

INTERNATIONAL PAST LEADERS' PROFILES

Abacha, Sani (Nigeria)

Introduction

Abacha claimed the Nigerian presidency in Nov. 1993 following the army's refusal to acknowledge the results of the presidential election held earlier in the year. Though voicing a desire to reintroduce democracy to Nigeria, his tenure was marked by civil rights violations and the dismantling of democratic institutions. He died while in office.

Early Life

Sani Abacha was born on 20 Sep. 1943 in Kano. He entered the army at the age of 18 and received his military education in Nigeria, England and the United States. Having achieved the rank of brigadier, he was a leading figure in the military coup of 1983 led by Ibrahim Babangida that removed Alhaji Shehu Shagari from power. Babangida himself seized the presidency 2 years later and Abacha served as minister of defence in this government. Following the victory of the social democrat Moshood Abiola at the 1993 elections, the army declared the elections void and Abacha nominated himself president in Nov.

Career Peak

Abacha vowed to reintroduce civilian government by 1995 and provided economic aid to democratic organizations in Sierra Leone and Liberia. His domestic record was not impressive, however. He banned political gatherings and instigated media censorship. When Abiola reaffirmed his democratic claim to the presidency in June 1994 he was imprisoned. Members of the opposition National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) were arrested and in 1995 several environmental activists, including the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, were executed for protests that resulted in the death of a pro-government chief.

Further civil rights violations followed. Having abolished several democratic institutions, Abacha postponed the elections scheduled for 1996. In 1997 the charging of Nobel Prize-winning exiled writer Wole Soyinka with treason was met with international outrage. Then Abacha promised elections for 1998, paving the way for his nomination as sole candidate for the presidency. He died suddenly in June 1998, reportedly of a heart attack.

Abbott, Tony (Australia)

Introduction

Tony Abbott became prime minister in Sept. 2013, leading his Liberal–National coalition to a decisive victory over the incumbent Labor government. A conservative on social issues, he won the election promising to strengthen the economy, limit the number of asylum seekers entering the country and revoke the recently introduced carbon tax.

Early Life

Anthony John 'Tony' Abbott was born in London, UK on 4 Nov. 1957 to Australian parents who returned to Sydney, Australia in 1960. He attended St Ignatius' College in the city's suburbs before reading economics and law at

the University of Sydney and winning a Rhodes scholarship to study politics and philosophy at the University of Oxford in England. In 1984 he began training for the Catholic priesthood but left before ordination to become a journalist, writing for *The Bulletin* and *The Australian*, the biggest-selling national daily newspaper. He worked as press secretary to opposition leader Dr John Hewson from 1990–93 and was the first executive director of the anti-republican group, Australians for Constitutional Monarchy. In March 1994 he became Liberal MP for Warringah.

Following the election victory of the Liberal–National coalition in 1996, Abbott was appointed as a parliamentary secretary and in 1998 was promoted to minister of employment services, where he introduced the 'Work for the Dole' scheme to encourage job seekers to take voluntary placements in return for benefit entitlement. He set up the Australians for Honest Politics Trust in 1998, a fund to finance private lawsuits against the extreme right One Nation Party.

Abbott became employment minister and leader of the House of Representatives in 2001 prior to becoming minister for health and ageing in Oct. 2003. His controversial decision to block access to an abortion drug in 2006 resulted in parliament passing legislation to remove health ministers' power of veto in such matters.

After the Liberal–National defeat in the 2007 election, Abbott was touted as a likely successor to Howard but withdrew his candidature and entered Brendan Nelson's shadow cabinet as minister for families, community services and indigenous affairs. He continued to serve when the Liberal leadership passed to Malcolm Turnbull in Sept. 2008. In Nov. 2009 he resigned over Turnbull's support for the Rudd government's Emission Trading Scheme (ETS), which Abbott argued was financially unsound. A three-way leadership contest ensued between Abbott, Turnbull and Joe Hockey, with Abbott claiming a narrow victory over Turnbull and becoming leader on 1 Dec. 2009. On 3 Dec. the Liberal Party rejected the ETS bill in the Senate and in Feb. 2010 Abbott proposed a new policy that provided for a markedly less ambitious cut in emissions by 2020.

Other policy initiatives included extending parental leave and increasing corporate tax. After the Aug. 2010 general elections delivered a Labor minority government, Abbott was re-elected unopposed as leader of the Liberal Party. He opposed plans for a flood levy in the aftermath of the Queensland floods of 2010–11, proposed consultations on indigenous affairs in the Northern Territory and argued that the government had no mandate for its carbon tax policy. After campaigning on pledges to boost the economy, tighten border controls and abolish carbon tax, he led the Liberal–National coalition to a decisive victory in the Sept. 2013 general election, winning 88 seats in the House of Representatives to Labor's 57.

Career Peak

Abbott was sworn in on 18 Sept. 2013 and rapidly embarked on measures to repeal the carbon tax, as well as launching a controversial programme to turn back asylum seekers' boats to Indonesia. Facing the challenge of a slackening economy, he was expected to focus on boosting the private sector and reducing public spending and government regulation. He identified indigenous affairs as a priority while holding a conservative position on social issues, including same-sex marriage. Internationally, his tasks included easing tensions with Indonesia (further strained by revelations in Nov. 2013 that Australian intelligence services had tapped the telephone of Indonesia's president) and using Australia's 2014 presidency of the G20 group of major economies to achieve his stated aim of strengthening free trade.

His first year in office was marked by parliament's abolition of the carbon tax in July 2014, the strengthening of trade ties with Japan and South Korea, a free trade deal with China in the wake of the G20 summit hosted by Abbott in Brisbane in Nov. and Australia's military engagement in the US-led intervention in Iraq from mid-year against Islamic State jihadists. Meanwhile, tensions with Indonesia continued over his policy of turning back boats carrying asylum seekers.

Domestically, however, his unpopular first budget and reintroduction of knighthoods to Australia's honours system fuelled a plummeting voter approval rating. It also prompted a party rebellion in Feb. 2015 over his leadership, which he survived but with the support of only 60% of Liberal members of parliament.

On 14 Sept. 2015, Abbott lost a leadership spill motion proposed by the then minister of communications Malcolm Turnbull. Turnbull defeated Abbott in the subsequent ballot and took over first as leader of the Liberal Party and then as prime minister a day later after Abbott seceded the premiership.

Abdallah Abdereman, Ahmed (Comoros)

Introduction

Ahmed Abdallah Abdereman was head of the governing council in 1975 when he was overthrown in a coup, but returned to power as president from 1976–89. He viewed independence as a 'regrettable necessity'.

Early Life

Born on 12 June 1918, Abdallah was partly educated in Majunga, Madagascar. He held several posts in the Comoros' government from 1947 onwards. Following the Comoran declaration of independence in 1975, he was elected head of state by the national assembly.

Career Peak

The Abdallah government was overthrown by a coalition of six parties (the United National Front) on 3 Aug. 1975. Abdallah escaped to Nzwani, continuing his rule with a small armed contingent. In Sept., however, he was finally arrested. Three years later, the Soilih government (established after the Aug. 1975 coup) was overturned by mercenary forces. Having helped to finance the coup Abdallah returned to Moroni from exile in Paris and was eventually named sole president.

Abdallah drafted a new constitution, giving each island limited self-rule but securing significant power for the presidency. It also provided for the restoration of Islam as the state religion. In 1982 all opposition political parties were banned, the culmination of several years of persecution of political opponents, especially those who had been in the Soilih camp.

The ongoing presence of the mercenary leader Bob Denard led to severe international criticism of the Abdallah regime. the Comoros' membership of the Organization of African Unity was suspended, diplomatic relations with Madagascar were severed and the UN threatened economic sanctions. However, Abdallah worked hard to maintain the diplomatic ties established by Soilih and there was a thawing in relations with France, particularly after he relaxed pressure over the question of Mahoré sovereignty and allowed French ships to use Comoran ports.

Grants from the European Economic Community and several Arab nations allowed for development of the Comoran infrastructure. However there was little significant upturn in the stagnant economy and funds that should have gone towards development went instead on staples such as rice. After a failed coup in 1981, opposition to Abdallah's rule was based predominantly abroad. With no rivals at home, he won over 99% of the vote in the 1984 presidential elections.

Protected by a Garde Présidentielle (PG, Presidential Guard) led by Denard and French and Belgian mercenaries, he ordered the arrest, killing and torture of dissidents. The regime was condemned by Amnesty International for human rights abuses and France threatened to cut off aid. The GP continued to wield its influence throughout the 1980s and Denard used his position for financial gain. Abdallah himself was criticized for his dominant role in Comoran business, often allowing personal interests to affect policy decisions.

Abdallah called a referendum in Nov. 1989, to approve constitutional amendments allowing him to stand for re-election in 1990. The polls were marked by violence and on the night of 26–27 Nov. Abdallah was shot dead. Two days later Denard and the GP seized control of the government.

Abdellahi, Sidi Mohamed Ould Cheikh (Mauritania)

Introduction

Sidi Abdellahi took office in April 2007 after winning the country's first fully-democratic multi-party elections. He stood as an independent candidate to replace the outgoing military junta. Abdellahi had previously served as minister of the economy from 1971–78. He was forced from office by a military coup in Aug. 2008.

Early Life

Abdellahi was born into an Arab marabout family in 1938 in Aleg, a town 250 km southeast of the capital, Nouakchott. After local schooling he completed his secondary education in Dakar, Senegal. He went on to study economics in Grenoble, France before returning to Mauritania in 1968.

Having worked as an economic strategy adviser to the government, Abdellahi joined Moktar Ould Daddah's administration in Sept. 1971. He held several posts including minister of state and minister of the economy, playing a key role in the nationalization of iron mining and creating a national currency. In 1974–75 he participated in negotiations for the Lomé Convention, a framework for co-operation between the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the EU.

Abdellahi was imprisoned in July 1978 following the overthrow of Ould Daddah. On his release in 1979, Abdellahi went to Kuwait to work as an adviser to the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development from 1982–85. He returned to Mauritania in 1986 to serve in Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya's authoritarian government, first as minister of hydro-power and electricity and then as minister of fisheries. In 1987 Taya arrested him on allegations of corruption, prompting Abdellahi again to leave the country in 1989. This time he moved to Niger to advise the government on behalf of the Kuwait Fund until his return to Mauritania in 2003.

After a bloodless military coup ousted Taya in 2005, Abdellahi announced his intention to run for the presidency as an independent candidate. He defeated Ahmed Ould Daddah in a second round run-off on 25 March 2007 and took office on 19 April.

Career Peak

In April 2007 Mauritania regained a seat on the African Union and received an US\$18 m. loan from the Islamic Development Bank. Abdellahi pledged to confront the country's ethnic inequalities, exacerbated by the unequal distribution of wealth from the discovery of oil off the Mauritanian coast in 2001.

In early 2008 rising food prices dented Abdellahi's popularity. He dismissed his cabinet and formed a new government that lacked broad support. In July 2008 the cabinet lost a parliamentary vote of no confidence, which was shortly followed by the resignation of 48 MPs from the ruling party. On 6 Aug. 2008 Abdellahi dismissed several prominent military figures. On the same day he was removed from his home by members of the Presidential Security wing and taken into army custody. The prime minister and interior ministry were also arrested. On 7 Aug. a High Council of State assumed executive power, with Gen. Abdel Aziz as its president. The new regime is expected to try Abdellahi on corruption charges. The coup received international condemnation.

Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (Saudi Arabia)

Introduction

King Abdullah administered Saudi Arabia on behalf of his half-brother, King Fahd bin Abdulaziz, between 1996 and Fahd's death on 1 Aug. 2005, following which he was named as successor. Abdullah maintained the strict Islamic code of governance associated with the Wahhabi Saudis while

attempting to rein in the excesses of the princely class. He gained respect internationally for his efforts in the Middle East peace process but at times relations with the USA administration were strained. Abdullah died on 23 Jan. 2015.

Early Life

Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz was born in Riyadh in 1924, the only son of Fahda bint Asi bin Shurayim Shammar, the eighth wife of Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud, then Sultan of Nejd, who founded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Abdulaziz, known as bin Saud by Europeans, reared his massive family in the Bedouin tradition, educating his sons at court and instilling them with Islamic and Arab virtues.

Abdullah's career began in 1952 when he was given the command of the Saudi National Guard by his half-brother, King Saud, the first son to succeed Abdulaziz. The National Guard comprised descendants of Abdulaziz's Bedouin warriors who took part in the expansion of Saudi power. On his accession in 1975, King Khalid bin Abdulaziz appointed Abdullah second deputy prime minister. In this post Abdullah became involved in foreign policy, visiting the USA in 1976 to meet President Gerald Ford. On the accession of King Fahd in 1982, Abdullah was designated crown prince and first deputy prime minister.

Career Peak

The succession in Saudi Arabia is decided by the Saudi princes, who number over 4,000 (some sources claim an estimated 8,000). A crown prince is traditionally selected by seniority and ability. Since the death of the kingdom's founder, Abdulaziz, in 1953, only his sons have been considered suitable for the succession. Abdullah, who had no full brothers, lacked a fraternal support base and relied on alliances forged with other factions within the family, most notably the sons of King Faisal, Prince Saud (foreign minister since 1975) and Prince Turki (head of Saudi intelligence).

Known as a devout Muslim, Abdullah had 14 sons and 20 daughters by six wives. His reputation for piety earned him support from religious leaders. Having assumed the position of regent in 1996, he was soon considered the *de facto* ruler of Saudi Arabia on account of King Fahd's recurrent illnesses and absences from the country. It was likely that Abdullah consulted and, to some extent, ruled with Fahd's Sudairi brothers, Sultan and Salman, the second deputy prime minister and the governor of Riyadh respectively.

Abdullah's foreign policy concentrated on improving relations within the Arab world and on encouraging the peace process in the Middle East (notably putting forward settlement proposals in 2002). He nevertheless showed support for militant Islamic groups such as Hizbollah and condemned Israeli military action in Lebanon and against the Palestinians. In March 2011 he sanctioned the deployment of Saudi troops to Bahrain in support of its fellow monarchy in response to Shia opposition demands for political reforms in the island kingdom.

Abdullah was less overtly pro-Western than King Fahd. The attacks on New York, USA, in Sept. 2001, although condemned, created serious tensions owing to the high proportion of Saudi nationals among the perpetrators. He had declined a visit to the USA on two occasions before the attacks, complaining that then President George W. Bush was 'uninformed' about the Middle East and the plight of the Palestinians. Nevertheless, he maintained that the USA would remain a firm ally, and Saudi Arabia has itself since become the target of several suspected al-Qaeda attacks.

In Dec. 2006 the UK government controversially suspended a fraud investigation into the 1980s al-Yamamah defence contract with Saudi Arabia, stating that diplomatic co-operation between the two countries was being put at risk (a decision subsequently confirmed as lawful by the British House of Lords in July 2008). In Nov. 2007 Pope Benedict XVI greeted Abdullah at the Vatican in the first such meeting between the head of the Roman Catholic Church and a Saudi monarch.

Internal liberalization was slow under Abdullah. He resisted Western calls for the abolition of Sharia law and the emancipation of women, stating that it is 'absurd to impose on an individual or a society rights that are alien to its beliefs or principles'. However, some key issues have been addressed. Female education, previously the preserve of the *ulema* (religious leaders), was placed under the jurisdiction of the ministry of education in 2002 and Abdullah supported the increase of female employment. The country's first ever elections in 2005, although with a limited franchise and

only for local councils, were a partial response to pressure for political change. A law to reform the judicial system was enacted in Oct. 2007 and provided for new specialized courts and the introduction of a supreme court as a final court of appeal. Plans were also announced to curb the powers of the religious police, which had come under increasing criticism over deaths in custody.

In Feb. 2009 Abdullah made extensive changes in government affecting top positions in the courts, the armed forces, the central bank, the health, education and information ministries, the religious police and the Consultative Council. He also appointed the country's first woman minister, Nora Al-Fayez, as deputy minister responsible for girls' education. In Sept. 2011 he announced that women would be eligible to stand and vote in local elections from 2015, and in Jan. 2013 he granted women seats on the Consultative Council for the first time. In 2011 he responded to political tensions generated by popular discontent across much of the Arab world by announcing a new welfare spending programme for the kingdom.

During Abdullah's latter years there was speculation about the issue of succession and internecine royal politics. In late 2006 he announced that a committee of senior princes would be formed to select the future crown prince and reduce the likelihood of family conflicts. The new committee would in theory have the power to remove a king if he was judged to be permanently incapacitated and would lead the country in a caretaker capacity until a successor was chosen. In Oct. 2011 the deputy prime minister and minister of interior, Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, was named as heir to the throne. However, he died in June 2012 and was succeeded by defence minister Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In an unprecedented diplomatic step, the Saudi regime in Oct. 2013 renounced its right to a two-year term on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member, citing the UN's failure to address the ongoing civil war in Syria or resolve the long-standing Israel–Palestine issue.

Abdullah, who had been suffering from poor health, died on 23 Jan. 2015. His half-brother, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, was immediately sworn in as his successor.

Abdullah bin Hussein (Jordan)

Introduction

Abdullah I was the founder of the modern Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He assumed the throne of the Amirate of Transjordan in 1921 and took the title of King after his country achieved independence from Britain in 1946. Mentor to his grandson, Hussein bin Talal, Abdullah was assassinated in 1951.

Early Life

He was born in 1882, the second son of Hussein bin Ali (Amir of Makkah from 1908–16 and king of the Hejaz 1916–24). Under the Hashemite banner, Abdullah fought in the Arab revolt against Turkish occupation during the First World War. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Britain received a mandate over the Amirate of Transjordan (as well as the territory of Palestine and Kingdom of Iraq). Abdullah was made ruler (and his brother Faisal assumed the throne of Iraq).

Career Peak

Over the next 25 years he sought to develop centralized governmental authority over a mostly tribal and nomadic society. He promulgated the first constitution in 1928 and held elections for the first parliament in 1929. He also presided over a series of Anglo-Transjordanian treaties culminating in Britain's recognition of his country's full sovereign independence in March 1946. Transjordan became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The latter part of his reign witnessed the creation of the neighbouring Jewish State of Israel and the first Arab-Israeli War of 1948–49. Jordanian troops fought in the conflict in the defence of Jerusalem and parts of Palestine. After the war Abdullah concluded an armistice directly with Israel. On 20 July 1951 he was shot outside the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The gunman was a Palestinian opposed to any dealings with Israel.

Abusahmain, Nouri (Libya)

Introduction

Nouri Abusahmain was elected Chairman of the General National Congress (GNC) on 25 June 2013, making him *de facto* head of state. His election came after Mohamed Magariaf resigned on 28 May 2013 following the ratification of a law prohibiting Gaddafi-era officials from holding office for 10 years after the law came into effect.

Early Life

Abusahmain was born in the western coastal town of Zuwarah into the Berber community, whose cultural identity was suppressed by the Gaddafi regime. He studied law and international relations in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s. He then worked in his home town's petrochemical industry. Following the Libyan uprising he was elected in 2012 to the GNC as the representative for Zuwarah.

In a vote for the GNC chairmanship by its 184 members on 25 June 2013, Abusahmain secured 96 votes against 80 for his opponent, Al-Sharif al-Wafi, with eight abstentions in a second round of polling. Although Abusahmain has maintained that he is independent, his success at the poll was widely accredited to the backing that he received from the Justice and Construction Party, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Career Peak

Abusahmain's main tasks in office were to oversee the drafting and ratification of a new constitution and then to fix a date for a general election. A Constituent Assembly tasked with drafting the constitution was elected on 20 Feb. 2014. Abusahmain announced that general elections would be called as early as possible, with some commentators predicting polls as early as the end of 2014. However, with the Constituent Assembly needing to take account of an array of tribal, regional and ethnic fault lines, the transition to democracy was widely expected to take longer. Regional divisions within the country were further exacerbated in March by the dismissal of Ali Zeidan as prime minister by the GNC in a controversy over control of oil exports.

Elections were finally held on 25 June 2014, and Abusahmain subsequently stood down in his capacity as interim president when Aguila Salah Issa was elected president of the new House of Representatives and his successor by parliament on 5 Aug. 2014.

Adamkus, Valdas (Lithuania)

Introduction

At the age of 77 Valdas Adamkus was elected president of Lithuania for a second term in 2004, following the impeachment of Rolandas Paksas just 16 months after he took office. Once a blue-collar worker in a Chicago car plant, Adamkus returned to his native Lithuania in 1997 after 48 years in the USA and entered formal politics for the first time. Within a year he had become president.

Early Life

Valdas Adamkus was born in Kaunas on 3 Nov. 1926. His father, Ignas Adamkavičius, was a civil servant and served as a volunteer in battles for Lithuanian independence from Germany (achieved in Nov. 1918, although the capital, Vilnius, came under Polish control in 1920). Kaunas became the country's *de facto* capital in 1922. In the Second World War, when Lithuania was annexed by the USSR (July 1940), and then occupied by Nazi forces (July 1941), Adamkus joined a resistance movement and published an underground newspaper. When Lithuania was again invaded by the Red Army in 1944, he signed up to the National Defence Force and fought against Soviet rule at the battle of Seda in the west of the country. Subsequently Adamkus and his family were among around 60,000 Lithuanians who managed to flee to Germany, where they were liberated by the Western Allies. After

graduation from a Lithuanian school in Germany, Adamkus entered the Faculty of Natural Science of the University of Munich. He also worked at the World YMCA organization where he focused on helping displaced Lithuanians. A keen sportsman, Adamkus competed at the Olympic Games of the Enslaved Nations in 1948 and won two gold medals.

Adamkus, along with his parents, brother and sister emigrated to the USA in 1949. He began work in a car factory and later took employment as a draughtsman for an engineering firm. In 1960 he graduated as a construction engineer from the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Adamkus organized demonstrations against the Soviet occupation of Lithuania and initiated numerous petitions. Between 1961–65 he was a member of the board of the Lithuanian Community in the USA. In the late 1960s he turned his attention to the environment, first heading a scientific research centre and later working as deputy administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency's mid-West office. His department's work on improving water quality and the environment in the Great Lakes was widely praised. From 1972 Adamkus became a regular visitor to Lithuania – he established links with Vilnius University and helped various Soviet institutions to build water purification facilities and set up environmental monitoring projects. When he resigned as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency in June 1997 he received the agency's highest award for achievements in service and a letter of thanks from the US president, Bill Clinton.

Following the USSR's recognition of Lithuania's independence on 6 Sept. 1991, Adamkus became increasingly involved in Lithuanian politics. He spearheaded the electoral campaign of Stasys Lozoraitis (the ambassador to the USA) in the 1993 presidential elections, although Lozoraitis lost to the former communist Algirdas Brazauskas who had strong support in the poor, rural areas. Adamkus actively participated in the campaign leading up to the 1996 general election, helping to unite the centre-right Christian Democrats and the Homeland Union. They were guided to victory under Gediminas Vagnorius, who became prime minister. The following year Adamkus returned to Lithuania and was nominated by the Lithuanian Centre Union to represent the council of the northern city of Šiauliai. He stood in the presidential election as an independent candidate on 21 Dec. 1997, winning sufficient votes to contest a run-off with Artūras Paulauskas on 4 Jan. 1998.

Career Peak

Adamkus beat the former prosecutor general by a margin of less than 1% (14,256 votes), with his support coming mostly from the cities of Kaunas and Klaipėda and the west of the country. As president from 1998–2003 he laid the groundwork for Lithuania's membership of NATO and the European Union. Although popular with Lithuania's new middle class, he lost his 2003 bid for re-election to Rolandas Paksas by a narrow margin. However, the Paksas presidency was dogged by financial scandals and allegations of links with the Russian Mafia, resulting in his impeachment in April 2004 for divulging state secrets. In the presidential election of June 2004 Adamkus won a second term after narrowly defeating former prime minister Kazimiera Prunskienė in a run-off.

Most analysts predicted that Adamkus would continue to pursue a strongly pro-Western foreign policy with an emphasis on links with neighbouring Nordic states within the EU. In 2005 he declined the invitation to attend the Russian war anniversary celebrations in Moscow.

In May–June 2006 the coalition government led by the Social Democratic prime minister Algirdas Brazauskas collapsed. It was replaced by a new centre-left minority administration under Gediminas Kirkilas, who was approved by parliament as Adamkus' second nominee for the premiership in July. Following the Oct. 2008 parliamentary elections, Adamkus appointed Andrius Kubilius of the Homeland Union–Lithuanian Christian Democrats as prime minister of a new centre-right coalition government in Nov.

He chose not to stand again in the 2009 presidential elections and was succeeded by Dalia Grybauskaitė on 12 July 2009.

Adenauer, Konrad (Germany)

Introduction

Konrad Adenauer was the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, holding the post from 1949–63. Mayor of Cologne before World

War II, he became Chancellor when he was 73. Having opposed the rise of Nazism, in the Cold War he turned his attention to the threat of Soviet expansion in Central Europe. A Christian Democrat, he saw the need for West Germany to align itself with the West and to this end pursued closer ties with the United States and worked to promote a united Europe. Though he was criticized for failing to promote the re-unification of the two Germanies, he succeeded in securing international recognition for West Germany, was integral to its economic success and assisted the nation in coming to terms with its recent past.

Early Life

Adenauer was born in Cologne on 5 Jan. 1876. He was the son of a civil servant and his family had a strong Catholic background. He graduated in Jurisprudence and Political Science, having studied at the Universities of Freiburg, Munich and Bonn. Active in Cologne's political life, he joined the Municipal Council in 1906, becoming Deputy Mayor 3 years later and Mayor in 1917. It was a position he held with distinction until 1933, when his opposition to Hitler led to his dismissal. He was also an active Centre Party member in the Provincial Diet and the Prussian State Council, of which he was President from 1920–33.

He was imprisoned by the Nazis in 1934 and again in 1944, when he was sent to a concentration camp. After World War II Adenauer was briefly restored to office in Cologne, only to be removed, this time by British officials. Adenauer was now able to devote all his energy to the formation of the new Christian Democratic Union, a political party established by Protestants and Catholics to oppose Nazism and promote economic growth in a devastated Germany. In 1946 Adenauer was elected CDU chairman in the British zone of occupation and soon after became its President.

Career Peak

After the Allies agreed a federal style government for West Germany, the CDU formed a coalition with the Christian Social Union (CSU) and won enough votes to form the government. In Sept. 1949 Adenauer was elected Chancellor by one parliamentary vote. He quickly set about the task of defining West Germany's role on the international scene and, though a pragmatist, his policies were guided by his Christian principles and a core belief in the freedoms and responsibilities of the individual.

In 1951 West Germany joined the Council of Europe and the European Coal and Steel Community (a precursor to the European Economic Community). Adenauer favoured a European Defence Community and when this project failed, West Germany joined NATO. The re-arming of the country put Germany in the front line of the Cold War but was opposed by those who still feared German aggression and by sections of the German population who were war-weary and guilt-ridden after World War II. In 1958 Adenauer made West Germany a founding member of the European Economic Community (EEC).

Adenauer's tenure as chancellor was the time of the German Economic Miracle, though responsibility for this lay more with Finance Minister and future Chancellor Ludwig Erhard than with Adenauer who concentrated on foreign affairs. Adenauer won convincing victories in the elections of 1953 and 1957 but, by this time in his 80s, he was aware that time was short. Erhard had become Vice Chancellor in 1957 but relations between the two men were uneasy, and there was conflict over the terms West Germany should accept to enter the EEC. Two years later Adenauer tried to block Erhard's path to the Chancellorship.

At the elections of 1961 Adenauer's popularity was at a low ebb. He was attacked for not having done more to oppose the building of the Berlin Wall, and there was growing concern about his age. He was forced to form a coalition government with the Free Democrat Party, who insisted that Adenauer must resign before the next general election. Beset by allegations of corruption, Adenauer lost a deal of credibility during the *Spiegel Affair* of 1962. The influential publication *Der Spiegel* had printed a number of articles criticising the government, including one which alleged that Minister of Defence, Franz Josef Strauss, had been drunk one night during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Soon afterwards the *Der Spiegel* offices were raided by the police, 11 people were arrested and the editor imprisoned for three and a half months on charges of endangering national security. Adenauer distanced himself but was later shown to have lied in parliament.

Adenauer's last major act as Chancellor was the culmination of his dream of closer relations with France. He met President de Gaulle in Paris in Jan. 1963 where they signed a Treaty of Friendship. A short while later he resigned.

Later Life

In retirement he wrote his biography and died on 20 April 1967, in Rhöndorf. Ludwig Erhard said of him, 'Germany's rebirth is indelibly linked with his name'.

Adulyadej, Bhumibol (Thailand)

Introduction

HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej (also known as Rama IX) enjoyed the longest reign of any Thai sovereign. He inherited a monarchy tarnished by the mysterious death of his predecessor and lacking a distinct role, having been forced to relinquish absolute power only 14 years previously. King Bhumibol re-established the monarchy as a central part of Thai society. He earned the respect of his people through his relative informality and by twice intervening in the political process to restore democracy.

Early Life

Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej was born on 5 Dec. 1927 at Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his father, Prince Mahidol, was at Harvard School of Public Health. The young prince was taken to Thailand for his primary schooling, but went to Switzerland for both secondary and university education. Bhumibol was accompanied by his elder brother, Ananda, who had succeeded to the throne in 1935 when he was a 10 year-old schoolboy. Ananda returned to Thailand in 1946 to take up his duties, but within weeks he was found shot dead in bed.

Career Peak

Bhumibol succeeded to the Thai throne on 9 July 1946 as result of his brother's violent and unexplained death. In the early years of his reign, the young sovereign had to define a new role as a constitutional monarch.

In 1950 Bhumibol married Sirikit, the daughter of Prince Chandaburi Suranath. The young couple tried to give the monarchy a more contemporary appeal, undertaking long programmes of public appearances and tours. Like so many Thai men, the King became a Buddhist monk for a short time. But he attracted publicity for his keen interest in jazz. Bhumibol founded his own jazz band and played on the public radio. He was an accomplished saxophonist, the composer of more than 40 pieces and played with Benny Goodman, Jack Teagarden and Stan Getz.

Bhumibol had won popularity by the time of his intervention in the political crisis of 1971–73. The imposition of military rule sparked student protests and later huge public demonstrations. Public dissent was ended only after a direct plea from the King, who was instrumental in forcing the leaders of the military government into exile. Bhumibol asked an academic to be interim premier to oversee the drafting of a democratic constitution.

The period of democracy was brief and Thailand, threatened by instability and the wars in neighbouring Indochina, suffered several coups. By 1988 a new *modus vivendi* had emerged: the military and parliament shared power with King Bhumibol acting as an intermediary between them. In 1992 popular unrest again brought the King into the political arena. King Bhumibol helped bring about the resignation of an unpopular army chief who was a leading member of the military junta. A new constitution restored civilian government.

The King's Golden Jubilee in 1996 was celebrated with genuine public affection, and on his 60th birthday he was proclaimed 'the Great' by the Prime Minister. In March and April 2010 the King received criticism for failing to speak out against the violent protests that erupted in central Bangkok between the government and pro-Thaksin red-shirt protesters. His silence was seen by some as an indication of the waning of his political influence and his increasing frailty after a 5 month period of hospitalization in late 2009.

On 22 May 2014 Bhumibol gave his approval to the military junta led by Prayuth Chan-ocha, who had overthrown the interim government installed following the impeachment of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Bhumibol died aged 88 in Oct. 2016. His son, the crown prince Vajiralongkorn, requested that his proclamation as king be delayed in order to prepare for the role. The president of the privy council, Prem Tinsulanonda, subsequently took over as interim regent, with Prince Vajiralongkorn eventually accepting the throne on 1 Dec. 2016.

Ahern, Bertie (Ireland)

Introduction

Bertie Ahern was Irish Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) from 1997 to 2008, heading coalitions comprising his Fianna Fáil party, the Progressive Democrats and, following the 2007 elections, the Green Party. He was instrumental in brokering the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, the framework accord for peace in Northern Ireland. Staunchly pro-European, he has encouraged the expansion and closer unity of the EU. The second longest-serving *Taoiseach* since Ireland achieved independence, and the first since 1944 to be elected three times, Ahern oversaw a period of unprecedented prosperity and economic growth in Ireland. Forced out of office by investigations into his financial affairs, he remains an influential figure in Irish and European politics.

Early Life

Bartholomew Ahern was born on 12 Sept. 1951 in Dublin. After studying economics and computer science at University College Dublin and the London School of Economics, he entered the Irish parliament (the *Dáil*) in 1977 as the republican Fianna Fáil member for a Dublin seat. Two years later he joined the Dublin City Council, serving as lord mayor for a year in the late 1980s.

He first obtained government office in 1980 as a chief whip. Junior ministerial posts followed until 1987 when he was appointed minister for labour. In 1991 he took over the finance portfolio. In Nov. 1994, after 11 years as Fianna Fáil's deputy leader, Ahern was voted Albert Reynolds' successor. He led Fianna Fáil in opposition until 1997.

As Ireland's biggest party following the June 1997 elections, Ahern was prepared to form a coalition government with the Labour Party, but following last minute realignments he went into government with the Progressive Democrats.

Career Peak

Within a month of Ahern taking office the Irish Republican Army (IRA) renewed its ceasefire, and all-party peace talks resumed in Sept. These culminated in the Good Friday Agreement of April 1998. Amongst the agreement's key provisions were the creation of the Northern Irish assembly, North–South ministerial council and British–Irish Council. It also laid out guidelines for weapons decommissioning by paramilitary groups, although negotiations were to stall on several occasions over this issue. Ahern meanwhile acknowledged that ending paramilitary violence was only a first step in countering deep-rooted 'tribalism'.

Ahern's handling of the peace talks and Ireland's healthy economy maintained his popularity, although support fell in the Catholic community after his separation from his wife. Also, within a year of taking office, two of his long-term allies—former *Taoiseach* Charles Haughey and former minister Ray Burke—were involved in embarrassing funding scandals.

Ahern was a leading advocate for the EU. He oversaw the transition from the Irish pound to the euro in 2002 and expressed a wish that the UK would also adopt the new currency, thus facilitating commerce between the Republic of Ireland and the North. In Oct. 2002 he oversaw the endorsement via referendum of the Nice Treaty, allowing ten new countries to join the EU in 2004 (the treaty having been rejected in an earlier Irish referendum in 2001).

Ahern won another term of office when Fianna Fáil won the elections of May 2002. In Oct. 2002 the Northern Irish Assembly executive was suspended over allegations of IRA spying at the Northern Ireland Office. Direct rule from London was reimposed and shortly afterwards the IRA cut off its links with the international weapons decommissioning body. In May 2003 UK Prime Minister Blair postponed elections to the Northern Irish Assembly, claiming that Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams' assurance that the IRA would not do anything to undermine the peace process did not provide a sufficient guarantee. Ahern refused to endorse Blair's position but restated his commitment to working with the UK government towards a lasting peace. Subsequently, in July 2005, the IRA declared formally that it was ending its armed campaign to pursue peaceful political dialogue—a move confirmed by the international decommissioning body in Sept. despite Unionist scepticism. In Oct. 2006 Ahern and Blair unveiled a new timetable for restoring

government power-sharing in Northern Ireland between the Protestant and Catholic communities. The leaders of the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin subsequently reached an historic agreement to share power from 8 May 2007 in a devolved administration to replace direct rule by the British government.

In 2006 the Irish government became more unpopular as divisions emerged within the coalition and Ahern admitted to receiving several large loans from friends when he was finance minister in the 1990s. Nevertheless, Fianna Fáil remained the largest parliamentary party following elections in May 2007 (but without an overall majority) and in June Ahern formed a new coalition government with the Progressive Democrats and the Green Party. In Sept. 2007 Ahern narrowly survived a vote of no-confidence brought against him in the *Dáil* as the pressure on him owing to public investigations into his personal financial affairs intensified. In April 2008, in the wake of further revelations about financial irregularities, he announced that he would be standing down as prime minister and Fianna Fáil leader in May.

Later Life

In his resignation speech Ahern made explicit his intention to clear his name of the allegations of corruption that dogged his final years in office. He continues to represent his North Dublin constituency in the *Dáil*. In 2008 he was appointed to the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution and became a board member for Co-operation Ireland, an anti-sectarian charity. He began writing a sports column in a national newspaper in Aug. 2009 and released his autobiography in Oct. 2009 but was criticized for claiming a tax break on his earnings.

Ahidjo, Ahmadou Babatoura (Cameroon)

Introduction

Ahmadou Babatoura Ahidjo was Cameroon's first president from 1960 until 1982.

Early Life

Ahmadou Babatoura Ahidjo was born on 24 Aug. 1924 in Garoua, northern Cameroon, to a Fulani village chief. From 1942–53 he worked as a radio operator in the French Colonial administration, and in 1947 was elected to the first territorial assembly. Re-elected in 1952, he became president of this consultative panel in 1957. From 1953–56 he also served in France as the Cameroon member of the French Union. In 1957 he was appointed vice premier and minister of the interior in Cameroon's government.

After the resignation in 1958 of the country's first premier, André-Marie Mbida, Ahidjo formed his own party, the Cameroonian Union (CNU), and was elected Mbida's successor. When French Cameroon won independence from France in 1960, he was sworn in as the nation's first president.

Career Peak

Following independence, Ahidjo oversaw unification with British Cameroon in 1961 to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon. In the following decade he faced rebellion from the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon, although by 1970 he had succeeded in quashing resistance. In 1972 he introduced an unpopular constitution that ended the independence of British Cameroon. In 1976 he banned all political parties other than the CNU. Although implementing authoritarian rule, Ahidjo established one of Africa's most stable countries, securing new terms in office in 1965, 1970, 1975 and 1980.

His economic policies brought about improvements in agriculture, education, healthcare and transport. In the 1970s the discovery of oil transformed the previously agrarian economy, paving the way for technological innovation and underpinning increased national savings.

On 6 Nov. 1982 Ahidjo resigned as president citing health reasons. He handed power to the prime minister, Paul Biya, though retained his position as president of the CNU.

Later Life

A growing rift between Ahidjo and Biya saw Ahidjo go into exile in France on 19 July 1983. In his absence, Biya accused Ahidjo of plotting a coup, sentencing him to death in Feb. 1984 (subsequently commuted to life imprisonment). Ahidjo never returned to Cameroon and died on 30 Nov. 1989 in Dakar, Senegal.

Ahmadinejad, Mahmoud (Iran)

Introduction

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won the run-off in Iran's presidential election on 24 June 2005. The ultra-conservative former Revolutionary Guard and mayor of Tehran promised to tackle domestic poverty and corruption, and analysts expected an end to the fragile social reforms made under his predecessor, President Mohammad Khatami. In foreign policy he has hardened Iran's stance towards the West, particularly over its nuclear programme, and engaged in anti-Israeli rhetoric, which has heightened international tensions. Signs of internal dissension during his first term were reflected in his hotly disputed re-election in June 2009, which provoked waves of opposition protests and repressive government retaliation for the rest of the year and into 2010. He has since maintained his uncompromising position on Iran's nuclear development activities and sought to strengthen ties with left-leaning Latin American governments in Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba and Ecuador. However, in his second (and final term) of office he has overseen a further decline in the Iranian economy, aggravated by ongoing international sanctions, and has reportedly alienated Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei.

Early Life

The son of a blacksmith, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was born in 1956 in the village of Aradan in northern Iran. The family moved to Tehran a year later. In 1976 he took up a place to study civil engineering at the Iran University of Science and Technology (IUST). As a conservative student, he was supportive of Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution in 1979. Some of the 52 Americans who were held hostage in the US embassy after the revolution allege that Ahmadinejad was among those who captured them, though he strongly denies the claim. He remained at the IUST until the late 1980s, taking a master's degree in civil engineering, followed by a PhD in traffic and transportation engineering and planning, and then winning a professorship.

Ahmadinejad was drawn into the long-running Iran–Iraq war in 1986, when he joined the Islamic Revolutionary Guards and fought on the Iraqi border near Kirkuk. When the war ended in 1988, he worked as an engineer in the local government offices of Maku and Khvoy in the province of West Azarbaijan. In 1993 he became governor of the northwestern province of Ardabil until he was ousted following the election of the reform-minded President Mohammad Khatami in 1997. Returning to Tehran, Ahmadinejad rejoined the IUST's civil engineering faculty, where he remained until May 2003.

Ahmadinejad was elected mayor of Tehran on 3 May 2003, and pursued conservative policies. He closed down some fast-food restaurants and banned an advertising campaign that featured a Western celebrity. His views were at odds with President Khatami, who barred him from attending cabinet meetings, a privilege normally accorded to mayors of the capital. With the backing of conservative groups, Ahmadinejad contested the June 2005 presidential elections. His campaign was aimed at the poor and disadvantaged, as well as religious hardliners. He emphasized his working-class upbringing and promised to redistribute the country's income from oil. In a run-off against the former president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, on 24 June 2005, Ahmadinejad emerged victorious, with 63.4% of the vote, although there were complaints of voting irregularities.

Career Peak

On 3 Aug. Ahmadinejad received the formal approval of Ayatollah Khamenei, and he became president on 6 Aug. 2005. In his inaugural address, he

called for unity and the building of a model state based on principles of 'modern, advanced, and strong Islamic government'. However, he quickly caused consternation both at home and abroad.

Within Iran, Ahmadinejad instituted a purge of various branches of government, state economic agencies and the diplomatic service, drawing accusations that he was exceeding his constitutional powers. By the end of 2006 there were signs of domestic opposition to his policies. In Dec. his supporters fared badly in elections to local councils and to the powerful Assembly of Experts. Iran's economic malaise under his management incurred parliamentary rebuke in Jan. 2007, reportedly supported by Khamenei, and in June 2007 his government introduced petrol rationing, provoking public protests. There was also increasing evidence in 2007 of an unpopular crackdown on civil liberties. However, in parliamentary elections in March–April 2008 (in which many pro-reform candidates were barred from standing) there was a strong showing by the president's supporters.

The June 2009 presidential election saw Ahmadinejad win 62.6% of the vote, ahead of his nearest rival Mir-Hossein Mousavi with 33.8%. However, the opposition challenged the official results and accused the government of election rigging, resulting in violent clashes between police and demonstrators. Opposition unrest continued over the following months and was met with a repressive backlash by security forces. The government, meanwhile, claimed that outside interference was responsible for fomenting the upheaval. In Dec. 2010 Ahmadinejad dismissed his foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, considered a political rival within the Iranian leadership, and replaced him with Ali Akbar Salehi. However, his reported demand for the intelligence minister, Heidar Moselehi, to resign in April 2011 was overruled by Ayatollah Khamenei, fuelling speculation of a rift between them. In parliamentary elections in March–May 2012 to the Islamic Consultative Assembly, conservative candidates supporting Khamenei and opposing Ahmadinejad won the majority of seats.

On the international stage, Iran's resumption of uranium enrichment from Aug. 2005 intensified Western concerns over nuclear weapons proliferation. Ahmadinejad has maintained a belligerent stance on Iran's refusal to suspend enrichment, which has resulted in a series of punitive sanctions by the United Nations Security Council, the USA and the European Union. International suspicions were heightened in Sept. 2009 by the identification of a secret uranium enrichment plant (Fordo) near the city of Qom and by Iran's test-firing of missiles capable of reaching targets across the Middle East. Subsequent negotiations over the nuclear issue between Iran and the major Western powers have to date come to nothing as reports of an increasing enrichment capability at the Fordo facility have emanated from the International Atomic Energy Agency. Tensions were further exacerbated by US accusations in Oct. 2011 of Iranian complicity in an alleged plot to kill the Saudi ambassador to Washington and by the ransacking of the British embassy in Tehran by an Iranian crowd in Dec. that year, in response to which all Iranian diplomats were expelled from the UK. In Jan. 2012 Ahmadinejad's government threatened to block the shipping of oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz and warned its Arab Gulf neighbours not to back Western attempts to isolate Iran. Nevertheless, further punitive US and EU sanctions, targeting Iranian oil exports in particular, took effect in June and July that year.

Meanwhile, anti-Israeli speeches by Ahmadinejad and his denunciation of the Holocaust as a myth have continued to provoke international condemnation. In Sept. 2010, in his address to the UN General Assembly, he accused the US government of orchestrating the 11 Sept. 2001 suicide hijacking attacks to reverse its declining influence in the Middle East and to prop up Israel, prompting a walkout by Western diplomats. His remarks were labelled 'abhorrent and delusional'. In his UN address in Sept. 2012 he accused Israel of intimidating Iran with threats to attack its nuclear facilities.

Ahmadinejad was not eligible to stand again in presidential elections held in June 2013, which were won by Hassan Rouhani, a moderate cleric. On 3 Aug. 2013 Ahmadinejad stepped down as Rouhani took over the Iranian presidency. Ahmadinejad was subsequently appointed as a member of the Expediency Council, an advisory body for the Supreme Leader.

Later Life

In June 2016 it was reported that Ahmadinejad was planning to stand in the presidential election of May 2017. However, in Sept. 2016 Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei advised Ahmadinejad not to run for president. In April 2017 he registered to run but the *Guardian Council*, which vets candidates, rejected his nomination.

Ahmed, Abdullahi Yusuf (Somalia)

Introduction

Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was elected transitional president of Somalia in Oct. 2004. The transitional government began its return from exile in Kenya in June 2005, a step towards establishing the country's first functioning government since the overthrow of President Siad Barre in 1991. Following an Ethiopian-backed offensive by government forces against a rival Islamist administration at the end of 2006, he entered the capital, Mogadishu, for the first time as head of state in Jan. 2007. However, his authority over the country remained tenuous. Abdullahi resigned as president in Dec. 2008 following a bitter power struggle with Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein.

Early Life

Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was born on 15 Dec. 1934 in Galcacyo in the Mudug province of Italian Somalia. He studied in Italy and the Soviet Union and, following the country's independence in June 1960, joined the Somali National Army (SNA). He achieved the rank of colonel but refused to take part in the coup led by Siad Barre in Oct. 1969. Ahmed was jailed but released in the early 1970s and appointed manager of a state agency. He was reinstated as a commander in 1977 when the SNA attempted to 'liberate' the ethnically-Somali region of Ogaden in Ethiopia.

The following year, with the support of several members of his Majerteen clan, Ahmed staged an unsuccessful coup and fled to Kenya. Moving to Ethiopia in 1979, he formed the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) to oppose Siad Barre. Ahmed became embroiled in arguments with the Ethiopian leader, Haile Mengistu, and was jailed, released only in 1991 when the dictator's regime fell.

Siad Barre was driven out of Mogadishu, the Somali capital, on 27 Jan. 1991 by the United Somali Congress militia. Somalia slid into anarchy, divided into a dozen regions controlled by warlords. Ahmed focused his political ambitions in Puntland and was elected president of the relatively peaceful province in July 1998. Having failed to extend his term of office, which expired on 1 July 2001, he fought for control of the country. In the election for the transitional presidency of Somalia, held in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, on 10 Oct. 2004, he received 189 out of 268 votes.

Career Peak

Ahmed promised to rebuild his war-ravaged country and asked for international assistance. The transitional government began returning to Somalia in June 2005 but arguments broke out over its location, with Ahmed favouring Jowhar while other members supported a return to Mogadishu. The parliament met for the first time in Feb. 2006 at a compromise location, Baidoa in central Somalia.

The fragile authority of the transitional government was further undermined in mid-2006 by the rise of a rival Islamist administration whose militias seized control of Mogadishu and much of the south of the country from clan warlords who had held sway since the fall of Siad Barre. A political stand-off ensued between the Islamists and Ahmed's government, which turned to neighbouring Ethiopia to guarantee its security. In Dec. government troops backed by Ethiopian forces launched an offensive against the Islamist militias who retreated in Jan. 2007. Ahmed entered Mogadishu in late Dec. 2006 for the first time since taking office in 2004 to assume nominal authority over the country. However, despite the deployment of an African Union peacekeeping force from March 2007, fierce fighting between Islamist insurgents and Ethiopian-backed government forces ignited again throughout the year, particularly in Mogadishu, fuelling a refugee exodus and humanitarian crisis. Ahmed's strained relationship with Prime Minister Ali Muhammad Ghedi meanwhile resulted in the latter's resignation in Oct. 2007 and his replacement in Nov. by Nur Hassan Hussein. The president's relationship with the new prime minister was similarly turbulent and Ahmed resigned in Dec. 2008 after his attempt to sack Hussein was dismissed as unconstitutional by parliament.

Al Bakr, Ahmad (Iraq)

Introduction

Following the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba'ath) Party coup of 17 July 1968, Ahmad Al Bakr was the political leader of Iraq and commander-in-chief of the armed forces until his resignation in July 1979. He was also minister of defence from 1973–77.

Early Life

Al Bakr was born in Tikrit in 1914. He pursued a military career initially, serving in the army until 1958 when he was forced to retire for revolutionary activities as a member of the Ba'ath. Following the Feb. 1963 coup against Gen. Qassim, Al Bakr served briefly as Prime Minister and then Vice-President until Jan. 1964.

Career Peak

He took power as President, Prime Minister, and as Chairman of the newly-established Revolutionary Command Council following the Ba'ath coup in July 1968, thereafter governing in concert with his increasingly influential deputy, Saddam Hussein. In 1969 he was promoted to the military rank of Field Marshal. With a militant, nationalist background in the Ba'ath Party, he maintained total opposition while in office to any compromise with Israel in the Middle East conflict. Good relations with the Soviet Union were meanwhile reinforced by a 15-year friendship treaty in 1972. Al Bakr also oversaw a short-lived improvement in relations with Iran by agreeing a treaty in 1975 to settle the longstanding disputes over territorial sovereignty of the Shatt al-Arab waterway and Iranian aid to Kurdish rebels in Iraq. The later Iraqi abrogation of this agreement by Saddam Hussein sparked the Iran–Iraq war in Sept. 1980. On 16 July 1979 Al Bakr announced his retirement, reportedly because of declining health having earlier suffered a heart attack. Power was transferred peacefully to Saddam Hussein.

Later Life

Al Bakr died on 4 Oct. 1982 in Baghdad.

Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Jabar (Kuwait)

Introduction

Shaikh Jaber succeeded Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah as Amir of Kuwait on the latter's death on 31 Dec. 1977. External events dominated his reign, in particular the Iran–Iraq War of 1980–88 and the Iraqi invasion and ensuing Gulf War in 1990–91. Despite the existence of a partially elected parliamentary assembly, Jabar maintained the absolute authority of the monarchy. He held the post of Amir until his death in Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Shaikh Jaber was born in 1928, the eldest son of Shaikh Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah, under whose regency oil had first been discovered in Kuwait in the 1930s. His mother was a royal cousin. He was educated in local private schools and by palace tutors before his first public appointment in 1949 as Chief of Public Security in the oilfields of Ahmadi governate. In 1959 he became head of the Department of Finance and Economy, which was renamed the Ministry of Finance in 1962 following Kuwaiti independence the previous year. He was appointed Crown Prince in May 1966, serving also as Prime Minister until his accession as Amir in 1977.

Career Peak

In 1980 Shaikh Jaber decreed the restoration of the National Assembly that his predecessor had dissolved in 1976, briefly raising expectations of greater democratization. Subsequently, his regime was damaged by the 1982 collapse of the Souk el-Manakh unofficial stock market and the political violence associated with the Iran-Iraq conflict that spilled over into the sikaikdom. Among the terrorist attacks by militant Shia Muslims was an assassination attempt on the Amir in May 1985. In July 1986 Jaber dissolved the National Assembly, imposed stricter press censorship, and declared that he would rule by decree. Pro-democracy pressure led to fresh elections for a new National Council in June 1990, but less than 2 months later the country was occupied by Iraqi forces. The invasion placed Kuwait under direct foreign rule for the first time in its history. Although sovereignty was restored in Feb. 1991, following the Gulf War, the Amir was criticised for spending the period of occupation abroad and delaying his return to Kuwait after the war ended. The National Assembly was reconstituted, again with limited suffrage, in Oct. 1992, but Shaikh Jaber and the royal family remained in control. The Amir reportedly suffered a brain haemorrhage in Sept. 2001.

In July 2003, following elections to the National Assembly, the Amir appointed his brother, the former foreign minister, Shaikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah as prime minister. This was the first time since independence that the premiership had not been held by the heir to the throne. In a further step towards democratization, and following on from the Amir's 1999 decree on women's suffrage, the National Assembly passed legislation in May 2005 granting women the right to vote and to run for office beginning in 2007.

Shaikh Jabar al-Ahmed al-Jabar al-Sabah died in Jan. 2006 after an extended period of ill health. Kuwait declared 40 days of mourning. Crown prince Shaikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah was appointed by the cabinet to succeed him. However, 9 days later Kuwaiti parliament voted 65-0 to oust the new Amir on health grounds. He was replaced by his cousin, prime minister Shaikh Sabah.

Al-Assad, Hafez (Syria)

Introduction

Hafez al-Assad, soldier and Ba'athist politician, came to power in Syria in 1970 after staging a successful coup while serving as defence minister. Having become Prime Minister, he was then sworn in as President in March 1971. He was reappointed for a fifth 7-year presidential term in 1999 but died in June 2000 when he was succeeded by his son Bashar. Assad is credited with bringing political stability to Syria, albeit through repression, and increasing his country's influence in the Arab world.

Early Life

Born on 6 Oct. 1930 in Qardaha, Lattakia district, Assad belonged to the minority Alawi Islamic sect. As a student activist, he was active against French colonial rule. Independence came in 1946, the year he joined the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba'ath) Party. In 1952 Assad entered the Military Academy at Homs, graduating in 1955 as a fighter pilot. His later military training included a period in the former Soviet Union, with which he was to maintain close political and military links. During Syria's brief federation with Egypt (as the United Arab Republic from 1958-61) Assad served in the air force in Cairo. He was transferred to a civilian post following Syria's secession from the federation after a new government took power in a coup in Sept. 1961. With other officers, he formed an underground military committee that plotted the Ba'athist takeover in March 1963. Factional conflict within the Ba'ath Party led to a further coup in Feb. 1966 by nationalist and military elements (including Assad) against the progressive, mainly civilian politicians. As minister of defence and air force commander, Assad was unable to prevent Syria's territorial loss of the Golan Heights during the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War of June 1967. Implacable hostility to Israel defined his political career from that time.

Career Peak

On 12 Nov. 1970 Assad took full control in the fifth coup attempt in Syria in a decade, arresting his chief rival (and the effective leader) Salah al-Jadid, and other members of the government. Once in power, he launched his 'corrective movement' aimed at stemming corruption in government and bringing Syria back into the Arab political mainstream. He became Prime Minister and then, following a referendum, President in March 1971. In Aug. 1971 the Syrian regional command of the Ba'ath Party elected Assad as secretary-general. A new constitution in 1973 confirmed the Ba'ath Party as 'the leading party in the state and society'. It also became the dominant force within the National Progressive Front, a broad umbrella grouping of the country's legal parties, formed in 1972.

With Soviet assistance, Assad sought to strengthen the Syrian military. He also courted wider domestic support by promoting economic development (under state control), land reform measures and the expansion of education. He would not, however, tolerate any challenge to his rule. Political and religious opposition, principally from within the Sunni Muslim majority population, was suppressed — most obviously in his military crackdown against a rebellion by the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood in Hama in 1982, which resulted in a shattered city and thousands of deaths.

In 1983 Assad suffered a heart attack. His brother and rival, Rifaat, used troops under his control to try to seize power in the early months of 1984, but Assad recovered sufficiently to regain control. Although stripped of any power base, Rifaat retained his nominal position as a vice president until his dismissal and exile in 1998.

Assad's foreign policy was founded on Arab nationalism, independence from foreign (particularly Western) influences, and opposition to Israel. His relations with other Middle Eastern states varied, periodic disputes erupting with Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and the more conservative Arab governments. A surprise Syrian-Egyptian offensive against Israel in Oct. 1973 (to recover territories lost in 1967 and in support of the Palestinian cause) proved unsuccessful despite initial military successes. In 1982, when Israel invaded and occupied Lebanon, Syrian forces were again repulsed. Although throughout his presidency Assad declared his readiness to conclude a peace agreement with Israel, he maintained his demand right up to his death that all occupied Syrian territory be returned. He also resented President Sadat of Egypt, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and King Hussein of Jordan for abandoning the common Arab nationalist front by signing their own bilateral peace agreements with Israel.

Assad's military intervention in the Lebanese civil war in 1976 led eventually to Syrian hegemony over its neighbour (despite further clashes with Israeli forces). He also established close links with Iran following the 1979 Islamic Revolution, a stance condemned by some Arab regimes during the war between Iraq and Iran in the 1980s. His alliance with Iran was partly for reasons of longstanding rivalry with the Iraqi wing of the Ba'ath Party and personal enmity towards Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. Assad contributed Syrian troops to the US-led coalition that drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait following Saddam's invasion and occupation in Aug. 1990. This co-operation led to better relations with Western governments which had previously imposed diplomatic and other sanctions and accused Syria of sponsoring terrorism.

Re-elected overwhelmingly as President in Feb. 1999 (and similarly returned in 1978, 1985 and 1992), Assad died of a heart attack on 10 June 2000 in Damascus.

Alemán Lacayo, Arnoldo (Nicaragua)

Introduction

A former mayor of Managua, Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo was president of Nicaragua from 1996-2000, representing the right-wing Alianza Liberal (Liberal Alliance; AL) party. An opponent of the Sandinistas, Alemán defeated Ortega to become president of Nicaragua from 1996-2000. Known as *El Gordo* ('The Fat Man'. for his physical and financial appetite, he was convicted on corruption and theft charges in 2003.

Early Life

Born on 23 Jan. 1946, Alemán studied law at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua in Managua, graduating in 1967. In 1986 while he was president of the National Association of Coffee Producers in Managua, he was imprisoned by the Sandinista government for counter-revolutionary activity. On his release he was banned from leaving the country for 3 years and put under surveillance.

Alemán was mayor of Managua between 1990–96 when he attempted to renovate the city using international aid, although results were limited. Much of the city centre destroyed in the 1972 earthquake had not been rebuilt. Alemán also ordered many of the murals depicting the revolution on public buildings to be painted over. During this time Alemán became involved with the conservative Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (Constitutional Liberal Party; PLC). In Dec. 1994 he formed the AL to support his 1996 presidential campaign. The party is an alliance of various liberal parties including the Partido Liberal Nacionalista, led by Alemán. On 20 Oct. 1996 he stood for election along with 25 other candidates. His main rival was the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (Sandinista National Liberation Front; FSLN) leader Daniel Ortega Saavedra. Alemán won with 51% of votes to Ortega's 38%.

Career Peak

On his election Alemán pledged to fight poverty and unemployment and promote economic growth, familiar promises in a country that is currently the poorest in the Western hemisphere. The main obstacle was Nicaragua's enormous debt. In 1995 Nicaragua's per capita GDP was US\$390, while per capita debt equalled US\$2100. High inflation, which at one time reached four figures, was also a problem. Alemán's other aims were to boost agriculture, encourage small producers, return to private ownership property appropriated by the Sandinista Marxist regime and reform the complex bureaucracy left over from the same era. A programme agreed with the IMF in Feb. 1998 underlined Alemán's aim to implement free market policies. By 1999 inflation had dropped to 12%, but unemployment was up to 70% in some areas. Any improvements made by the Alemán government were set back by Hurricane Mitch. In Oct. 1998 the hurricane devastated Central America and the Caribbean. In Nicaragua alone 2,447 people were killed and 20% of the population were left homeless. 80% of crops were destroyed and the total damage was estimated at US\$1bn. Alemán came under severe criticism for his handling of the crisis, including delays in distributing foreign aid and his refusal to accept the help of Cuban doctors, claiming it would cause more chaos.

Alemán came under pressure to explain a large increase in his bank account whilst Mayor of Managua. In Jan. 2000, Alemán and Ortega profited from their respective parties' majority in the assembly to arrange a pact limiting other parties' chances for the 2000 municipal elections and protecting Alemán's and Ortega's personal interests (Ortega himself faced charges of sexual abuse of his stepdaughter). As a consequence, public support plummeted and Nicaragua failed to qualify for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. In the Nov. 2000 municipal elections the FSLN won many key seats, including Managua. Despite winning in over 90 towns, the AL lost the major city of Granada to the Partido Conservador de Nicaragua, among others, underlining the general swing away from Alemán's populist government. In a close fought election in Nov. 2001 Alemán's vice president, PLC representative Enrique Bolaños Geyer, beat the FSLN candidate Ortega by 56.3% of votes to 42.3%.

Later Life

The congressional immunity that Alemán had enjoyed since 2000 was revoked in Sept. 2002 following an historic vote by Nicaragua's parliament. This paved the way for him to face long-standing accusations of corruption when in office and in Dec. 2002 he was formally charged with the theft of US\$100m. of state funds. The charges were levelled by his successor and former vice-president, Bolaños, who vowed to fight corruption when he took office in 2001. Alemán denied the charges but his assets were frozen. After a period of house-arrest owing to ill-health, he was convicted of electoral crimes, money-laundering, fraud and embezzlement in Dec. 2003, sentenced to 20 years and fined US\$10m.

Alfonsín, Raúl (Argentina)

Introduction

Raúl Ricardo Alfonsín was president of Argentina between 1983–89 representing the centrist Unión Cívica Radical (Radical Civic Union; UCR). He was democratically elected after 7 years of military rule. Despite reforming the military and promoting human rights, Alfonsín exacerbated the precarious economic situation he had inherited.

Early Life

Alfonsín was born on 13 March 1927 in Chascomús, Buenos Aires province. After a military academy schooling, he studied law at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, graduating in 1950. Following 10 years of work in regional politics, Alfonsín was elected to UCR president Arturo Umberto Illia's parliament in 1963. In 1966 a military coup deposed Illia and his team. In 1973 Alfonsín stood as the UCR candidate in the presidential elections, but was defeated by the Peronist Frente Justicialista de Liberación candidate Héctor Cámpora.

During the 'Dirty War' (1976–83), Alfonsín was a vocal critic of the repressive military regime. He wrote his book *La cuestión Argentina* in response to human rights abuses and cofounded the Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights).

Career Peak

In the democratic presidential elections of 1983, the UCR's main rival was the Peronist Partido Justicialista (Justicialist Party; PJ). Alfonsín's campaign was aided when the PJ candidate for Buenos Aires, Herminio Iglesias, burnt a coffin wrapped in the UCR flag. Alfonsín won with 52% of votes compared to Italo Lúdes' 40%.

On his election Alfonsín pledged to uphold democracy and stabilize Argentina after decades of coup and counter coup. He was faced with a dire economy left over from 8 years of military rule. High inflation and national debt were coupled with military discontent and labour disputes. After negotiations with the IMF, Alfonsín introduced his Plan Austral in 1985 with limited success. Despite failing to resolve Argentina's economic problems, Alfonsín was instrumental in reforming the military and appeasing human rights supporters. In addition to cuts in the military budget and staffing, trials in 1985–86 resulted in the imprisonment of key military leaders responsible for human rights abuses during the 'Dirty War'. But the military forced Alfonsín to abandon trying lower ranked military and police officers.

By 1989 the economy was in a disastrous state. Amid severe recession and hyperinflation Alfonsín was forced to give way to incoming president Carlos Menem 5 months early.

Later Life

Alfonsín died on 31 March 2009.

Al-Gaddafi, Muammar Abu Minyar (Libya)

Introduction

Muammar Gaddafi took power in a military coup against the monarchy in 1969, espousing radical Arab nationalism and Islamic socialist policies. His revolutionary fervour frequently brought him into conflict with the Western powers, which held him responsible for acts of international terrorism. However, in the first decade of the twenty-first century there were improvements in diplomatic and business relations after Gaddafi settled the Lockerbie bombing claims and agreed to stop developing weapons of mass destruction. Domestic opposition to his rule grew, however, and in early 2011 a popular

movement emerged calling for him to step down. In Aug. 2011 insurgents seized control of the capital and installed an interim administration. Gaddafi remained in hiding until Oct. 2011 when he was captured by National Transitional Council forces and killed.

Early Life

Born into a Bedouin family near Sirte in June 1942, Gaddafi's education was strongly religious and he remains a devout and austere Muslim. He was also influenced in his early life by the Arab nationalist ideology of President Nasser and the Egyptian revolution. In 1965 Gaddafi graduated from the Royal Libyan Military Academy in Benghazi. As he and other officers of like mind rose through the ranks, their radicalism was fuelled by the humiliating defeat of Arab forces by Israel in the Six Day War of 1967. Gaddafi and others in a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) deposed King Idris on 1 Sept. 1969 in a bloodless coup.

Career Peak

The RCC, with Gaddafi as chairman, instigated a programme of revolutionary reform. British and US military bases in Libya were closed in 1970, foreign-owned oil companies were nationalized and extended welfare provision was funded from oil export revenues. Assuming increasingly dictatorial powers, Gaddafi pursued wider Arab unity, initiating a series of unsuccessful schemes for merging Libya with other Arab countries (including Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Chad, Morocco and Algeria), while maintaining implacable opposition to Israel. His Islamic socialist ideology was published in *The Green Book*, and in 1977 he promulgated a new constitution. This established the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which vested power in the masses through the General People's Congress (GPC). In 1979 Gaddafi relinquished his formal posts in the administration but remained Libya's undisputed leader.

With a reputation in international circles for erratic and unpredictable moves, Gaddafi mobilized Libya's oil wealth in support of revolutionary and terrorist groups around the world, intervening militarily in neighbouring states, particularly Chad. Accusing Gaddafi of sponsoring terrorism, the USA and UK bombed Tripoli and Benghazi in April 1986 in a reprisal air operation. In 1992 United Nations sanctions were imposed on Libya to force the extradition of two Libyan nationals implicated in an aircraft bombing atrocity over Lockerbie in Scotland in Dec. 1988. Gaddafi eventually relented and in 1999 surrendered the two principal suspects for trial in the Netherlands. One of the accused was convicted and sentenced in 2001. In 2003 Libya signed an agreement to compensate families of the Lockerbie bombing victims. Once the Libyan leader formally took responsibility for the atrocity, the UN Security Council voted to lift sanctions. In March 2004 the UK prime minister, Tony Blair, met with Gaddafi following the latter's promise to abandon programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction and to allow weapons inspectors into Libya. Diplomatic links with the USA were restored in May 2006.

In 2006 his unpredictable regime again came under international scrutiny as Libyan courts upheld death sentences on six foreign medical workers charged controversially with infecting hundreds of Libyan children with AIDS. However, the sentences were later commuted to imprisonment before the detainees were freed in July 2007 following diplomatic intervention by the European Union.

Libya's international rehabilitation progressed further in 2008 as the country took over the 1 month rotating presidency of the UN Security Council in Jan. and the US Secretary of State made the highest-level US visit to Libya since 1953 in Sept. In Feb. 2009 Gaddafi was elected to chair of the African Union for the year and in June made his first state visit to Italy.

In Aug. 2009 Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi, a Libyan national convicted in 2001 for the Lockerbie bombing, was released from prison in Scotland on compassionate grounds (he was suffering from a seemingly terminal illness). However, the decision was denounced by the US government and his triumphal return to Libya provoked outrage among the families of the victims of the atrocity.

In Feb.–March 2011 an eruption of popular opposition to autocratic governments across the Arab world led to an uprising against Gaddafi's long-standing regime, particularly in the east of the country. Gaddafi mobilized his supporters to resist the insurrection, not only incurring international condemnation over the level of violence but also prompting an exodus of foreign workers from the country as the threat of civil war grew. In March the UN, with Arab League backing, authorized a no-fly zone over Libya and permitted air strikes if deemed necessary to protect civilians. In May the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Gaddafi in respect of

'widespread and systematic attacks' on civilians. In Aug. rebel forces took Tripoli. The rebel-led National Transitional Council became the de facto government, although Gaddafi remained at large and refused to cede power. In Sept. a fresh assault on Gaddafi's hometown of Sirte was launched. Gaddafi was found hiding in a drainage pipe by National Transitional Council troops on 20 Oct. and killed. Acting Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril, who announced the death, said he had been killed in a crossfire between Gaddafi loyalists and fighters from the transitional authorities, although the exact circumstances were unclear. He died aged 69, having ruled Libya for 42 years.

Al-Hariri, Rafiq (Lebanon)

Introduction

A Sunni Muslim and billionaire businessman, Rafiq al-Hariri took office as prime minister for a second time in Oct. 2000, having previously served as premier and minister of finance from 1992–98. He has been credited with the rebuilding of Beirut during the 1990s. He resigned in 2004.

Early Life

Al-Hariri was born in Sidon on 1 Nov. 1944. Having graduated from the Arab University of Beirut, he emigrated to Saudi Arabia in 1965, to work as a teacher. He then became a successful entrepreneur, particularly in engineering and construction, with an international reputation. Using his wealth, he set up the Hariri Foundation, a philanthropic organization supporting social and educational development projects. His political career started in 1983–84 when he took part in conferences in Lausanne and Geneva in Switzerland aiming to end the conflict in Lebanon. In 1989 he was involved in the successful negotiations leading to the Taif Accord for national conciliation, which was voted into the constitution of the Lebanese second republic the following year.

Career Peak

In Oct. 1992 al-Hariri became prime minister following the first elections to the National Assembly (adapted to reflect the sectarian balance) since 1972. He made the rehabilitation of the country's infrastructure, particularly in Beirut, a government priority, implementing a multi-billion dollar reconstruction programme but incurring a high level of public debt at the same time. He continued in office following parliamentary elections in 1996, but stood down in Dec. 1998 amid differences with President Lahoud and allegations of government corruption. Voter dissatisfaction with the government of his successor was reflected in the National Assembly elections of Aug.–Sept. 2000, and Hariri was reappointed prime minister on 23 Oct. 2000. However, he resigned on 20 Oct. 2004 following differences over the extension to President Lahoud's period in office. Al-Hariri was killed in a car bomb attack in Beirut on 14 Feb. 2005.

Al-Hasi, Omar (Libya)

Introduction

On 25 Aug. 2014 the Islamist-dominated former General National Congress (GNC) appointed Omar al-Hasi as prime minister. This direct challenge to the elected House of Representatives left Libya with two rival governments, with al-Hasi's administration unrecognized by the wider international community but in control of large swathes of the country.

Early Life

Omar al-Hasi was a lecturer of political science at the University of Benghazi before he entered politics. A candidate for the premiership at the intended election of 29 April 2014, which was postponed when gunman stormed

parliament, he was defeated by Ahmed Maiteeq in the rescheduled vote on 5 May.

In the ensuing political deadlock and amid fighting for control of the capital, Tripoli, the outgoing GNC reconvened with the attendance of 94 politicians, the minimum required for a recall of parliament. It appointed al-Hasi as premier and mandated him to form a 'salvation government'.

Career Peak

Against a backdrop of questions over its legitimacy, al-Hasi's administration has lacked widespread recognition by the international community, which has favoured the democratically-elected government based in Tobruk. In Nov. 2014 al-Hasi argued for new elections, insisting that an administration led by himself and the GNC could restore stability. He warned the Tobruk-based government that any attempt on its part to assert control over the oil industry would escalate the political conflict and could force the break-up of the country.

Alia, Ramiz (Albania)

Introduction

Ramiz Alia was President of Albania between 1982–92 but it was not until 1985, when his mentor Enver Hoxha died and he became leader of the Party of Labour, that he assumed full power. Though Hoxha's chosen successor, he was a more pragmatic leader and pursued closer links with the outside world in an effort to halt Albania's ever-worsening economic decline. He re-established links with the USA, USSR and China and relaxed some of the most unpopular social and political restrictions. It was too little, however, to satisfy the growing demands for reform from within Albania and in 1992 his party was defeated at the first democratic elections in decades.

Early Life

Alia was born on 18 Oct. 1925 in Shkodër, Albania to a Muslim family who were originally from Kosovo. He was educated at a French school in Tirana. He joined the Albanian Communist Party (which became the Party of Labour in 1948) during World War II, and was active in its associated Army of National Liberation. Following the war he worked with the Party's youth movement and in 1949 was elected to the Party's Central Committee. He spent a year in the Soviet Union to receive training during the mid-1950s and returned to Albania to hold the post of Minister of Education between 1955–58. During this period he also became an alternate member of the Politburo and was called onto the Party's Secretariat where he was put in charge of the Propaganda and Agitation Department.

Under Hoxha, Alia was heavily involved in criticizing Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and China before the respective breaks with these countries and also played a leading role in enforcing Hoxha's will upon the Albanian people. Following Hoxha's political manoeuvring in 1981 and 1982, during which Prime Minister Mehmet Shehu and a number of his supporters died, he was made head of Parliament. Hoxha remained as the Party of Labour's First Secretary, but he gradually moved away from the political scene and died in 1985. Alia replaced him as head of the Party and was the country's undisputed leader.

Career Peak

No longer shackled by Hoxha's disastrous insistence on isolation, Alia began to re-establish ties with foreign partners. By the late 1980s there was contact between Albania and China, diplomatic relations with West Germany were re-instated in 1987, with the Soviet Union in 1990 (though the country had officially opposed Gorbachev's move towards reform) and with the USA the following year. Relations with Italy and Greece were also improved. International economic aid was slow in coming because Hoxha's 1976 constitution prohibited the acceptance of outside help. However, the country did benefit economically following its move away from isolationism.

Albania's industrial base was short on technology but began to improve under Alia via foreign expertise and resources. Nonetheless goods and services often had to be obtained by barter. Some free-market mechanisms were introduced along with social reforms including greater freedom of movement,

relaxation in restrictions of religious practice and a brake on the activities of the feared secret police.

Calls for reform continued to grow louder. In late 1990 the government was forced to permit other political parties. In a free election in March 1991 Alia's party won convincingly and, though Alia lost his own seat, he was re-appointed President. The government collapsed in June and renamed itself the Socialist Party. Popular protests continued, a general strike was threatened and new elections were called for March 1992 in which the Socialists were defeated by a Democrat-led opposition. Alia subsequently resigned as president.

Later Life

In Sept. 1992 Alia and a number of former allies were arrested on charges of corruption and in 1994 he was sentenced to 9 years imprisonment. He was released during an amnesty but was re-arrested on different charges before fleeing to Sweden in early 1997. Charges against him were dropped in Oct. 1997 and he returned to Albania the following Dec. Alia died of lung problems on 6 Oct. 2011 aged 85.

Aliyev, Heydar (Azerbaijan)

Introduction

Heydar Aliyev was head of the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan from 1969–82 and deputy prime minister of the USSR from 1982–87. After a high-profile Soviet career he emerged as an Azeri nationalist and in 1993 became president of independent Azerbaijan. Confronted by the restructuring problems of a former Soviet state, his tenure was overshadowed by conflict with the separatist Nagorno-Karabakh region. Aliyev encouraged a cult of personality, and was reluctant to give free reign to opposition parties. His son, Ilham, succeeded him in dynastic fashion in 2003 shortly before his death.

Early Life

Heydar Alirza oglu Aliyev was born in the autonomous state of Nakhichevan on 10 May 1923. Leaving school at 16, he studied architecture at the Azerbaijan State University. After a period in the local government of Nakhichevan and study at the Soviet Ministry of State Security Academy in Leningrad, he joined the KGB, becoming a general in 1960 and serving as chairman from 1967–69. Closely connected to Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, he became first secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party and leader of the Republic from 1969–82. He then returned to Moscow where he won full membership of the Politburo and served as first deputy prime minister of the USSR until 1987. An opponent of Mikhail Gorbachev and his foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, he left office citing ill health and the death of his wife, Zarife. After initial restrictions on his movement, he returned to Azerbaijan and was elected to the Nakhichevan legislature in 1990, becoming its chairman and effective leader of the autonomous state.

Amid deteriorating Soviet–Azerbaijani relations, Aliyev vociferously denounced the Soviet suppression of a pro-independence rally in Baku in 1990. Independent Azerbaijan was initially led by Ayaz Mutalibov, whose brief tenure was dominated by defeat and atrocities in Nagorno-Karabakh. Abulfaz Elchibey, the leader of the dissident Popular Front, became Azerbaijan's democratically elected president in June 1992. The country was in economic chaos and the government fared badly in the war with Nagorno-Karabakh, the breakaway region with a large ethnic Armenian population. Amid increasing social tension Elchibey went into exile and Aliyev was invited to Baku to mediate. Utilizing his popular image as a nationalist, he assumed the presidency in June 1993.

Career Peak

Aliyev was confirmed as president in the elections of Oct. 1993. He appointed as prime minister Col. Suret Huseynov, the Karabakh commander who had instigated the uprising against Elchibey. Huseynov was ejected in Oct. 1994 on grounds of plotting to usurp Aliyev. Fleeing to Russia, he was extradited and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1999 for a range of crimes including treason and gun-running.

Aliyev secured re-election in Oct. 1998 in elections criticized by foreign and domestic observers. Faced with restructuring the country's weak economy, he set about attracting Western investment and oversaw several large deals with oil companies eager to exploit Azerbaijan's reserves. The economy, however, remained vulnerable.

Russia brokered a peace deal between Aliyev's government and Nagorno-Karabakh in 1994 after the territory was effectively lost to Azeri control but further fighting subsequently broke out. Aliyev's relations with Russia were turbulent. In 1998 he accused the Russian government of destabilizing the Caucasus and of fuelling the Karabakh conflict by providing Armenia with weapons including missile systems.

Close relations with the US were built on assistance in energy projects such as the oil pipeline to Ceyhan on the Turkish coast. Aliyev courted Turkey, emphasizing cultural affinities and economic ties, despite revelations that he had supported the Kurdish PKK while leading Azerbaijan in the 1970s. The pipeline was agreed with Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit in Dec. 1999.

In 1999 Aliyev underwent major heart surgery, focusing attention on the selection of a successor. In April 2003 questions over his health and re-election aspirations revived after Aliyev collapsed at a military ceremony broadcast live on television. His son, İlham, the head of the national oil company and deputy leader of the New Azerbaijan Party, was approved as prime minister by parliament on 4 Aug. 2003, despite a boycott by the New Equality Party, one of the principal opposition parties. A constitutional amendment passed in 2002 allowed the prime minister to assume the powers of the president in case of incapacity—a scenario made increasingly likely in view of the president's absence for medical treatment abroad. In Oct. Heydar Aliyev withdrew his candidacy, allowing İlham to win the presidential elections. İlham Aliyev took office on 31 Oct. 2003.

Heydar Aliyev died of heart disease on 12 Dec. 2003 in Cleveland, USA.

Al-Jaafari, Ibrahim (Iraq)

Introduction

When he was sworn in as interim prime minister on 3 May 2005, Ibrahim al-Jaafari became Iraq's first democratically elected leader. A Shia Muslim and a long-time member of the conservative al-Dawa party, al-Jaafari was an exile in Iran and the UK for 23 years, and he became a powerful and vocal critic of Saddam Hussein's regime. He has argued for a new international 'Marshall Plan' for Iraq and the broader Middle East: 'Marshall repaired the decaying infrastructure of Germany after 6 years of war and 12 years of Nazi rule. In Iraq we have had nearly 40 years of fascist rule and have been at war for half that time'. In April 2006 al-Jaafari was succeeded by Nouri al-Maliki.

Early Life

Ibrahim al-Ashaiqir al-Jaafari was born in Karbala, south of Baghdad, in 1947. He studied medicine at the University of Mosul, where he joined al-Dawa, a conservative Shia Muslim group. After graduating in 1974, al-Jaafari practised medicine while becoming actively involved in al-Dawa and its opposition to the secular politics of the ruling Ba'ath party. In 1980, the year after Saddam Hussein took control of the Ba'ath party and began a violent crackdown on the al-Dawa group, al-Jaafari fled to Iran. He remained there until 1989, but has denied allegations that he was closely linked to Iran's ruling clerics. He studied Shia theology at the holy city of Qom, and subsequently organized resistance against Saddam.

In the early 1980s, al-Dawa carried out several suicide bombings in Baghdad and there was speculation that al-Jaafari was behind an attempted assassination of the then Iraqi-allied Kuwaiti amir. However, he has denied involvement. Having moved to London in 1990, al-Jaafari became the al-Dawa spokesperson in the UK and a key activist in the broader anti-Saddam movement. Al-Dawa claimed responsibility for an assassination attempt on Saddam's eldest son, Uday, in 1996.

Following the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the fall of Saddam, al-Jaafari returned to his homeland. In July 2003 he was selected as a member of the US-backed Iraqi Governing Council and was the first to take the rotating chairmanship (and interim presidency) a month later.

In June 2004, after the USA handed over sovereignty of Iraq to an interim administration led by Dr Ayad al-Alawi, al-Jaafari was selected to be one of the government's two vice-presidents. He later brought al-Dawa into a coalition of Shia parties known as the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA). The coalition was endorsed by Iranian-born Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most influential Shia cleric, and it won a majority (140 of the parliament's 275 seats) in the Iraqi elections of 30 Jan. 2005. When Ahmed Chalabi dropped out of the race to become the prime minister, al-Jaafari became the UIA's undisputed candidate. On 7 April 2005 a presidential council of Iraq's new president, Jalal Talabani and his deputies, Ghazi al-Yawer and Adil Abdel-Mahdi, appointed al-Jaafari prime minister of Iraq.

Career Peak

As prime minister al-Jaafari was at the heart of negotiations to form Iraq's government. Finally, on 28 April 2005, after lengthy arguments against a backdrop of sustained violence, he secured parliamentary approval for his list of ministers. The majority of the 36 cabinet jobs went to Shias (who form about 60% of the population), although several key positions were also offered to Kurds and Sunni Arabs—the country's two largest minority groups. Initially, al-Jaafari also served as the defence minister, although the position was ceded to Saadoun al-Duleimi (a Sunni) in May 2005.

The new administration faced many daunting challenges, the most pressing being the continuing insurgency and the prevention of full-scale civil war. 'I think 2 years will be more than enough to establish security in our country,' al-Jaafari told a news conference, adding that building up Iraq's own security forces, controlling its borders and pushing ahead with the political process would all play a part. The administration drafted a new constitution, although there were deep divisions over fundamental matters such as the role of Islam in Iraqi law and the extent of federalism before its approval in a national referendum in Oct. 2005. Al-Jaafari told the press that Islam should be the official religion of Iraq 'and one of the main sources for legislation' but glossed over his party's official position, which calls for the Islamization of Iraqi society, including the implementation of Sharia law.

Following elections in 2005 that re-instated Jalal Talabani as president, al-Jaafari was replaced by Nouri al-Maliki in April 2006.

Allawi, Iyad (Iraq)

Introduction

The British-trained neurologist and former Ba'ath party member Iyad Allawi returned to Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in April 2003. He was chosen by the Iraqi Governing Council to be the prime minister of the US-backed Iraq interim government from 1 July 2004—from the United States' handover of sovereignty—until national elections, scheduled for early 2005.

Early Life

Iyad Allawi was born in Baghdad in 1945 to a prominent Shia merchant family; his grandfather helped to negotiate Iraq's independence from Britain, and his father was an MP. He studied medicine at the University of Baghdad in the mid to late 1960s, and it was there that he first met Saddam Hussein. At this time, Allawi joined the leftist, secular Ba'ath party whose members had dominated Iraq's governing council since 1963, following a military coup that was led by Colonel Abd al-Salam Aref. Allawi moved to Beirut in 1971, and then travelled to Britain, where he continued to study medicine, specializing in neurology at the University of London. He became president of the Iraqi Student Union in Europe, and it has been alleged that he continued to serve the Ba'ath party until he resigned in 1975. The regime in Iraq dealt harshly with dissenters, and Allawi came under pressure from Saddam, by then deputy to president Ahmad Al-Bakr, to rejoin the Ba'ath party. Saddam is believed to have been behind a brutal attack on Allawi at his home near London in Jan. 1978. Allawi survived, but he was badly injured and spent many months in hospital. His recovery in 1979 and subsequent graduation with a PhD in medicine coincided with Saddam's ascension to the presidency in Iraq. Throughout the 1980s, as war raged between Iraq and neighbouring Iran, Allawi built up an opposition network, with the aim of overthrowing

Saddam. He travelled extensively in the Middle East, holding clandestine meetings with other exiled Iraqis, and cultivating links with disaffected soldiers who remained in Iraq.

In Dec. 1990, in the aftermath of the first Gulf War and Saddam's retreat from Kuwait, Allawi and Salih Omar Ali Al-Tikriti launched the Iraqi National Accord (INA) with the backing of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the British intelligence agency (MI6), as well as the administrations of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Both Allawi and Ahmed Chalabi (married to Allawi's sister) were recruited by the CIA and provided them with intelligence. The INA developed a plot to topple Saddam in a military coup in 1996, but it ended in failure, when the supposedly CIA-backed generals failed to lead their tanks against Saddam. Saddam took revenge by executing many of the coup plotters, and by seizing land owned for centuries by Allawi's family. The INA remained active, however, and Allawi gradually secured access to policymakers in Washington and London. In 2002 he channelled the report claiming that Iraq could deploy its supposed weapons of mass destruction 'within 45 min' to MI6, a claim that formed part of the British government's 'September Dossier' that argued for an invasion of Iraq. After the fall of Saddam in April 2003, Allawi returned to Baghdad and joined the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), holding the organization's rotating presidency during Oct. 2003. In April 2004 Allawi resigned as head of the IGC security committee over concerns about the US bombing of the city of Fallujah.

Career Peak

Chosen by the IGC to be Iraq's interim prime minister following the United States' handover of sovereignty on 28 June 2004, Allawi spelled out his determination to improve the country's security situation and prepare for national elections early in 2005. He swiftly reintroduced capital punishment, although gave assurances that he would not interfere with the forthcoming trial of Saddam. Allawi's links with the CIA, his long exile and his former membership of the Ba'ath party stoked resentment among Iraqis, and many regard him as an 'American candidate'. His decision to suspend Al-Jazeera, the Arabic TV news service, for a month in Aug. 2004 and his attempts to eliminate the radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr did little to increase his popularity.

Despite daily news of violence, insecurity and vastly reduced oil production in Iraq, Allawi painted a positive picture of his country in an address to the US House of Representatives in Sept. 2004. Allawi said his government now commanded 100,000 trained soldiers, militiamen and police, and claimed that 15 of Iraq's 18 provinces were sufficiently peaceful for immediate elections. In the remaining three, he said, there were only small numbers of insurgents.

Allawi stood for the premiership at the elections of Jan. 2005. However, his Iraqi List won only 40 seats while the Shia-dominated United Iraqi Alliance won 140 seats. In Feb. 2005 Allawi announced he was forming a new coalition to challenge the Shia alliance and in April his party joined the interim government of his successor, Ibrahim al-Jaafari. Later in the month Allawi survived an attempt on his life. He was formally succeeded by al-Jaafari on 3 May 2005.

Later Life

Despite the Iraqi List's representation in the newly formed government of 2006, Allawi did not take up a cabinet position and withdrew from mainstream Iraqi politics (in spite of his continued leadership of the coalition). In 2009, however, he founded the al-Iraqiya List—an alliance of nationalist, anti-sectarian parties—and subsequently won parliamentary elections in 2010, defeating his main rival Nouri al-Maliki's 'state of Law' coalition. Nonetheless, after months of negotiations between the main parties, it was decided that al-Maliki would remain prime minister.

In Sept. 2014 Allawi returned to public office as vice president of Iraq under newly elected president Fuad Masum. However, his term as vice-president ended in Aug. 2015 when the post was abolished at the suggestion of the al-Abadi led government.

democratically transform Chile from capitalism to democratic socialism. His efforts led Chile into economic chaos, resulting in a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte in which Allende lost his life.

Early Life

Allende was born in Valparaíso on 26 July 1908. The son of a lawyer and a solicitor he studied medicine between 1926–32 at the Universidad de Chile in Santiago where he was an active Marxist. In 1930 he was vice-president of the Chilean students' union. A year after receiving his degree, Allende was instrumental in the founding of the PS, an amalgam of six left-wing parties dedicated to Marxist-Leninist principles. In 1936 Allende was elected to the chamber of deputies representing Valparaíso and Quillota. In Pedro Aguirre Cerda's administration, he served as health minister from 1939–42. Allende was nominated Secretary General of the PS in 1942. In 1945 he was elected Senator for the southern provinces of Valdivia, Llanquihue, Chiloé, Aysén and Magallanes. From 1948–57 the PS split into two factions, the Partido Socialista de Chile and the Partido Socialista Popular, the latter led by Allende.

Allende first stood in presidential elections in 1952, receiving 5% of votes. Six years later with the PS reunified, he stood again as the Frunte de Accion Popular candidate, a combination of the PS and the Partido Comunista. This time he came a close second to the right-wing Jorge Alessandri Rodríguez. In his third attempt at presidency in 1964, Allende received 35% of votes, being beaten by Partido Demócrata Cristiana representative (Christian Democrats; PDC) Eduardo Frei Montalva.

Career Peak

Backed by the Unidad Popular—an alliance of Socialists, Radicals and Communists set up in 1969—Allende stood for his fourth presidential elections in 1970. His two main rivals were the right-wing representative Alessandri, who gained 34.9%, and the PDC candidate, Radomiro Tomic, who gained 28%. Allende led with 36% of votes. His victory was sealed with the backing of the PDC, despite strong right-wing opposition and little PDC enthusiasm. On his election, Allende set about changing Chile from a capitalist into a socialist state, albeit with a basis of democracy. Nationalization was the priority. Foreign control was removed from finance and mining. US-owned companies were expelled without compensation. Chile's primary export, copper, was the first industry nationalized. Banks and other businesses followed. Allende then enacted a series of land reforms based on collectivization, expropriating many farms. Aiming to promote equality of wealth, Allende agreed to large wage increases.

The reforms gained popularity, and the Unidad Popular increased its standing in the 1971 municipal elections, winning 50% of votes, and in the 1973 constitutional elections, 45% of votes with an increased parliamentary representation. Allende's reforms were less popular with the middle classes. Economic problems started when heavy industries were affected by international boycotts. Land reforms slowed production, inflation increased and exports decreased as did foreign investment. Food shortages coupled with an inflation rate of 1000% led to violent clashes between government supporters and opponents. Right-wing and centrist opposition parties united with anti-government factions of the military relied on financial backing from the US government.

On 11 Sept. 1973 a military coup led by Pinochet deposed Allende. Armed forces attacked the La Moneda presidential palace and with Allende still inside, military aircraft bombed the presidential palace. Over 3,000 people were killed during the coup. Allende died, although there is controversy over whether he was killed or committed suicide. In July 2011 a scientific autopsy confirmed that he did commit suicide. Replaced by a military junta, Chile, thus far the longest surviving Latin American democracy, entered 17 years of dictatorship.

Allende Gossens, Salvador (Chile)

Introduction

Salvador Allende Gossens was president of Chile from 1970–73, representing the Partido Socialista de Chile (PS). During his 3 year term, Allende tried to

Al-Maliki, Nouri (Iraq)

Introduction

Nouri al-Maliki was appointed Iraq's prime minister designate in April 2006. He succeeded his fellow member of the conservative Shia Muslim

al-Dawa group, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, who had been unable to curb the violent insurgency or create alliances with Sunni and Kurdish factions since elections in Dec. 2005. Al-Maliki, who once commanded Shia forces against Saddam Hussein's regime from exile in Syria, promised an inclusive government. Although his first administration struggled to achieve a lasting political consensus, levels of violence did subside and in Nov. 2008 parliament approved an agreement with the USA that all US troops leave the country by the end of 2011. Al-Maliki's State of Law coalition came second at elections in March 2010 but he remained in office and sought to construct a workable coalition that was eventually approved by parliament at the end of that year. Sectarian and ethnic divisions and frequent associated violence have nevertheless continued to undermine political and social stability in Iraq.

Early Life

Nouri Kamel al-Maliki was born in Hindiyah, southern Iraq in 1950. While studying Arabic at Baghdad University in the early 1970s he joined al-Dawa, which was opposed to the secularism of the ruling Ba'ath party. In 1980 he was forced into exile, initially in Iran and from 1990 in Syria.

Following the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, al-Maliki returned home. In July 2003 he was selected as a member of the US-backed Interim Governing Council, serving on a committee formed to purge Saddam's Ba'athist allies. However, many Sunni Muslims resented what they saw as a Shia plot to deny them a role in post-Saddam Iraq. As a senior member of al-Dawa, al-Maliki worked to forge a coalition of Shia parties, called the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), which won a majority in the elections to a Transitional National Assembly in Jan. 2005. Al-Maliki was the senior Shia Assembly member charged with drafting the new constitution and he resisted efforts by Sunnis to reduce the autonomy given to Kurds in the north and Shias in the south.

Attempts by Prime Minister al-Jaafari to form a broad-based coalition government to reflect the results of the permanent Assembly elections on 15 Dec. 2005 became deadlocked and he stepped down on 21 April 2006. Al-Maliki emerged as the UIA's premiership candidate and was sworn in 20 May 2006.

Career Peak

Calling for an end to sectarian divisions, al-Maliki announced a national reconciliation plan in June 2006, including a conditional amnesty for insurgents and intra-communal dialogue between political leaders, clerics, armed militias and civil society representatives. However, sectarian violence continued and Sunni opinion was further inflamed by the widely criticized conduct of Saddam Hussein's execution for crimes against humanity at the end of Dec. 2006. In Jan. 2007 President Bush announced that he would send 21,000 extra US troops to Iraq to reassert the authority of al-Maliki's government. Meanwhile, al-Maliki struggled to find a political consensus on divisive issues, an impasse aggravated by the withdrawal from the national unity government of radical Shia members, secular-leaning Iraqis and the main Sunni coalition group (who rejoined in July 2008).

In Dec. 2007 the UK military contingent in Iraq handed control of Basra province to Iraqi forces, which in March 2008 launched a crackdown on the radical Shia Mahdi Army militia. Also in March, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made an unprecedented two day visit to Iraq for talks with al-Maliki, who returned the visit in June. In Nov. 2008 Iraq's parliament approved a security pact under which all US troops would leave the country by the end of 2011.

On 1 Jan. 2009 the Iraqi government took control of Baghdad's fortified Green Zone from US forces and assumed authority over foreign troops in the country. British troops formally ended their combat mission in Iraq in April 2009 and in June the Iraqi government declared a holiday to mark National Sovereign Day as US combat troops completed their withdrawal from towns and cities. In Oct. 2011 the US government confirmed that all remaining US troops would be out of Iraq by the end of the year.

In Oct. 2009 al-Maliki announced the formation of a multiconfessional nationalist State of Law grouping to contest the forthcoming general election after a split in the broad Shia coalition that won the 2005 polls. Unexpectedly, his alliance was narrowly defeated at elections in March 2010 by the Iraqi National Movement of former prime minister Iyad Allawi, although al-Maliki challenged the result. He remained in office during the drawn-out process of negotiating a coalition, which was eventually concluded in Dec. that year when, having been reappointed in Nov. as premier,

he named a new cabinet which was approved by parliament. Sectarian tensions in the government and parliament nevertheless continued through 2011 and 2012, prompting the arrest on terrorism charges and subsequent flight abroad of the Sunni vice president, Tariq al-Hashemi (who was convicted and sentenced to death *in absentia*), and fuelling further violence across the country.

At the same time Iraq was not isolated from the wave of popular disaffection that swept across much of the Arab world from early 2011, and there were also increasing tensions between the central government and the administration of autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan over oil contracts with foreign companies and the distribution of revenues. Continuing anti-government discontent in 2013 among the Sunni minority heralded the worst sectarian violence since 2007, with nearly 8,000 Iraqis killed during the year.

In Oct. 2013 it was announced that further parliamentary elections would be held at the end of April 2014, in which al-Maliki would run for a third term of office. However, despite his State of Law coalition's victory at the elections, al-Maliki stepped down as prime minister in Sept., after facing increased pressure from opposition groups to resign amid accusations that he had effectively monopolized power. He was also criticized for aggressively pursuing a pro-Shia agenda—allegations that had been steadily compounded by Iraq's descent into Sunni-Shia sectarian violence at the hands of the jihadist Islamic State.

Later Life

Al-Maliki became one of Iraq's three new vice-presidents in Sept. 2014 after stepping down as prime minister, joining Usama al-Nujayfi and longtime rival Iyad Allawi who were concurrently appointed to the executive. However, his term as vice-president ended in Aug. 2015 when the post was abolished at the suggestion of the al-Abadi led government.

Al-Salim Al-Sabah, Abdullah (Kuwait)

Introduction

Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah ruled from 1950–65, succeeding his cousin Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah. During Abdullah's reign, Kuwait achieved full independence from Britain and was transformed into a wealthy, oil-producing shaikhdom. He also oversaw the introduction of a new constitution and the inauguration of the first Parliament.

Early Life

Born in 1895, he was from the Salim (rather than the Jaber) line of the al-Sabah dynasty which has ruled Kuwait since the 1750s.

Career Peak

In domestic affairs, Abdullah made two significant policy decisions following his accession. The first was to distribute the revenues from the expanding oil industry sector more widely among the population as a whole. He inaugurated a programme of public works and built up comprehensive and subsidized social services, particularly education and health care. The second was to broaden political participation, albeit on a limited basis, in the form of a National Assembly. Under a new constitution drafted in 1962, this Assembly of 50 members was elected and inaugurated in early 1963.

In foreign relations, Abdullah oversaw Kuwait's transformation into a formally independent state in June 1961. He signed new letters of friendship with representatives of the UK Government, terminating earlier agreements dating from 1899 under which Kuwait had become a British protectorate. Shaikh Abdullah then took the title of Amir. Shortly afterwards, he called for British military assistance as the new state was threatened by an Iraqi claim to sovereignty over its territory. Iraq agreed to recognize Kuwait's independence in 1963, although the issue continued to simmer (culminating in the events of 1990–91).

Abdullah died on 24 Nov. 1965 and was succeeded by his brother, Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, whose reign, until 1977 proved to be largely a continuation and consolidation of Abdullah's policies.

Al-Sammad, Saleh Ali (Yemen)

Introduction

Saleh Ali al-Sammad was sworn in as president of Yemen's Supreme Political Council in Aug. 2016. He was the leader of the Iranian-backed Houthi movement that in Sept. 2014 wrested control of the capital Sana'a from President Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi's government. The international community does not recognize the authority of the Supreme Political Council. On 19 April 2018 he was killed in a drone strike.

Early Life

Saleh al-Sammad was born in 1979 in Yemen's northern Saada governorate. The Shia Houthi movement to which he belongs is an offshoot of Ansar Allah, a theological group founded in the 1990s. In Sept. 2014 the Houthis seized control of Sana'a and agreed to a UN-brokered deal to take part in a unity government. However, in Jan. 2015 they rejected proposals to divide the country into six regions and forced the resignation of President Hadi (which he later retracted). A month later they replaced his government with a presidential council and announced that the council would form a transitional administration. In Aug. 2016, after tens of thousands of Yemenis took to the streets of Sana'a to declare their support for the Houthis, al-Sammad announced the establishment of a ten-member presidential council to govern the capital and other parts of the country under its control. The decree led to the breakdown of UN-sponsored peace talks.

Career Peak

With different Yemeni factions serving as proxies for other regional powers, Saleh al-Sammad faced a military campaign to regain Sana'a by the Saudi-led coalition backing Aden-based President Hadi. By the end of 2017 the conflict had inflicted devastation on what was already the poorest country in the Middle East, but with little prospect of peace in an apparent stalemate. Saleh al-Sammad was killed in a Saudi-led drone air strike on 19 April 2018 according to Houthi officials.

Altankhuyag, Norov (Mongolia)

Introduction

Norov Altankhuyag became prime minister in Aug. 2012 after securing 72% support from parliament. His appointment ended weeks of political uncertainty after the Democratic Party failed to win the required seats at the June 2012 elections to form their own government. He left office in Nov. 2014.

Early Life

Norov Altankhuyag was born on 20 Jan. 1958 in Ulaangom, Uvs Province. After graduating in physics from the National University of Mongolia, he took a teaching position in 1981 at the mathematics and physics department of his *alma mater*.

In 1990 he was involved in anti-Communist protests and helped to establish the Social Democratic Party, holding key posts including general secretary. He was elected to the *Great Hural* (the national parliament) in 1996, firstly for the Social Democratic Party and then the Democratic Party. He served as minister of agriculture and industry from 1998–99 and as minister of finance from 2004–06.

Altankhuyag was elected Democratic Party leader on 30 Aug. 2008 after Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj stood down in the aftermath of disputed elections. Altankhuyag also became first deputy prime minister in a coalition government headed by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). He served as acting prime minister for 1 day on 28 Oct. 2009 after the incumbent, Sanj Bayar, resigned as a result of ill health. Sukhbaataryn Batbold was sworn in as premier the following day.

At a parliamentary election in June 2012 the Democratic Party won 31 seats. After weeks of negotiations, it formed a coalition with the Justice Coalition, which had come third in the election. On 10 Aug. 2012 Altankhuyag was confirmed as premier at a parliamentary session.

Career Peak

Altankhuyag's principal challenge was to manage the country's vast natural resources and secure the confidence of foreign investors while maintaining his fragile coalition between its pro-market Democratic members and the nationalist MPRP wing. He was also confronted with widespread corruption and a disparity in wealth between urban and rural communities.

Faced by decreased foreign investment and a mounting economic crisis exacerbated by collapsing commodity prices, Altankhuyag was ousted from the premiership on 5 Nov. 2014 following a successful parliamentary vote of no-confidence. He was replaced by his deputy Dendevyn Terbishdagva, who took over on an interim basis.

Al-Yawer, Ghazi (Iraq)

Introduction

Appointed interim president of the Iraqi transitional government on 2 June 2004, Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawer has been portrayed as a liberal leader who can unite the country as it edges towards national elections and full independence. A Sunni Arab and a member of one of the country's largest and most respected tribes, which comprises both Sunni and Shia Muslims, he enjoys good relations with Iraq's Kurds. Al-Yawer's business acumen and strong links with neighbouring countries are thought to make up for his lack of political experience.

Early Life

Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawer was born in Mosul, northern Iraq in 1958. A Sunni Muslim, his grandfather was chief of the powerful and influential al-Shamma tribe. Al-Yawer attended primary school in Mosul and secondary school in Baghdad, before returning to his tribal homelands near the Syrian border. In the late 1970s, as Iraq lurched towards war with Iran under Saddam Hussein, al-Yawer moved with his family to Saudi Arabia and studied engineering at the Petroleum and Mineral University in Dhahran. He went on to take a master's degree at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. in 1984. Returning to Saudi Arabia, al-Yawer worked as a civil engineer and later established a telecommunications company with his maternal uncle, Sheikh Muhsin. Although vehemently opposed to Saddam's Ba'athist regime, al-Yawer shied away from involvement with political opposition groups—heedling family advice that as a high representative of a tribe, his priority was to retain his tribe's integrity.

Joining a band of returning exiles after the fall of Saddam, al-Yawer arrived in Baghdad in May 2003, although his wife and four children remained in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Events unfolded swiftly and he took over as head of the US-appointed interim governing council (ICG) after the assassination of the previous chief Abdel-Zahraa Othman, better known as Izzedin Salim. He soon demonstrated an independent spirit, denouncing the coalition forces for what he described as their inability to tackle the worsening security situation in Iraq. He also criticized the violent attacks by militants on US forces. In the weeks running up to the handover of sovereignty by US forces on 30 June 2004, the experienced Iraqi politician Adnan al-Pachachi, a Sunni Muslim, was invited to take on the post of president of Iraq. He turned down the offer and al-Yawer, who was endorsed by a large number of the ICG's members, became the first Iraqi president since the demise of the monarchy in 1958 to reach the position competitively, without bloodshed and without holding a military rank.

Career Peak

In his first interview as interim president, al-Yawer said that he will focus on 'a complete national reconciliation' and that he is 'determined to build our democratic experiment and liberate our country from the shackles of

occupation.' He also said he would seek the support of Iraq's neighbours to establish a stable government that would be beneficial to all sides. Confirming his independent views and commitment to democracy, al-Yawer came out against an American order that would ban the radical cleric, Moqtada al-Sadr, from taking part in Iraq's first democratic elections in Jan. 2005. He argued that it is better to get radicals to join the political process than leave them outside the tent.

Amin, Idi (Uganda)

Introduction

Idi Amin Dada Oumee was an army officer who served as President of Uganda between 1971 and 1979. He came to power following a coup in which he had overthrown his one-time ally, Milton Obote. Physically large and personally charismatic, Amin was welcomed by the Ugandan people and the world at large but his mismanagement of the country, the ferocious cruelty of his dictatorial regime and his involvement in numerous international outrages ensured his popularity did not last. He fled Uganda following a Tanzanian invasion in 1979.

Early Life

Amin's year of birth is believed to be 1925. He was born in Koboko into the Kakwa tribe in northwest Uganda and was a Muslim. His education in missionary schools was patchy and during his leadership he was unable to write and was only slightly better at reading. In 1943 he joined the King's African Rifles, an African regiment of the British army, serving in Somalia, Uganda and Kenya. He was stationed in Kenya during the Mau Mau uprising, where Amin endeared himself to the British authorities by his skill and enthusiasm. He was Uganda's light heavyweight boxing champion between 1951 and 1960.

Uganda was led to independence in 1962 by Milton Obote, a close ally of Amin who by that time was one of only two African soldiers of officer rank in the KAR. In 1966 Obote appointed Amin commander of both the army and the air force but relations soured between the two men over the ensuing years. Fearful after an unsuccessful attempt on his life, Obote put Amin under house arrest in 1970. In Jan. 1971 Obote was on a visit to Singapore when Amin, galvanizing his support within the armed forces, staged a successful coup.

Career Peak

The Ugandan population, disillusioned by the corruption of the Obote regime, was generally welcoming, as was the West which had become nervous of Obote's far left political sympathies. It was hoped that Amin would keep his promise to restore civilian government.

However, Amin was quick to demonstrate his ruthlessness and set about purging the army of members of the Acholi and Lango ethnic groups, thus ridding Obote of his largest body of support as well as doing little to alleviate the country's already chronic tribal tensions. Following Obote's failed counter coup, launched from Tanzania in 1972, Amin forged ahead with his systematic ethnic persecution, victimizing civilians as well as military personnel.

In addition, in 1972 he ordered the expulsion of those resident Asians who had not taken Ugandan citizenship. Crucially, this section of society controlled much of the country's commercial sector and was instrumental in the efficient running of the civil service. While Amin tapped into a strong seam of resentment against the Asian population within the African population, his policy was economically disastrous. International isolation resulted and Amin left the running of many businesses, a lot of which he nationalized, to the military and to political allies who took what they could before allowing the businesses to fold.

Urban life became dominated by the black market, corruption and crime. Amin continued to terrorize his opponents through his State Research Bureau and the Public Safety Unit and it is estimated that his regime accounted for 100,000–300,000 victims. On the international stage, he alienated the USA and the UK by publicly condemning both countries. He also turned his back on a once strong relationship with Israel, instead forging ties with the Soviet

Union, Libya and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. He was also suspected of direct involvement in a number of international terrorist exploits, including the hi-jacking of an Air France plane filled with Israelis which culminated in an Israeli rescue mission that saw deaths on both sides.

In Oct. 1978, in an attempt to generate some popular support, he set about an ill-advised invasion of Tanzania to claim the region of Kagera Salient. The Ugandan forces were not suitably prepared or motivated and proved no match for the Tanzanian forces who entered Uganda and made their way to the capital, Kampala. Amin fled, first to Libya and then to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, and was replaced by a coalition of former exiles in April 1979.

Later Life

In March 1998 it was reported that Amin had been banished from Jeddah and isolated in Makkah (Mecca) following allegations of his involvement in an arms shipment to northern Uganda. He died on 16 Aug. 2003 of multiple organ failure. President Yoweri Museveni vetoed his return to Uganda for burial.

Andreotti, Giulio (Italy)

Introduction

Giulio Andreotti presided over seven governments in four terms as prime minister between 1972 and 1992. His political career lasted almost five decades and he occupied several of the most important posts in the country. His reputation as a skilful statesman who was indispensable to the country suffered when in the early 1990s he was accused of dealing with the Mafia.

Early Life

The youngest of three children, Andreotti was born in Rome on 14 Jan. 1919. He read law at the University of Rome where he was president of the Catholic student's federation. His political career began in 1942 when he met Alcide De Gaspari and heard of his plans to set up a Christian Democrat party after the fall of the fascist regime. Andreotti became a willing protégé. When De Gaspari was made prime minister a few years later Andreotti was appointed under-secretary to his cabinet. The following year he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies as a Christian Democrat and retained a seat there after every election from 1948–87. He joined the cabinet as minister of the interior and went on to hold dozens of ministerial appointments. His success was attributed to his skill as a political operator.

Career Peak

Andreotti was prime minister for the first time in 1972, when his government lasted 4 months. He soon regained power and formed a second cabinet that remained in office until June 1973. In 1976 he again became prime minister, on this occasion as head of a Christian Democrat government that had won its majority with the tacit endorsement of the Communist Party. Having instigated this uneasy alliance, he succeeded in stemming an economic crisis that threatened to engulf the country.

From 1983–89 he was minister of foreign affairs under a Socialist administration led by Bettino Craxi. He was then restored to the premiership for the last time. His tenure ended in April 1992 after disappointing election results attributed to a number of high profile corruption scandals, several of which involved Andreotti.

Later Life

In 1993 the Senate voted to remove Andreotti's immunity from prosecution in order for him to stand trial on charges of complicity with the Mafia, including in the murder of a journalist in 1979. He denied the charges but was indicted in 1995. He was acquitted in 1999, but 3 years later the verdict was overturned and Andreotti was sentenced to 24 years imprisonment. Andreotti appealed against the decision. In July 2003 The Palermo Appeals Court acquitted him of separate charges concerning relations with the Mafia. He died on 6 May 2013 at the age of 94.

Andropov, Yuri (Russia)

Introduction

Yuri Andropov was general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, and thus *de facto* head of state and government, from 1982 until 1984. Former head of the KGB, he achieved little of long-term effect during his tenure. Despite a reputation as a conservative, he oversaw the development of several reformers, most notably Mikhail Gorbachev.

Early Life

Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov was born on 15 June 1914 (30 May by the Orthodox calendar) in Nagutskoye, Russia. His father was officially described as a railway worker although he is widely held to have been a white collar station master. Andropov left school at 16 and held a series of jobs including film operator, telegraph operator and ferryman. He later undertook studies at a technical college and at Petrozavodsk University.

He joined the Young Communist League (Komsomol), becoming an organizer for the Yaroslav branch. In 1939 he became a member of the Communist Party and the following year he took over the leadership of Komsomol in the Karelo-Finnish Autonomous Republic (which had been recently ceded from Finland). During World War II he was active in the Russian underground movement.

He remained in the Karelo party apparatus until being called to Moscow in 1951 to work on the communist secretariat staff. Strongly associated with the Stalinist movement, he lost popularity after Stalin's death in 1953 and was transferred to Budapest to work in the Soviet embassy. He was ambassador from 1954 until 1957, during which time he was instrumental in the 1956 Soviet invasion to suppress the Hungarian uprising.

In 1957 he returned to Moscow and headed the department of liaison between Moscow and the other Eastern Bloc regimes. Advocating a split with Chinese communism, in 1967 Andropov was named head of the KGB where he won a reputation for the ruthless suppression of political opposition, including the sectioning on mental health grounds and the enforced exile of critics. In 1973 he won full membership of the Politburo.

In 1982 Andropov resigned from the KGB and, with Leonid Brezhnev's health declining, emerged as a leading contender (along with Brezhnev's favourite Konstantin Chernenko) to become general secretary. Brezhnev died in Nov. 1982 and Andropov was selected to succeed him.

Career Peak

As well as party general secretary, Andropov became chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in June 1983 but his tenure was dogged by ill health. He had promised to increase the economic efficiency of the USSR but achieved little of lasting impact. In foreign policy he continued the war in Afghanistan which had begun in 1979. Relations with the US continued on a downward spiral as he attempted to block the deployment of US missiles in West Germany. In Sept. 1983 a major international diplomatic incident occurred when the USSR shot down a South Korean civilian jet which had strayed into Soviet military airspace, killing 269 people. Andropov made his last public appearance in Aug. 1983 and died on 9 Feb. 1984 from kidney failure.

Ansip, Andrus (Estonia)

Introduction

When Andrus Ansip was sworn in as prime minister of Estonia on 13 April 2005, he took charge of the country's 12th government since its independence in 1991. A right-leaning former investment banker who was mayor of the second largest city, Tartu, for 6 years, Ansip pledged to implement policies that would attract investment and strengthen Estonia's position as a dynamic, post-industrial economy. His coalition government retained power in

parliamentary elections in March 2007 and March 2011. He stood down in March 2014. In Nov. 2014 he took up a position in the European Commission under its new president Jean-Claude Juncker.

Early Life

Ansip was born in Tartu in the Soviet Republic of Estonia (ESSR) on 1 Oct. 1956. He attended local schools and graduated from the University of Tartu with a diploma in chemistry in 1979. He remained at the historic university to undertake further academic study, and later joined the municipal Committee of the Estonian Communist Party (ECP), which had been led, since 1978, by Karl Vaino, a Russian-born Estonian. The ESSR experienced increased Russification and 'sovietization' in the early 1980s, in accordance with the policy of the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev. By 1988 however, there was growing opposition to the communist leadership and, against a backdrop of gradual economic liberalization, Ansip joined Estkompexim, a 'joint-venture' specializing in the import and export of foodstuffs. He was head of Estkompexim's Tartu office during 1991, when, following the collapse of the USSR, Estonia was internationally recognized as an independent nation. The following year Ansip attended a business management course at the University of York in Toronto, Canada.

On his return to Estonia in 1993, Ansip entered the rapidly evolving banking and investment sector, serving as a member of the board of directors of Rahvapank (the People's Bank) until 1995 and then chairman of the board of Livonia Privatization. In 1997 he was chief executive officer of the investment fund, Fondinvesteeringu Maakler AS, as well as chairman of the board of Radio Tartu. The following year he was elected Mayor of Tartu as a candidate of the centre-right Estonian Reform Party (Reform), established in 1994 by Siim Kallas, a former governor of Estonia's central bank. A popular mayor, Ansip was credited with attracting investment to the country's second city and overseeing developments such as the Baltic Defence College and a new biomedical research institute which capitalized on Tartu's long-standing reputation as an academic centre.

On 13 Sept. 2004, shortly after Estonia joined the EU and NATO, Ansip was nominated to replace Meelis Atonen as the minister of economic affairs and communications. Two months later, he became chairman of Reform, which had formed part of the Res Publica-led coalition government under Juhan Parts since March 2003. His appointment followed the departure of Reform's leader (and former prime minister), Siim Kallas, to Brussels to become an EU commissioner. When, in March 2005, the *Riigikogu* (parliament) passed a vote of no confidence in the country's justice minister over proposed anti-corruption measures, Parts resigned as prime minister. On 31 March 2005 the president, Arnold Rüütel, asked Ansip to form a new government. He succeeded in forging a coalition with the Estonian Centre Party (Kesk) and the Estonian Peoples' Union (Rahvaliit). Ansip was backed by 53 out of 101 members of the *Riigikogu*, and was inaugurated as prime minister on 13 April 2005.

Career Peak

Ansip confirmed Estonia's aspiration to adopt the single European currency. However, he acknowledged that it would be tough to fulfil the criterion of holding inflation to no more than 1.5% points above that of the three lowest-inflation EU countries, given that Estonia's economy was growing at that time at around 7% a year and its exports had risen by 20% in its first 12 months in the EU. He pledged to maintain the previous government's tax-cutting agenda, as well as increasing social welfare measures to bridge the gap between the relatively wealthy, young urban population and poorer rural citizens. He retained the premiership following legislative elections in March 2007, forming a coalition with Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica (IRL) and the Social Democratic Party. However, in May 2009 the government lost its parliamentary majority as Ansip dismissed the three Social Democratic ministers in a dispute over economic policy, replacing them in June with IRL members and continuing on a minority basis.

Despite a sharp economic contraction in the wake of the global financial crisis, Estonia fared better than its Baltic neighbours in the ensuing downturn. The government acted quickly to implement spending cuts and adjustments to stem the rise in the budget deficit, while earlier prudent management of the public finances provided a buffer of fiscal reserves, with no requirement for support from the International Monetary Fund. Estonia became the 17th country to adopt the euro in Jan. 2011.

In foreign affairs, Ansip signed a border treaty agreement with Russia in May 2005. However, Russia subsequently withdrew from the agreement in response to a preamble to the text referring to the Soviet occupation that

Moscow deemed unacceptable. Relations with Russia soured further in early 2007 when the Estonian parliament passed legislation banning monuments glorifying Soviet rule and the government approved the removal of a Soviet war memorial in Tallinn.

Ansip secured another term in office when Reform won the March 2011 parliamentary election and resumed its coalition with the IRL.

In March 2014, Ansip resigned as premier in order to enable a successor to lead his Reform Party into elections scheduled for 2015. He was succeeded by Taavi Rõivas, who at the age of 34 became the youngest government leader in the European Union. At the time of his resignation, Ansip was the longest-serving premier in the EU.

Later Life

Ansip joined the new European Commission on 1 Nov. 2014 as the vice-president responsible for the digital single market.

Ántáll, József (Hungary)

Introduction

József Ántáll served as Prime Minister of Hungary between 1990–93, following the fall of the communist regime. He did not become active on the political scene until the late 1980s, when anti-communist reform movements grew throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Having become President of the fledgling Hungarian Democratic Forum in 1989, a year later he became the country's first democratically elected leader for over 40 years.

Early Life

Ántáll was born on 8 April 1932 in Budapest. His father, also called József, gained recognition for his work as a government commissioner for refugees during World War II, and was credited with ensuring the survival of large numbers of Jews. The son obtained a degree in Humanities and Political Science in Budapest, and then worked as a librarian, historian and teacher. At the time of the 1956 uprising he was the chairman of a revolutionary committee and the following year he was arrested for his political activities and banned from teaching or publishing any material for the following 6 years.

Ántáll played little part on the Hungarian political scene in the ensuing decades. However, by the 1980s the regime of János Kádár was in decline and a drive towards reform was underway. A new party, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), was established in 1988 and advocated a course of nationalist conservatism. Ántáll became Chairman of the MDF in 1989 and in March of the following year led them to a comprehensive election victory, taking 43% of the vote. They were, however, unable to form a majority government and so Ántáll led a coalition that also included the Christian Democratic Peoples' Party and the Independent Smallholders' Party.

Career Peak

The government was thus right of centre. Under Ántáll's guidance it set about developing the market economy and instigated a major privatization programme. The MDF's vocal far right nationalist wing soon alienated many voters and the party suffered heavy losses at local elections after a few months. The party's economic policies were also difficult, with inflation, unemployment (up from 1.5% to 12.0% in the period 1990–93) and crime all rising sharply in the early 1990s. The broader achievements of Ántáll's tenure concern the establishment of institutions and structures necessary for a functioning democracy. He also controversially re-established the teaching of Roman Catholicism into the national curriculum, oversaw the phased removal of Soviet troops from Hungarian territory and pursued closer relations with the West.

He was soon criticized for his domineering style of leadership and he had a difficult relationship with the President, Árpád Göncz, of the rival Alliance of Free Democrats. However, he retained his role as MDF chairman in early 1993. Ántáll had been diagnosed as suffering from cancer in 1990 and on 12 Dec. 1993, while he was in Budapest, it took his life. He was succeeded by Peter Boross.

Anthony, Kenny (St Lucia)

Introduction

Dr Kenny Anthony returned to office as prime minister on 30 Nov. 2011, having previously served two consecutive terms from 1997 to 2006. After electoral defeat in Dec. 2006, he remained leader of the Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) in opposition before returning to power.

Early Life

Kenny Davis Anthony was born on 8 Jan. 1951. He studied law at the University of the West Indies before studying for a PhD at Birmingham University in the United Kingdom.

He joined the SLP on his return to St Lucia, serving as minister of education from 1980–81. A former consultant to the United Nations on its development programmes, Anthony was also a member of the Caribbean Community secretariat from 1995–97 and served as chairman of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. He became SLP leader in 1996 and was sworn in as prime minister for the first time in May 1997.

In his first term Anthony was at the centre of a dispute with the USA and World Trade Organization over alleged preferential treatment for former colonial banana suppliers to the European Union. In Sept. 2002 tropical storm Lili hit the island, devastating the banana crop and exacerbating economic problems. The government sought to diversify the economy, with a focus on increasing investment in tourism. Anthony also oversaw extensive domestic infrastructure development, while education spending rose significantly.

However, he was criticized for St Lucia's high levels of borrowing, with the debt-to-GDP ratio standing at around 63% in 2005. Meanwhile, the crime rate remained stubbornly high, despite the passage of a new criminal code. In July 2003 parliament amended the constitution to replace the oath of allegiance to the British monarch with a pledge of loyalty to the St Lucian people (although Queen Elizabeth II remained head of state).

At the general election of 11 Dec. 2006, the SLP won only six seats against 11 for the United Workers Party, headed by Sir John Compton. Anthony nonetheless retained his own constituency and continued as leader of the SLP. Compton died in Sept. 2007 and was succeeded as prime minister by Stephenson King. During his time in opposition, Anthony visited Cuba, where he thanked the Cuban administration for its aid to St Lucia and other Caribbean nations. In the general election held in Nov. 2011 the SLP were returned to power, taking 11 of the available 17 seats.

Career Peak

With the economy in need of urgent attention, Anthony warned the island's population that 'difficult times lie ahead'. He also faced a strained relationship with Taiwan following St Lucia's establishment of diplomatic ties with China during his previous tenure.

Legislation criminalizing gang membership came into force in June 2014 with the aim of countering a growing threat from gang-associated violence on the island.

Anthony's third term came to an end in June 2016 following the SLP's defeat at parliamentary elections that month.

Aquino III, Benigno (Philippines)

Introduction

Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III was sworn in as president in June 2010 after a landslide victory at the election in May. He campaigned on a platform of tackling corruption and eradicating poverty. He is due to leave office on 30 June 2016 following the elections of 9 May 2016 in which he was ineligible to stand.

Early Life

Aquino, popularly known as Noynoy, was born on 8 Feb. 1960 in Manila into the influential Aquino political family. His father, Benigno Simeon 'Ninoy' Aquino, Jr, was a prominent opposition leader who was assassinated by Ferdinand Marcos' regime. His mother, Corazón Aquino, led a non-violent people's revolution following her husband's death that brought about an end to the Marcos dictatorship and secured her the presidency. Benigno Aquino III graduated in economics from Ateneo de Manila University in 1981 before joining his family in exile in the USA. On his father's death in 1983, he returned to the Philippines.

From 1983–98 Aquino worked in business for companies including Nike, Intra-Strata Assurance Corp., Best Security Agency Corporation and Central Azucarera Tarlac, an organization owned by the Cojuangco clan. In 1989 in an attempted coup led by Gregorio Honasan against his mother's administration Aquino narrowly escaped assassination.

Joining the Liberal Party in 1998, he was elected to the House of Representatives to represent the 2nd District of Tarlac, a seat he held until 2007. He served as deputy speaker of the House from Nov. 2004–Feb. 2006, resigning when he joined other Liberal leaders in calling for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the height of the 'Hello Garci' vote-rigging scandal. On 17 March 2006 Aquino was appointed vice chairman of the Liberal Party. Constitutionally unable to seek a fourth term in the House of Representatives, he won a Senate seat in the May 2007 elections.

After the death of his mother in Aug. 2009, there was a swell of public support for Aquino to stand for the presidency. Announcing his candidacy on 9 Sept. 2009 his subsequent campaign used the colour yellow to evoke his mother's 'people power' movement. The front runner leading up to the election, Aquino went on to win with 42% of the vote.

Career Peak

On assuming office, Aquino announced the creation of an independent commission to investigate the alleged corruption of the Arroyo administration (which led to the former president's arrest in Oct. 2012) and appointed a new justice secretary, Leila de Lima, the former head of the commission on human rights. In education, he pushed for the extension of the basic education system from a 10 year programme to 12 years. He also came out in support of a controversial family planning bill which, despite strong opposition from the Catholic Church, was eventually approved by parliament in Dec. 2012 and by the Supreme Court in April 2014. Critics have nevertheless questioned Aquino's ability to introduce reforms that act against the interests of the Philippines' powerful clans, from which he himself comes.

In Oct. 2012 Aquino signed a framework agreement on peace and autonomy between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Muslim separatist movement operating in the Mindanao region, with the aim of ending years of armed conflict. A power-sharing accord was signed in Dec. 2013 and a peace deal was concluded in March 2014. However, in Sept. 2013 there were violent clashes between a faction of another militant group, the Moro National Liberation Front, and government forces in the southern city of Zamboanga. Further conflict between Muslim rebels and security forces in Mindanao was also reported in Jan. 2015.

At the international level, there have been territorial tensions with China since mid-2012 over a disputed area of the South China Sea, while in May 2013 a diplomatic clash similarly arose with Taiwan following the killing of a Taiwanese fisherman by Filipino coastguards in an area of sea claimed by both countries.

In May 2013 pro-Aquino candidates won the majority of congressional seats in mid-term elections. However, in Nov. that year the Supreme Court ruled that a widely misused government fund for development projects, known as the DAP, was unconstitutional, which has tainted Aquino's anti-corruption image and undermined his ability to pursue economic reforms.

In Nov. 2013 the central provinces of the Philippines were devastated by Typhoon Haiyan, which killed thousands of people and displaced around 4 m. more.

As the constitution prohibits presidents from serving consecutive terms, Aquino was barred from running at the May 2016 elections. He was replaced by the winner, Rodrigo Duterte, the following month.

Aquino, Corazon (Philippines)

Introduction

Maria Corazon (Cory) Conjuangco Aquino is attributed with restoring democracy in the Philippines. She was the country's first female president (1986–92). The wife of murdered dissident Benigno Aquino, she defeated Ferdinand Marcos after disputed elections.

Early Life

Corazon Aquino was born on 25 Jan. 1933 in Tarlac province, Luzon. After studying in Manila, Aquino left the Philippines with her family for the United States where she finished her education at Mt Saint Vincent College in New York, graduating with a degree in French and mathematics.

After returning to the Philippines to resume her academic career she met and married the politician, Benigno Aquino Jr. in 1954. Benigno Aquino, a Liberal party opponent to Ferdinand Marcos and ardent critic of Marcos' 'Oplan Sagitarius'—a plan to declare martial law in the capital. He was arrested in 1972 and exiled in 1980. Upon Benigno Aquino's return to the Philippines in 1983 he was assassinated at Manila International Airport.

When, in 1986, President Marcos announced a surprise election the opposition to the Marcos regime unified behind Cory Aquino. Former Senator Salvador Laurel of the UNIDO Party stood down as presidential candidate to run as Aquino's vice-presidential candidate.

Career Peak

After a bitterly contested election Marcos and Aquino each claimed victory. Both were inaugurated by their respective supporters. Marcos, after his being inaugurated at Malacañang Palace fled the country, leaving Aquino to take power.

On 25 March 1986 Aquino proclaimed a provisional constitution (the Freedom Constitution) and then appointed a commission to write a new constitution. This was ratified by referendum in Feb. 1987 and included the provision that the head of state is directly elected for a non-renewable 6-year term. Despite attempts to address government corruption, including long-established commercial monopolies, Aquino failed to implement fundamental economic change. Corruption remained endemic, support from the military wavered and communist groups were a constant threat. She was replaced in 1992 by her defence minister, Fidel Ramos. She died of cardio-respiratory arrest on 1 Aug. 2009, aged 76.

Arafat, Yasser (Palestinian Territories, Israel)

Introduction

Yasser Arafat has been synonymous with the Palestinian campaign for independent statehood since the 1960s. Various labels a terrorist, resistance fighter and statesman, he remained the dominant personality in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the figurehead with whom successive Israeli leaders had to deal. In the aftermath of the 1993 Oslo agreements, he was elected President of the Palestinian Authority in Jan. 1996. However, after the renewed Palestinian intifada from Sept. 2000 and the uncompromising military response of the Israeli government, he was sidelined internationally and his leadership called into question. In March 2003 he agreed to create the post of prime minister, a move demanded by Israel and the US before the peace process could resume. The following month an internationally-brokered 'roadmap to peace', allowing for the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state, was published.

Early Life

Arafat was born in Aug. 1929, although the exact date and place of his birth are disputed. He is believed to have spent his childhood in Cairo, except for a 4 year period living with relatives in Jerusalem. Active in Palestinian student politics while studying at Faud University, Cairo, he trained and worked as an engineer in Egypt and Kuwait until 1965. In the late 1950s he was a co-founder of Al-Fatah, an underground nationalist movement that became the core of the PLO in the 1960s. In 1964 Arafat left Kuwait for Jordan from where he led Fatah's revolutionary activity.

Career Peak

In 1969 Arafat became the acknowledged, though not universally popular, chairman of a fractious PLO. In the early 1970s his hostility towards any compromise with Israel and refusal to acknowledge its right to exist was reflected in international terrorism by the PLO, as well as violent conflict with King Hussein's Jordan, from where the PLO was expelled. He then adopted a strategy of militancy coupled with diplomacy. While maintaining his demand for Palestinian statehood, he gained recognition for the PLO at the United Nations in 1974. In 1982 the PLO was forced out of Lebanon by the Israeli invasion and Arafat's authority was weakened by disaffection. Despite the outbreak of the first Palestinian intifada in 1987, he implicitly accepted Israel's right to exist in 1988, based on an earlier UN Security Council land-for-peace principle.

Arafat's support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in the 1990–91 Gulf war damaged his standing with conservative Arab states and Western governments. Nevertheless, subsequent diplomatic efforts resulted in the Sept. 1993 Oslo agreements with Israel, providing for phased Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank and in Gaza. The following year he was jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin. In Jan. 1996 Arafat was elected president of the Palestinian Authority. Frequent disruptions over political and security concerns, and the renewal of the Palestinian intifada in Sept. 2000, subsequently stalled the peace process.

In April 2002 tensions between Israelis and Palestinians increased as suicide bomb attacks on Israeli cities were countered with Israeli tanks occupying several Palestinian towns. As tanks surrounded the building housing Arafat, the Palestinian leader refused Sharon's offer of a safe exit in return for self-imposed exile. Later in the month Arafat was released after a 5 month barricade of his headquarters. Sharon refused to cooperate with a UN fact finding mission investigating Israel's military offensive in Jenin. Sharon's reluctance to negotiate with Arafat was reinforced by President Bush's outline for a settlement in June 2002. The proposals, which advocated the election of a new Palestinian leadership, caused international unease. Sharon later outlined a plan to grant Palestine around 40% of the West Bank, albeit demilitarized with Israeli control over all points of entry and exit and over airspace. Negotiations would not begin until Palestinian violence ended and Yasser Arafat was removed from power. The Palestinian authorities rejected the proposals.

In Sept. 2002, following a suicide bomb attack in Tel Aviv, Arafat was again put under siege in his Ramallah muqata'a. Ten days later, after the compound's destruction, widespread international condemnation and Palestinian protests, the Israeli army withdrew. In Jan. 2003 Sharon placed a travel ban on Palestinian officials, effectively barring them from attending peace talks in the UK. The UN, EU, Jordan, Egypt, Russia and Saudi Arabia were all due to attend the talks. The move came after a suicide bomb attack in Tel Aviv killed over 20 people.

In March 2003 the PLO's general secretary Mahmoud Abbas accepted Arafat's invitation to become the administration's first prime minister. Arafat had agreed to create the post to facilitate the resumption of an internationally mediated peace process. Under the terms of the premiership Abbas was responsible for the day-to-day running of the Palestinian Authority while Arafat retained control of defence and peace negotiations. Following disputes over several key appointments, Arafat and Abbas agreed on the composition of a cabinet in late-April 2003.

In April 2003 a 'roadmap to peace', a plan jointly produced by the UN, EU, US and Russia to secure a lasting peace, was published and delivered to Abbas. The document called for an immediate ceasefire, an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian towns, a clampdown on Palestinian militants and the dismantling of Israeli settlements built since 2001. It set out proposals for the establishment of an independent, democratic Palestinian state as early as 2005. The Palestinian Administration welcomed the development. In June

2003 Israel withdrew its troops from the main north-south highway in the Gaza Strip and from positions throughout northern Gaza. The move came after the three main Palestinian militant groups (Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Fatah) agreed to a ceasefire.

In July 2003 the Israeli government promised to release several hundred Palestinians, including members of militant organizations. In addition, Israeli checkpoints in Ramallah and Hebron were dismantled and 8000 workers from the Gaza Strip, Bethlehem and Tulkarem were allowed into Israel. However, the following month Sharon reiterated his commitment to building a 600 km-long 'security fence' around the West Bank, which he claimed was essential to prevent Palestinian suicide attacks.

Arafat alienated Abbas by retaining control of the Palestinian security forces, a jurisdiction promised to his prime minister. Abbas resigned in Sept. and Arafat appointed the speaker of the National Council, Ahmed Qureia, as his replacement. Following threats by the Israeli government against Arafat's life, the Palestinian president declared a state of emergency on 5 Oct. and announced an emergency government, headed by Qureia. This angered the members of the council, whose approval was required for the installation of the cabinet. After rumours of Arafat suffering a mild heart attack, Qureia reluctantly agreed to remain in his designated position until the approval of a prime minister by the council.

On 7 Oct. 2003 Arafat swore in the emergency cabinet, which included Qureia in the position of Prime Minister. Qureia had previously announced his commitment to the UN backed 'roadmap to peace' but stated he would not risk a civil war by using force against Palestinian militants. Days later Qureia threatened to resign owing to indignancy over Arafat's attempts to 'interfere' with security issues.

In Nov. 2003 Qureia agreed to retain his position and was asked by Arafat to form a new government. However, the formation was postponed after disputes between the leader and Qureia as to whom was to be appointed Interior Minister—a position which controls the Palestinian security forces. Eventually Arafat effectively retained control of the security apparatus by appointing the loyalist, Hakam Balawi.

In April 2004 Arafat stated that the Palestinian struggle would never end until there was an independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, but also added that any future peace agreement should preserve the Jewish character of the Israeli state and pledged to control Gaza if Israel withdrew. Nevertheless, following a series of kidnappings in Gaza, Arafat declared a state of emergency in July 2004 and suggested that the security forces be overhauled as Qureia again offered his resignation. Arafat rejected the offer and appointed Moussa Arafat—his nephew—as overall security chief. This appointment caused thousands of Palestinians to stage marches in Gaza in protest. These protests resulted in clashes between security forces and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade—a military faction of Fatah—forcing Arafat to demote his nephew and re-appoint Abdel Razek al-Majeida as head of general security. Reluctantly Qureia agreed to remain Prime Minister as Fatah dissidents claimed their protests were not a challenge to Arafat's overall leadership, but to his methods of government. Arafat flew to Paris for medical care in Oct. 2004 but died in Nov. 2004.

After years of Palestinian claims that Israel poisoned Arafat his body was exhumed in Nov. 2012. Samples were retrieved from his remains and sent for tests that aim to finally determine his cause of death.

Arias Sánchez, Óscar (Costa Rica)

Introduction

Dr Óscar Arias became president of Costa Rica for the second time in May 2006, claiming victory over his rival, Otton Solís, after weeks of recounts. The centrist politician, best known for his economic reforms and his contribution to peace in Central America, previously held the presidency from 1986–90. His second term ended in May 2010.

Early Life

Óscar Rafael Arias Sánchez was born on 13 Sept. 1940 in Heredia, central Costa Rica. He was educated at St Francis College and the University of Costa

Rica, where he read law and economics. He received a doctorate from the University of Essex, Britain, before working for José Figueres, a National Liberation Party leader who had served as president from 1970–74. Appointed minister of planning and political economy in 1972, in 1979 Arias was named general secretary of the PLN, helping Luis Alberto Monge to victory in the elections of 1982. Arias himself was elected president on 8 May 1986, easily beating Rafael Calderón of the United Coalition.

Arias drafted a plan to promote peace and democracy in war-ravaged Central America, which led to the signing of the Esquipulas II Accords on 7 Aug. 1987 and for which he subsequently received the Nobel peace prize. He liberalized the Costa Rican economy, promoting tourism while reducing dependence on exports of bananas and coffee. Steady growth was maintained and unemployment fell to a regional low. After the end of his presidential term in May 1990, he served on the boards of various organizations including the International Crisis Group, Transparency International and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Arias was widely recognized as a champion of democracy and demilitarization and became a prominent spokesman for the developing world.

Arias contested the 5 Feb. 2006 presidential election, promising a 'fresh start' for the country after a series of corruption scandals. However, his early lead in the opinion polls was eroded by a surge in support for Ottón Solís of the left-leaning Citizens' Action Party. The two candidates clashed regularly over the ratification of the controversial Central American Free-Trade Agreement (CAFTA), with Arias favouring approval. The election was followed by a manual recount and weeks of tension. On 7 March 2006 Arias was declared the victor with 40.9% of the vote and was sworn in on 8 May 2006.

Career Peak

Arias pledged to stamp out corruption and to implement economic reforms, although his narrow victory and weak parliamentary position suggested a struggle to win support for policies such as confirmation of CAFTA. However, in Oct. 2007 a national referendum narrowly decided in favour of ratifying the trade agreement and in Nov. 2008 the legislature voted to implement it. In June 2007 Arias announced that Costa Rica was withdrawing its diplomatic recognition of Taiwan in favour of new relations with China in order to attract Chinese investment. He was succeeded by Vice-President Laura Chinchilla on 8 May 2010.

Aristide, Jean-Bertrand (Haiti)

Introduction

Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president in 1990 but served only 7 months before being ousted in a military coup. Under threat of US invasion, the military junta stepped down in 1994 and Aristide saw out the rest of his term. Constitutionally barred from contesting the presidential election of 1996, he successfully stood for office again in 2000. A staunch opponent of the dictatorial regimes of Papa and Baby Doc, he was unable to resolve Haiti's economic and political crises. He was forced to flee the country in Feb. 2004 after a military insurrection.

Early Life

Aristide was born on 15 July 1953 in Port-Salut on Haiti but spent much of his youth in Port-au-Prince, the capital. He was educated in Roman Catholic schools and at the College Notre Dame in Cap-Haïtien before attending a seminary run by the Salesian Fathers in the Dominican Republic. He returned to the Grand Séminaire Notre Dame to undertake post-graduate philosophy studies and then to the State University of Haiti where he graduated in psychology in 1979. Aristide then studied theology in Rome and Israel.

In 1983 he returned to Haiti to be ordained and was named curate of St Joseph's church in Port-au-Prince. In 1985 Aristide completed his foreign studies and gained a master's degree from Canada's Montreal University. He returned to Port-au-Prince and the church of St Jean Bosco. Here he gained a reputation for his vociferous criticism of Jean-Claude Duvalier (Baby Doc) via his sermons and his broadcasts on a Catholic radio station and was warned by the Salesian order for his political activism.

In Feb. 1986 Baby Doc was forced from power and replaced by a military junta. Aristide won wide respect for heading a march to commemorate Duvalier's victims that was attacked by the army. In the same year he established the Lafanmi Selavi orphanage. In Sept. 1988 Aristide survived one of several attempts made on his life when St Jean Bosco's was attacked by a crowd of pro-government supporters as he preached. Several dozen worshippers died in the incident and the resultant public out-cry was regarded as key to the collapse of the military regime the following week. Aristide, however, was dismissed from the Salesian order for his political stance.

Aristide remained prominent in Haiti's fragile journey towards democracy through to the elections of 1990. Backed by the swelling support of the Lavalas (The Flood), a popular democratic movement, Aristide announced he would stand for the presidency and emerged victorious with 67% of the vote, although the election was beset by violence.

Career Peak

Aristide was sworn in on 7 Feb. 1991 and began a programme of democratization that won widespread support and brought much-needed international aid. However, in Sept. 1991 the military, led by Brigadier-General Raoul Cedras, staged a coup and Aristide went into exile in Venezuela and then Washington, D.C. as Haiti succumbed to a 3 year reign of terror that cost over 5,000 lives.

The US, UN and the OAS instigated sanctions against Haiti and, following the threat of a US invasion, Aristide was able to return to Haiti in Oct. 1994 to see out the remainder of his term. Faced with a devastated economy and a fractured political landscape, Aristide set about restructuring the armed forces and established a civilian police force. Elections were held in Feb. 1996 and Aristide, constitutionally prohibited from standing for a second consecutive term, was succeeded by René Préval in independent Haiti's first peaceful transition of power.

Whilst out of office Aristide established an eponymous foundation for democracy. In Nov. 1996 he founded the Fanmi Lavalas (Lavalas Family) Party. Haiti struggled to repair itself and Préval began rule by decree in 1999. Aristide announced his intention to stand for the presidency in elections in Nov. 2000. He won with 91.8% of the vote but several opposition groups alleged fraud and international aid was frozen. The political scene remained entrenched and in July 2001 Aristide accused several former army officers of attempting a coup. Thirty armed men attacked the National Palace in Dec. 2001 in a further challenge to the presidency. In July 2002 Aristide oversaw Haiti's entry into CARICOM despite fears of continuing human rights abuses within the country.

In July 2003 the Inter-American Development Bank granted loans worth US\$220m. to fund improvements in transport, education and public health. However, Aristide's presidency was weakened by mass demonstrations in early 2004. Rebel forces seized the north of the country and Aristide fled abroad before the advancing militias.

Later Life

The chief justice, Boniface Alexandre, was sworn in as provisional president on 29 Feb. 2004. Aristide went first to the Central African Republic and then to Jamaica, from where he filed lawsuits against unspecified officials from the US and France, alleging he had been kidnapped and forced into exile.

Aristide returned to Haiti in March 2011.

Arthur, Owen (Barbados)

Introduction

Owen Arthur was Barbados' fifth prime minister and the leader of the Barbados Labour Party (BLP). He took office in 1994 and was re-elected in 1999 and 2003. Arthur ran for another term in office but suffered defeat at the 15 Jan. 2008 elections.

Early Life

Owen Seymour Arthur was born on 17 Oct. 1949 in Barbados. He studied in Jamaica at the University of the West Indies, graduating with a master's in economics. He worked in Jamaica for much of the 1970s, firstly as a

researcher at the university's department of management, then at the national planning agency and later as director of economic research at the Jamaican bauxite institute.

In 1981 he joined the Barbados ministry of finance and planning as chief project analyst. He then became a research fellow at the University of the West Indies' institute of social and economic research. He also held positions on the boards of the Jamaican council for scientific research, the Barbados industrial development corporation and the central bank of Barbados. Between 1982–84 he was chairman of the Barbados agricultural development corporation.

Arthur began his political career in 1983 when he was appointed to the Barbados senate and the following year he was elected to the house of assembly. From 1993–94 he served as leader of the opposition. He led the BLP into the 1994 general election promising to develop a 'modern, technologically-dynamic economy'. The BLP won 19 of 28 available seats and Arthur was returned as prime minister.

Career Peak

Arthur has made economic development a main priority with emphasis on promotion of international trade and investment, incorporating an expansion of the tourism sector.

In the build-up to the 1999 election he vowed to make Barbados a republic, proposing that a ceremonial president replace the queen as head of state. There are plans for a referendum on the subject. Arthur's BLP won a landslide victory at the 1999 polls, claiming 26 of the 28 seats. In 2000 the OECD placed Barbados on a list of nations designated as uncooperative tax havens but was removed from the list 2 years later. Arthur's majority was slightly reduced at the election of 2003 when the BLP won 23 seats on a platform of reduced taxation and increased prosperity.

Arthur has been active in regional politics, taking a leading role in developing the Caribbean single market and economy. Additionally he was the chair of the Commonwealth ministerial group on small states, chair of the global conference on small states and a consultant to the OAS and CARICOM.

In 2004 relations with Trinidad and Tobago declined following a sea border disagreement when several Barbadian fishermen were arrested. The dispute was referred to the UN for adjudication. Ties between Barbados and Trinidad took a further knock in 2005 when Arthur suggested Tobago would be better off in a union with Barbados.

Arthur was minister of finance in addition to being prime minister.

Arthur sought a fourth consecutive term in office and in the run-up to the Jan. 2008 vote accused his rivals of taking donations from Taiwan, in return for promising to switch allegiance from China. The opposition, the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), had in turn suggested that Arthur had access to undeclared bank accounts. Arthur was defeated in the elections held on 15 Jan., but was re-elected to his own seat from St Peter constituency. On 19 Jan. 2008 Arthur stepped down as leader of the BLP, saying that he felt immediate leadership transition would be in the best interest of the party and Barbadian democracy.

Ásgrímsson, Halldór (Iceland)

Introduction

When Iceland's prime minister of 13 years, Davíð Oddsson, became ill in Aug. 2004, Halldór Ásgrímsson was chosen to replace him. The accountant-turned-politician, who had been minister for foreign affairs since 1995, took office on 15 Sept. 2004. He resigned in June 2006.

Early Life

Halldór Ásgrímsson was born in Vopnafjörður in eastern Iceland on 8th Sept. 1947. He attended the Co-operative College of Iceland in Reykjavík and graduated in 1965. He then specialized in finance and commerce and received a licence as a certified public accountant in 1970. The following year he undertook further studies abroad at the universities of Bergen and Copenhagen. Returning to Reykjavík in 1973, Ásgrímsson began working at the University of Iceland, lecturing at the faculty of economics and business

administration. A year later, in the general election that was brought about by a split in the ruling coalition over economic policies, Ásgrímsson was elected as a member of the *Alþingi* (Parliament) for the moderate Progressive Party (PP). In 1976 Ásgrímsson became a member of the board of the Central Bank of Iceland. He served as a member of the Icelandic delegation to the Copenhagen-based Nordic Council in 1977–78.

In 1980 he became vice-chairman of the PP, which had joined the People's Alliance (PA) in a coalition led by the former Independence Party (IP) leader Gunnar Thoroddsen. The presidential election of 1980 was won by Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, who became the world's first popularly elected female head of state. Ásgrímsson became the minister for fisheries in May 1983 following the general election which resulted in the PP leader Steingrímur Hermannsson becoming prime minister. Ásgrímsson later served as minister for Nordic co-operation (1985–87) and minister for justice and ecclesiastical affairs (1988–89). He took over as leader of the PP when Hermannsson stepped down in 1994. From 1995–2004 Ásgrímsson was minister for foreign affairs and external trade in a coalition government of the PP and the IP led by prime minister Davíð Oddsson. The period was broadly characterized by strong economic growth underpinned by fisheries and the production of aluminium. Oddsson emerged victorious in the May 2004 general election, but decided to make way for Ásgrímsson following a period of ill-health in Aug. Oddsson took the job of minister of foreign affairs until Sept. 2005.

Career Peak

According to an agreement between the two coalition parties (IP and PP), Ásgrímsson became prime minister of Iceland on 15 Sept. 2004. In his opening policy address he outlined his commitment to diversifying the Icelandic economy away from its dependence on fisheries by expanding the country's power-intensive industries and taking full advantage of abundant supplies of free geothermal energy. He also pledged to cut income tax over 3 years, raise child allowance and promised a review of the constitution. His government aimed to promote more active international co-operation following the announcement of Iceland's candidacy for a seat on the UN Security Council for the period 2009–10, with elections taking place in 2008.

Following a poor showing at the municipal elections of June 2006, Ásgrímsson announced that he was resigning as prime minister and would step down as leader of the Progressive Party before the end of 2006. He was succeeded by the chairman of the Independence Party, Geir Hilmar Haarde.

Ásgrímsson died on 18 May 2015 following a heart attack.

Aso, Taro (Japan)

Introduction

Taro Aso became prime minister in Sept. 2008 after the resignation of Yasuo Fukuda. With a reputation as a conservative and nationalist, he came to office promising to address Japan's economic problems. However, he faced a divided parliament, with the upper house controlled by the opposition, and severe challenges resulting from the global economic crisis.

Early Life

Taro Aso was born on 20 Sept. 1940 in Iizuka, Fukuoka. As owners of the Aso Cement Company, his family had a tradition of holding political office. After graduating in politics and economics at Gakushuin University, he studied at Stanford University in the USA and at the London School of Economics. In 1966 he joined the Aso Cement Company, for a period working in its Brazil offices, and was appointed company president in 1973. Aso also represented Japan at shooting at the 1976 Olympic Games.

In Oct. 1979 he was elected to the House of Representatives as a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). He was appointed vice minister for education in 1988 and in 2003 joined Prime Minister Koizumi's cabinet as minister of internal affairs, posts and communications. In Oct. 2005 he was appointed minister for foreign affairs, a position he held for 3 years, during which time he supported sanctions against North Korea and criticized China's military spending, describing it as a threat to Japan and the region. In 2006 China was angered when he praised Taiwan (which China claims as an

integral part of its territory) as a ‘law-abiding country’. Aso’s outspoken remarks nonetheless secured him popular support within Japan.

When Koizumi resigned in 2006, the LDP chose not to call a general election but to hold an internal contest for the leadership. Aso stood but was defeated by Shinzo Abe. He continued as foreign minister in Abe’s government and when Abe resigned in Sept. 2007, announced his candidature to replace him. Opponents claimed the process was a return to old-style Japanese politics, in which leaders of the party factions pledged their support in advance of an open vote. Aso lost to the more moderate Yasuo Fukuda by 330 votes to 197.

Fukuda faced a split in parliament, with the upper house controlled by the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). Aso declined offers of a ministerial portfolio and embarked on a political tour of the country. He changed his focus from foreign affairs and cultural issues to the economy and advocated a ‘Japan Renewal Programme’ based on regional decentralization, pension reforms and employment liberalization.

In Aug. 2008 Aso was appointed secretary-general of the LDP. On 1 Sept. 2008 Fukuda, unable to implement his policies, announced his resignation. Aso campaigned to replace him, identifying economic stability as his priority. On 22 Sept. 2008 he was elected president of the LDP with 351 of a possible 525 votes. However, the upper house voted for the DPJ candidate Ozawa ensuring Aso too faced a divided parliament.

Career Peak

Aso faced severe challenges as the global economic crisis worsened throughout 2008–09. He announced three economic stimulus plans (in Oct. and Dec. 2008 and Feb. 2009) but was criticized for delays in submitting detailed plans to parliament. There was concern at problems in the pension system among older voters, many of whom were angered when Aso criticized them for not taking better care of their health. By early 2009 there was widespread pressure for an early general election. In foreign relations, Aso moved to build bridges with China and met the Chinese premier for talks in Oct. 2008. In Feb. 2009 he visited President Obama, a meeting seen as a mutual confirmation of good relations between the two nations.

The Aug. 2009 elections to the House of Deputies saw the LDP lose to the Democratic Party of Japan, taking only 119 seats compared to their rivals’ 308. On 16 Sept. Aso was succeeded as prime minister by Yukio Hatoyama.

Later Life

Aso joined Shinzo Abe’s government in Dec. 2012 as deputy prime minister and minister of finance.

Atambayev, Almazbek (Kyrgyzstan)

Introduction

Almazbek Atambayev was sworn in as president on 1 Dec. 2011. His election represented the first peaceful handover of power since the country gained independence during the dissolution of the Soviet Union. He succeeded Roza Otunbayeva, who assumed the post on a temporary basis after the previous incumbent, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, was ousted in a violent uprising in April 2010. A successful entrepreneur, Atambayev has favoured closer ties with Russia.

Early Life

Atambayev was born on 17 Sept. 1956 in Chui, a northern region of what is now Kyrgyzstan. He studied at the Moscow Institute of Management, from where he graduated with a degree in economics. From 1983 until 1987, when the Kyrgyz Republic was still a constituent part of the Soviet Union, he served on the Supreme Council of the Republic.

In 1993, 2 years after the country had declared independence, Atambayev was one of the founders of the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan. Having established himself as a prosperous businessman in the post-Soviet era, he became chairman of the party in 1999. In 2000 he won 6% of the vote in a presidential election. In Dec. 2005 he was appointed minister of industry,

trade and tourism, but resigned 5 months later. In Nov. 2006 he was among the leaders of anti-government protests in the capital, Bishkek. He served as prime minister from March to Nov. 2007, and ran again for president in April 2009 but withdrew on the day of the ballot, citing electoral fraud.

Kurmanbek Bakiyev was overthrown in April 2010, prompting a wave of ethnic violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities in the south of the country. A national referendum approved a new constitution that weakened the authority of the president and shifted power towards the legislature. Parliamentary elections followed and a coalition government was established for the first time in the country’s history. Atambayev was appointed prime minister once more, a position he held until the presidential election in Oct. 2011.

Atambayev gained a comfortable victory at that election which, though criticized by some observers, was regarded as a significant democratic achievement.

Career Peak

Atambayev came to power in a country riven by ethnic division. He pledged to foster national unity and described Russia as the country’s ‘main strategic partner’. Soon after assuming office he said that he would look to close a US military base in the country when its lease expired. This policy was endorsed by parliament in June 2013, after which the base closed in June 2014.

In Sept. 2012 Atambayev appointed technocrat Zhanotor Satybaldiyev, a technocrat, as prime minister following the collapse of the coalition government in the wake of corruption allegations, a poor economic record and the resignation of former premier Omurbek Babanov. Further reports of corruption also prompted the fall of Satybaldiyev’s administration in March 2014 and the subsequent appointment of Dzhoomart Otorbayev as the new premier, although with no changes to other key ministerial portfolios. He in turn resigned in April 2015 and was succeeded by Temir Sariyev. In parliamentary elections the following Oct. Atambayev’s Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) was returned as the largest party with 38 seats and another coalition government under Sariyev’s premiership was formed.

In April 2016 Sooronbay Jeenbekov was sworn in as prime minister after Sariyev and his cabinet resigned having been accused of corruption by a parliamentary commission. Jeenbekov’s government also resigned in Oct., but he was reappointed and nominated a largely unchanged new administration that was approved by parliament and by Atambayev the following month. In a national referendum in Dec. about 80% of voters endorsed proposed constitutional amendments that included increasing the powers of the prime minister and the SDPK-dominated government. However, critics believed that the amendments would strengthen the executive at the expense of parliament and the judiciary.

In accordance with the constitution, Atambayev was only eligible to serve one 6 year term. On 24 Nov. 2017 he was replaced by Sooronbay Jeenbekov, also from the SDPK, as president.

Attlee, Clement (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Clement Attlee was British Labour prime minister between 1945 and 1951. A social reformer, under his administration an advanced welfare state was created. On the world scene, he oversaw the initial stages of dismantling the British Empire and the difficult transition to a new international role for Britain.

Early Life

Born on 3 Jan. 1883 in Putney, southwest London, Clement Richard Attlee graduated from Oxford University with a law degree and subsequently qualified as a barrister. For 15 years until 1922 he lived in the East End of London and it was his exposure during this period to poor living standards that confirmed in him his belief in social reform. He served in the army during World War I, rising to the rank of Major.

Attlee's political life began in earnest when he joined the socialist Fabian Society in 1907 and the Independent Labour Party the following year. By 1919 he was mayor of Stepney in east London and by 1922 he had entered the House of Commons as the member for Limehouse. Limehouse was to remain his constituency until 1950 when he became MP for West Walthamstow. He held junior ministerial posts in Britain's first Labour governments, the 1924 and 1929–31 administrations of Ramsay MacDonald. However, unhappy at MacDonald's decision in 1931 to head the national coalition government which included Liberals and Conservatives, Attlee resigned. Later in the year he was appointed deputy to the new Labour leader, George Lansbury, and replaced him in 1935 with strong trade union backing.

In the lead up to World War II, Attlee voiced his opposition to the aggression of Europe's fascist powers but he was reluctant to support extensive rearmament or conscription. He refused to serve in Chamberlain's wartime cabinet but was a supporter of Churchill, serving as Lord Privy Seal, Secretary for the Dominions, Lord President of the Council and deputy prime minister during Churchill's premiership.

Career Peak

In the post-war election of July 1945, despite massive public affection for Churchill, Attlee's Labour Party won a landslide victory on the promise of social change. Attlee became the first Labour prime minister with a majority in the Commons. His term of office proved to be one of the most significant of the twentieth century, both domestically and internationally.

On the home front, Attlee's administration paved the way for the welfare state, as set out in W. H. Beveridge's *Social Insurance and Allied Services Report* of 1942, and also the National Health Service, principally installed by Minister of Health Aneurin Bevan. In addition, Attlee undertook a massive programme of nationalization. By the end of his tenure the Bank of England, telegraphs, railways, coal mining, gas, electricity, iron and steel had all been taken out of private hands. This equated to around one fifth of the British economy. Attlee also approved increased spending on education, and the school leaving age was raised to 16. However, these reforms were expensive, especially so in the aftermath of World War II, and Chancellor Stafford Cripps imposed severe economic constraints from 1947 onwards eventually leading to devaluation. Discontent spread throughout the party (Bevan himself eventually resigned in protest at cutbacks) with a consequent loss of popular support.

Foreign policy, under the control of Ernest Bevin for most of Attlee's administration, saw the repositioning of Britain's role on the world stage. His term of office found the British Empire in its death throes. Attlee had become convinced of the need for self-rule on the Indian sub-continent following a trip he had made there in 1927. Independence was granted in 1947 to India and the new state of Pakistan (under the guidance of Louis Mountbatten, the last Indian Viceroy), followed by Burma (now Myanmar), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and British withdrawal from Palestine (paving the way for the creation of Israel). This transitional phase was far from easy, and numerous unresolved questions led to problems evident still today, as epitomized by the disputes between India and Pakistan and between Israel and the Palestinians.

Meanwhile, closer ties with European neighbours were established with the signing of the Brussels Treaty in March 1948, forming an alliance between the UK, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Belgium. The UK joined the Organization for European Economic Co-operation less than a month later and joined the Council of Europe in 1949 but there was strong resistance to joining the European Common Market. Closer relations also developed with the US in the face of the Soviet threat, much to the chagrin of many left-wingers within the Labour party. The US Marshall Plan of 1947 for European re-development was fully backed as was the creation in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Attlee's government was also integral to the creation in 1950 of the Colombo Plan for Asian economic development.

Attlee won the general election of 1950, but as a result of the worsening economic climate his majority was slashed. In an attempt to improve this situation, he returned to the polls in Oct. 1951 but the gamble failed and the Conservatives, under Winston Churchill, came to power.

Later Life

Attlee remained leader of the opposition until Dec. 1955 when he retired and became 1st Earl Attlee, Viscount Prestwood. Hugh Gaitskill succeeded him as Labour leader and Attlee went on to pen his memoirs before he died, in Westminster, on 8 Oct. 1967. Though often perceived as a rather staid public figure, he was intelligent and witty and his time in office was one of the most difficult of any British prime minister.

Aung San (Myanmar)

Introduction

Aung San, the father of modern Myanmar, led the anti-colonial movement in the 1940s, securing independence for his country through post-war negotiations with the UK. A revolutionary student and Japanese-sponsored rebel, Aung San managed to unite the Burmans and the disparate ethnic nationalities in a common struggle. Using both peaceful and military means, he forced the British administration to negotiate an organized transfer of power. His assassination the year before independence created a hero's cult. Aung San Sui Kyi, his third child with Daw Khin Kyi, has been associated with his achievements.

Early Life

Aung San was born on 13th Feb. 1915 at Natmauk in the central Burmese district of Magwe. His father, U Pha, a lawyer, and his mother, Daw Su, came from prosperous gentry families with a pedigree of resistance to colonial rule. He received his education in a monastic establishment and at the Vernacular High School in Natmauk and after at the National High School, Yenangaung. In 1932 Aung San began studying English Literature, Modern History and Political Science at Rangoon University. He became involved in politics through the students' union and edited the union magazine. A university strike in 1938 forced the authorities to revoke his expulsion, ordered for a provocative article. He was elected president of the Students' Union while continuing his studies in law.

In Oct. 1938 Aung San joined the Dohbama Asi-ayone ("We-Burmese" Association), a nationalist and militant political organization, known ironically as the Thakins (*Thakin*, or 'master'. being the term of address used for the British). In 1939 Aung San became general secretary of the newly formed Freedom Bloc—a confederation of parties seeking independence from colonial rule.

The outbreak of the World War II precipitated negotiations with the British. Aung San attended the Indian National Congress assembly at Ramgarh in 1940 with the intention of seeking international support for Burmese independence. His anti-British activism in Rangoon provoked a warrant for his arrest, forcing him underground and subsequently to China (though the warrant was revoked). In Amoy, now Xiamen, Japanese agents offered Aung San assistance. On his return to Burma, he gathered a group of young nationalists, later known as the 'Thirty Comrades', for military training in Japan. The Burma Independence Army (BIA) was formed in Bangkok in Dec. 1941 to assist the Japanese invasion of British-held Burma in 1942.

Career Peak

Rangoon was occupied on 8 March 1942 by Japanese forces and the BIA, commanded by Maj.-Gen. Aung San. The BIA grew in numbers during the takeover of the country and assumed the duties of local government under a Japanese administration. Aung San served as defence minister under the puppet regime of Ba Maw, relinquishing control of the BIA (transformed into the Burmese National Army) to Ne Win, the later dictator. Burma was declared sovereign on 1 Aug. 1943 but dissatisfaction with Japanese policies and treatment of the Burmese persuaded Aung San to approach the British in Nov. 1943. In 1944 he founded the Anti-Fascist Organization (AFO) in preparation for a general uprising against the Japanese on 27 March 1945. After the surrender of the Japanese in Aug. the AFO was reformed as the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), gaining widespread popular support. This convinced the British military commander, Lord Mountbatten, to defy the wishes of the returning colonial administration, which deemed Aung San a traitor, and re-appointed Sir Hubert Rance as governor. Rance's non-confrontational approach allowed for rapid negotiations with Aung San and the AFPFL.

In Sept. 1946 Aung San was appointed deputy chairman of the Executive Council of Burma. In this capacity, and as president of the AFPFL, he negotiated a schedule for Burmese independence with the British government in London. The Aung San-Attlee Agreement was signed on 27 Jan. 1947, securing total independence in a year's time. The issue of ethnic divisions was settled in Feb. when Aung San signed the Panglong Agreement with leaders of the nationalities, which supported the creation of a unified independent

Burma. Elections to the constitutional assembly were held in April 1947, giving the AFPFL 196 of the 202 seats.

On 19 July 1947 Aung San and six members of the Executive Council, including his brother, U Ba Win, were assassinated under the orders of U Saw, a former prime minister who opposed Aung San's compromises with the British. U Saw was subsequently tried and executed for the murders. Burma achieved independence from the UK on 4 Jan. 1948.

Auriol, Vincent (France)

Introduction

The first of the two presidents of the Fourth Republic, Auriol's 7 year term was blighted by post-war crises and the Indochina War. Friction with the communist party and the Gaullists, coupled with an alarming succession of prime ministers, rendered Auriol's period of rule unstable.

Early Life

The son of a baker, Vincent Auriol was born on 27 Aug. 1884 in Revel, near Toulouse. After studying law in Toulouse he joined the bar. At the time of his studies Auriol was already embracing socialism. He was involved with the Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière (International Workers Party; SFIO) later the Parti Socialiste, since its beginnings in 1905. In May 1914 he became Socialist deputy for Muret, Haute-Garonne, and was elected to the Chamber of Deputies. Between 1919–35 Auriol led the parliamentary body of the SFIO. From 1936–37, as finance minister in Léon Blum's Front Populaire government, he devalued the franc. From the following year Auriol was minister of justice under Camille Chautemps, who was prime minister from 1937–38, before rejoining Blum for his second term in 1938.

At the Fall of France, a vote was held on 10 July 1940 to determine whether Pétain should gain full control of the Vichy government. 80 members voted against, including Auriol. He was subsequently arrested and imprisoned. In 1943 he went first to London and then to Algiers. After the War, de Gaulle appointed him to the provisional government. Between 1945–46 he presided over two Constituent Assemblies and the National Assembly until Jan. 1947.

Career Peak

On 16 Jan. 1947 Auriol became the first president of the Fourth Republic. Despite having gained a reputation as a political mediator, he was unable to prevent friction in his coalition government. Both the communists and Gaullists proved incompatible and the tripartite coalition came to an end in May 1947 when the communist ministers were dismissed.

Instability was caused by a succession of prime ministers, who resigned or were replaced after short periods in office. During Auriol's presidency, there were eleven different prime ministers with sixteen changes of government. Their periods in office ranged from a maximum of a year to a minimum of 6 days. Between 16 Jan. 1947–16 Jan. 1954 the prime ministers were Paul Ramadier, Robert Schuman (twice), André Marie, Henri Queuille (three times), Jules Moch, René Mayer (twice), Georges Bidault, René Pleven (twice), Edgar Faure, Antoine Pinay and Joseph Laniel.

In the troubled post-war years, economic hardship provoked a culture of strikes and industrial action. Attempts at resolving problems were met with PCF obstruction and violent demonstrations. In Dec. 1947, after weeks of strikes, 16 people were killed when a sabotaged train was derailed. Communists had believed the train contained security forces on their way to break up the strikes. On the same day there were 15 other sabotages and six more derailments. An added difficulty was France's war with Indochina (1946–54), which drained the country's meagre resources. At the end of his term, Auriol declined to stand again. In the 1954 elections, René Coty was elected president.

Later Life

Auriol was a strong opponent of de Gaulle's Fifth Republic and in 1960 he retired from politics. He died on 1 Jan. 1966.

Ayrault, Jean-Marc (France)

Introduction

Jean-Marc Ayrault was appointed prime minister on 16 May 2012 by President François Hollande. Ayrault served as president of the cross-party Socialist group in the National Assembly from 1997 to 2012 and was mayor of Nantes between 1989 and 2012.

Early Life

Jean-Marc Ayrault was born on 25 Jan. 1950 in Maulévrier, Maine-et-Loire. In 1971 he graduated in German from Nantes University before gaining a teaching diploma and becoming a German teacher. He taught at Angevine College in Saint-Herblain, a suburb of Nantes, from 1973 until 1986.

In 1971 Ayrault joined the Socialist Party (PS) and affiliated himself with Jean Poperen, who unsuccessfully challenged François Mitterrand for the party leadership that year. From 1976–82 he served as a regional councillor for Loire-Atlantique and in 1977 was elected mayor of Saint-Herblain, a post he held for 11 years. In 1979 he joined the PS national committee and in 1981 its executive committee. In 1986 he was elected to the National Assembly to represent Loire-Atlantique, a seat he held for the next six legislative elections.

In 1989 Ayrault became mayor of Nantes, winning re-election in 1995, 2001 and 2008. In 1997 he was elected president of the parliamentary Socialist group, the same year as he received a 6 month suspended prison sentence after the Nantes government awarded a newspaper contract without a public tender. He was a special adviser to François Hollande on his successful presidential campaign in 2012 and was subsequently appointed premier.

Career Peak

Ayrault's principal challenge was to rejuvenate the economy and improve the public finances. Together with Hollande, he pushed the European Commission to support the Greek economy. Domestically, he lowered the retirement age from 62 to 60 for some workers, cut ministerial salaries by up to 30% and announced plans to spend €2.5bn. by 2017 to help the poor. His government also introduced new capital gains and inheritance taxes, an exit tax for entrepreneurs, a temporary 75% tax on annual incomes over a €1m., an income tax hike from 41% to 45% on salaries over €150,000 and increased taxes on stock options, dividends and financial transactions.

Ayrault resigned as prime minister on 31 March 2014 after the Socialist Party suffered considerable losses in local elections. He was replaced a day later by the serving interior minister, Manuel Valls.

Later Life

Ayrault returned to government in Feb. 2016 when he was appointed minister of foreign affairs and international development, serving in the cabinet of Manuel Valls.

Ayub Khan, Muhammad (Pakistan)

Introduction

Muhammad Ayub Khan, Pakistan's president from 1958–68, was the first leader of Pakistan to impose direct military rule. His 'Great Decade', which saw steady industrialization and an opening up of the economy to the West, but he lost support over the unsuccessful Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 and his monopolization of state power.

Early Life

Muhammad Ayub Khan was born on 14 May 1907 in Hazara in the northwest of Pakistan. He was born to Mir Dad Khan, a non-commissioned officer in the British Indian army. Educated at schools in Saria Saleh and Haripur, he went on to study at Aligarh University in Uttar Pradesh, India. Before taking his

exams he was selected for training at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, England, where he spent 2 years (1926–28). In 1928 he was commissioned in the British Indian army. In the second world war Khan fought as second-in-command of a regiment in Burma and then as a battalion commander in India. When India gained independence in 1947 he joined the newly-formed Pakistani army, rising to become Maj.-Gen. in 1948 and the first Commander in Chief of Pakistan's armed forces in 1951.

In 1954 Ayub Khan was appointed defence minister in the government of Muhammad Ali Bogra, a post which he held until 1958. During this time he played a key role in Pakistan's involvement with a series of US-sponsored military alliances (CENTO and SEATO).

On 7 Oct. 1958 Iskander Mirza, aided by Khan, took power in a coup, declaring martial law. Mirza gained the presidency while Khan became Chief Martial Law Administrator. Relations between Mirza and Khan broke down following the coup and on 28 Oct. 1958 Khan dismissed Mirza and took power as Pakistan's president, retaining his role as Chief Martial Law Administrator while giving himself the title of Field Marshall.

Career Peak

Ayub Khan's presidential rule, which was confirmed by referendum in Feb. 1960, began promisingly. The public were generally welcoming towards him and regarded his take-over as a signal that political instability was at an end. Khan moved the capital from Karachi to Islamabad, where he constructed a modern, spacious city, and began a wide-ranging series of reforms in the agricultural, social and educational sectors. In the economic sphere he pursued a successful pro-market policy which encouraged foreign investment. His agricultural policies, however, came under fire for their bias towards the land-owning classes and powerful industrialists.

Realizing the need to lift the state of emergency and to normalize politics, he appointed a constitutional commission. Martial law was lifted on 8 June 1962. The new constitution introduced a system of 'Basic Democracy' which extended limited political power through a system of indirect election while maintaining military control over the judiciary and the civil service.

The US' even-handed support for India and Pakistan and the arming of India's military after the Indo-China border confrontation (1962) prompted Khan to develop closer ties with China, from whom Pakistan subsequently received military aid. At the same time, Pakistan's relations with India deteriorated as the situation in the contested region of Jammu and Kashmir worsened. In 1965 these tensions culminated in a brief war. After the UN called for a ceasefire, Ayub Khan agreed to the Tashkent declaration which established revised boundaries for Indian and Pakistani territory. This was viewed by Pakistanis as a capitulation on the gains made during the military conflict.

Ayub Khan retained power in the 1965 presidential elections. His main contender, Fatimah Jinnah (sister of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan) gained fewer votes than expected, prompting allegations of vote-rigging. The economic consequences of the war led to increasing dissatisfaction with Khan's rule. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, his right-hand man, turned against him and established the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) while in East Pakistan, the growing strength of the Awami League under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman increasingly undermined Khan. In spite of the unrest, in 1968 Khan chose to celebrate 10 years of power, or what he called the 'Great Decade'. This ill-judged celebration led to calls for strike action. In Jan. 1969 a Democratic Action Committee, an alliance of opposition parties, was formed with the single objective of ousting Khan. Khan initially declared that he would not seek re-election in 1970 yet the protest continued, forcing him to stand down. On 25 March 1969 martial law was re-introduced and Ayub Khan resigned, handing power to Yahya Khan, the Commander in Chief of the army.

Later Life

Having suffered poor health from 1968, Ayub Khan died in 1974.

Azarov, Mykola (Ukraine)

Introduction

Mykola Azarov was appointed prime minister on 11 March 2010. A close ally of President Viktor Yanukovich, his predecessor as leader of the Party of

Regions, Azarov was regarded as a technocrat. Ethnically Russian, he was a veteran of the country's turbulent political system, having previously served as deputy prime minister, foreign minister and, on two occasions, acting prime minister.

Early Life

Mykola Azarov was born on 17 Dec. 1947 in the town of Kaluga, in what is now Russia. He studied geology at Moscow State University before working at a coal mine in the Russian city of Tula. In 1984 he moved to Donetsk to serve first as deputy director and later as director of the Ukrainian State Geological Institute. He became a member of Ukraine's parliament in 1994 and 2 years later was appointed head of the state tax authority.

During his 6 years there, Azarov had a reputation for authoritarianism and controversy. It was alleged that he promoted electoral fraud and the intimidation of journalists to secure the re-election of President Leonid Kuchma in 1999. Azarov staunchly denied the accusations, citing a plot against him by rivals.

In 2002 the European Choice parliamentary group, of which he was chairman, nominated Azarov for prime minister. He declined and stood aside for Yanukovich, who assumed both the leadership of the Party of Regions and the premiership. Yanukovich appointed Azarov as deputy prime minister and finance minister in his first cabinet, with Azarov serving until 2005 and then again in 2006–07. His most notable reform was to bring the variable tax rate on personal income down to a uniform flat rate.

During the political upheaval that accompanied the Orange Revolution over the winter of 2004–05, Azarov twice served briefly as acting prime minister. After masterminding Yanukovich's victorious presidential election campaign in 2010, he assumed the leadership of the Party of Regions and was confirmed as prime minister by parliament on 11 March 2010.

Career Peak

Azarov declared that his primary task was to restore the struggling economy. Admitting that 'the coffers are empty', he pledged to push through a programme of budgetary restraints to encourage the IMF to resume funding suspended in 2009. However, in Nov. 2011 the IMF postponed loan instalment negotiations because of a lack of progress by the Azarov government on pension reform and the removal of domestic gas subsidies.

Criticized by opponents for his poor grasp of the Ukrainian language, Azarov promised that government affairs would be conducted in Ukrainian.

Following the Party of Regions' victory in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2012, President Yanukovich nominated Azarov in Dec. for a new term as prime minister of a reconstituted government. However, he resigned in Jan. 2014 amid widespread social unrest caused by the ongoing 'Euromaidan' protests with demonstrators demanding closer EU integration. Azarov had previously rejected conditions to joining the European Union (including the decriminalization of same sex marriage), whilst seeking to improve strained economic relations with Moscow.

Azikiwe, Nnamdi (Nigeria)

Introduction

Nnamdi Azikiwe, popularly known as 'Zik', was the first governor-general of Nigeria between 1960–63. He served as president from 1963 to 1966, though the post held few significant powers.

Early Life

Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe was born on 16 Nov. 1904 in Zunguru, Northern Nigeria. His opposition to the colonial power was confirmed when his father lost his job as a civilian clerk in a British army regiment. He attended the Roman Catholic and Church Missionary Society's Anglican missions at Onitsha, after which he studied in Lagos and Calabar. He was fluent in the Ibo, Yoruba, and English languages besides his mother tongue, Hausa.

After working in the treasury department in Lagos from 1921–25 he headed for the United States where he obtained his MA in political science from Lincoln University in 1930. His first book, on international relations,

was published in 1931. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1934 with an MSc in Anthropology.

For 3 years, he was editor of the *African Morning Post* in Sierra Leone. Back in Nigeria in 1937, he set up a number of newspapers and in his role as editor of the *West African Pilot*, he fought colonialism. He was the founder member and, after 1946, leader of the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons.

Career Peak

Azikiwe was premier of Eastern Nigeria until the 1959 pre-independence federal elections, after which his party formed a coalition with the Northern Peoples' Congress. On Nigerian independence in 1960 he became governor-general. He was made president in 1963 and was one of the founders of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He was deposed by a military coup in Jan. 1966, led by General Aguiyi-Ironsi.

After a second military counter-coup in June 1966 Azikiwe came out of retirement to support the Biafran cause in the civil war that followed the 1967 declaration of independence by the country's Eastern Region. However, in 1969 he changed his mind to argue for reunification and set about opposing the Biafran ruling party until its collapse in 1970.

Later Life

Having published his memoirs in 1970, Azikiwe became chancellor of the University of Lagos in 1972. In 1978 he founded the Nigerian People's Party to fight in the presidential elections of 1979 and 1983. Unsuccessful on both occasions he retired from politics and died on 11 May 1996 at his home in Nsukka.

Aznar, José María (Spain)

Introduction

José María Aznar López was elected prime minister in 1996, representing the right-wing Partido Popular (PP; formally the Francoist Alianza Popular). He ended a 14-year rule by the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) led by Felipe González Márquez. Aznar's market-led economic policies and labour reforms brought increased prosperity, lower unemployment and successful entry into the single European currency, but he failed to resolve the ongoing dispute with the Basque nationalists, ETA. He has also faced public unease over his support of the USA's aggressive policy towards Iraq. Following terrorist attacks on Madrid shortly before the elections of March 2004, Aznar's PP were unexpectedly voted out of government.

Early Life

Aznar was born on 25 Feb. 1953 in Madrid. His father and grandfather both held government posts under General Franco. Aznar studied law at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, after which he worked as a tax inspector in Valladolid. He became active in the Francoist Alianza Popular in the 1970s, becoming secretary-general of his local branch in 1979 and deputy of the Avila region in 1982. After a year as vice-president of the newly created PP, Aznar was elected party president in 1989. In 1995 Aznar survived a car bomb attack thought to be perpetrated by ETA.

Continued re-election of the PSOE at the expense of the Alianza Popular between 1982–96 was largely a consequence of the popular distrust of any party with Francoist connections. Aznar decided to reinvent the party. With a new name, he attracted a younger membership and pulled the PP to the centre of the political scale. His 1996 electoral campaign benefited from emerging PSOE corruption scandals even though the PSOE's campaign warned Aznar's leadership would threaten health, welfare and trade unions. The PP claimed 38.2% of votes, narrowly beating the PSOE. Without a majority, Aznar was forced to seek the backing of the Catalan nationalist Convergència i Unió party (Convergence and Union) and the Partido Nacionalista Vasco, promising regional concessions.

Career Peak

On election Aznar pledged to reduce an unemployment rate of 23% and lower Spain's debt using market-based economic reforms. He implemented austerity measures to meet the economic criteria of the Maastricht Treaty. He continued the PSOE's privatization policy, selling the steel industry. He reformed employment laws, which had kept a third of Spaniards on short-term contracts, and reduced the top level income tax. Aznar's first term was economically successful. Unemployment was down to 15% by 2000, the economy grew by a fifth, Spain qualified for the single currency and its standing in the EU strengthened. Aznar appointed several independents to his government, including some from the left, thus easing Spaniards' fears of a return to right-wing dictatorship.

In 2000 elections Aznar won a second term and an absolute PP majority with 183 out of 350 parliamentary seats. His policy focused on encouraging small- and medium-sized businesses and continuing labour reforms. Companies were given financial incentives to employ 16–30-year-olds, women (especially those returning to work after childbirth) and the over-55s.

Despite economic success, the overwhelming issue was combating continued ETA violence, which had intensified over the 2000 election period. His initial headline tactics appeared to be working when ETA announced a ceasefire in Sept. 1998 but this was revoked 14 months later. 2000 saw 33 people killed by ETA terrorism. A lower vote for Euskal Herritarrok, ETA's political coalition, in the May 2001 regional elections did not benefit the PP since nationalist sentiments remained high. Aznar rejected calls for multi-party peace talks on the recent Northern Ireland model and calls for a referendum on Basque separation. He went further in Aug. 2002, when a reconvened parliament voted 295 to 10 to ban ETA's political wing, Herri Batasuna, a move bolstered by a court ruling suspending party activities for 3 years.

On an international level, increasingly sour relations with Morocco came to a head in July 2002 when Moroccan troops landed on the uninhabited island of Perejil, 200 metres off the Moroccan coast. Spanish troops quickly retook the island, but the discord highlighted tensions over Spain's ownership of two enclaves on the Moroccan mainland, Ceuta and Melilla. Morocco had withdrawn its ambassador from Spain in Oct. 2001.

Aznar was criticized for his handling of the Prestige oil spillage off the coast of Galicia in Nov. 2002. During the preparations for war in Iraq in early 2003, he received further domestic criticism for his support of President Bush's policy towards Saddam Hussein. Aznar survived a secret parliamentary ballot by 184 votes to 164 but popular opinion remained largely anti-war. In May 2003 Spain co-sponsored a draft UN resolution with the US and UK on Iraq's post-war future. Having announced his intention to step down before the March 2004 general elections, his nominated successor and first deputy prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, was chosen as leader of the PP in Sept. 2003.

On 11 March 2004, Madrid's rail network was hit by a series of terrorist attacks that killed 191. Aznar's government blamed ETA in the aftermath but evidence soon pointed to a link with North Africa. At the general elections 3 days later, the PP suffered a backlash and were unexpectedly defeated by the PSOE. Aznar left office on 17 April 2004.

Bachelet, Michelle (Chile)

Introduction

Michelle Bachelet began her second term as president on 11 March 2014 following her electoral victory over centre-right opponent Evelyn Matthei in Dec. 2013. Leading the centre-left Nueva Mayoría (New Majority) coalition, Bachelet campaigned on a platform of addressing inequality through an ambitious programme of tax, educational and constitutional reforms.

Early Life

Verónica Michelle Bachelet Jeria was born on 29 Sept. 1951 in Santiago, the daughter of an air force general and an anthropologist. In 1962 the family moved to Washington, D.C., in the USA where her father was assigned to the Chilean embassy. Returning to Chile in 1964, Bachelet attended the Javiera Carrera Lyceum girls' school in Santiago. She then studied medicine at the University of Chile, where she joined the Socialist Youth Movement.

Following the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende's socialist government, her father was arrested for treason and later died in prison. Bachelet and her mother were arrested in Jan. 1975 and held at the notorious Villa Grimaldi in Santiago. Released later that month, they fled to Australia and then to East Germany, where Bachelet continued her medical studies at the Humboldt University in East Berlin.

Returning to Chile in 1979, Bachelet completed her medical degree at the University of Chile in 1983, specializing in paediatrics and public health. As a result of her family background, she found it hard to find employment but eventually gained work with various non-governmental organizations helping the children of the tortured and disappeared.

From the mid-1980s she became actively involved with the Socialist Party (PS). With the re-establishment of democracy in 1990 Bachelet began working for the health ministry and served as undersecretary of public health between March 1994 and July 1997. She attended the National Academy of Strategic and Political Studies in 1996 and the Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D.C., the following year. A member of the PS central committee from 1995, Bachelet joined the party's political committee in 1998 and worked on Ricardo Lagos' campaign for the presidency in 1999. He appointed her health minister in March 2000 and in Jan. 2002 she was given the defence portfolio.

On 15 Jan. 2006 Bachelet won a run-off against Sebastián Piñera with 53.5% of the vote to become the nation's first female president. Although her centre-left Concertación coalition was popular, it made only modest inroads into reducing inequality and faced accusations of incompetence, mismanagement of public funds and the slow handling of the aftermath of the Feb. 2010 earthquake that struck just 11 days before the end of Bachelet's term. Nonetheless, she left office with an 84% approval rating.

In April 2010 she established the Fundación Dialoga think tank and in Sept. 2010 was appointed to head the newly created UN Women, a body working for female empowerment. In March 2013 she announced her resignation, returning to Chile to seek a second presidential term. In the first round of polling on 17 Nov. 2013 she secured 47% of the vote, forcing a run-off against Evelyn Matthei. On 15 Dec. 2013 Bachelet received 62% of the vote and became the first leader since the end of military rule to attain two terms in office.

Career Peak

On returning to power Bachelet pledged to overhaul the country's educational, political and economic structures, many of which date back to Augusto Pinochet's administration. She promised free tuition for the poorest 70% of higher education students and was expected to reform the electoral system and introduce a new constitution to replace the one drawn up in 1980. During the first few months of her term, she pursued a range of proposals, particularly ambitious tax changes (including raising corporate tax rates) and a complex education reform, with the aim of promoting economic growth and fairness. However, her approval rating among voters has since dropped sharply in response to revelations of corruption scandals involving members of her family. Since the constitution prohibits presidents from serving consecutive terms, Bachelet was ineligible to stand in the 2018 presidential elections. On 11 March 2018 she was succeeded by Sebastián Piñera of Chile Vamos, who had previously been president in 2010–14.

Badawi, Abdullah (Malaysia)

Introduction

Tun Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi succeeded Mahathir Mohamad as prime minister in Oct. 2003. A less abrasive figure than Mahathir, he espoused moderate Islamic policies and social inclusion. He largely continued Mahathir's economic policies, making Malaysia's economy one of the most stable in the region, and sought to improve relations with Singapore after decades of fractiousness between the two countries. Badawi secured another term in March 2008 but with a much reduced majority. This weak showing led to his resignation in April 2009.

Early Life

Badawi was born on 26 Nov. 1939 on the island of Penang. In 1964 he graduated in Islamic studies from the University of Malaya. Badawi then entered the civil service, working in the department for public services until 1969 when he moved to the National Operation Council, which held executive powers after race riots that year. From 1971–73 he served as director general of the ministry of culture, Youth and Sports and in 1974 was made deputy secretary general of the department.

Badawi left the civil service in 1978 to pursue his political ambitions, having joined the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) in 1965. His father had been a co-founder of the party. He entered parliament as the member for Kepala Batas and was named parliamentary secretary to the Federal Territory ministry in the government of Mahathir Mohamad. In 1980 he was promoted to deputy minister for the department. From 1981–84 he was minister in the prime minister's department, then minister of education until 1986, minister of defence from 1986–87 and minister of foreign affairs from 1991–99. In 1999 he was made deputy prime minister with responsibility for home affairs, following the sacking and subsequent imprisonment of Mahathir's previous deputy, Anwar Ibrahim. Within UMNO, Badawi had become a member of the party's supreme council in 1981, and was then appointed party vice president 3 years later and party deputy president in 1999.

When Mahathir resigned after 22 years in power, at the end of Oct. 2003, Badawi assumed the premiership.

Career Peak

On taking office, Badawi was regarded as a less controversial figure than his predecessor. With a buoyant Malaysian economy, he announced few major policy changes. In addition to the premiership and home affairs portfolio (part of which he gave up in March 2004), Badawi also took control of the finance ministry.

Having no electoral mandate, Badawi called elections for March 2004. Though expected to win, many observers believed that the nation's growing Islamic fundamentalist parties (the Islamic Party of Malaysia, or PAS, being the largest) would gain support. The ruling National Front Coalition, of which UMNO is the main element, went on to win by a landslide, with the PAS losing power in one of two states it had previously controlled and only narrowly retaining power in the other. Opposition parties claimed electoral irregularities but failed to provide evidence. Armed with electoral success and a large parliamentary majority, Badawi continued to espouse moderate Islamic politics.

Badawi promised to crack down on the official corruption that blighted much of Mahathir's tenure. However, opponents were disappointed when many of Mahathir's key officials were retained in Badawi's first cabinet. Nevertheless, he deviated from some of the policies of the Mahathir era, for which he was criticized publicly by his predecessor. In March 2006 he introduced a new, multi-billion dollar plan with the goal of helping Malaysia to achieve developed-nation status by 2020. The new plan did not dismantle the longstanding positive-discrimination scheme for ethnic Malays, but did switch emphasis from grand infrastructure projects to tackling rural poverty and promoting education. In the international arena, he pursued closer ties with neighbouring Singapore, although in April 2006 he abandoned plans for a new bridge to the island state (a scheme that Mahathir had championed when in office).

In Nov. 2007, in the largest anti-government protests in almost a decade, thousands of demonstrators marched in Kuala Lumpur demanding reform of the electoral system. The elections of March 2008 were marred by allegations from Badawi's leading rivals of vote rigging. The National Front Coalition suffered its worst results since the 1960s. Its share of the parliamentary vote fell from two-thirds to a little over a half while at the state level it lost control of five assemblies. Badawi stood down as prime minister on 3 April 2009.

Bajnai, Gordon (Hungary)

Introduction

Gordon Bajnai took office as prime minister in April 2009, following the resignation of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány. A career banker, Bajnai had

previously served in the ministry of economics and pledged to introduce a raft of economic reforms. He left office following Fidesz's landslide victory in the general election in April 2010.

Early Life

Born on 5 March 1968 in the southern Hungarian town of Szeged, György Gordon Bajnai was raised in Baja. He studied at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences (now Corvinus University), graduating from the international relations department in 1991. He entered the banking sector, working from 1991–93 at Creditum Financial Consulting Ltd. Following a 1993 internship at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London, he joined Eurocorp International Finance Ltd (then under the directorship of Ferenc Gyurcsány).

From 1995–2000 Bajnai was managing director and then deputy chief executive officer of brokerage firm CA-IB Securities, where he oversaw the listing of several major companies on the stock exchange. From 2000–05 he was chief executive officer of Wallis ZRT, a trade and investment group with extensive holdings. During this period he served as a member of the board of directors of Graboplast, a flooring firm in which Wallis ZRT acquired a majority shareholding, and oversaw the liquidation of poultry-producing company Hajdu-Bet.

Bajnai became president of Budapest Airport Inc. in 2005, when he was also appointed to the supervisory committee of Zwack Inc. and became a member of the economic council of Corvinus University. On 1 July 2006 Prime Minister Gyurcsány appointed him head of the National Development Agency as part of a drive to prepare Hungary for eurozone membership. Bajnai became local government minister in 2007. In Oct. 2008, after the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz) left the coalition government in protest at the slowing of economic reforms, Bajnai's department was renamed the ministry for national development and economy.

In March 2009, against a background of political deadlock, Gyurcsány announced that he would stand down and pass the premiership to the candidate with the greatest parliamentary support. On 30 March 2009 Bajnai won the backing of both the ruling Socialist Party (MSZP) and the SzDSz for his manifesto of economic reforms that combined cuts in welfare benefits with a stimulus package for business. Presenting himself as politically independent, Bajnai promised not to stand for re-election in polling scheduled for April 2010. On 14 April 2009 Gyurcsány initiated a constructive vote of no confidence and resigned in favour of Bajnai.

Career Peak

Bajnai was sworn in as prime minister on 14 April 2009 with 204 votes in favour and none against. He emphasized the severity of Hungary's economic crisis, predicting that the economy could shrink by up to 6% over the following year and advocating stringent austerity measures to reverse the decline. He identified his primary task as crisis management and announced that his new cabinet was selected on the basis of expertise rather than party allegiance. His early moves to cut state benefits, restructure taxes and invest in industry were well received by international markets. However, he faced severe challenges in winning public acceptance of his welfare reforms, especially changes to pension and benefit entitlement. He did not contest the general election of April 2010, having previously announced that he would not hold office for more than a year. He was succeeded by Viktor Orbán of Fidesz on 29 May 2010.

Bakili Muluzi, Elson (Malaŵi)

Introduction

Dr. Bakili Muluzi was president of Malaŵi from May 1994–May 2004. He succeeded Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, who had ruled Malaŵi in an increasingly autocratic fashion since independence. A former protégé of Banda, Muluzi emerged as leader of the southern-dominated United Democratic Front in the country's first multi-party elections. Internationally respected for avoiding the dictatorial mistakes of his predecessor and many of his neighbours, Muluzi struggled to improve the living standards of one of Africa's poorest nations. Persuaded not to seek a constitutional amendment,

Muluzi stepped down after two terms on the election of his named successor, Bingu wa Mutharika.

A Muslim, Muluzi has two wives (one separated) and seven children.

Early Life

Elson Bakili Muluzi was born on 17 March 1943 in Machinga, Southern Province, the son of Chitula Muluzi and Salile Abiti Sumani. Educated at Malosa Secondary School, Machinga District, Muluzi continued his education in Europe at the Bolton College of Education, England and the Thisted College of Further Education in Denmark. In 1973 he was appointed principal of Nasawa Technical College in Chiradzulu District, near Blantyre.

Entering politics in 1975, Muluzi was elected to the National Assembly as member for Machinga. The following year he joined the cabinet as junior minister for youth and culture, soon rising to education minister and minister without portfolio. Muluzi's influence was recognized when he became secretary-general of the sole legal party, the Malaŵi Congress Party (MCP). In 1981 he was abruptly demoted to minister of transport and communications by President Hastings Banda. Muluzi resigned from the government and left politics in 1982, turning his attention to business. His success brought him positions at the Road Transport Association and the Malaŵi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Involvement with the underground political opposition led him to found the United Democratic Party in 1992. Calls, led by rights campaigner Chakufwa Chihana, for an end to the one-party state brought legalization of political parties in 1993 after a national referendum. In multi-party elections in May 1994 Muluzi's renamed United Democratic Front (UDF) took 85 out of 177 seats in the National Assembly. Banda's MCP won 56 seats and the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) took 36 seats. Muluzi defeated Banda and two other opponents in presidential elections, gaining 47% of the vote.

Career Peak

Tortuous negotiations between the three elected parties resulted in a coalition between Muluzi's UDF and AFORD. Chihana accepted Muluzi's offer of a new position—second vice-president—despite objections in the National Assembly and the press to this disregard of the constitution. Muluzi gave Justin Malewezi, a Banda loyalist, the vice-presidency.

Ethnic, linguistic and social divisions dominated the 1994 and 1999 elections. Each of the major parties had clear geographic constituencies: the UDF's heartland was the populous Southern Region, where Muluzi held strong support from Muslims and the Yao, his ethnic group; AFORD represented the well-educated, less populated north while the MCP controlled the Chewa-dominated Central Region, Banda's birthplace.

Muluzi placed Banda under house arrest in 1995 on suspicion of organizing the murder of four ministers in 1993. A corruption case against the ex-president was cut short by his ill-health and death in 1997. Muluzi altered his attitude towards Banda, declaring a week of national mourning and giving him a state funeral.

Malaŵi's relations with her international creditors had been strained under Banda. In 1998 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) praised Muluzi's government for its economic reform programme and approved a US\$27 m. loan. Concerns over corruption and fraud prompted criticism from the British government in Oct. 2000. Muluzi responded by sacking three senior ministers including Cassim Chilumpha, the education minister, after a damning report from the Public Accounts Committee. The report particularly condemned corrupt and wasteful contracts agreed by the education ministry.

The UDF narrowly missed an outright majority in the 1999 parliamentary elections, though Muluzi defeated Gwanda Chakuamba, the MCP/AFORD candidate. Violent opposition to the result focused on accusations of failure to register tens of thousands of voters in the MCP and AFORD heartlands in the centre and north, though international observers supported the result. Refusing to accept the result, Chakuamba had expected to win by running with the popular Chihana, whose reformist party lost seats through its alliance with the party of the old order. In 2000 Chakuamba was suspended for a year from the National Assembly for disrespect towards the president and for boycotting sittings.

In 2002 Malaŵi suffered its worse famine for 50 years; three-quarters of the population faced starvation. The government's reluctance to admit the scale of the problem delayed foreign aid. In July 2002 Italy and Germany announced debt relief measures totalling US\$500,000 despite the IMF suspension of loans over allegations of corruption and bad management. In Dec. Muluzi negotiated a US\$50 m. loan from the World Bank, pledging to cut costs and continue efforts to expunge corruption in government.

Fears that Muluzi would attempt to amend the constitution to allow him to seek a third term provoked violent clashes between opposition and UDF supporters in June 2002. Religious leaders, both Christian and Muslim, were particularly prominent in advising the president not to follow the path of his predecessor, who declared himself 'president for life' in 1972. In April 2003 he announced that he would step down as president and endorsed Bingu wa Mutharika, his economic planning minister. Support for Mutharika, who performed badly in the 1999 presidential election, was bolstered by a major cabinet reshuffle that excluded several opposition members, including Chihana.

The turn in Malaŵi's economic fortunes was marked by Muluzi's approval of the resumption of maize exports in July 2003. Economic improvements ended problems with the IMF, which agreed a US\$9.2 m. loan and short-term assistance. The IMF decision encouraged European donors to resume aid programmes halted in 2001.

In Aug. 2003 several prominent UDF members split from the party, forming the National Democratic Alliance. However, the speaker of the National Assembly expelled the rebels, including former education minister Brown Mpinganjira, for quitting the party for which they had been elected. Vice-President Justin Malewezi defected to the People's Progressive Movement in Jan. 2004 but Muluzi was barred from sacking him without impeachment.

The run-up to elections in May 2004 was dominated by the opposition's failure to select a joint candidate. AIDS, previously a taboo subject, was an important campaign issue after Muluzi announced that his brother had died of an AIDS-related condition. Muluzi clashed with the EU election observers, threatening to deport them for bias and interference. The observers claimed serious flaws in the election that gave the UDF's Mutharika 35% of the vote, defeating John Tembo, with 27%, and Gwanda Chakuamba, with 26%. Both Tembo and Chakuamba rejected the result, demanding a recount. Nevertheless, Mutharika was installed as president on 24 May 2004.

Balaguer, Joaquín (Dominican Republic)

Introduction

A lawyer and writer, Joaquín Balaguer served as president from 1960–62, 1966–78 and 1986–96. Over seven terms, he outlasted all of his Latin American contemporaries with the exception of Fidel Castro.

Early Life

Joaquín Antonio Balaguer Ricardo was born on 1 Sept. 1906 in the northern town of Navarette. He studied law at the University of Santo Domingo, later gaining a PhD from the University of Paris. Following a short stint as a journalist, he moved into politics in 1930 when he was appointed Attorney General in the Court of Properties.

Balaguer held numerous posts during the dictatorship of Gen. Rafael Leonides Trujillo, including undersecretary of foreign relations (1937), secretary of education (1949–55) and secretary of state of foreign relations (1953–56). In 1957 he became vice-president and when Gen. Trujillo's brother, Héctor, resigned his nominal role as president in 1960, Balaguer was sworn in as his successor.

Career Peak

Initially, Balaguer was the puppet of the dictator, lacking little power in his own right. However, following Rafael Trujillo's assassination in 1961, Balaguer adopted a more independent stance. His attempted reforms, though, met with opposition from both hard-line Trujillistas and liberal reformers, who deemed his proposals too weak. Balaguer held power until a military coup in 1962 forced him into exile in New York and then Puerto Rico.

US intervention in 1965 ended the Dominican Republic's brief civil war and the following year Balaguer returned to run in the presidential election against Juan Bosch. The US president, Lyndon B. Johnson, supported Balaguer as a champion against communism. Balaguer duly won at the polls, securing re-election in 1970 and 1974. In these elections, the

Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), the only viable opposition party, boycotted proceedings. Balaguer's 12 years in power from 1966 were marked by repression, though his tenure was considered less brutal than that of Trujillo.

Public work schemes, foreign investment, foreign borrowing and tourism all contributed to economic expansion. However, prosperity proved short lived. By the late 1970s growth had slowed and the country faced rising inflation and unemployment.

At the 1978 presidential election, Balaguer was defeated by Antonio Guzmán Fernández of the PRD and 4 years later he lost out to Salvador Jorge Blanco. However, Balaguer won a new term of office in 1986, aged 80. Blind, practically deaf and with his health in decline, his third presidency was marked by greater tolerance of opposition and an improved human rights record. He narrowly won re-election in 1990. Two years later, work was completed on his most visible legacy, the vast concrete Columbus Lighthouse to commemorate the landing of Columbus in Hispaniola in 1492. The controversial 10-storey edifice cost US\$250m. at a time when the country faced 25% unemployment.

In 1994 Balaguer again won re-election amid charges of electoral fraud. Under international pressure, he agreed to stand down and schedule a new election in 1996.

Later Life

As a frail 92-year-old, he contested an eighth presidential term in 2000 but could secure only third place. On 14 July 2002 Balaguer died of heart failure in Santo Domingo.

Balkenende, Jan Peter (Netherlands)

Introduction

Jan Peter Balkenende, head of the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), succeeded Wim Kok as Dutch prime minister following the elections of May 2002. He briefly led a right-of-centre coalition which included the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) until Oct. 2002, when LPF in-fighting forced the collapse of the government. Balkenende then led the CDA to victory at the elections of Jan. 2003 and formed a new coalition with the VVD and Democrats '66 (D66). Following the Nov. 2006 elections, in which the CDA was again returned as the largest party but lost ground, Balkenende remained prime minister as he formed a new coalition government. He was succeeded by Mark Rutte in Oct. 2010.

Early Life

Balkenende was born on 7 May 1956 in Kapelle. He graduated in history and law from the Amsterdam Free University. Between 1982 and 1984 he was a legal affairs policy officer for the Netherlands Universities Council before joining the policy institute of the CDA, where he stayed until 1998. Between 1993 and 2002 he held a professorship of Christian social thought on society and economics at the Amsterdam Free University. An alderman for Amstelveen, he won a parliamentary seat at the elections of 1998.

When Jaap de Hoop Scheffer resigned the party leadership in late 2001 there was a divisive contest to replace him. Balkenende came under fire for his lack of experience and perceived weak leadership skills, but eventually emerged victorious. In the build-up to the 2002 elections he refused to rule out a coalition with any party, including List Pim Fortuyn, although he distanced himself from some of its extremist policies.

Career Peak

Following the May 2002 elections Balkenende headed a coalition of the CDA, LPF and VVD. His cabinet was sworn in 9 weeks later. He pledged to tighten up immigration policy, reduce taxes and reduce the number of people receiving disability benefits. In addition, he sought a review of the Netherlands' liberal drugs and euthanasia legislation. However, his government was plagued by the instability of the LPF, whose leader, Mat Herben, resigned in Aug. 2002. LPF in-fighting was caused by a personality clash between two of its ministers, Eduard Bomhoff and Herman Heinsbroek, both

of whom resigned in Oct. 2002. The CDA and VVD were unable to continue alone and the government resigned on 21 Oct. 2002. Balkenende agreed to remain in place in a caretaker capacity until new elections.

At elections to the Second Chamber in Jan. 2003, the CDA took 44 seats, two ahead of the Labour Party (PvdA). In May 2003, after months of negotiations, Balkenende was sworn in as head of a coalition government comprising the CDA, VVD and D66. His government's policies proved unpopular. In Oct. 2004 more than 200,000 people turned out in Amsterdam to protest against public spending cuts and welfare reform, and in June 2005 the electorate voted decisively against the proposed new European Union constitution in a national referendum.

In July 2006 Balkenende formed a temporary minority administration pending fresh elections. This resulted from the collapse of the previous coalition on the withdrawal of D66 in a row over immigration (a highly-charged issue in Dutch politics). The CDA lost support in the elections in Nov. 2006 but remained the largest parliamentary party with 41 seats. Balkenende eventually formed a new three-party centrist coalition in Feb. 2007. His government eased immigration legislation in 2007 and increased public spending on health care and education.

In Sept. 2008, as crisis in the credit system spread through continental Europe, the governments of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg partly nationalized Fortis, a large regional retail bank, amid uncertainty about its financial stability.

The CDA remained the largest Dutch party in the June 2009 polling for the European Parliament, taking five of 25 seats allocated to the Netherlands, but conceded electoral ground to the far-right Party for Freedom (PVV), which won four seats. However, Balkenende's preparations for the general election of June 2010 suffered a setback in Feb. 2010 when the PvdA left his coalition, causing the collapse of the cabinet. He remained in office as caretaker prime minister. After a disappointing result for the CDA in June's parliamentary elections Balkenende stood down as leader and renounced his seat. He remained in office until 14 Oct. when VVD leader Mark Rutte succeeded him.

Banda, Hastings (Malaŵi)

Introduction

Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda was Malaŵi's (formerly Nyasaland's) leader from 1963 until 1994. Instrumental in Nyasaland's nationalist struggle, he became Prime Minister in 1963 following the collapse of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. As President after 1965, he was known for his autocratic and often despotic rule, though his economic policies were conservative, and his willingness to work with white partners internationally made him unpopular with many fellow African leaders.

Early Life

Hastings Kamuzu Banda claimed to have been born on 14 May 1906 in Kasungu in Malaŵi (then the British Central Africa Protectorate). However, it is now generally accepted that he was born in 1899. His early education was in a Church of Scotland missionary school. In his early teens he travelled to South Africa, working as an interpreter for a Rand goldmining company and in 1923 he moved to the US. He took a degree in history and political science at the University of Chicago before studying medicine at an all-black university and moving to Edinburgh, Scotland in 1941 to continue his education. He remained in Britain throughout the 1940s and worked as a general practitioner until 1953, but he retained political links with Nyasaland.

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland which came into being in 1953 was regarded by Banda and his allies as an unacceptable extension of white dominance. In the same year he moved to Ghana but, after prompting from associates, he returned to Nyasaland to be met by around 12,000 supporters at the airport. He became President of the Nyasaland African Congress (which evolved into the Malaŵi Congress Party in 1960). In March the following year, with tensions rising and a state of emergency called, he was arrested by the British authorities and imprisoned in Southern Rhodesia after unsubstantiated charges were made linking him to a murder plot.

He was released in 1960 and negotiated with the colonial powers for constitutional amendments which increased African representation in the Nyasaland Legislative Assembly. Between 1961 and 1963 he served as Minister of Natural Resources and Local Government.

Career Peak

He then became prime minister and in 1964 Nyasaland was granted independence and changed its name to Malaŵi. An immediate conflict with the younger and more radical section of his party erupted and led to a number of sackings and ministerial resignations. A rebellion led by two former ministers was quashed the following year and in 1966 Malaŵi became a republic with Banda as its President. Six years later the office was made his for life.

The Malaŵi Banda inherited had certain severe disadvantages, including a scarcity of mineral resources, a failing agriculture system, large debts, weak infrastructure and an unevolved education system. His policies tended to be conservative and pragmatic in nature, and did bear fruit in the early years of his rule, with GDP growing consistently until the late 1970s. However, his autocratic style of rule was unpopular with many of his colleagues and he displayed some of the worst excesses of any of the African dictators. Malaŵi was a one-party state and though elections were ostensibly democratic, all candidates had to be approved by Banda. Political opponents were routinely dismissed from their positions or jailed, and torture and murder became an accepted part of the political agenda.

In terms of foreign policy, he was out of favour with many other African rulers, including Presidents Kaunda of Zambia and Nyerere of Tanzania. They felt that the economic progress he made was at the expense of the Africanization of social institutions within the country and there was considerable outrage at his willingness to improve ties with, and accept economic assistance from, the apartheid regime in South Africa and the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique. From 1977 onwards the economy also started to decline, principally due to the world-wide oil crisis and a succession of droughts.

In Oct. 1992 pro-democracy demonstrations led to the deaths of over 40 people and the West ceased to provide Banda with aid. Against this background he agreed to a referendum to decide if a multi-party system should be introduced. An overwhelming majority of the nation believed that it should and in 1994, in the first free elections since 1991, Banda and his party were ousted from power. A new president, Bakili Muluzi, was installed.

Later Life

The following year Banda was placed under house arrest in connection with the deaths of four ministers in 1983 who were discovered to have been clubbed to death by police. Banda was acquitted in 1996 before apologizing nationally for any atrocities that had occurred under his rule. He retired from politics in July 1997 and, after a corruption case against him was dismissed due to his failing health, he died on 25 Nov. 1997 in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was accompanied by his long time 'official hostess', Cecilia Kadzamira.

Banda, Joyce (Malaŵi)

Introduction

Joyce Banda was sworn in as president in April 2012 following the death of President Bingu wa Mutharika. A lifelong campaigner for women's rights, Banda was the first female president of Malaŵi and only the second female president of any African state. She is the leader of the People's Party, which she formed in 2011 after a dispute with Mutharika that saw her expelled from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

Early Life

Joyce Banda was born in Malaŵi's Zomba District on 12 April 1950. In 1975 she left her abusive husband, who worked at Malaŵi's embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. Her decision, she said later, was inspired by a Kenyan women's movement.

Banda secured her financial independence by establishing a clothing manufacturing business, the first of several enterprises she set up. In 1990 she founded the National Association of Business Women, a non-governmental group aimed at improving the prospects of small, female-led businesses. In 1997 she set up the Joyce Banda Foundation, focusing on education.

She entered politics in 1999 as the member of parliament for the Zomba-Malosa constituency, serving under President Bakili Muluzi as minister of gender and community services. She was re-elected to parliament in 2004 but left the defeated United Democratic Front to join the DPP, the party of new president Bingu wa Mutharika. Banda was named foreign minister on 1 June 2006. During her time in the role she severed ties with Taiwan in favour of closer relations with the government in Beijing, paving the way for communist Chinese investment in Malaŵi's infrastructure.

In 2009 Mutharika selected Banda as his running mate in his bid for re-election, seeking to take advantage of her popularity in rural areas. However, once elected, Mutharika moved to isolate Banda, who had refused to support the planned succession to the presidency of Mutharika's brother. Having been ousted from the DPP, Banda established her own People's Party in 2011. She refused to relinquish the vice-presidency, and Mutharika lacked the constitutional powers to remove her.

Mutharika's sudden death from a heart attack on 5 April 2012 threatened a prolonged power struggle but after 2 days of political jockeying, constitutional procedure prevailed and Banda was sworn into office on 7 April.

Career Peak

Within days of becoming president Banda dismissed the chief of police, Peter Mukhito, who had been accused of mishandling anti-government riots in 2011 in which at least 19 people were killed. She replaced him with Lot Dzonzi, a human rights supporter. She also acted quickly to remove the minister of information, Patricia Kaliati, who had attempted to block Banda's accession after the death of Mutharika. In May 2012 she oversaw a currency devaluation to comply with International Monetary Fund conditions for a restoration of external funding. However, the move triggered steep increases in the prices of basic goods and in Jan. 2013 there were demonstrations against her government over rising inflation and economic austerity. In March 2013 several senior political figures were accused of having tried to prevent Banda's presidential succession following Mutharika's death and were charged with treason. Then, in Oct. Banda dissolved her cabinet amid allegations of high-level corruption in government and appointed a new administration.

A long-standing border dispute with Tanzania was exacerbated when Malaŵi awarded a licence for oil exploration in Lake Malaŵi. The dispute remained unresolved by early 2014.

Banda's term in office ended on 31 May 2014 after she lost presidential elections to DPP candidate Peter Mutharika. Despite initially alleging electoral fraud, Banda backtracked on her demands for a re-election and handed power to Mutharika.

Banda, Rupiah (Zambia)

Introduction

Rupiah Banda became president on 2 Nov. 2008 after winning the general election following the death of the incumbent Levy Mwanawasa. A career diplomat, the centrist Banda was a leading figure in Kenneth Kaunda's Marxist regime before joining the ruling Movement for Multi-Party Democracy in 2002.

Early Life

Rupiah Banda was born on 19 Feb. 1937 in Gwanda, then in British-ruled Southern Rhodesia, to parents originally from Northern Rhodesia. He was educated at Munal Secondary School in Lusaka from 1954–58, where he joined the youth wing of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), headed by Kenneth Kaunda. Banda studied economics at the University of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa and then at Sweden's Lund University from 1960. While there, he served as UNIP's representative in northern Europe,

organising scholarships for several other Africans who would later play a role in their countries' independence movements. Returning to Lusaka in newly independent Zambia in 1964, Banda enrolled at the National Institute for Public Affairs, which presaged a diplomatic career. Postings to Egypt (1965–67) and the USA (1967–69) followed.

Banda was a manager at the Rural Development Corporation and National Agricultural Marketing Board in the early 1970s. He also developed business interests, taking stakes in engineering firms linked to the copper mines that formed the backbone of the steadily growing economy. Returning to the international stage, Banda became Zambia's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York in 1974. He was chairman on the UN Council for Namibia, set up to steer South West Africa towards liberation from South Africa. The following year he was appointed the minister of foreign affairs in Kaunda's UNIP government (UNIP being the only legal party after Kaunda signed a constitutional amendment in Dec. 1972). Much of his work involved attempts to bring peace to Angola and to improve relations between the 'frontline states' (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia) and South Africa.

Elected as an MP for the Munal constituency south of Lusaka in Dec. 1978, Banda's early parliamentary careers coincided with a collapse in copper prices that brought serious economic decline and growing opposition to Kaunda's regime. Banda lost his seat in the 1983 election and subsequently worked as a civil servant in Lusaka's civic authority, before being appointed minister of state for mines. Banda recaptured his parliamentary seat in 1988 but his party was beset by deteriorating economic conditions, corruption scandals and mismanagement. When multi-party democracy returned to Zambia following a referendum in Aug. 1991, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) brought an end to the Kaunda era. Having lost his seat to an MMD candidate, Ronald Penza, in the Oct. 1991 general election, Banda resumed his business interests.

He left the UNIP in 2000 and 2 years later joined the MMD, whose leader, Dr Mwanawasa, displayed an openness towards former opposition MPs. Banda helped galvanize support for the MMD in the east of the country and was rewarded with the position of vice president after the MMD victory at the Sept. 2006 general election. Following President Mwanawasa's death in Aug. 2008, Banda became acting president and stood as the MMD's candidate in the presidential election of 30 Oct. Initial results showed Banda's main challenger, Michael Sata of the Patriotic Front (PF), in the lead but as votes from rural areas were counted, Banda closed the gap. Final results on 2 Nov. 2008 showed Banda with 40% of the vote against 38% for Sata. The PF alleged vote rigging and refused to recognize Banda's victory, with Sata's supporters rioting in Lusaka and Kitwe.

Career Peak

Banda pledged to continue his predecessor's pro-business policies and anti-corruption efforts, as well as address the country's widespread poverty. He urged the opposition to set aside divisions after the closely fought election. He faced growing unrest in 2009 as the global economic downturn brought down the price of Zambia's main export commodities and led to job cuts. In presidential elections held in Sept. 2011 Banda lost to the opposition leader Michael Sata and he accordingly succeeded Banda as president.

Bandaranaike, Sirimavo (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

Sirimavo Bandaranaike served as prime minister of Sri Lanka between 1960–65, 1970–77 and 1994–2000. She was the world's first female prime minister. Her entry into politics followed the assassination of her husband, Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1956, when she took control of the Sri Lankan Freedom Party. Bandaranaike's tenures were marked by controversy; despite a declared leaning towards a socialist agenda, her aggressive promotion of Sinhalese nationalism was criticized for exacerbating ethnic tensions between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils.

Early Life

Sirimavo Ratwatte was born to a wealthy landowning family in British colonial Ceylon on 17 April 1916. Educated at St Bridget's, a Roman Catholic convent in Colombo, she married Solomon Bandaranaike in 1940. Her husband founded the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and both converted from Christianity to Buddhism, the dominant Sinhalese religion. As a Sinhalese Buddhist, Bandaranaike promised to put an end to the privileges the Tamils were seen to enjoy under British rule. Ceylon became an independent state in 1948.

In Sept. 1959, 3 years after he was elected prime minister, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was assassinated by a Buddhist monk. Threatened with the disintegration of the SLFP, Sirimavo Bandaranaike was called upon to succeed her husband as leader. In the 1960 elections 'the weeping widow' led the party to victory, while on 20 July Bandaranaike became the first woman to serve as prime minister.

Career Peak

Sirimavo Bandaranaike's policies aggravated the fundamental cultural and religious divisions between the Sinhalese and the Tamil population; the latter had already been alienated by her husband's decision to adopt Sinhalese as the official language. She continued the programme of commercial nationalization, instigated by her husband, and gave priority to the Sinhalese for places in universities, the government and the civil service. Tamils were replaced as heads of nationalized industries and Sinhalese were placed in control of the tea estates. Following the Tamil-based campaign of civil disobedience, in defiance of her husband's 'sinhala Only' strategy, Bandaranaike was forced to declare a state of emergency. She was supported by Felix Dias Bandaranaike, her nephew and minister of finance and justice, who famously called for 'a little bit of totalitarianism'. The Tamils responded with separatist demands.

By 1965 the coalition government formed to relieve the country's political and economic pressures had proved ineffective. Bandaranaike's first term ended with the victory of the opposition, the United National Party, in the March 1965 elections.

When Bandaranaike re-assumed power with a left-wing coalition (the United Front) in 1970, her measures to ensure stability were no less uncompromising. These measures and external factors led to mounting inflation, higher oil prices and unemployment, culminating in a student and activist-led rebellion that was brutally suppressed in 1971. Emergency law was reinstated, and remained until 1976.

1972 marked the creation of a new constitution. Ceylon became Sri Lanka and was declared a republic. The predominantly Hindu Tamil minority was further provoked when Buddhism was declared the state religion, and Sinhala the exclusive state language. Worsening economic conditions led to a general strike in 1976, again put down by the government; in the same year the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a militant separatist movement, was formed. Defeated in the general elections of 1977, Bandaranaike was expelled from parliament 3 years later. Accused of abusing her rights as prime minister, she was denied her civil rights and banned from office for 6 years.

Later Life

Bandaranaike attempted to re-enter politics in the 1980s but her campaign for the presidency in 1988 was unsuccessful. In 1994 her daughter, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, was elected president and appointed her mother prime minister. The role of prime minister, however, had been rendered largely ceremonial by an amendment to the structure of government. Citing ill health, Bandaranaike stepped down in 2000. On the 10 Oct. 2000, hours after casting her vote in the country's general elections, Bandaranaike suffered a fatal heart attack. She was survived by three children, including President Kumaratunga and UNP opposition leader Anura Bandaranaike.

Banzer Suárez, Hugo (Bolivia)

Introduction

President between 1997–2001, Hugo Banzer Suárez represented the Acción Democrática Nacional (ADN), of which he was co-founder. From 1971–78 he led Bolivia as a military dictatorship before being ousted in a coup. During

his last term, Banzer faced the challenge of remedying Bolivia's precarious economic situation and widespread poverty. He also attempted to eradicate the illegal, if traditional, production of coca, the basis of cocaine. In Aug. 2001 ill health forced him to hand over power to his vice president and fellow ADN member, Jorge Fernando Quiroga Ramírez.

Early Life

Banzer was born on 10 May 1926 in the eastern town of Concepción. He trained at the Colegio Militar de Ejérjito, before finishing his studies in Argentina as a Bolivian army representative. He pursued a successful army career rising to the post of general. Banzer's political career began in the education ministry in which he served from 1964–66 under the regime of Co-president Generals René Barrientos Ortuño and General Alfredo Ovando Candia.

Career Peak

The cycle of coup and counter coup in Bolivian politics was continued by Banzer when in 1971 he deposed the socialist army general, Juan Jose Torres, and established himself as leader of a right-wing military regime. He implemented successful economic policies, including public sector investment, which produced a strong economy with low inflation. The success was short lived and the consequent fall out in the early 1980s brought hyperinflation and large public debt. At the beginning of his rule, Banzer pledged to restore democracy with constitutional elections. However, following an attempted coup in 1974, he cancelled elections and banned all political activity. A strict regime was enforced in which many were imprisoned or pushed into exile. He neutralized the influence of the trade unions, which were powerful under the Marxist regime of Torres. In 1978 Banzer was, in turn, deposed by General Juan Pereda Asbún.

The following year Banzer reinvented himself in order to run for the presidency. He disassociated himself from his image as a military dictator, creating the ADN as a vehicle for election. The party pledged to lead Bolivia into democracy. In the 1979 elections Banzer came third with 14% of votes. In 1980 this increased to 16.9%. In 1981 Banzer was arrested for his part in plotting a coup. He returned to fight his third democratic election in 1985 receiving 28.6% of votes. Despite gaining the highest amount of votes, without a majority Banzer was pitted against the second place centre-left former president Victor Paz Estenssoro. Parliament chose the latter.

For his fourth attempt in 1989, the ADN joined forces with the Partido Demócrata Cristiano, choosing Banzer as the coalition's candidate. He came second behind his rival, the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) candidate Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. Fearing the latter would be chosen in a head-to-head, Banzer withdrew from the race. The coalition placed its support behind Jaime Paz Zamora, the third place candidate of the Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria (Movement of Revolutionary Left). Under Paz's presidency, Banzer was in charge of government policy as head of the Consejo del Gobierno de Unidad y Convergencia (Political Council of Convergence and National Unity). He also controlled senior appointments in the armed forces and the public sector.

Following an unsuccessful fifth attempt at the presidency in 1993, Banzer resigned as ADN leader, only to re-emerge in 1995. In 1997 he was finally preferred by parliament over the second place MNR candidate, Juan Carlos Durán Saucedo. On election Banzer promised better jobs and services and an end to the privatization schemes of his predecessor that had caused public discontent. The successful privatization of oil and gas companies had failed to provide increased employment or benefit the majority indigenous population living in poverty. Banzer had courted indigenous support by promising large investments. His major policy, though, was the US-supported eradication of coca production. A centuries-old crop traditionally cultivated for religious ceremonies and later to sustain workers in difficult conditions in the Andes, coca production increased dramatically in the 1970s to feed the booming illegal drug industry. At its height, around a third of Bolivians were financially dependent on its production and the trade generated millions of dollars for the black economy. Eradication programmes destroyed 40,000 ha in the Chapare region leaving many farmers destitute. Replacement schemes promoting banana and pineapple farming failed to provide enough jobs or revenue to compensate. Plans to cut into the 12,000 ha of legal coca crops in the Yungas highland caused protests. UN investment in alternative schemes has also failed owing to the near impossible farming terrain.

By 1999 Banzer's promises were still unfulfilled and the rate of economic growth had fallen. Anger with increased water charges (for a new reservoir), coupled with general economic misery, provoked widespread protests, strikes

and roadblocks in April 2000. Violence ensued and Banzer announced a state of emergency. A police strike forced Banzer to grant wage increases to contain the protests. Social unrest continued over the following year. Farmers, coca growers, public sector workers and the unemployed united against rising unemployment and falling incomes brought on by falling economic growth. Meanwhile, Banzer's anti-poverty policy was languishing in congress awaiting authorization.

In July 2001 Banzer was diagnosed with cancer and in Aug. he resigned, appointing his vice president and fellow ADN member Quiroga to see out the rest of his term. Born on 5 May 1960 in Cochabamba, Quiroga studied industrial engineering and then business management in Texas. As well as working for various companies in the private sector, Quiroga built up a respectable political CV. He worked under Paz as finance minister among other positions. In 1993 he was the ADN's campaign manager before becoming its vice president. He was appointed Bolivia's vice president on Banzer's election.

Quiroga was left with a difficult economic and political situation. Yet, many saw his appointment as an opportunity for change. On his inauguration, Quiroga pledged to concentrate his efforts on fighting poverty and resolving the faltering economy by seeking foreign investment. But four earlier schemes to reactivate the economy while Quiroga was vice president failed. He also promised to eradicate corruption and nepotism in politics. But his year in power offered little time to make much impact.

Later Life

Banzer's illness persisted and in March 2002 he formally resigned as ADN leader. He died on 5 May 2002.

Barak, Ehud (Israel)

Introduction

Ehud Barak served as prime minister between 1999 and 2001, having held high rank in the army. His unsuccessful efforts to negotiate a truce with Palestine led to his resignation as premier but he remained head of the Labour Party until leaving to form his own party in 2011. Since 2007 he has served as minister of defence.

Early Life

Ehud Barak was born Ehud Brog in 1942 in Kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon in the former British mandate of Palestine. The eldest child of East European immigrant parents, he was drafted into the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) at the age of 17 and changed his name to Barak ('lightning' in Hebrew). A member of the elite, top-secret special forces unit, Sayeret Matkal, he took part in intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism operations and, by 1971, was unit commander. During his tenure he led several high-profile, hostage-freeing missions, including Operation Isotope in 1972 and Operation Entebbe in 1976, which were credited with leading to the break-up of the Palestinian militant group, Black September. However, Sayeret Matkal faced criticism for the assassinations of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) targets in a raid in Lebanon in 1973 led by Barak.

Alongside his military career, he graduated from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1968 in physics and mathematics, before completing a master's in engineering and economics at Stanford, California in 1978. In 1982 he was appointed head of the planning branch of the IDF and a year later, head of the intelligence branch. By 1986 he was commander of IDF central command and in May 1987 was promoted to deputy chief-of-staff. He assumed overall command of the IDF in April 1991 as chief of general staff, remaining in the position until 1995.

In July 1995 Barak entered politics as interior minister in the Labour government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. He subsequently served as foreign minister under Rabin's successor, Shimon Peres, until June 1996, when the latter was replaced by Likud's Binyamin Netanyahu. Despite Labour's defeat at the polls, Barak won his parliamentary seat and replaced Peres as party chairman in 1997. At the May 1999 elections, he defeated Netanyahu to become prime minister, heading his One Israel centre-left

coalition with the Meimad and Geshet parties. He was sworn in as prime minister and minister of defence on 6 July.

Career Peak

With One Israel having only won 26 of 120 seats in parliament, Barak was forced to extend the coalition into an unwieldy multi-party alliance that combined secular and religious parties. In May 2000 he withdrew Israeli troops from southern Lebanon and began peace talks with the PLO which culminated in the Middle East Peace Summit at Camp David in July 2000 with Yasser Arafat and Bill Clinton. However, attempts to negotiate a 'final status settlement' proved fruitless with both sides unwilling to compromise on key issues. The outbreak of the Second Intifada in Sept. 2000 and Israeli-Arab riots in Oct. further damaged Barak's credibility as leader. With his coalition destabilized by the withdrawal of several parties, he resigned in Feb. 2001 and lost prime ministerial elections to Likud leader Ariel Sharon.

Later Life

Having made a foray into business in 1995, Barak became a consultant in the USA for various security-related firms and established himself as a public speaker. In 2004, he re-entered politics to campaign for the Labour party leadership although when it emerged he lacked the support to win, he renounced his bid in favour of Shimon Peres. During his second attempt to regain the leadership in May 2007 he admitted that inexperience had caused him to make mistakes as prime minister. He won a second round run-off to defeat Ami Ayalon and shortly afterwards replaced previous Labour leader Amir Peretz as defence minister in Ehud Olmert's cabinet.

After Labour's poor performance at the 2009 elections in which they won only 13 seats, Barak faced opposition from his own party for entering into coalition with Likud but kept his position as defence minister in Binyamin Netanyahu's new administration.

In May 2010 Israel was widely criticized for an IDF attack on an international aid convoy to Gaza which resulted in nine civilian casualties. Facing an inquiry into the legality of the raid in Aug., Barak said he took full responsibility for the events and expressed regret for the deaths whilst defending the army's actions.

Following several months of infighting among Labour's MPs over the party's role in the Netanyahu government, Barak and four of his Labour colleagues left the party in Jan. 2011 to form a new party called Independence. Described by Barak as 'centrist, Zionist and democratic', it remained part of the ruling coalition.

In Nov. 2012, in the wake of an 8 day conflict in Gaza, Barak announced his resignation from politics although he did remain defence minister until March 2013 when a new government was sworn in following parliamentary elections in Jan. of that year.

Barre, Raymond (France)

Introduction

Raymond Barre was a centrist economist who served as prime minister from 1976–81. With the economy struggling in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis, his government imposed unpopular austerity measures.

Early Life

Born on the French Indian Ocean island of Réunion on 12 April 1924 into a wealthy Roman Catholic family, Barre moved to Paris in 1946 to study law, economics and politics at the *Institut d'études politiques de Paris*. After graduating, he joined the economics faculty as a professor and in 1959 he accepted a senior position in the ministry of industry. From 1967–73 he served as a commissioner for economic and financial affairs within the institutional structure of the European Economic Community (forerunner of the EU), helping to draw up an influential proposal for European monetary co-operation.

Career Peak

Barre joined Prime Minister Jacques Chirac's cabinet as foreign trade minister in 1976. Although he had little public profile at the time, President Giscard d'Estaing appointed him premier and minister of economy and finance when Chirac resigned in Aug. 1976.

The international oil crisis of the early 1970s had brought to an end France's three decades of post-war prosperity. To tackle the new economic reality, Barre enforced tough anti-inflation policies, including reducing government spending and cutting thousands of jobs in loss-making industries such as steel and coal. Rising unemployment and declining living standards took a heavy toll on his popularity. He also angered the trade unions after calling on them 'to stop whingeing and start working'. He was succeeded as prime minister by Pierre Mauroy in May 1981 following the electoral victory of President François Mitterrand's Socialist Party.

Later Life

Barre contested the presidential elections of 1988, coming third with 16.5% of the first round vote, behind Mitterrand and Chirac. His last major political office was the mayorship of Lyon from 1995 until 2001. He retired from front-line politics the following year and died in Paris on 25 Aug. 2007.

Băsescu, Traian (Romania)

Introduction

Traian Băsescu, a former ship's captain and mayor of Bucharest, successfully fought the country's 2004 presidential elections on an anti-corruption platform. He took over from Ion Iliescu, who had served as president for much of the post-communist period. Băsescu was suspended from office in April 2007 but resumed his role a month later after a national referendum supported his reinstatement. He was narrowly re-elected in Dec. 2009.

Early Life

Băsescu was born in Basarabi near the port of Constanta on 4 Nov. 1951 and graduated from the Marine Institute in Constanta in 1976. He then joined the merchant navy, controlled in the communist era by NAVROM, winning promotion to captain in 1981 and to admiral of the merchant fleet in the mid-1980s. In 1987 he became head of NAVROM and in 1989 entered the political scene as general director of the State Inspectorate of Civic Navigation in the ministry of transport. After the dramatic collapse of the Ceaușescu regime in Dec. 1989, Băsescu was promoted to deputy minister of transport. He became minister of transport in 1991 in the government dominated by the National Salvation Front (FSN), which had received mass support in the first post-communist elections on 20 May 1990.

Following a split in the FSN in 1992, Băsescu joined Petre Roman in the new centre-left Democratic Party and, in 1996, he co-ordinated Roman's unsuccessful presidential campaign. Băsescu was re-elected as a Democratic Party MP in 1996 and served as minister of transport until 2000, when he stood as the Democratic Party candidate in the Bucharest mayoral election. He won and began co-ordinating the regeneration of large areas of the city, gaining praise for his direct approach to addressing problems—from cracking down on the notorious packs of stray dogs to improving traffic flow and municipal central heating systems.

Following disagreements with Petre Roman, Băsescu replaced him as leader of the (opposition) Democratic Party in 2001. Two years later, in Sept. 2003, Băsescu became a co-chairman of the centre-right Justice and Truth Alliance (DA), forged between his Democratic Party and the National Liberal Party (PNL). Băsescu's rule as mayor of Bucharest proved popular and he was re-elected in June 2004. He then decided to contest the 2004 presidential election as the DA candidate. Campaigning on an anti-corruption and pro-Western platform, he defeated the PSD candidate in the second round run-off in Dec.

Career Peak

Băsescu's first task as president was the formation of a new DA government, which became possible when the small Humanist Party (since renamed the

Conservative Party) pledged its support, in addition to the backing of the ethnic Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania. Băsescu appointed the PNL leader and former minister of the economy Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu to the post of prime minister. In his inaugural address Băsescu said that fighting corruption would remain his priority and that he intended to steer Romania towards membership of the European Union. This was achieved on 1 Jan. 2007 as Romania and Bulgaria became the EU's 26th and 27th member states. He also stressed the need to strengthen strategic partnerships with the USA and the UK, as well as to improve relations with Russia and the former Soviet states.

Although allied within the ruling DA, Băsescu's relations with Popescu-Tăriceanu deteriorated to the point where, in April 2007, Popescu-Tăriceanu won a vote in parliament to suspend Băsescu for 'grave infringements of the constitution' and the Democratic Party was excluded from the government. Former prime minister Nicolae Văcăroiu was appointed interim president. However, Băsescu returned to office on 23 May 2007 after he was backed by 74.5% of voters in a referendum on his leadership. He then promised to campaign for electoral reform to increase MPs' accountability to the electorate and for a law that could be used to remove former senior officials of the Ceaușescu regime from their offices. In Dec. 2007 he called on Popescu-Tăriceanu to dismiss his justice minister because of corruption allegations. Also in Dec. 2007 the Democratic Party merged with the Liberal Democratic Party to form the Democratic Liberal Party (PD-L). Concerns over high-level corruption also prompted the EU in Feb. 2008 to threaten sanctions against Romania. In April 2008 Băsescu hosted a summit meeting of NATO leaders in Bucharest.

Following inconclusive parliamentary elections in Nov. 2008, Băsescu nominated Theodor Stolojan, an economist and former prime minister, to head a new government. Stolojan soon withdrew his acceptance and Băsescu then asked Emil Boc, the leader of the Democratic Liberal Party, to form the new administration, which was approved by parliament in Dec. 2008. However, in Oct. 2009 this government lost a confidence vote, although Boc carried on in a caretaker capacity until the pending presidential elections as Băsescu's subsequent nominees for prime minister-designate were not acceptable to parliament.

At the end of 2009 Băsescu stood for presidential re-election. His narrow win over Mircea Geoană of the PSD-PC alliance with 50.3% of the run-off vote was challenged by his opponent who claimed electoral fraud. Băsescu then turned again to Boc to form a new government, which was approved by parliament but which laboured with economic recession and austerity. With his government increasingly unpopular, Boc resigned in Feb. 2012. Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu succeeded him as prime minister but his government also fell after only 2 months following a vote of no confidence in parliament. Victor Ponta of the Social Liberal Union then established an administration to govern until elections later in the year.

In July 2012 Băsescu faced a further challenge to his authority, this time from his new prime minister, and was suspended from office following a parliamentary vote pending efforts to impeach him. However, he survived an impeachment referendum as the majority vote to remove him failed to meet the required minimum turnout of the electorate and he resumed office in Aug. In the Dec. 2012 parliamentary elections Ponta's government won a clear majority against parties backed by Băsescu, after which the president and prime minister signed an agreement guaranteeing their institutional co-operation and respect for the constitution. However, in late 2013 Băsescu was reported to be reviewing the agreement after the deputy prime minister, Liviu Dragnea, was charged with attempting to influence the outcome of the impeachment referendum.

Having served the constitutional limit of two consecutive terms as head of state, Băsescu was ineligible to take part in the presidential elections of Nov. 2014. He was succeeded as president by Klaus Iohannis, who took office on 21 Dec. 2014.

Batbold, Sukhbaataryn (Mongolia)

Introduction

Sukhbaataryn Batbold became prime minister in Oct. 2009 after his predecessor, Sanj Bayar, resigned because of ill health. Batbold's appointment was

approved with 62 of 66 votes cast in a plenary session of the Great Hural. His tenure lasted until parliamentary elections that were held in June 2012.

Early Life

Batbold was born in 1963 in Ulan Bator. He was educated at the University of Moscow, graduating from its School of International Relations in 1986. He joined the ministry of economic foreign relations and was appointed head of the Mongol Impex Cooperative in 1988. After returning to higher education, he graduated from the London School of Business in the UK in 1991. In 1992 he joined Altai Trading LLC as its director general, a post he held until 2000.

He was appointed deputy minister of foreign affairs after the return to power of the MPRP in 2000. From 2004–06 he served as minister of trade and industry and in 2008 was named minister of foreign affairs. During his tenure he hosted UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to Ulan Bator to discuss climate change in Mongolia and stood in for Bayar at a Council of Heads of State meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

On 26 Oct. 2009 parliament accepted Bayar's resignation and Batbold was nominated by the MPRP as his successor. His appointment was approved 3 days later.

Career Peak

Batbold's government undertook a review of strategies to take advantage of Mongolia's largely untapped natural resources without falling prey to 'Dutch Disease'. Where a sudden surge of wealth hampers long-term growth. He was also keen to loosen economic reliance on Russia and China by developing relationships with the USA and Canada, while at the same time ensuring Mongolia does not alienate its powerful neighbours. His first year in office was, however, overshadowed by the devastation of the country's livestock, and its effects on herder communities, by extreme bad weather. Batbold's MPP (former MPRP) lost its parliamentary majority to the Democratic Party (DP) at elections in June 2012. The chairman of the DP, Norov Altankhuyag, was nominated for the position of prime minister and was subsequently sworn in as the new prime minister of Mongolia in Aug. 2012, having received the approval of the president and the parliament.

Batista y Zaldívar, Fulgencio (Cuba)

Introduction

Fulgencio Batista twice ruled Cuba, from 1933–44 and 1952–59. He was supported by the USA, despite the increasing brutality of his regime and the civil unrest it eventually caused. In 1959 he was forced from office by a revolutionary group led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

Early Life

Batista was born in Banes, Cuba, on 16 Jan. 1901 to poor farming parents of mixed race. A man of shrewdness and charm, he joined the army in 1921 as a private. He rose to the rank of sergeant, developing a large personal following among his peers. In 1933 he took a leading part in the 'Revolt of the Sergeants'. Which toppled the provisional presidency of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, and installed the middle-class Ramón Grau San Martín as president. Batista appointed himself chief of staff and, with the blessing of the US, ruled Cuba through a succession of puppet leaders until he took over the presidency himself in 1940.

Career Peak

With the support of the armed forces and the civil service, Batista managed to govern strongly and effectively. Despite amassing a personal fortune, he also made vast improvements to education, public works and the economy.

In 1944 Batista lost power to his old rival Grau, and put himself into luxurious exile in Florida. During this time government corruption in Cuba worsened, and public services broke down.

Batista, by now a Cuban senator, returned to run for president again in 1952. On 10 March, 3 months before the elections, while trailing in the opinion polls, Batista seized power. On 27 March President Eisenhower formally recognised Batista's government.

Under his increasingly authoritarian rule, strikes were banned, constitutional guarantees suspended, and opposition crushed. Batista's secret police became notorious for political beatings, torture and murder while organized crime flourished.

On 26 July 1953 a young Fidel Castro led an attack on the Moncada army barracks in Santiago. He was sent to prison, but managed to stir the nation with his eloquent defence in court. To deflect the public unrest, Batista released Castro, who was exiled to Mexico. But student riots and anti-Batista demonstrations became more frequent. He tightened his control over the media, and refused calls for an immediate election.

In Dec. 1956 Castro launched an expedition from Mexico, retreating into the Sierra Maestra mountains to organize a guerrilla uprising. By 1958 it became clear that the regime was doomed. On New Year's Eve 1958, Batista resigned and fled to the Dominican Republic. He died in Spain on Aug. 6, 1973.

Batlle Ibañez, Jorge Luis (Uruguay)

Introduction

Jorge Luis Batlle Ibañez was president of Uruguay from 1999 to 2005 and represented the Colorado party. Elected on his fifth attempt in 1999, he succeeded fellow Colorado president Julio María Sanguinetti. Batlle's preoccupation in office was to prevent the economy slipping into recession.

Early Life

Batlle was born on 25 Oct. 1927 into a Colorado family that had dominated a century of Uruguayan politics. He is the descendant of three former presidents—his grandfather Lorenzo (1868–72), his father Luis (1947–51, 1955–56) and his great uncle José (1899, 1903–07, 1911–15). After studying in London in 1947, he gained a doctorate in law and social sciences from the Universidad de la República. While studying he worked in radio and later for the *Diario Acción* newspaper until 1973 when the military dictatorship forced its closure. Strongly influenced by the family political legacy, he joined the PC in 1947. Batlle ascended the ranks from regional branch secretary to president of the party's executive committee. Between 1958–67 he was a PC deputy, standing for his first presidential elections in 1966. Between 1973–84 his political activities were hindered by imprisonment and a prescription handed out by the military leaders. In 1985 Batlle presided over the assembly as senator in the first post-dictatorship democratic government. The following year he represented Uruguay in the UN. In 1989 he fought his third election representing the PC faction, Batllismo Unido. He came second with 30% of votes. After again serving as senator between 1994–99, he stood for his fifth presidential election.

His main rival in the 1999 elections was Tabaré Vázquez, the left-wing Encuentro Progresista (Progressive Encounter) candidate and former mayor who led the first round of votes. The opposition Blanco candidate withdrew after coming third place. Batlle and Vázquez fought a run off. In his campaign, Vázquez offered economic stability and a change from over a century of political domination by the Colorados and the Blancos. To combat the strength of the left, the Colorado party persuaded the Blancos to back Batlle in exchange for jobs. Batlle claimed that Vázquez's proposed fiscal reforms would raise income tax. Batlle won by 54.1% to 45.9%. He formed a coalition government between the Colorados and the Blancos.

Career Peak

On election, Batlle pledged to cut public spending, limit bureaucracy and continue prudent fiscal policies. Five government jobs went to Blanco politicians. Despite inheriting a strong economy, Uruguay was already feeling the effects of the recession in neighbouring MERCOSUR countries. As Uruguay's chief trading partner, Brazil's economic problems spilled over. At the beginning of June 2000 the trade unions, PIT-CNT, organized a strike protesting against Batlle's austerity measures and rising unemployment, and demanding investment in health and education. Since the beginning of the twentieth century Uruguay's public-run services, especially a strong welfare

state, had been strongly supported and Batlle debated over introducing unpopular privatization schemes. But he did manage to ease the state monopoly on natural gas.

In 2002 Uruguay suffered the effects of neighbour Argentina's economic instability. In Aug. the government closed the banks in an emergency measure to slow increased bank withdrawals. The move resulted in a general strike. A temporary US loan of US\$1.5bn. allowed Uruguayan banks to reopen a week later and the country received a US\$3.8bn. IMF loan. In Nov. the five Blanco ministers resigned complaining of being sidelined. Batlle retained an uneasy hold on government.

Human rights abuses committed under the military dictatorship (1973–85) remained an important issue. Batlle's plans for a cross-party commission to investigate the disappearance of people during the regime won widespread support. He became the first president to agree to meet the families involved and promised to question the military about its crimes. The inquiry found the government responsible for 26 of 39 deaths investigated.

Batlle was not eligible to stand for re-election in the presidential elections of Oct. 2004, but remained in office until his successor, Tabaré Vázquez, took office on 1 March 2005.

Later Life

Batlle remained active in Uruguayan politics during his later years and was a noted critic of president José Mujica. He died aged 88 on 24 Oct. 2016 after suffering a cerebral haemorrhage following a fall at a party.

Bayar, Celal (Turkey)

Introduction

In power between 1950–60, Celal Bayar was the third president of the Turkish Republic, and was twice re-elected. His decade in power saw the emergence of private enterprise in the country and the curbing of state authority.

Early Life

The son of a jurist, Bayar was born in Bursa in northwest Turkey on 15 May, 1883. He completed his education locally at a French school where he specialized in economics and finance. He then worked for the Bursa branch of a German bank and as an official in Gemlik judicial court.

Bayar's political career began in 1908 when he joined the Committee of Progress and Union which opposed the rule of Sultan Abdülhamid. He went on to become secretary for the Izmir (then Smyrna) branch of the committee. After the end of World War I, when the remnants of the Ottoman empire crumbled, Bayar enlisted in the nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He helped to organize troops to fight the Allied occupation of Anatolia.

In 1920 Bayar was elected as the parliamentary deputy for Izmir, but the British suppressed the parliament and arrested many of the nationalist supporters. Bayar escaped, fleeing to Ankara where Atatürk had installed his provisional government, the Grand National Assembly. In 1921 Bayar was appointed economic minister, a post he held for a year before taking on the challenge of overseeing the reconstruction and settlement of the newly emancipated Turkish republic.

In 1924 Bayar was commissioned to establish Is Bank, and his financial acumen earned him the post of economics minister. At this stage in his career he favoured a state-run economy. In 1937 Atatürk appointed him prime minister of the 14th cabinet, but he resigned following the death of Atatürk in Jan. 1939. He was replaced by Refik Saydam.

Career Peak

In 1945 Bayar broke away from the Republican People's Party to form the opposing Democrat Party with support from Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, Adnan Menderes and Refik Koraltan. The new party advocated a policy of private enterprise and won 62 seats in the general election of 1946. Four years later, the party secured a convincing majority in parliament, and Bayar was elected President. He appointed Menderes as his prime minister and began to reduce the state's role in the economy to one of regulation and co-ordination. He was re-elected in 1954 and again in 1957.

Later Life

His political career was ended by a military coup in May 1960. Bayar was arrested and tried for treason. His trial lasted for 16 months, after which he and 15 other leading figures within the Democrat Party were sentenced to death. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and he was released in Nov. 1964 on grounds of ill health. He received an official pardon 2 years later, and wrote his memoirs entitled *I, Too, Have Written*. Bayar died on 22 Aug. 1986.

Bayar, Sanj (Mongolia)

Introduction

Sanj Bayar was elected prime minister by parliament on 22 Nov. 2007 following the resignation of Miyegombo Enkhbold. Bayar had replaced Enkhbold as MPRP chairman the previous month amid concerns within the party over Enkhbold's weak, minority government ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for June 2008.

Early Life

Bayar was born in 1956 in Ulan Bator. He graduated in law from the Moscow State University in 1978 and went to work for the Ulan Bator city assembly. A year later he joined the general staff of the Mongolian armed forces. Leaving in 1983, he worked as a journalist, becoming chief editor of the Russian-language newspaper *Novosti Mongolii* and head of the state-run Montsame news agency.

In 1988 Bayar was appointed deputy chief officer of the state committee for Mongolian radio and television. He joined the MPRP in the same year. Between 1990–92 he was an elected member of the now defunct *Baga Hural* (*Small Hural*, the short-lived upper chamber) that drafted Mongolia's constitution. He also served as chairman of the standing committee on the state structure. In 1992 he was appointed director of the Strategic Research Center of Mongolia.

From 1997–2001 Bayar served as President Natsagiin Bagabandi's chief officer and in 2001 he became ambassador to Russia. He returned to Mongolia in 2005 and was elected secretary general of the MPRP. On 26 Oct. 2007 Bayar received over 60% of his party's votes to take over from Enkhbold as the MPRP's chairman.

Career Peak

Bayar promised to counter corruption, bring down the inflated prices of essential goods and cut bureaucracy in public services. In June 2008 the MPRP retained power in disputed parliamentary elections. On 26 Oct. 2009 Bayar announced his resignation owing to health reasons, with first deputy prime minister Norovyn Altankhuyag becoming acting prime minister. Foreign minister Sukhbaataryn Batbold was subsequently nominated and approved by parliament and took office as the new prime minister on 29 Oct.

Beckmann Geisel, Ernesto (Brazil)

Introduction

Ernesto Beckmann Geisel was president of Brazil from 1974 to 1979, the fourth of the five generals who ruled the country from 1964 to 1985. He played a central role in preparing the country for a return to democracy.

Early Life

Born in Bento Gonçalves on 3 Aug. 1908, Geisel was an army officer who participated in Getúlio Vargas' 1930 military coup. He served the government in various jobs until 1945 when he was instrumental in removing Vargas from power. He was subsequently deputy chief of the military staff of the presidency and sat on the national petroleum council.

In 1964 he participated in another military coup and took a senior military position in the government of Humberto Castelo Branco. Five years later he was appointed head of the national oil corporation. In March 1974 he assumed the national presidency.

Career Peak

Though dependent on the ruling military junta, Geisel promoted measures to reduce censorship and increase political freedom. He permitted free elections in 1974. His economic plan encouraged domestic industries, such as farming and mining, and expanded Brazil's transport infrastructure.

Geisel reverted to political oppression when electoral victory seemed doubtful. In April 1977 he dismissed congress when it failed to pass judicial reforms and used emergency powers to institute those reforms and other electoral and constitutional changes. He resigned from government in 1979, giving his backing to General João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo as his successor.

Later Life

Geisel died on 12 Sept. 1996.

Begin, Menachem (Israel)

Introduction

Having dominated the opposition in the Knesset to successive Labour administrations in the first three decades of Israel's existence, Menachem Begin became prime minister at the head of a right-wing Likud (Unity) government in June 1977. The outstanding achievement of his premiership, which lasted until Oct. 1983, was the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty signed in 1979, for which he and President Sadat of Egypt were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. However, world opinion turned against his government in the wake of atrocities during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Early Life

Begin was born in Aug. 1913 in Brest-Litovsk, then in Poland and now in Belarus. A committed Zionist from an early age, he became the leader of the Betar Jewish youth movement in Poland after graduating with a law degree. When Nazi Germany invaded Poland in 1939, he fled to Soviet territory and was deported to Siberia until 1941. Released, he joined the Free Polish Army and went to Palestine in 1942 where he revitalized the Jewish Irgun Tzeva' I Le'umi (Etzel) underground organization. The increasing militancy of Etzel's operations against the British mandate brought Begin into conflict with the mainstream Zionist strategy of David Ben-Gurion. After the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, Begin formed the Herut (Freedom) Party and served as opposition leader in the Knesset until 1967 when he joined the national unity government as minister without portfolio for almost 3 years. In 1973 he became chairman of the Likud coalition, which won the legislative elections in May 1977.

Career Peak

In Nov. 1977 Prime Minister Begin hosted Egyptian President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. This inaugurated 2 years of negotiations leading to the US-brokered peace treaty in 1979 between the two countries (providing for Israel's phased withdrawal from the occupied Egyptian territory of Sinai) and to an agreement for ill-defined future Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank. In 1981 Begin controversially ordered the Israeli air force to destroy Iraq's nuclear installation at Osirak near Baghdad. He incurred further international condemnation when Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982, the second such incursion aimed at dislodging the PLO during his premiership. Israel's advance into Muslim west Beirut preceded a massacre of Palestinian refugees by Lebanese Christian militia groups. Begin left office in Oct. 1983 and died in March 1992.

Belaúnde Terry, Fernando (Peru)

Introduction

Fernando Belaúnde Terry was president of Peru between 1963–68 and 1980–85, representing the *Acción Popular* (AC) party. Despite liberal and progressive socio-economic reforms, Belaúnde was a largely ineffectual president, blocked by opposition politicians, terrorist activity and an inability to resolve economic problems.

Early Life

Belaúnde was born in Lima on 7 Oct. 1912. From a wealthy family, his father, Rafael Belaúnde Diez Canseco, served as prime minister from 1945–46. Belaúnde studied architecture at the University of Texas and then in France. He practised in Mexico before continuing his career in Peru. He was elected to congress, serving as a deputy between 1945–48. In 1956 he stood for presidential election representing the AP, a right-wing party formed by Belaúnde to promote an alternative to military dictatorship or Marxist rule. Belaúnde promised economic modernization. The president and military dictator Manuel Odría, attempted to block Belaúnde's candidature. Following much protest and public support, Belaúnde was finally permitted to stand. In the 1956 elections he came second but the AP gained strong support.

Career Peak

In the 1963 elections, Belaúnde stood against Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, the candidate for the centre left *Partido Aprista Peruano*—the Peruvian branch of the *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance; APRA), founded by Haya de la Torre. With support from the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (Christian Democratic Party), Belaúnde won with 40% of the votes. Nevertheless, the opposition had a majority in Congress. Belaúnde's aim was to increase democracy, strengthen the economy and ameliorate conditions for Peru's rural poor. He outlined land and education reforms as well as industrial development. Large-scale construction of road networks was carried out to some of Peru's most rural and inaccessible areas, including the Andes. Belaúnde was pro-American in his outlook and supported the Alliance for Progress programme—the well-meaning but ineffectual international economic development programme begun in 1962 between the USA and 22 Latin American countries. Belaúnde was frustrated in his efforts by the opposition. Peru's inflation increased and there were protests against an American company, the International Petroleum Company, which had a monopoly of the development of oil fields in Northern Peru.

In 1968, amid increasing disillusionment with the government, Belaúnde was deposed in a military coup by General Juan Velasco. He fled to the USA where he pursued his career in architecture. He attempted to return to Peru in 1970, but was immediately deported.

In 1980, after 12 years of military dictatorship, Belaúnde was elected to a second term as president. He rescued projects from his first term, including the development of the *Carretera Marginal de la Selva*, a road running parallel to the Andes. He supported the idea of free-market economy. Yet, Belaúnde's second term was as ineffectual as his first. Inflation, foreign debt and unemployment increased and he proved powerless against the increasing threat of the *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path). The Maoist guerrilla group, formed by a small group of intellectuals in 1970, began extensive terrorist activity in 1980. Over 25,000 deaths are attributed to *Sendero Luminoso*. Corruption within the government became endemic. In 1985 Belaúnde was beaten convincingly by the APRA candidate, Alan García Pérez.

Later Life

Despite this heavy defeat, Belaúnde continued to play an active role in politics, remaining the leader of the AC party. In the 1990 elections, he actively supported Mario Vargas Llosa's presidential campaign. Belaúnde voiced strong opposition to President Alberto Fujimori's auto-coup in 1992. Belaúnde died on 4 June 2002.

Belka, Marek (Poland)

Introduction

Marek Belka became Poland's prime minister on 2 May 2004, the day after the nation's entry to the European Union. A professor of economics with a reputation for instigating harsh public-spending cuts while minister of finance in 2001–02, Belka continued to court unpopularity as he attempted to push through further financial and civil-service reforms.

Early Life

Marek Belka was born on 28 Jan. 1952 in Łódź. After attending a school in the city, he entered the Faculty of Economics and Sociology at Łódź University, and graduated with a master's degree in economics in 1972. He remained at the university, working as a research assistant and undertaking a PhD, graduating in 1978, the year in which Poland's communist-run economy is considered to have peaked. Post-1978 industrial and economic decline is now seen as a crucial factor in provoking the social discontent and political stalemate that afflicted Poland through much of the 1980s. In 1978 Belka went to the United States as a Fulbright Foundation fellow at Colombia University, where he met the neo-liberal economics professor, Milton Friedman.

He travelled again to the USA in 1985 under a scholarship from the American Council of Learned Societies at the University of Chicago. A year later, Belka joined the Institute of Economics at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw as Assistant Professor. After attending the London School of Economics in 1990 Belka returned to a country undergoing dramatic political and economic change. He became a consultant to the central planning office and at the Ministry of Finance. The policies of the finance minister Leszek Balcerowicz succeeded in stabilizing the currency in 1990, but the enormous budget deficit, rising inflation and spiralling unemployment led to political instability under the Bielecki (1991), Olszewski (1992) and Suchocka (1992–93) governments. Nevertheless, ministers and advisers including Belka managed to carry out complex reforms of the civil service and the state treasury, and by 1993 a capitalist infrastructure with a stock market and a modern banking system was established. Belka became professor at the Polish Institute of Sciences in 1994 and economic adviser to the president of Poland in 1997.

Belka was brought into the government for the first time in 1997 under prime minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz. He replaced Grzegorz Kolodko as finance minister and pressed ahead with unpopular reforms to pensions and welfare state provisions. In the same year the government was voted out of office. When, in 2001, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) party was once again voted into power (crushing the Solidarity government), the prime minister, Leszek Miller, reappointed Belka as finance minister. In an attempt to reduce the budget deficit and prepare for joining the European Union, Belka made harsh cuts to social welfare benefits. Faced with widespread hostility, the Miller government proposed a compromise on the welfare cuts and the cabinet drafted legislation restricting the powers of the central bank. Both measures were unacceptable to Belka and he resigned in July 2002.

From June 2003 Belka worked in the civil administration in occupied Iraq as economic adviser to Paul Bremer, head of the Coalition Provisional Authority. In Poland, the SLD government was faced by rocketing unemployment (almost 20% in late 2003), popular protests on the streets of Warsaw and allegations of ministerial corruption. In March 2004 a group of senators and deputies left the SLD to form a new party, forcing the resignation of Leszek Miller on 2 May, the day after Poland's entry to the European Union. The president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, appointed Belka to replace Miller as prime minister.

Career Peak

Despite being rejected by the lower house of parliament (Sejm) in mid-May, Belka gained a vote of confidence to continue as prime minister of Poland on 24 June 2004. Belka also won another confidence vote on 15 Oct. He made it clear that he would continue the unpopular economic policies he espoused as finance minister. His austerity package included a borrowing cut of US\$13bn. in 4 years, which he argued was an essential precursor to joining the Eurozone. Belka advocated the continuing presence of Polish troops in Iraq.

In 2005 Belka unsuccessfully stood to be secretary general of the OECD. In May 2005 he proffered his resignation to Kwaśniewski when parliament rejected his attempt to bring forward elections so he could fulfil his promise that the caretaker government would stay in office for a maximum of a year. His resignation was rejected but he came under opposition pressure to step down in June 2005 amid allegations that he had co-operated with the secret police during Poland's communist era. His Alliance of the Democratic Left won only around 11% of the vote at the general elections of Sept. 2005 and Belka was replaced as prime minister by Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz.

Belka became director of the IMF's European Department in Nov. 2008 and was then named president of the National Bank of Poland in May 2010, serving a 6 year term from June 2010–June 2016.

Belkhadem, Abdelaziz (Algeria)

Introduction

Abdelaziz Belkhadem was prime minister of Algeria from May 2006 until June 2008. His appointment followed the resignation of Ahmed Ouyahia, who would return to succeed him as prime minister 2 years later. The leader of the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) since 2005, Belkhadem was a close ally of Algeria's president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika.

Early Life

Abdelaziz Belkhadem was born on 8 Nov. 1945 in Aflou, Laghouat Province, French Algeria. Graduating with a diploma in administration and finance, he began work as a tax inspector in 1964, becoming a professor in 1968. He joined Algeria's administration in 1972, serving as deputy director of international relations in the Revolutionary Council led by Col. Houari Boumediene (who became president in 1976).

In Feb. 1977 Belkhadem was elected to represent the FLN, the only legal party, in the national assembly. He was also deputy of the town of Sougueur, Tiaret from 1977 to 1992. In 1987 he was appointed director of the commission for education, training and scientific research and the following year he was elected vice president of the national assembly, becoming its president in 1990 after the departure of Rabah Bitat.

Between 1991 and 1997, when civil war was sparked by the military-backed government's decision to cancel multiparty elections that the Islamic Salvation Front had been poised to win, Belkhadem served in the political office of the FLN. Abdelaziz Bouteflika's victory in a controversial presidential election in April 1999 paved the way for a ceasefire and a period of relative stability. Belkhadem was appointed minister of foreign affairs in 2000, initially under Ali Benflis, the reformist prime minister and leader of the FLN. After almost a decade of civil war Algeria had become isolated internationally and Belkhadem was at the forefront of restoring relations with countries such as Morocco and France, notably via pan-African diplomacy.

The parliamentary elections in May 2002 saw large gains for the FLN, which claimed 199 out of 389 national assembly seats to become the dominant party in the ruling coalition. Tensions between the president and Ali Benflis were resolved in Feb. 2005 when Belkhadem, a Bouteflika loyalist, was elected secretary general at the party's congress. Following the resignation of the prime minister, Ahmed Ouyahia, on 24 May 2006, the president nominated Belkhadem to succeed him. Ouyahia's downfall followed his opposition to a general wage increase proposed by the unions and supported by the FLN.

Career Peak

Belkhadem prioritized a 'revision' of the constitution and increases in pay for public-sector workers. He also pledged to cut the unemployment and poverty afflicting millions of Algerians despite the country's hydrocarbon-fuelled economic upturn since 2004. In Nov. 2006 Belkhadem restated Algeria's aim to improve ties with France if the French government admits to having committed crimes during its 130 years as colonial ruler. In May 2007 Belkhadem retained the premiership as the FLN-led ruling coalition won

parliamentary elections marked by a low voter turnout. His government briefly resigned in early June before his reappointment as premier. On 23 June 2008, in a move that surprised many observers, President Bouteflika named Ahmed Ouyahia prime minister. Belkhadem was appointed the president's 'personal representative'.

Ben Ali, Zine El Abidine (Tunisia)

Introduction

Appointed prime minister by Habib Bourguiba, Tunisia's leader from 1957, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali then became president after Bourguiba was deposed in 1987. Despite advocating moderate liberalization, his human rights record remained a source of international unease. He was scheduled to retire in 2004, but secured support in a referendum for changes to the constitution allowing him a further two terms in office. He was re-elected in Oct. 2009 but left office and fled to Saudi Arabia in the face of popular protests in Jan. 2011.

Early Life

Ben Ali was born in Hammam Sousse on 3 Sept. 1936. As a teenager he became involved in the nationalist movement, which culminated in Tunisia's independence from France in 1956. He resumed his studies abroad, training at the military academy at Saint-Cyr and at the artillery school of Châlons-sur-Marne in France, and later studying in the USA where he obtained a degree in electronic engineering.

Returning to Tunisia, he was appointed head of military security from 1964–74 and became a military attaché to the Tunisian embassy in Morocco. Upon his return, he was made head of national security and later served as ambassador to Poland. In 1986 he was appointed minister of the interior.

Ben Ali was active in fighting militant fundamentalist groups. In Oct. 1987 he was appointed prime minister by President Habib Bourguiba. Bourguiba was dogged by rumours of intermittent senility and in Nov. was declared unfit to rule by a committee of doctors and deposed in a bloodless coup. Ben Ali replaced him as president.

Career Peak

As leader of the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD), Ben Ali had been overwhelmingly re-elected in March 1994, Oct. 1999, Oct. 2004 and Oct. 2009. The cancellation of the 1992 election at a point when the opposition seemed likely to win prompted international criticism. Scheduled to retire in 2004, he initiated changes to the constitution in 2002 to allow him to govern for another two terms. In the Oct. 2004 elections the main opposition group, the Progressive Democratic Party, withdrew its candidates 2 days before polling, arguing that the vote would be worthless.

Ben Ali inherited an economically stable country and oversaw a reduction in the poverty rate and improving literacy levels. He expressed his commitment to furthering women's rights and authorized the release of some political prisoners, but human rights groups were critical of his regime. He maintained tight control of the media and the treatment of journalists and political opponents critical of his rule caused international concern.

Ben Ali was re-elected chairman of the RCD in July 2008 and president, with 90% of the vote, in Oct. 2009. Following weeks of violent protests driven by economic grievances and resentment over political repression, Ben Ali relinquished power in Jan. 2011 and fled to Saudi Arabia. Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi agreed to act as interim president but was subsequently succeeded by Foued Mebazaa, the President of the Chamber of Deputies.

Later Life

In June 2011 Ben Ali and his wife were convicted in absentia of charges relating to arms, narcotics and the misappropriation of funds. Both were sentenced to 35 years in prison and fined US\$65.5m. In June 2012 Ben Ali was given a life sentence by a military court, which found him guilty of 'inciting disorder, murder and looting'.

Ben Bella, Ahmed (Algeria)

Introduction

Ahmed Ben Bella became the first president of newly independent Algeria in Sept. 1963, serving until June 1965. A long-time opponent of French colonial rule, he endured several years of imprisonment and exile prior to independence.

Early Life

Ahmed Ben Bella was born in Maghnia on 25 Dec. 1918. He studied in Tlemcen but left school with no qualifications. He joined the French Army in 1936 and was posted to Marseille. During the Second World War he won a commendation for bravery at the 1944 battle of Monte Cassino.

Angry at France's brutal suppression of the anti-colonial movement in Algeria, Ben Bella refused an officer's commission and returned to his homeland entering politics. He became a municipal councillor in Maghnia and was a founding member of the anti-French, paramilitary Organisation Spéciale. After being arrested in 1951 for robbing a post office to raise funds for the group, he escaped and made his way to Cairo in Egypt, which was his base when the Algerian War of Independence broke out in 1954.

Ben Bella was one of nine members of a committee that led the Front de Libération Nationale/National Liberation Front (FLN) during the war and survived several assassination attempts. In 1956 he was arrested when the plane on which he was travelling was diverted by the French authorities to Algiers. While imprisoned in France he was elected vice-premier of the provisional government of Algeria, but was released in 1962 following the signing of a peace deal. Returning to Algeria, he was elected premier with the support of Col. Houari Boumedienne, chief of the Army of National Liberation, and in 1963 was voted president unopposed.

Career Peak

Ben Bella initiated a reform programme inspired by his anti-colonial and pro-Arab philosophy. He nationalized what was left of the colonial farming lands but his land reforms were largely unsuccessful and resulted in economic hardship. In education, meanwhile, he brought in large numbers of teachers from Egypt and Syria. He also fostered close economic ties with France, as well as negotiating aid from the USA and the USSR. However, with government reforms faltering and Ben Bella increasingly autocratic, Boumedienne headed a bloodless coup on 19 June 1965.

Later Life

Ben Bella was imprisoned or kept under house arrest for the next 14 years. Restrictions upon him were eased in 1979 and he was allowed to go into exile in Oct. 1980. In 1984 he launched the Movement for Democracy in Algeria and returned to the country in the 1990s, becoming a vocal critic of the country's destructive civil war. He died on 11 April 2012.

Benedict XVI (Vatican City State)

Introduction

Joseph Ratzinger was elected head of the Roman Catholic Church on 19 April 2005, becoming Pope Benedict XVI. His appointment followed the death of the popular and charismatic Pope John Paul II. A highly intellectual theologian from southern Germany, Benedict XVI has served in the Vatican as head of the department that defends Catholic orthodoxy since 1981. He has reinforced the broadly conservative policies of John Paul II, his friend and close ally, and opposed secularism and relativism, which he has described as 'letting oneself be tossed and swept by every wind of teaching'.

Early Life

Joseph Ratzinger was born in Marktl am Inn, southeastern Bavaria, Germany, on 16 April 1927, the third and youngest child of a police officer and his wife. In 1929 his father was posted to the town of Tittmoning on the Austrian border, where the family remained for 3 years, before moving to Aschau am Inn and then to Hufschlag, near Traunstein, when his father retired in 1937. Ratzinger attended the high school in Traunstein, and later opted to train for the priesthood, entering the town's seminary in 1939. At 14 years of age he joined the Hitler Youth—a legal requirement as part of the Nazis' efforts to convert the German population to the 'National Socialist spirit'. Two years later Ratzinger was drafted into the anti-aircraft artillery corps. His unit guarded facilities including an aircraft-engine plant near Munich. In late 1944 Ratzinger was drafted into the German army and served in and around Munich. Reportedly a reluctant soldier, he deserted weeks before Germany's surrender in 1945, and rejoined the seminary in Traunstein. After 2 years he took up a place at the Herzogliches Georgianum, a theological institute linked to the University of Munich. On 29 June 1951 he was ordained to the priesthood in the cathedral at Freising, near Munich.

Ratzinger continued with his study of theology at the University of Munich—his doctoral thesis focused on St Augustine and his view of Christianity in the fifth century. Having gained his doctorate in July 1953, he began post-doctoral research about St Bonaventure, a Franciscan theologian of the nineteenth century. In 1959 Ratzinger moved to Bonn to take up a professorship in fundamental theology at the city's university. He taught at the University of Münster for 3 years from 1963, before joining the University of Tübingen, near Stuttgart. When the wave of student uprisings swept across Europe in 1968, it brought Marxism to the Tübingen campus. Ratzinger was horrified by what he saw as a 'tyrannical, brutal and cruel' ideology that was undermining the Church. He accepted an offer of a teaching position at the new University of Regensburg a year later, and remained in the Bavarian city for the next 7 years. He began to take a more conservative approach to theology, and rose to become the dean and then vice-president of the university.

On 24 March 1977 Ratzinger was elected archbishop of Munich and Freising by Pope Paul VI. He was ordained to the episcopal order in May 1977 and a month later was elevated to cardinal priest. However, his work as an archbishop was to prove relatively short-lived. In Nov. 1981 he was called to Rome by Pope John Paul II (who had been elected in 1978) to take over the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the department in the Vatican responsible for defending and reinforcing Catholic orthodoxy (once known as the Inquisition). At the same time, he became president of the International Theological Commission and the Pontifical Biblical Commission. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith courted controversy after publishing 'Dominus Jesus', which described other Christian faiths and world religions as 'deficient or not quite real churches'.

Ratzinger was elevated to the position of cardinal bishop of the diocese of Velletri-Sigini on 5 April 1993, and was elected vice-dean of the College of Cardinals in 1998. When he was appointed dean of the College in late 2002 (and cardinal bishop of the diocese of Ostia), Ratzinger had become one of the Vatican's most powerful and influential figures. He presided over the funeral of Pope John Paul II in St Peter's Basilica on 8 April 2005, and subsequently inaugurated the conclave for the election of the successor to St Peter in the Sistine chapel. On 19 April, after the fourth ballot of the conclave, the proto-deacon of the College of Cardinals, Jorge Estévez, announced to a crowd of tens of thousands in St Peter's Square: 'Dear brothers and sisters, we have a Pope. The most eminent and most reverend Lord, Lord Joseph, Cardinal of Holy Roman Church, Ratzinger, who has taken the name Benedict XVI'.

Career Peak

Pope Benedict XVI swiftly reappointed all former officers who had served under John Paul II. A hint of future Vatican policy came with the appointment of the US non-Cardinal William Joseph Levada to the post of prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 13 May 2005. The elevation of this deeply conservative prelate archbishop of the Archdiocese of San Francisco to one of the church's most powerful positions raised fears among reform-minded Catholics.

Controversy from another direction erupted in Sept. 2006 after the Pope delivered a lecture in Germany including a reference to a medieval text perceived as hostile to Islam. This provoked almost worldwide Muslim protest, forcing the Vatican to apologize for any unintentional offence. The incident threatened to derail a planned papal visit in Nov. to Turkey, a predominantly Muslim country, but the trip went ahead successfully, with Benedict advocating 'authentic dialogue' based on mutual respect between Christians and Muslims.

In 2007 the Pope met Russian president Vladimir Putin for the first time, and also King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. It was the first such meeting between the head of the Roman Catholic Church and a Saudi monarch. In March 2009 he toured Africa and in May visited the Middle East where he appealed for peace and religious coexistence.

In Dec. 2008 Benedict again courted social controversy with a perceived attack on homosexuality that angered gay rights groups and activists. Then, in Jan. 2009, his controversial decision to readmit to the Church an ultra-conservative bishop who had denied the Holocaust angered Jews and many Catholics. Moreover, his assertion in Feb. 2010 that the effect of some equality legislation in Britain had been to impose unjust limitations on the freedom of religious communities to act in accordance with their beliefs was condemned by human rights campaigners.

In Oct. 2009 Benedict made an unprecedented offer to disaffected Anglicans to join the Catholic Church while still maintaining many of their own spiritual traditions. In early 2010 he was the subject of allegations that he failed to take timely action against paedophile priests while prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1981–2005), where he had responsibility for dealing with clerical abuse. The Vatican denied any wrongdoing but in Sept. 2010, while making the first papal visit to the United Kingdom since 1982, Benedict acknowledged that the paedophile scandal had undermined the moral credibility of the Church.

In Nov. 2010, in an apparent shift in traditional Vatican policy towards contraception, it was reported that the Pope was prepared to countenance the use of condoms to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Following a bomb attack on a Christian church in Alexandria, Egypt, Benedict called on Middle Eastern governments in Jan. 2011 to do more to protect religious minorities in their countries. This prompted the Egyptian government to recall its ambassador to the Vatican in protest at perceived interference in its internal affairs. He made a similar appeal for religious tolerance in Jan. 2012 following the bombing of a Christian church in Nigeria.

In July 2011 the Irish prime minister accused the Vatican of having tried to downplay the extent of sexual abuse of children by Catholic clergy in Ireland. In response, the Vatican recalled its envoy from Dublin.

In his traditional Christmas message from the Vatican in Dec. 2012, Benedict called for an end to hostilities in Syria and a resumption of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. He also controversially denounced gay marriage as a 'manipulation of nature'.

In an unexpected move, Benedict announced his resignation from the papacy on 11 Feb. 2013, citing declining health and advanced age. The Pope stepped down on 28 Feb., being the first pope to resign since 1415.

Benediktsson, Bjarni (Iceland)

Introduction

Bjarni Benediktsson was sworn in as prime minister on 11 Jan. 2017, having previously been minister of finance and economic affairs in the outgoing coalition that was defeated in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2016. He is the chairman of the centre-right Independence Party (SSF), which traditionally dominated Icelandic politics from its formation in 1929 until it lost its uninterrupted status as the largest party in the wake of the 2008–09 financial crisis that bankrupted Iceland. Bjarni Benediktsson shares his name with an unrelated former prime minister of Iceland who served from 1963–70. He only held office for ten months, with Katrín Jakobsdóttir succeeding him as prime minister.

Early Life

Benediktsson was born in Reykjavík on 26 Jan. 1970. He studied law at the University of Iceland before furthering his education in Germany and the United States. After returning to his home country, he entered parliament as an SSF representative at the 2003 election. He subsequently served on committees overseeing the economy and taxation, health and social security, and industry, and was chairman of the foreign affairs committee from 2007 to 2009.

The SSF resigned from government in 2009 amid popular protests over the extent of Iceland's financial collapse. Benediktsson was appointed party chairman. In the ensuing parliamentary election it gained only 16 seats, an

historic low for a party that had gained the largest share of the vote in every election since its establishment 80 years earlier. In the wake of the disastrous campaign, the SSF entered as a junior partner into government with the Social Democratic Alliance.

Benediktsson campaigned in the 2013 poll on a programme of restoring growth after a period of severe austerity. He pledged to lower taxes and take steps to reduce the heavy burden of debt on households. He offered to resign the chairmanship of the party only two weeks before the election following an attempted coup from within his own ranks, a move credited with boosting his appeal to the electorate. In the election, held on 27 April 2013, the SSF gained 19 (out of a total of 63) seats, against the same number for the Progressive Party (FSF) and nine for the Social Democratic Alliance. The SSF then joined a new coalition headed by Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson of the Progressive Party and Benediktsson took over the finance and economic affairs portfolio.

In April 2016 Gunnlaugsson stepped down after reports in the so-called *Panama Papers* of his secret offshore investments triggered mass public protests and demands for another election. The FSF deputy leader, Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson, meanwhile became interim premier.

At the poll in Oct. 2016 the SSF emerged as the largest party with 21 parliamentary seats, but weeks of inter-party negotiations followed before Benediktsson could form a new SSF-led coalition with the centre-right Reform Party (Viðreisn) and centrist Bright Future in Jan. 2017.

Career Peak

Having taken office, Benediktsson was unable to draw a line under the political fall-out from the *Panama Papers*, as he declined a request by a parliamentary standing committee to answer questions about tax evasion by Icelanders amid international media reports that he had been similarly implicated. In Sept. 2017, following revelations of an alleged scandal involving Benediktsson's father, Bright Future announced that they would end their co-operation with the government only nine months after the swearing-in of the cabinet. After the subsequent Nov. 2017 snap parliamentary election, President Jóhannesson asked Katrín Jakobsdóttir of the Left-Green Movement (VG) to form a new government. She replaced Benediktsson as prime minister on 30 Nov. 2017.

Later Life

As had been agreed as part of the coalition agreement between the VG, the SSF and the FSF, Jakobsdóttir appointed Benediktsson as finance and economic affairs minister.

Ben-Gurion, David (Israel)

Introduction

Zionist leader and Labour statesman, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the state of Israel on 14 May 1948. He was Israel's first and longest serving prime minister over two terms from 1948–53 and 1955–63. He died in Tel Aviv on 1 Dec. 1973.

Early Life

Ben-Gurion was born in Plonsk, in what is now Poland, in Oct. 1886. The son of an ardent Zionist, he migrated to Palestine in 1906. At the outbreak of the First World War he was expelled by the then ruling Ottoman authorities and went to the United States before returning to Palestine as a soldier in the Jewish Legion of the British Army. In the 1920s Ben-Gurion and others founded the Histadrut (General Federation of Jewish Labour). He served as its first secretary general until 1935, meanwhile assuming the leadership of the Mapai Party, formed from several labour factions. In 1935 he became head of the Jewish Agency, a government-in-waiting among the Jews of Palestine under the British mandate. At the end of the Second World War he orchestrated the Jewish campaign for statehood, becoming prime minister and minister of defence in 1948 of a territory under siege from hostile Arab neighbours.

Career Peak

Having secured the new state's military survival, Ben-Gurion sought to encourage and integrate waves of Jewish immigrants and to create a national, regular army—the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). In foreign affairs, he adopted a pro-Western policy, which set the stage for a closer strategic alliance with Britain and France. Having resigned from office in Dec. 1953, he resumed the premiership in Nov. 1955. In the 1956 Suez crisis, Israel colluded with Britain and France in an attack on Egypt in retaliation for Col. Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal. Israel, Britain and France were forced to withdraw under pressure from the United States and the United Nations.

Ben-Gurion resigned as prime minister in June 1963, probably as a result of division within the Mapai Party. He formed a new party (Rafi) in 1965 and retired from public life in 1970. He died in 1973.

Benkirane, Abdelilah (Morocco)

Introduction

Abdelilah Benkirane became prime minister in Nov. 2011 after his moderate, left-leaning Islamist party won a majority in legislative elections. Although reappointed in Oct. 2016 following further elections, he failed to form a new government and was dismissed in March 2017 by the King pending the installation of a successor. He nonetheless retained the premiership in a caretaker capacity.

Early Life

Benkirane was born in Rabat on 4 April 1954 and graduated in science and engineering in 1979. In 1983 he jointly founded a moderate, left-leaning Islamist group, Al Jamaa Al Islamiya, despite official resistance. In 1997 Benkirane and other moderate Islamists joined forces with the Popular Democratic and Constitutional Movement (MPDC) and in polling in Nov. he was elected to parliament. The following year the MPDC changed its name to the Party of Justice and Development (PJD).

In Sept. 2002 Benkirane was re-elected as the PJD took 42 parliamentary seats and in July 2008 he was elected party leader. Reformist protests in Feb. 2011, echoing unrest across the Arab world, led the King to amend the constitution in July to give new powers to a prime minister selected from the largest party in parliament. Following elections in Nov. 2011 the PJD formed a coalition with three parties that had been part of previous governments and Benkirane was appointed premier.

Career Peak

Benkirane aimed to achieve ambitious economic growth targets and to bring down unemployment by 2017. However, in May 2012 thousands rallied in Casablanca demanding jobs, accusing the government of failing to deliver on promised reforms.

Following the resignation of the Istiqlal Party from the government in mid-2013, Benkirane forged a power-sharing administration with the National Rally of Independents in Oct. that year. In Oct. 2016 the PJD again emerged as the largest party in elections and Benkirane was reappointed prime minister. However, his subsequent struggle to form a new coalition reflected a polarized political atmosphere and public anger over perceived abuses of state power and continuing unemployment. In March 2017 the king removed him from office, although Benkirane remained prime minister in a caretaker capacity ahead of the formal appointment of his successor.

Berger Perdomo, Óscar (Guatemala)

Introduction

President of Guatemala from Jan. 2004 to Jan. 2008, Óscar Berger Perdomo of the Grand National Alliance (GAN) was previously twice mayor of the

capital, Guatemala City. On 14 Jan. 2008 Berger was succeeded by Álvaro Colom after Colom won the presidential elections in Nov. 2007.

Early Life

Born into a wealthy family on 11 Aug. 1946 in Guatemala City, Berger received a private education culminating in his graduation from the Jesuit Rafael Landívar University as a lawyer and notary. Having supported Álvaro Arzú, a classmate from university and later president of Guatemala, in his successful campaign in the mid-1980s to become mayor of Guatemala City, Berger then held this position himself from 1991–99. At the end of the 1980s, Berger and Arzú formed the National Advancement Party (PAN) to take advantage of what they saw as a gap in the political spectrum, hitherto dominated by conservative and far-right parties. Standing for the PAN in the Nov.–Dec. 1999 presidential elections, Berger lost to the FRG candidate, Alfonso Cabrera, in the second round of voting.

Career Peak

In late 2003 Berger stood again as a presidential election candidate, this time for the GANA, and won the second round run-off with 54.1% of the vote. He was sworn in on 14 Jan. 2004. Despite his personal victory, his GANA coalition failed to secure a congressional majority and he has faced political opposition to his government's programme. He has introduced improvements in education and health programmes and also initiated reductions in the armed forces. In Sept. 2006 some 3,000 troops and police stormed a prison controlled by inmates. In Oct. 2005 a state of emergency was declared following a devastating hurricane.

On 4 Nov. 2007 Álvaro Colom, leader of the social-democratic National Union of Hope (UNE), narrowly won the presidential election on a platform of economic development and fighting crime. Colom, who faced Berger in a run-off vote in Dec. 2003, was inaugurated on 14 Jan. 2008, succeeding Berger for a 4 year term.

Berisha, Sali (Albania)

Introduction

Former president Dr Sali Berisha returned as prime minister in Sept. 2005 after 8 years in opposition. He was a leading opponent of the communist regime in the late 1980s and served as Albania's first elected post-communist president from 1992–97. Breathing life into Albania's ailing economy, reforming its institutions and tackling corruption and organized crime have remained his policy priorities. Following parliamentary elections in June 2009, Berisha retained the premiership at the head of a new coalition formed in Sept. between his Democratic Party of Albania and its allies and the Socialist Movement for Integration.

Early Life

Sali Ram Berisha was born in Vuçitot in northern Albania on 15 Oct. 1944, the year in which the communist leader, Enver Hoxha, seized power and established a hard-line Stalinist regime. Berisha graduated in medicine from the University of Tirana in 1967, subsequently specializing in cardiology and publishing numerous textbooks and scientific papers. He joined the communist Party of Labour in 1971.

In the late 1980s Berisha was one of a group of intellectuals who called for democratic reforms. Following student protests at the University of Tirana in Dec. 1990, he founded the PD and was elected a member of parliament in the country's first multi-party elections on 31 March 1991. During the PD's first Congress in Sept. 1991 Berisha was voted chairman and led the party to victory in the general election of 22 March 1992. Elected president of Albania on 9 April 1992, he set out to open up the economy, promote foreign investment and reform the country's institutions. However, the administration was marred by corruption and Albania remained mired in poverty. Tens of thousands emigrated and Berisha faced growing opposition to his increasingly authoritarian rule, particularly in the south of the country.

Support for Berisha was further eroded by the collapse of various pyramid investment schemes in 1997. An uprising in the south threatened to spill over into civil war and tensions remained high when Berisha refused to step down

after the electoral victory of a socialist-led coalition in June 1997. He eventually resigned under international pressure on 23 July 1997, to be replaced by the head of the Socialist Party, Rexhep Meidani. Fatos Nano, a fellow socialist and arch-rival of Berisha, became prime minister.

Tensions between the two main parties remained. Berisha accused Fatos Nano's administration of corruption and incompetence and withdrew from parliament between 1998 and early 2002. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo in 1999 placed further strain on the faltering economy and infrastructure. Berisha fought the general election on 3 July 2005 on an anti-corruption platform and the PD claimed victory, although foreign monitors criticized the vote as falling short of international standards. Having formed a coalition with other centre-right groups to take control of 81 of the 140 seats in the legislature, Berisha was sworn in as prime minister on 11 Sept. 2005.

Career Peak

Berisha promised to build a 'social state' by streamlining the government and purging it of corrupt elements, reducing taxes and enabling private enterprise to flourish. He also declared his aim of eventual Albanian membership of NATO and the EU. In June 2006 his government signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU after 3 years of negotiations, and in April 2009 Albania joined NATO and applied for EU membership.

Berisha presided over an improvement in the economy, a revival of agriculture and the attraction of greater foreign investment. However, Albania's reputation for lawlessness has endured and criticisms of the country's ineffective judicial system remain. In March 2008 Berisha removed the defence minister, Fatmir Mediu, from office following a series of explosions at an ammunition depot near Tirana airport which killed 26 people and injured 250 more.

A new coalition government comprising the PD, the Republican Party of Albania, the Party for Justice and Integration and the Socialist Movement for Integration, with Berisha retaining the premiership, was sworn in on 17 Sept. 2009 following earlier parliamentary elections. However, the opposition Socialist Party maintained that the election result was fraudulent. The party's consequent campaign of demonstrations, civil disobedience and boycotting parliament resulted in political paralysis and prompted the EU's refusal in Nov. 2010 to grant Albania candidate membership status. The political climate deteriorated further in Jan. 2011 when an anti-government rally in the capital resulted in the killing of four protesters by security forces and led Berisha to accuse the opposition leader of trying to instigate a coup.

The parliamentary elections held in June 2013 were won by the opposition. Berisha publicly accepted the result and announced responsibility for the defeat. The following month he stepped down from the leadership of the PD. In Sept. 2013 Edi Rama succeeded Berisha as prime minister.

Berlusconi, Silvio (Italy)

Introduction

Silvio Berlusconi was Italy's longest-serving post-war prime minister, having served a total of three terms. His first government in 1994 lasted less than 8 months. He was returned to power as the head of Italy's government on 14 May 2001. His appointment was controversial, with many protesting that his position as the owner of the country's three main private television networks meant that he was able to unfairly influence the outcome of the election. Nevertheless, his centre-right coalition achieved a convincing majority in both the Senate and the lower house. In April 2005 the coalition collapsed, triggering a brief political crisis before another centre-right coalition under his premiership won a vote of confidence. His term ended in 2006 when his government lost parliamentary elections to Romano Prodi's Union coalition. However, after Prodi's own coalition collapsed in Feb. 2008, Berlusconi emerged victorious from the general election held in April. Berlusconi's third term was marred by scandals whilst he struggled to solve fiscal problems related to the European debt crisis. After losing his parliamentary majority he resigned in Nov. 2011.

Early Life

The son of a bank clerk, Silvio Berlusconi was born in Milan on 29 Sept. 1936. After graduating from the University of Milan he embarked on a career in property development, acquiring a large personal fortune by the early 1970s. In 1974 he founded a cable television company, *Telemilano*, which was later at the forefront of his campaign to end the state's monopoly on national television. By the end of the decade Berlusconi had established the country's first commercial television network, *Canale 5*. By this time he had also amassed stock in retail outlets, cinemas, AC Milan football club and publishing. These holdings were consolidated under a new umbrella organization that Berlusconi dubbed *Fininvest*. The conglomerate expanded throughout the 1980s and at its peak controlled over 150 separate businesses.

In Jan. 1994 a series of high profile corruption and bribery scandals engulfed the government and prompted demands for reforms. It was in this atmosphere that Berlusconi entered the political arena. He founded a new party, *Forza Italia*, which attracted floating voters disenchanted with politics after the demise of the Christian Democrats and Socialists. *Forza Italia* proclaimed its agenda as one of justice, economic liberalization and the reduction of bureaucracy and government intervention in commerce and industry. To secure power, the party allied itself with the right-wing Northern League and the neo-Fascist National Alliance. Called House of Freedoms (*Casa delle Libertá*), this coalition won a majority of seats in the Chamber of Deputies on 28 March 1994. Berlusconi, as the leader of the largest party in the alliance, was sworn in as prime minister in May.

Career Peak

Berlusconi's first term of office was short-lived. He immediately became entangled in a legal battle against political opponents who accused him of corruption and conflicts of interest. In Dec. 1994 an official investigation began into his past business dealings, prompting a no confidence vote. He resigned on 22 Dec. 1994. In the 1996 elections Berlusconi lost to Romano Prodi's centre-left Olive Tree coalition. Prodi left office in 1998 when he himself lost a no confidence vote.

Despite the popularity of the Olive Tree government, its leader in the 2001 elections, Francesco Rutelli, was unable to muster enough support to return the coalition to power. By this time Berlusconi's reputation had recovered. The centre-right won 368 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (a gain of 65 seats) compared to the Olive Tree's 242. In the Senate the centre-right coalition secured 177 of 315 seats, while the centre-left won just 125. This performance was enough to ensure Berlusconi the premiership.

Berlusconi pledged to cut taxes, raise pensions and create 1.5 m. new jobs. He also promised to form a stable government that would remain in power for the full five-year term. However, his term was marred by efforts to prosecute him for corruption and financial wrongdoing. Although his convictions for illegal party financing, false accounting and bribery were quashed, he stood trial in early 2003 for bribing the judiciary and business malpractice. However, in June 2003 parliament passed a law granting immunity from prosecution for leading government figures while they held office and Berlusconi's trial was dropped. Two of his smaller coalition partners threatened to leave government until the justice minister announced in Aug. 2003 that a judicial enquiry into Berlusconi's commercial affairs would still go ahead. Nevertheless, in Dec. 2004 he was cleared by the courts of a charge relating to his business affairs in the 1980s and another charge was dropped by virtue of the statute of limitations.

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the attacks on the USA on 11 Sept. 2001, Berlusconi gave firm support to the US war on terror, backing military action in Afghanistan and Iraq, where Italian troops were deployed in the multinational forces.

On 20 April 2005 the centre-right coalition collapsed following a poor showing in regional elections. Berlusconi was forced to resign, but was reappointed a few days later by President Ciampi and formed a new coalition of all the parties in the previous administration. In April 2006 parliamentary elections were held, with House of Freedoms losing to Romano Prodi's centre-left coalition, Union. The results of the elections were close and disputed by Berlusconi, who claimed electoral fraud. He then called for a grand coalition government and for a House of Freedoms speaker in the Senate, where Union gained 158 seats to House of Freedoms' 156. He finally tendered his resignation on 2 May 2006, 3 weeks after his defeat. He remained in office as caretaker until Prodi was sworn in and formed the new government on 17 May 2006.

In Feb. 2008 Prodi's coalition collapsed and elections were called for April. Berlusconi announced he would stand for a third term, with the

intention of completing the reform programme started during his previous tenure. Attacking the left for 'bringing Italy to its knees', he steered an alliance of centre-right parties to victory in the April elections and, in March 2009, oversaw the inaugural congress of the alliance (but excluding the independent Northern League) as a single People of Freedom (PdL) party.

Berlusconi's government was confronted by Italy's slide into economic recession under the shadow of its huge public debt and in the wake of the global financial crisis. In Oct. 2009 Italy's Constitutional Court overturned the law granting Berlusconi immunity from prosecution while in office. The ruling meant that he could face trial in two possible court actions. Also in 2009, the prime minister came under increasing media and opposition scrutiny over allegations about his conduct in his private life. On 13 Dec. 2009 he sustained facial injuries in an assault by a single assailant after addressing a rally in Milan.

Despite anti-government demonstrations backed by the opposition and the trade unions, Berlusconi's PdL made gains at the expense of the centre-left in regional elections in March 2010. However, in Aug. the government lost its parliamentary majority after more than 30 deputies broke away from the PdL, forming the Future and Freedom for Italy party (led by Gianfranco Fini, a former Berlusconi ally). The government subsequently survived several no-confidence votes up to Dec. but Berlusconi's political authority was further undermined as four ministers resigned in Nov. and claims about his personal life continued to surface. In Feb. 2011 he was indicted to stand trial by a judge on charges of paying a minor for sex and abuse of power.

On 8 Nov. 2011, amid growing fiscal problems related to the European debt crisis, Berlusconi lost his parliamentary majority. Berlusconi resigned on 13 Nov. after politicians approved an austerity package to protect the country and eurozone from financial collapse. His resignation was met with celebration outside the presidential palace.

Later Life

In Oct. 2012 a court in Milan convicted Berlusconi of tax fraud and sentenced him to 4 years in jail, although this was reduced to 1 year almost immediately. In May 2013 the appeals court upheld the 4-year sentence and reinstated a 5-year ban from public office that Berlusconi was given in Oct. Berlusconi was expelled from the Senate following his conviction and could face arrest over other criminal cases, having been stripped of immunity from prosecution.

In June 2013 he was found guilty of procuring an under-age dancer for sexual purposes and other related charges of abuse of power. He received a 7-year prison term and a lifelong ban from public office but in July 2014 an appeal court overturned his conviction.

Bērziņš, Andris (Latvia)

Introduction

Andris Bērziņš became president in June 2011 after an election dominated by rows over parliamentary links to business. A former banker, Bērziņš leads the Union of Greens and Farmers and advocates economic reforms and the consolidation of ties with the European Union (EU).

Early Life

Andris Bērziņš was born on 10 Dec. 1944 in Nītaure. After schooling in Nītaure and Sigulda, he studied radio engineering at the Riga Polytechnic Institute from 1966–71. He worked for R/A Elektronis from 1971–88, eventually as managing director. From 1987–88 he studied industrial planning at the University of Latvia, and from 1988–89 served as deputy minister of municipal services of the Latvian SSR. He was elected to the district council of the city of Valmiera in 1989, serving as its chairman until 1993. From 1990–93 he represented Valmiera on the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, where he joined the Popular Front grouping. On 4 May 1990 he voted for Latvian independence from the USSR.

Between 1990 and 1992 Bērziņš served on the supervisory council of the Bank of Latvia, as the country began its conversion to a market economy. In 1993 he was appointed president of the newly founded commercial bank,

Latvijas Unibanka, overseeing its rapid growth until leaving the post in 2004. During this period he extended his own business interests into property.

In 2005 Bērziņš unsuccessfully stood for mayor of Riga, representing the Union of Greens and Farmers. He was president of the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry from 2006 until 2010, and from 2007–09 was chairman of the supervisory council of the state-owned Latvenergo electricity company. In 2010 he entered parliament as a member of the Union of Greens and Farmers, which formed a coalition government with the Unity party.

From 2010 he served a year as chairman of the economic, agricultural, environmental and regional policy committee. In June 2011 he was elected president by parliament, beating the incumbent Valdis Zatlers in a second round of voting after Zatlers had accused MPs of being lax on corruption.

Career Peak

Bērziņš took office on 8 July 2011, promising to work independently of Latvia's oligarchs. He prioritized economic growth and the restoration of trust in the nation's democratic institutions. He also sought to consolidate Latvia's position in the EU, overseeing the country's adoption of the euro on 1 Jan. 2014. In the same month he appointed Laimdota Straujuma as Latvia's first female prime minister.

In April 2015, ahead of presidential elections scheduled for June, Bērziņš announced that he would not be seeking a second term. Raimonds Vējonis took over from Bērziņš on 8 July.

Bhattarai, Baburam (Nepal)

Introduction

Baburam Bhattarai became prime minister in Aug. 2011. His principal challenge was to draft a new constitution by the scheduled date of 28 May 2012 (exactly 4 years after Nepal became a republic). However, against an increasingly polarized political background, he failed to achieve this aim and was also unable to deliver fresh elections promised for Nov. after opposition parties refused to cooperate over electoral arrangements.

Early Life

Baburam Bhattarai was born on 18 June 1954 in Khoplang, Gorkha District. As a schoolboy he achieved among the nation's highest test results and graduated in architecture at the Chandigarh College of Architecture in 1977. He completed a master's degree in town and country planning from the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi in 1979 and received a doctorate in regional development planning from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in 1986. While in India he founded the All India Nepalese Students' Association and in 1981 joined the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN). On his return to Nepal he became a Politburo Member of CPN (Unity Centre) and later of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), which has in the meantime become the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

On 4 Feb. 1996 Bhattarai submitted a 40-point memorandum to the government on behalf of the United People's Front. Shortly afterwards he went into hiding when the Maoists launched their armed insurgency, emerging in 2003 as the Maoist party spokesman. He was a leading negotiator on the Nov. 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord. In 2008 he was elected to parliament representing Gorkha constituency no. 2 and served as finance minister in Pushpa Kamal Dahal's short-lived government.

Parliament elected Bhattarai prime minister on 28 Aug. 2011 after the political parties failed to form a consensus government following Jhalaanath Khanal's resignation. Bhattarai received 340 of the 575 votes cast. He was sworn in the following day.

Career Peak

Bhattarai's main challenge was to forge a cross-party consensus and draft a new constitution before 28 May 2012, at which point the Constituent Assembly was scheduled to be dissolved after a Nov. 2011 deadline was missed. However, the May 2012 deadline was also missed and Bhattarai then failed to hold promised new elections scheduled for Nov., which aggravated the political stalemate and heightened tensions between his government and President Yadav.

Meanwhile, in Nov. 2011 Bhattarai had secured the support of opposition parties and his own party hard-liners for a programme that would integrate into the army a third of the nation's 19,000 former Maoist fighters, while offering re-training and financial assistance to the rest. Securing the future of the fighters was seen as a major component of the peace process.

Later Life

In June 2016 Bhattarai founded Naya Shakti, a new party and alternative political force leaning towards economic development and the control of corruption.

Bhutto, Benazir (Pakistan)

Introduction

Benazir Bhutto served as Pakistan's prime minister between 1988–90 and 1993–96, becoming the first woman to head an Islamic state. She entered politics when her father, former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was overthrown in a military coup. After his execution in 1979 she went on to lead the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) to electoral victory. Though absent from active politics and banned from contesting the premiership, Bhutto was the most vociferous critic of President Musharraf's leadership and maintained her role at head of the PPP. She returned to Pakistan from voluntary exile in late 2007 ahead of elections in 2008. On 27 Dec. 2007 she was assassinated as she left a political rally.

Early Life

Benazir Bhutto was born in Karachi on 21 June 1953 to the wealthy, land-holding family of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Nusrat Bhutto. Her father was Pakistan's leader from 1971 until 1977 while her mother acted as deputy prime minister in his cabinet. Having received an early education in Pakistan, she studied at Harvard and then Oxford University, graduating in philosophy, politics and economics, before taking a further course in international law and diplomacy. In Jan. 1977 she was elected president of the Oxford student union.

She returned to Pakistan in June 1977 with the aim of joining the Pakistani foreign service, but the following month her father was removed from power in a coup led by Zia ul-Haq and she was placed under house arrest. As the campaign against her father intensified, Bhutto became strongly linked with the PPP. In 1979 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged for conspiracy to murder. Benazir began a period of activism against Zia ul-Haq's government which lasted until 1985, during which she spent several years imprisoned (including ten months in solitary confinement) and 2 years living in exile in the UK. Despite political persecution, in 1981 she co-founded the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy.

In Nov. 1985 Zia lifted martial law and the following April Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan to a rapturous welcome. In May 1986 she was elected co-chairwoman of the PPP alongside her mother, backed by a growing tide of support for Zia's removal from power. Zia's death in 1988 led to national elections in which the PPP won the largest single bloc of seats (92 out of 207). An alliance with the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) gave them a majority and a government was formed with Bhutto at its head. She was sworn in as prime minister on 2 Dec., aged 35, becoming the youngest leader in Pakistan's history and the first woman to lead an Islamic government.

Career Peak

Bhutto's victory was warmly welcomed by Western governments, eager to see an end to Zia's military dictatorship and the inauguration of a more amenable democratic government. In power she showed herself keen to continue the socialist policies of her father, introducing a People's Program, designed to channel resources to the poor, introducing a monthly minimum wage, and lifting the ban on student and trade unions. Despite this, she proved herself unable to cope with a rising crime rate and the poor state of the economy. She also lacked the ability to ally Islamism and socialism in the same way that had marked her father's period in power. A narrowly won no-confidence motion in Nov. 1989 and the break-away of the MQM from its coalition with the PPP weakened Bhutto's government. Disputes with

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan over the appointment of military and judiciary officials led to a growing rift and on 6 Aug. 1990 Bhutto's government was dismissed on charges of 'economic mismanagement, corruption and decline in law and order'. Elections were held in Oct. 1990 but were lost to the Muslim League, headed by Nawaz Sharif, forcing the PPP into opposition.

The PPP was returned to power in 1993 at the head of another coalition with Bhutto as prime minister and Farooq Leghari replacing Ghulam Ishaq Khan as president. Although Bhutto demonstrated a more seasoned approach during her second tenure, establishing firm ties with the military, accusations of corruption continued to plague her. Her husband, appointed minister of investments in her cabinet, had been convicted on various charges of corruption in 1990 and was now accused of receiving kickbacks in government deals. Bhutto's government was dismissed in 1996 on the same grounds as in 1990.

Later Life

Bhutto was defeated in the national elections of 1997 and seemed a spent political force. In 1999 further charges of corruption and of involvement in the murder of Bhutto's brother, a political rival, forced her into exile in the UK and the UAE from where she appealed against the charges. In 2001 the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered a retrial and set aside the charges of corruption. Under President Musharraf's government, however, the anti-corruption platform which served to support his military coup meant the continued ostracization of Bhutto.

In national elections held in Oct. 2002 the PPP came second to the pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam), despite winning a higher percentage of votes. Bhutto declined the opportunity to lead the party at the head of a national government. After 5 years apart, Bhutto and her husband were reunited in late 2004 but in 2006 the two were subject of an Interpol arrest warrant, instigated by Pakistan, on charges of corruption. Bhutto challenged its legal validity.

In 2007 she made a number of high-profile appearances in the West, meeting major political figures and appearing in the media. From mid-2007 the possibility emerged of Musharraf surrendering his military role but retaining the presidency, with Bhutto or a Bhutto-appointee coming in as prime minister. There was also speculation that the PPP might enter into a power-sharing agreement with the party of her historic political rival, Nawaz Sharif.

Ahead of the 2008 election and with the outstanding charges of corruption against her waived, she returned to Pakistan on 18 Oct. 2007. As she made her way to a rally in Karachi, a suicide bomber killed over 130 people and injured 450, though Bhutto was unscathed. At the beginning of Nov. Musharraf declared a state of emergency and Bhutto (along with other leading opposition figures) was temporarily placed under house arrest. When Musharraf was sworn in as a now civilian president at the end of the month, he pledged to lift the state of emergency by mid-Dec. Bhutto responded by launching her election manifesto, based around improving 'employment, education, energy, environment, equality'.

On 27 Dec. 2007 Bhutto was leaving a PPP rally in Rawalpindi when a suicide bomber attacked her car. She and 20 others died. The exact cause of death has been disputed but witnesses suggested shots were fired at her by a gunman. Her death was met with riots throughout the country. Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the killing.

Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali (Pakistan)

Introduction

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Pakistan's leader between 1971–77. His period in power was marked by an Islamization of Pakistan on socialist principles. He remains a controversial figure, at once acclaimed for his non-aligned foreign policy and supportive measures towards Pakistan's poor rural population yet equally criticised for his aggressively anti-Indian outlook and his drive towards turning Pakistan into a nuclear state.

Early Life

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was born on 5 Jan. 1928 in Larkana district to a wealthy, land-owning family. His father, Shah Nawaz Khan Bhutto, had been a prominent figure in pre-independent Indian politics and had received a knighthood. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto studied at Bombay Cathedral high school before joining the Berkley campus at the University of Southern California in 1949, going on to become the first Asian elected to Berkley student council. Graduating with honours in political science, he left to study law at Christ Church college, Oxford, in 1950. In 1951 he married Nusrat Ispahani with whom he had four children. In 1953 Bhutto was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn, London, but left England to set up a legal practise in Karachi.

A charismatic orator, Bhutto's rise to political importance began through his successful leadership of several Pakistani delegations to the UN between 1957–65. In 1958, at the age of 30, he was appointed minister of commerce, becoming the youngest cabinet member in Ayub Khan's government. He took responsibility for several other portfolios, including information and national reconstruction (1959), fuel, power and natural resources (1960), and foreign Affairs (1963–66). In the last of these posts Bhutto was influential in directing Ayub Khan's foreign policy towards closer ties with China and an increasingly hostile stance towards India. Leading a delegation to the UN, Bhutto courted western disapproval by going against the US and voting for China's membership.

The 1965 war between Pakistan and India and the failure to gain control of Kashmir led to a growing divide between Bhutto and Khan. Bhutto, who felt that Khan had failed to represent Pakistan's interests in the Tashkent declaration which followed the war, remained vigorously opposed to the development of bilateral relations, famously declaring at a UN security council meeting that Pakistan would fight for Kashmir 'for a thousand years'. In June 1966 he resigned from the cabinet in protest to the Tashkent declaration.

In Nov. 1967 Bhutto founded the Islamic socialist Pakistani People's Party (PPP) with the slogan, 'Islam is our Faith, Democracy is our Policy, Socialism is our Economy, All Power to the People'. His party began agitation against Ayub Khan's government and Bhutto himself led a Mass Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in 1968 for which he was subsequently arrested.

In elections held on 7 Dec. 1970 the PPP gained a massive majority in West Pakistan while in East Pakistan the Awami League, under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was the biggest party. Yayha Khan, who had replaced Ayub Khan as president, was unable to stem the secessionist movement in East Pakistan and after the 1971 war between East and West Pakistan (which led to the creation of Bangladesh) he resigned, leaving Bhutto in power. Bhutto subsequently became President and Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan.

Career Peak

In 1972 martial law, which had been imposed under Yayha Khan's rule, was lifted. In April 1973 a new constitution, which designated Islam as the state religion, was unanimously accepted and in Aug. Bhutto was elected as prime minister.

Bhutto set about a range of reforms, including the nationalization of key industries, the setting of land ownership ceilings and tax reliefs for the rural poor. His government's withdrawal of Pakistan from a number of international groups such as SEATO and the British Commonwealth formed part of a wider foreign policy in which he sought to draw together the support of third world, Islamic countries and to move away from the ties to the western hemisphere which his predecessors had fostered. His desire to place Pakistan at the helm of these new international alliances came with nuclear aspirations. Despite warnings from US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in Nov. 1972 Pakistan's first nuclear power plant was established at Karachi.

Bhutto won popularity in 1972 with the signing of the Simla Agreement which saw 93,000 prisoners from the 1971 war returned to Pakistan. Over the following years he oversaw the establishment of the Pakistan Steel Mills, the Port Qasim Authority and the Quaid-e-Azam University. Yet his successes were marked by his repression of political dissent. In the run-up to national elections in 1977 nine opposition parties came together to form the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). Though the elections were won by the PPP, there were accusations of vote rigging. The PNA subsequently withdrew from local elections and shortly afterwards fighting broke out. In an ill-advised attempt to quell the situation Bhutto had opposition politicians arrested and on 5 July 1977 Muhammad Zia ul-Haq staged a coup. Bhutto was imprisoned for a month.

Later Life

On his release Bhutto toured the country which was greeted with enthusiasm. Despite this, the new administration's determination to show the past leader as

corrupt culminated with his arrest for alleged involvement in the murder of a political opponent in 1974. Bhutto protested innocence but was found guilty. The death sentence was approved by the Supreme Court and on 4 April 1979 Bhutto was hanged. His daughter, Benazir, followed Zia ul-Haq as president in 1988.

Biko, Stephen Bantu (South Africa)

Introduction

Steve Biko was a founding member of South Africa's Black Consciousness Movement. His death as a result of injuries inflicted whilst in police custody was powerfully symbolic of the political struggle of South African black nationalists against a repressive state and transformed Biko into an internationally renowned martyr to his cause.

Early Life

Biko was born in King Williams Town, Cape Province on 18 Dec. 1946. Having been expelled from school for political activism he enrolled at the more liberal St Francis College and went on to study medicine at Natal University Medical School where he became involved in the National Union of South African Students. The NUSAS was a multiracial organization working for racial equality in South Africa.

Career Peak

This view was in conflict with how Biko perceived the reality of NUSAS and in 1968 he and some colleagues established the exclusively black 'southern African Students' Organization'. Biko believed that political freedom could only be achieved if blacks stopped feeling inferior to whites, saying 'The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.' SASO's aim was to raise black self-esteem and confidence. The movement spread widely throughout University campuses during the early '70s. In Feb. 1973 Biko and his colleagues were served with 'banning' orders. They were not allowed to communicate with each other and were restricted from attending social gatherings. Steve Biko responded by operating covertly and established the Zimele Trust Fund, a fund designed to help the families of political prisoners.

On 18 Aug. 1977 Steve Biko and a fellow activist were arrested and jailed in Port Elizabeth. The Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report states that:

'Stephen Bantu Biko died in police custody in Pretoria on 12 Sept. 1977. He was detained by the Security Branch in Port Elizabeth twenty-four days earlier, and was subjected to interrogation, during which he sustained serious brain injuries. He was examined by both a district surgeon and a medic. He was then transported naked in the back of a police van from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria. He died from brain damage in a prison cell shortly after his arrival in Pretoria. . . Minister Kruger. . . implied that Biko had died as a result of engaging in a hunger strike. At the inquest, the security police claimed that Biko had "become violent" during interrogation and had to be "subdued" by the interrogation team, in the course of which he hit his head against the wall.' An inquest at the time cleared the police of all allegations.

On 12 Sept. 1997 President Nelson Mandela called Steve Biko 'one of the greatest sons of our nation' and paid homage to him by unveiling a statue in East London.

Bin Hamad Al Thani, Khalifa (Qatar)

Introduction

Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani deposed his cousin, Sheikh Ahmed bin Ali Al Thani, on 22 Feb. 1972 to become ruler of Qatar. After 23 years in power he was himself deposed by his son, Hamad bin Khalifa, in June 1995. This

palace coup took place with the approval of the rest of the royal family and the armed forces.

Early Life

Sheikh Khalifa was born into the ruling Al Thani dynasty in 1932, the son of Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Thani, who was the Amir from 1940–48. Hamad was succeeded by Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah (1949–60) and Ahmed bin Ali (1960–72), neither of whom had any particular interest in supervising day-to-day government and administration. By default, these duties were assumed by Khalifa who was declared the heir apparent and deputy ruler in Oct. 1960. By 1970 he was prime minister, having already headed the ministries or departments of foreign affairs, finance and petroleum, education, and police and internal security.

Career Peak

It was Khalifa who declared Qatar's independence from Britain on 3 Sep. 1971, just a few months before becoming ruler. His assumption of power was portrayed as a simple succession in Qatar, but Western opinion viewed the event as an overthrow. Khalifa and other influential members of the Al Thani family were believed to be concerned by Sheikh Ahmed's financial profligacy. In the wake of the country's oil boom, Khalifa is credited with putting into effect a programme of economic development and modernization, which brought free health, education, and housing benefits to the broader population. Politically, there were no significant moves towards democracy.

From the early 1990s Khalifa left daily government to his sons, particularly Sheikh Hamad, the Crown Prince and defence minister. On 27 June 1995 Hamad took control of the country when his father was on a private visit to Switzerland. Khalifa was linked to an attempted counter-coup in Feb. 1996, before agreeing to release substantial state funds under his control in return for a peaceful retirement.

Later Life

Khalifa died on 23 Oct. 2016 at the age of 84.

Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Hamad (Qatar)

Introduction

Sheikh Hamad was the eighth member of the Al Thani family to rule Qatar, having seized power from his father, Sheikh Khalifa, on 27 June 1995. After 18 years in power he abdicated in favour of his son, Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, on 25 June 2013.

Early Life

Born in Doha in 1952, Hamad graduated from the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst in 1971. He then joined the Qatari military with the rank of major. In 1975 he was promoted to major-general and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. On his appointment as Crown Prince and heir apparent in May 1977, he also became minister of defence.

Career Peak

Having ousted his father in 1995, Hamad appointed himself prime minister. However, in Oct. 1996 he relinquished the premiership to his younger brother, Sheikh Abdallah. The Amir is credited with initiating plans for an elected consultative council (through the new constitution which he approved in 2004 and which took effect in June 2005), giving women the right to vote in municipal elections (from 1999) and ending official media censorship. He has also encouraged foreign investment in Qatar's oil and natural gas industries.

In Aug. 2003 he named his fourth son as his heir apparent, and in April 2007 appointed his foreign minister and cousin, Sheikh Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabir Al Thani, prime minister. To pre-empt pressure for political liberalization in the wake of the discontent that spread across much of the Arab world from early 2011, Hamad announced in Nov. that year that elections to Qatar's Advisory Council would be held in 2013 although by April 2013 no fixed date had been set.

In foreign relations he has overseen the resolution of long-standing border disputes with Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. In 2011 Qatar was involved in international military operations against the Gaddafi regime in Libya, a fellow Arab state. The country's profile on the world stage was raised in Dec. 2010 when it successfully bid to host the football World Cup finals in 2022. In Sept. 2012 Hamad called on Arab nations to form a coalition to intervene in the Syrian conflict, and in Oct. he made the first visit to Gaza as a head of state since the Hamas government took control of the Palestinian territory.

Hamad abdicated in June 2013 in favour of his 33-year-old fourth son, Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Hamad explained his decision by stating it was appropriate time for the new generation to take charge of the Gulf nation. Sheikh Hamad, aged 61, has been known to suffer from health problems in recent years, but official sources claim that his health did not influence the decision to abdicate.

Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Maktoum (United Arab Emirates)

Introduction

The ruler of Dubai emirate, Sheikh Maktoum became vice president and prime minister of the UAE federal government following the death of his father, Sheikh Rashid in 1990.

Early Life

Maktoum was born in 1941. The eldest of Rashid's four sons, he assumed the title of Crown Prince of Dubai. He served as the UAE's first federal prime minister of three cabinets before resigning in April 1979 in an effort to end discord among the seven member emirates. This had arisen because of rivalry among the rulers over the extent of federal government powers. Maktoum became one of two deputy prime ministers in a new government led by his father, Sheikh Rashid.

Career Peak

Following Rashid's death on 7 Oct. 1990, Maktoum became the ruler of Dubai and was sworn in the following month as federal prime minister (for a second time) and vice president. He served in both positions until 4 Jan. 2006, when he died after suffering a heart attack. He was succeeded by his brother, Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

Bin Said Al-Maktoum, Rashid (United Arab Emirates)

Introduction

The ruler of Dubai emirate from 1958–90, Sheikh Rashid was also vice president of the UAE from its formation in 1971, and prime minister of the federal government from 1979. His son, Sheikh Maktoum, succeeded on Rashid's death on 7 Oct. 1990. Sheikh Rashid is credited with Dubai's transformation into one of the most prosperous trading and commercial centres in the Middle East.

Early Life

Sheikh Rashid was born in 1912, the eldest son of Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum who ruled Dubai until his death in 1958. The al-Maktoum family are a branch of the Bani Yas tribe that includes the al-Nahyan, rulers of neighbouring Abu Dhabi. Rashid effectively ran the state as Prince Regent from about 1940, and so his direction of Dubai's economic evolution straddled both the pre- and post-oil eras. Before oil was discovered in the emirate, his administration had sought to modernize the

territory, borrowing from neighbouring states to develop the Dubai Creek and consolidating Dubai's position as the main trading hub for the then Trucial Coast.

Career Peak

In the late 1960s, oil was discovered in Dubai. Sheikh Rashid deployed export revenues for construction and infrastructure projects. However, aware of the risks of oil-dependency, he also promoted alternative industrial ventures—in particular, the creation of Jebel Ali port (the world's largest man-made harbour) and free trade zone, west of Dubai city. Upon the withdrawal of the British from the Gulf in 1971, Sheikh Rashid led Dubai into the new, independent UAE as the second largest constituent emirate after Abu Dhabi. He assumed the vice presidency and, in 1979, the federal premiership. He retained both posts until his death, but played a background role during in the 1980s when he was in failing health. His four sons continued his policies.

Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Isa (Bahrain)

Introduction

Shaikh Isa succeeded to the throne on 2 Nov. 1961, and took the title of Amir on 16 Aug. 1971 following Bahrain's independence from Britain. His long reign ended on his death on 6 March 1999.

Early Life

Born in the village of Jasra on 3 July 1933, Shaikh Isa was educated in Bahrain by private tutors. From the age of 20 he assumed public administrative duties. Having been appointed a member, and subsequently deputy chairman, of the Administrative Council (later the Council of Ministers), he was named Crown Prince and heir-apparent by his father, Shaikh Salman bin Hamad, in July 1957.

Career Peak

Supported by oil revenues, Shaikh Isa presided over Bahrain's rapid economic and infrastructural development in the 1970s and 1980s. During his reign there was also diversification, particularly in the finance sector, making Bahrain the hub of the Gulf and the regional centre for offshore banking. Although a popularly-elected National Assembly was set up under a new constitution ratified in June 1973, the Amir dissolved it in Aug. 1975 and ruled by decree from then on. He did, however, agree the establishment of a Consultative Council in Dec. 1992. The last years of Shaikh Isa's reign, from the mid-1990s, were marked by unrest among the Shia Muslim majority community and violent agitation for political reform.

Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, Zayed (United Arab Emirates)

Introduction

Ruler of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the seven emirates, Sheikh Zayed had been president of the UAE since it was established on 2 Dec. 1971 until he died in 2004.

Early Life

Zayed was born in 1918. He was governor of Abu Dhabi's eastern province based in Al-Ain from 1946 until 1966 when he deposed his brother Sheikh Shakhbut and became ruler of the sheikhdom. The Al-Nahyan family considered Shakhbut an obstacle to the investment of Abu Dhabi's new oil wealth (from 1962) in the development of the sheikhdom. As the United Kingdom ended its protectorate of the Trucial Coast, Zayed persuaded the other emirates (but not Bahrain or Qatar) to join in a federation. The UAE was formed in

Dec. 1971 (although Ras al-Khaimah did not accede until Feb. 1972) and the rulers of the emirates elected Zayed to his first 5 year term as federal president.

Career Peak

Zayed had been re-elected president at 5 year intervals, overseeing rapid economic development, federal centralization and defence integration. This had taken place against a backdrop of stability in a traditionally volatile region. Abu Dhabi's, and Zayed's, image was dented in 1991 by the failure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. The institution had been founded in 1972 with Zayed's help and the Abu Dhabi government had bought the majority of shares in 1990. Zayed continued to rule until his death on 2 Nov. 2004.

Bin Sultan Bin Al-Nahyan, Shakhbut (United Arab Emirates)

Introduction

Sheikh Shakhbut was the ruler of Abu Dhabi within the then British-controlled Trucial Coast from 1928–66. At the end of his long reign he lost the support of other members of the al-Nahyan family and was replaced by his more progressive younger brother, Sheikh Zayed.

Early Life

Born in 1905, the eldest son of Sheikh Sultan, Shakhbut was selected by a family conclave as ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1928. At that time Abu Dhabi's fragile economy had been undermined by the collapse of the pearl market and the world economic depression. Shortly after the Second World War, the search for oil began in earnest as Sheikh Shakhbut granted exploration concessions. By 1958 the first oilfields were being exploited. The first oil was exported in 1962.

Career Peak

Throughout his reign Sheikh Shakhbut maintained friendly relations with the British. He resisted territorial incursions in a prolonged border dispute with Saudi Arabia over the oil-rich Buraimi oasis. The dispute was settled in 1974. Despite the emirate's new oil-based wealth, the Sheikh was reluctant to invest the earnings in development and infrastructure projects for the benefit of the state. On 6 Aug. 1966 he was replaced by his brother and went temporarily into exile. He died in Abu Dhabi in Feb. 1989.

Bin Taimur Al-Said, Said (Oman)

Introduction

Said bin Taimur Al-Said was Sultan of Oman (hereditary absolute monarch) from 1932–70. A reclusive and repressive ruler, his autocratic policies prompted popular unrest and armed revolt. In 1970 he was overthrown by his son Qaboos bin Said, the present Sultan, in a bloodless coup.

Early Life

Said bin Taimur succeeded his father, Taimur bin Faisal, in 1932. Said inherited a country virtually bankrupt and internally divided. The historical split between Oman's coastal areas, ruled by the Sultan, and the rest of the territory, had been recognised in the 1920 Treaty of As Sib (brokered by the British) under which Said's father conceded limited sovereignty to the tribes of the interior. The treaty was a de facto partition agreement, although the ruling Al-Said dynasty did not relinquish their claim to all of Oman.

Career Peak

In the early 1950s Said sought to extend his writ into the oil rich interior, which offered the means to alleviate the debt problems of his regime and reinforce his rule. However, the acquiescence of the interior tribal sheikhs was necessary for oil exploration. This was not forthcoming, and a rebellion broke out in 1954 under a new Imam (nominal head of the interior) who led a movement for independence. Britain intervened on the Sultan's behalf and by 1959 Said had fully re-established his authority.

Despite the potential of Oman's oil revenues, Said failed to modernize his country. While maintaining his military connection with the British, he opposed any social change, including popular education. In 1958 he withdrew from Muscat to the coastal city of Salalah, the administrative capital of the Dhofar region in the southwest, where he remained except for periodic private visits to the United Kingdom.

Resistance to Said's conservative regime continued to simmer after the unrest of the 1950s. In 1964 another serious rebellion broke out, this time in Dhofar. The revolt, fuelled by the neighbouring Marxist state of Yemen, was to continue until 1975. On 23 July 1970 Said's Western-educated and more progressive son, Qaboos bin Said, took power in a palace coup with the tacit endorsement of the British. Said was forced to abdicate and withdrew to London, England, where he died in 1972.

Bird, Lester (Antigua and Barbuda)

Introduction

Lester Bird, the son of Vere Cornwall Bird (Antigua and Barbuda's first prime minister), served as the country's second prime minister from 1994 to 2004. His rule was marred by corruption scandals.

Early Life

Lester Bryant Bird was born in New York City on 21 Feb. 1938. A keen sportsman, he played cricket for the Leeward Islands and was an All-American long jumper at the University of Michigan, from where he graduated in 1962. He then completed his law studies in the UK and was called to the Bar in 1969. He returned to Antigua and Barbuda to work in private practice from 1969–76.

In 1971 Bird was appointed chairman of the Antigua Labour Party (ALP) and leader of the opposition in the Senate. After the 1976 election returned the ALP to power, Vere Bird named his son as deputy premier and put him in charge of the foreign affairs, tourism and energy portfolios.

In 1981 Lester Bird became minister for external affairs, and was named the first chairman of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States in 1982 (a post he held again in 1989). In the late 1980s he became embroiled in a power battle with his brother, Vere Bird Jr, who was widely considered favourite to succeed their father. However, numerous scandals, including arms smuggling to the Colombian Medellín drug cartel, led to Vere Jr being dismissed as minister of public works by Vere Snr.

In 1992 V. C. Bird was caught misappropriating public funds and announced that he would step down ahead of the 1994 general election. Lester eventually defeated John St. Luce to win the ALP leadership in 1993. In 1994, at elections deemed neither fair nor free, the ALP won 11 of 17 seats and Lester Bird was sworn in as prime minister. Despite an inquiry recommending that Vere Jr never be allowed to hold ministerial office again, he was appointed to the cabinet by Lester as a special adviser.

Career Peak

As prime minister, Lester Bird also assumed the portfolios for external affairs, planning, social services and information. In a cabinet reshuffle in 1996, he added the communications, civil aviation, international transport and gaming portfolios. Further reshuffles saw him additionally in charge of the ministries of finance, legal affairs, justice and national security by 2002.

He implemented tax and tariff increases alongside sharp cuts in spending on health, education, and basic infrastructure, leading to a deterioration in services. The government nonetheless continued to borrow heavily in commercial markets, with foreign debt reaching US\$466m. in 1997.

Bird secured victory at the 1999 election despite allegations from opposition parties of ALP bribery and intimidation. Although he promised the introduction of anti-corruption legislation, he continued to be dogged by scandal, including the arrest of his brother, Ivor, for trying to board a plane while in possession of 26 pounds of cocaine. His administration was also charged with diverting international relief aid and misusing funds and in 2004 Bird was accused of having a sexual affair with a minor.

The Bird family's domination of domestic politics that had lasted since the 1950s came to an end at the March 2004 election, when the United Progressive Party (UPP) defeated the ALP. Bird remained as the ALP's political leader but in 2012 was again involved in scandal when he was questioned by police over a multi-million dollar fraud case.

Bird, Vere Cornwall (Antigua and Barbuda)

Introduction

A dominant figure in Antiguan politics for more than 50 years, Sir Vere Cornwall Bird led his country to independence from Great Britain and was its first prime minister, holding office from 1981–94. He was credited with turning Antigua into one of the more prosperous of the Eastern Caribbean States, though his rule was marred by allegations of nepotism and corruption.

Early Life

Vere Cornwall Bird was born on 7 Dec. 1909 in the slums of the capital, St. John's. He had no formal post-primary education but enlisted in the Salvation Army when aged 18, serving for 2 years and attaining the rank of captain.

In 1939 Bird helped found the Antigua Trades and Labour Union (ATLU), the island's first union. In 1943 it won legal status and he became its president, a position he held until 1973. Bird worked to secure the rights of workers against oppressive and exploitative conditions, particularly in the sugar industry. He pressured plantation owners to turn over plots and homes to the sugar harvesters who had been their tenants, and fought to improve basic infrastructure. He oversaw improved conditions of work and pay, as well as the abolition of child labour.

Like other Caribbean contemporaries, Bird used union activism as a springboard to political office. After the formation of the Antigua Labor Party, Bird was elected to the colonial legislature in 1945. In 1946 he became a member of the executive council, securing universal adult suffrage in 1951. That same year, union representatives led by Bird won all eight elected seats on the local legislature, a feat repeated at each election until 1967.

Bird was a key figure at the 1947 Montego Bay Conference in Jamaica that led to the creation of the West Indian Federation (WIF). After the collapse of the WIF in 1962, Bird was instrumental (along with Errol Barrow of Barbados and Forbes Burnham of Guyana) in establishing the Caribbean Free Trade Association in 1965 (known as the Caribbean Community and Common Market from 1973).

Career Peak

On 11 Jan. 1960 Bird became first chief minister of Antigua and spearheaded attempts to diversify the economy away from its reliance on sugar. A deep water port and international airport (later renamed Vere Bird International) was built to boost tourism, while a construction boom was fuelled by hotel and resort development.

In 1966 Bird led a delegation to the United Kingdom to seek independence. Britain agreed to Associated Status, giving Antigua and Barbuda's government control of all internal affairs while defence and foreign affairs continued to be directed from London. In Feb. 1967 Bird was appointed the country's first premier.

Following elections in 1971, his government was succeeded by George Walter's Progressive Labour Movement administration. Despite allegations that he had orchestrated bombing campaigns to undermine the Walter government, Bird was re-elected to the premiership in 1976 and had Walter imprisoned for corruption. Bird secured another election victory in 1980,

with the nation winning full independence from London a year later and Bird taking the office of prime minister.

He hung on to power for another 10 years. Although he had overseen improvements in the education and telecommunications system and the introduction of free medical services, he was subject to allegations of corruption, nepotism, bribery and money laundering. The Bird family were linked to drug- and gun-running scandals from the late 1970s until the 1990s. In March 1994 Bird retired from politics and was succeeded by his son, Lester Bryant Bird.

Later Life

Upon retirement Bird was formally accorded the status of the country's first National Hero and in July 1998 was awarded the Order of the Caribbean Community in recognition of his role in the development of the region. He died on 28 June 1999.

Biyoghé Mba, Paul (Gabon)

Introduction

Paul Biyoghé Mba is a career civil servant who served as a minister under Gabon's autocratic president, Omar Bongo. In Oct. 2009 he was appointed prime minister by the late president's controversial successor, Ali Bongo.

Early Life

Biyoghé Mba was born on 18 April 1953 in Donguila, Estuaire province, in western Gabon. In the early 1970s he studied business administration at the University of Rennes, France, before returning to Gabon to work at the Banque Gabonaise de Développement. Biyoghé Mba served as the bank's deputy director from 1977–80, before joining the civil service, initially as an adviser to Omar Bongo on commercial, industrial and investment affairs (1980–83). This was when high international oil prices brought prosperity to Gabon and to the president personally.

Biyoghé Mba was deputy director to the presidential cabinet from 1984–89, when he helped secure US investment in a period of economic downturn. Disillusionment with Bongo's repressive policies brought demands for multi-party democracy. In 1990 Gabon held its first multi-party legislative elections for 22 years. Biyoghé Mba was elected for the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG), which gained a majority in the National Assembly. He served as a deputy for 2 years until he was appointed minister of state control, parastatal reform and privatization.

Biyoghé Mba supported Bongo's re-election as president in 1993 but resigned from the government and the PDG the following year in protest at Bongo's authoritarian response to riots in Libreville and Port-Gentil. Returning to the National Assembly, he created a new party, the Communal Movement for Development (MCD), which eventually merged with the PDG in 2002. Elected to the newly established Senate in 1997, he was the minister responsible for small and medium-sized enterprises from 1999–2003. As Gabon's minister of trade and industrial development (2003–08) he was responsible for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (a programme of the African Union adopted in 2001). In Oct. 2008 he became minister for agriculture in Jean Eyeghe Ndong's government.

Career Peak

In the political upheaval that followed Bongo's death on 8 June 2009 (ending his 41-year rule), his son, Ali Bongo (then minister of defence) became the PDG's presidential candidate. Ndong resigned as prime minister to fight the election as an independent.

On 17 July 2009 the interim president, Rose Francine Rogombé, named Biyoghé Mba as interim prime minister. Ali-Ben Bongo Ondimba was sworn in as the new president on 16 Oct. 2009, nearly 2 months after his disputed election victory had triggered widespread civil unrest. On the same day, Bongo appointed Biyoghé Mba as prime minister, praising his managerial skills and experience. Biyoghé Mba named a government of 30 ministers (slimmed down from 44), which included 12 members from his previous cabinet. Following the victory of his party in the Dec. elections, Biyoghé Mba resigned on 13 Feb. 2012 as required by the constitution.

Blair, Tony (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Tony Blair, who led a rejuvenated Labour Party to a landslide victory in the 1997 general election, ending 18 years of Conservative rule, was returned to power in 2001 and 2005. Espousing 'Third Way' centrist policies, Blair instigated constitutional and public service reforms, pursued peace in Northern Ireland and sought closer integration with Europe. He was criticized on the left for his perceived attachment to Thatcherite economic policies, his centralized control over his party's and government's image, and his close alignment of UK foreign policy with that of the USA. After the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks on the USA, Blair was President George W. Bush's closest international ally in the 'war on terror' and fully supported US policy in Iraq, despite widespread opposition both domestically and from EU and UN partners. In Aug. 2003 Blair became the longest continuously-serving Labour prime minister and in May 2005 led the party to an unprecedented third consecutive term. In Sept. 2006 Blair delivered his final conference speech as Labour leader but declined to set a precise date for his departure from office. He eventually left office in June 2007.

Early Life

Anthony Charles Lynton Blair was born in Edinburgh on 6 May 1953. His mother was a teacher and his father a lawyer. Brought up in Durham and educated at Fettes College, Edinburgh, he graduated in law from St John's College, Oxford, in 1975 and was called to the bar a year later, joining the chambers of Derry Irvine (later to become Blair's Lord Chancellor).

Blair joined the Labour Party in 1976 and in 1982 unsuccessfully contested a by-election in Beaconsfield before winning the seat of Sedgfield at the 1983 general election. Under Neil Kinnock's party leadership, he became assistant spokesman on treasury affairs from 1984 and then deputy spokesman on trade and industry. He joined the shadow cabinet in Oct. 1988 as shadow secretary for energy, moving to employment in 1989. Following Labour's defeat at the 1992 elections, Kinnock was replaced by John Smith who made Blair shadow home secretary. When Smith suffered a fatal heart attack in 1994, Blair was elected to succeed him as leader. He continued his two predecessors' efforts to modernize the party, and in 1995 won a significant victory in abolishing Labour's longstanding commitment to public ownership of leading industries.

Promoting free-market economics, tough action on crime and a more positive European policy, Labour made major gains in the 1995 local elections. As John Major's Conservative government imploded, Blair's personal charisma and his skilled 'spin doctors' convinced voters previously fearful of Labour's left-wing heritage that the party was ready to govern. At the general election of May 1997 Labour inflicted a crushing national defeat on the Conservatives.

Career Peak

Once in office, Blair instigated major constitutional reforms. Following national referendums on devolution, Scotland gained its own parliament with tax-raising powers while Wales got an assembly with more limited authority. In the House of Lords the majority of hereditary peers were removed, while London was granted the right to elect its own mayor.

The economy generally prospered under Blair and Chancellor Gordon Brown, with steady growth and declining unemployment. In 1997 the Bank of England won independence, with a new Monetary Policy Committee having the power to set interest rates and maintain inflation within Treasury targets.

In foreign policy, Blair sought to preserve the close relationship with the USA while extending ties with the EU. Labour's victory in 1997, and Blair's commitment to sign up to the EU Social Chapter (rejected by the UK since the early 1990s), was welcomed by many EU governments. However, the UK remained outside the euro area.

After the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks on the USA, Blair was Bush's staunchest ally in the military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, this

commitment dented the prime minister's domestic and international standing. When in Sept. 2002 Bush challenged the UN to act on Iraq, Blair was the only other leader with the power of veto on the UN Security Council to unequivocally support the USA. As Bush pursued independent action, the Westminster parliament in March 2003 granted Blair permission to send UK forces to Iraq, although 139 Labour MPs voted against war—the strongest revolt by his own party since taking office in 1997. Several ministers resigned, including leader of the House of Commons and former foreign secretary Robin Cook.

US-led forces launched an invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and by early April Saddam Hussein's regime had collapsed. In May 2003 a UN resolution, co-sponsored by the USA, UK and Spain, endorsed co-operation between UN special representatives and the occupying forces in forming a new Iraqi government. Meanwhile, British media criticism over the failure to discover persuasive evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) raised doubts over the justification for war. This led in July 2003 to a public enquiry headed by Lord Hutton, who, in Jan. 2004, controversially exonerated the Blair government of exaggerating intelligence about Iraq's WMD. A further investigation, chaired by Lord Butler and delivered in July 2004, criticized the flawed quality of WMD intelligence but found no deliberate attempt to mislead. Despite efforts to introduce and sustain democratic government in Iraq, insurgent and sectarian violence escalated. As the situation deteriorated, British public opinion became increasingly hostile to Blair's stance and continuing UK military involvement.

In Northern Ireland, Blair continued the political initiatives started by the Major administration, and in 1998 secured the Good Friday Agreement. Establishing a power-sharing scheme centred on a Northern Ireland Assembly, it offered the first realistic chance of peace in the territory in 30 years. However, breakdowns in the peace process prompted the suspension of the devolved administration in Oct. 2002. Despite the suspension, fresh Assembly elections took place in Nov. 2003, with the hardline Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and nationalist Sinn Féin making significant gains. There was no further progress until Oct. 2006 when Blair and his Irish counterpart outlined a new timetable back to power-sharing in the province. With conditional party support for the timetable, new Assembly elections were held in March 2007 in which the DUP and Sinn Féin were again predominant. Both parties came under pressure to compromise and on 26 March reached an historic agreement to share power from 8 May with a devolved Northern Ireland government replacing direct rule from London.

Within the EU, Blair championed a new constitution to reflect the enlargement of the Union from May 2004 but the project stalled following its rejection in French and Dutch referenda in 2005. He also supported accession negotiations with Turkey, which began tentatively in Oct. 2005. In Dec. 2005, as leaders of the 25 member states finally agreed a deal on the budget for the enlarged Union for 2007–13, Blair was forced to concede a reduction in the UK's annual budget rebate but failed to secure cuts in common agricultural spending.

In the public services, Blair put emphasis on improving the health and education systems, although progress in these areas is disputed. In April 2003 he established self-governing hospitals that would be financially rewarded for strong performance but suffered a significant Labour revolt amid fears that this could lead to a growing divide in service provision. Radical proposals for school reform (announced in late 2005) also drew opposition from some Labour MPs, while in Nov. 2005 Blair suffered his first parliamentary defeat since coming to power in a Labour rebellion over anti-terrorism legislation. In March 2007 he was forced to rely on Conservative Party support for parliamentary endorsement of his government's decision to build a new generation of the submarine-based Trident nuclear weapons system. 95 Labour MPs opposed the policy.

Blair's government was also criticized over the expensive failure of the Millennium Dome project, the mishandling of the foot-and-mouth agricultural crisis in 2001 and, more recently, the ballooning budget for the 2012 Olympic Games to be staged in London.

Meanwhile, Blair's aim to avoid allegations of sleaze that so damaged the previous Conservative government was undermined by the cabinet resignations of his close allies Peter Mandelson and David Blunkett, and by police investigations into the alleged sale of peerages and state honours.

After prolonged speculation, Blair announced on 10 May 2007 that he would leave office on 27 June. On 17 May Gordon Brown won the contest to succeed him. Blair resigned as an MP immediately after leaving his role as prime minister, and took a position representing the USA, EU, UN and Russia as envoy to the Middle East.

Later Life

Blair founded several organizations after leaving office including the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, the Tony Blair Sports Foundation and the Africa Governance Initiative, a charity to promote growth and development in countries such as Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Liberia. In addition he founded a consultancy firm called Tony Blair Associates and took consultancy posts at US bank JPMorgan Chase and the Swiss investment company Zurich Financial Services. In Jan. 2010 Blair testified at the UK's Iraq Inquiry where he defended the decision to go to war in 2003.

Boc, Emil (Romania)

Introduction

Emil Boc succeeded Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu as prime minister in Dec. 2008. The former mayor of Cluj-Napoca, Boc came from a centre-right background and was close to President Traian Băsescu. Following a closely fought general election in Nov. 2008 he headed a coalition charged with tackling a severe economic downturn. Following the collapse of this administration in Oct. 2009, Boc served in a caretaker capacity until Dec. that year when he formed a new centrist government endorsed by parliament. He resigned in Feb. 2012 amid protests over austerity measures and stagnant growth.

Early Life

Boc was born in the village of Rachitele, northwestern Romania on 6 Sept. 1966. After graduating in law from Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca in 1991, he taught history in a secondary school and later at the university, where he undertook further study in political science. During the mid- to late-1990s Boc combined teaching and legal practice in Cluj-Napoca and as a visiting scholar to the Universities of Virginia and Michigan in the USA and the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium.

Boc was elected to parliament for the centre-right Democratic Party (PD) in the Nov. 2000 general election. Within 3 years he was party leader and successfully stood as the PD candidate for the mayoralty of Cluj-Napoca. He oversaw rapid economic growth in the city, winning praise from local and foreign investors before securing re-election in 2008 with 76% of the vote.

A breakdown in relations between President Băsescu and Prime Minister Popescu-Tăriceanu precipitated the collapse of the ruling Justice and Truth Alliance (forged between the PD and the National Liberal Party/PNL) in Jan. 2007. The prime minister formed a minority government consisting of the PNL and the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania. Boc remained at the helm of the PD and in Dec. 2007 orchestrated a merger with the Liberal Democratic Party, headed by former prime minister, Teodor Stolojan, to form the Democratic Liberal Party (PD-L). Boc led the new centre-right party to a narrow victory in the general election of 30 Nov. 2008.

Băsescu initially nominated Stolojan for the premiership but when Stolojan rejected the post, Boc was offered it. He was sworn in on 22 Dec. 2008, heading a grand coalition of the PD-L and the Social Democratic Party (PSD).

Career Peak

Boc had to confront a steep decline in Romania's economic fortunes amid the global slowdown. Priorities included tackling spiralling government and household debt, rising unemployment and a fast-devaluing currency. Tensions within the coalition soon emerged, with the PSD interior minister, Liviu Dragnea, resigning after 12 days. Sweeping cuts to public spending, including a policy reversal on recently-promised public-sector wage increases, proved unpopular but Boc was forced to announce further austerity measures as Romania had to accept IMF support in March 2009.

Bad feeling between the coalition partners came to a head in Sept. 2009 when Boc sacked interior minister Dan Nica of the PSD after Nica accused the PD-L of plotting to rig the voting in the forthcoming presidential election. Nica's dismissal prompted the remaining PSD cabinet ministers to resign in protest and a subsequent parliamentary vote of no-confidence passed by 254 votes to 176 on 13 Oct. resulted in the collapse of Boc's government. Subsequent nominees for the premiership failed to gain parliamentary

approval until Dec. when, following his re-election, President Băsescu reappointed Boc to head a new centrist coalition. This government was endorsed by parliament and quickly announced an austerity budget for 2010, promising tough and unpopular measures to meet IMF conditions. Thousands of public sector workers protested in the streets in May 2010 against planned cuts in pay and pension entitlements and in June, and again in Oct. 2010 and March 2011, the government narrowly survived no-confidence votes in parliament. Following further mass protests over austerity measures in early 2012, Boc resigned on 6 Feb. 2012.

Bokassa, Jean-Bedel (Central African Republic)

Introduction

Jean-Bedel Bokassa was head of state of the Central African Republic (CAR) from 1966 until 1979. He enjoyed close relations with the French government, particularly President Giscard d'Estaing, although his increasingly eccentric and brutal behaviour became a major embarrassment. Having crowned himself Emperor of the Central African Empire in 1977, his authorization of a massacre of protesting schoolchildren in 1979 prompted a French-backed coup d'état. After a period in exile, Bokassa was later convicted of murder.

Early Life

Jean-Bedel Bokassa was born on 22 Feb. 1921 in Bobangui in what was then the French colonial province of Oubangui-Chari. At the age of six his father was murdered by a colonial administrator and his mother committed suicide. He was educated at missionary schools and joined the French colonial army in 1939, serving in World War II and later in Indochina and Algeria.

David Dacko became president of the newly independent CAR in 1960, and Bokassa, an army captain, was appointed his Chief of Staff. Buoyed by public discontent at Dacko's rule, Bokassa deposed him in 1966 and declared himself president.

Career Peak

Bokassa soon established a dictatorial regime in which political opponents were routinely murdered. Corruption was rife and among the many charges levelled against him were cannibalism and the dropping of beggars from planes into the Oubangui River.

Despite his record of atrocities, he retained a level of domestic popularity as a result of public spending. The national road infrastructure was improved and university buildings and sports complexes constructed. Internationally, his reputation prompted disparate reactions. For many nations, his personal excesses, spontaneous violence and large entourage of wives and children marked him out as a cartoon-like African dictator though he managed to retain close ties with France. His gift of diamonds to French president Giscard d'Estaing and shared hunting holidays were indicative of the close personal relationship between the two men.

In 1972 Bokassa declared himself president for life. Five years later he re-named the country the Central African Empire and made himself emperor, placing the crown on his own head in the style of his hero Napoléon. His coronation ceremony in Dec. 1977, partly funded by France, cost between US\$20m. and US\$30m., conservatively estimated as equivalent to a third of the nation's entire GDP for the year.

However, his erratic behaviour (including a physical attack on the French ambassador) became increasingly embarrassing to the French. In 1979 Bokassa declared that all schoolchildren should wear a uniform which bore his likeness and was produced by a company in which he had a financial interest. There were widespread protests and he ordered several hundred demonstrating schoolchildren to be rounded up and imprisoned. In May 1979 Amnesty International reported 100 of the children had been clubbed to death. Following international outrage at the incident, French forces backed a coup led by former president Dacko while Bokassa was travelling in Libya in Sept. 1979.

Later Life

Bokassa went into exile, living in a château in the Parisian suburbs. He returned to CAR in 1986 and was put on trial for murder and embezzlement. His trial included sensational evidence from a former chef who claimed he had murdered and eaten one of his political opponents. Bokassa was sentenced to death, later commuted to 20 years in prison. He was freed in 1993 and died in Bangui on 3 Nov. 1996 of a heart attack.

Bolaños, Enrique (Nicaragua)

Introduction

Enrique Bolaños, leader of the Constitutional Liberal Party, won the presidential elections of Nov. 2001. He assumed office in Jan. 2002, tasked with rejuvenating Nicaragua's ailing economy, but was hampered by congressional opposition. His term of office ended in Jan. 2007.

Early Life

Bolaños was born in 1928 near Managua. Having graduated from Saint Louis University in Missouri, USA, he embarked on a career in business. During the Sandinista revolution he was jailed for his criticism of the government, and his business interests were nationalized. In 1996 he was appointed vice-president in the corruption-tainted government of Arnoldo Aleman. With strong backing from the US government, and especially the governor of Florida, he stood successfully for the presidency at the elections of Nov. 2001, winning with 56.3% of the vote.

Career Peak

Among Bolaños' chief election promises was the elimination of government corruption, with offenders facing prison. Former president Aleman was subsequently convicted and jailed for fraud and money laundering. However, this move cost Bolaños the support of his party's Aleman loyalists who allied with the opposition Sandinistas to secure control of the National Assembly, leaving Bolaños politically isolated. In 2005 the Assembly sought to amend the constitution and weaken the president's powers, leading to court action and political stalemate.

Economically, advocating a free market with low unemployment and a redeveloped infrastructure, Bolaños negotiated with the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Inter-American Development Bank in April 2002 to secure increased long-term financing of development projects, debt relief and structural support loans. In Jan. 2004 the World Bank agreed to cancel 80% of Nicaragua's debt, and later in that year Russia wrote off the country's debts incurred during the Soviet era. Bolaños also established a national development plan that sought to diversify the economy away from its traditional agricultural base.

Keen to develop relations with the USA, Bolaños vowed on election to combat drug smuggling and he supported the Bush regime in the aftermath of the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks. He subsequently signed trade agreements with the USA and other Central American countries, reducing tariffs on major exports.

With his tenure having been blighted by consistent opposition from congress, Bolaños was defeated by Daniel Ortega of the Sandanistas at the general election of 5 Nov. 2006. He was expected to play a prominent role in opposition. Instead, he retired from politics and established a foundation that aims to maintain a virtual library gathering documents on Nicaragua's history and politics.

Bolger, Jim (New Zealand)

Introduction

James Brendan Bolger, born on 31 May 1935 in Taranaki on North Island, was prime minister for 7 years from 1990. Formerly a sheep and cattle farmer,

he led the National party for almost 12 years, subsequently becoming the country's ambassador to the United States. Surprised by his extremely narrow 1993 election win, Bolger famously remarked, 'Bugger the pollsters'.

Early Life

Bolger's politics developed in the 1960s when he joined National and was involved in farming organizations. In 1965, he set up a sheep and cattle farm in Te Kuiti, King Country, and was elected MP for King Country in 1972, the year of a landslide Labour victory. Bolger held this seat for nine terms. Following minor roles in the ministries of Maori affairs, agriculture and fisheries, and rural finance, he was appointed a parliamentary under-secretary after National's 1975 election win. Two years later, Bolger was named the country's first fisheries minister, and simultaneously became associate agriculture minister. He was involved in the establishment of a 200 mile exclusive economic zone for fishing. After the 1978 election Bolger was appointed minister of immigration until 1981 and of labour until 1984. In 1980 he led an unsuccessful coup with two other ministers to replace Prime Minister Robert Muldoon with his deputy Brain Talboys. Prior to National's electoral defeat in 1984, Bolger introduced legislation allowing weekend shopping and voluntary unionism, and served as president of the International Labour Organisation in 1983. Jim McLay, the next National leader, made Bolger his deputy in Nov. 1984. Bolger was elected leader of the opposition in March 1986. Four years later, he returned National to power with the largest parliamentary majority in New Zealand history.

Career Peak

Taking office as prime minister and minister for the security intelligence service on 2 Nov. 1990, Bolger revised the implementation of centre right fiscal policies that had led to recession and stock market crash under Labour 3 years earlier. He was appointed to the British Privy Council in the following year. Welfare benefits were cut and relations between unions and employers were deregulated. Bolger pursued an export-led economic strategy and outward-looking foreign policy, easing the country's defence relations with the United States which had been strained by Nuclear Free legislation. Between 1992–4, New Zealand was a member of the UN Security Council, chairing the Iraq sanctions committee. Bolger also represented the country at five APEC leaders' summits from 1993 onwards, and hosted the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in 1995. Following his dismissal of cabinet minister Winston Peters after disagreement over economic policy in 1991, Peters' centrist New Zealand First party reduced Bolger's support at the 1993 election. National remained in power with a majority of two, reporting 6% economic growth over the following year, and bringing the budget into surplus in 1994. By 1996 the country's economy was the third strongest in the OECD; when Bolger took office it had been one of the weakest. 1996 also marked Bolger's announcement of a uniquely New Zealand honours system structured around a five tier Order of Merit. The mixed member proportional representation election in 1996 led to Bolger's formation of a coalition government with New Zealand First, followed by a drop in National's popularity. While he attended a Commonwealth meeting in Edinburgh in 1997, a coup by Jenny Shipley provoked Bolger's resignation and his reappointment as minister of state and associate minister of foreign affairs and trade in Dec. of that year. In the new year's honours list he became a member of the Order of New Zealand, the country's highest honour.

Later Life

Bolger resigned from parliament on 6 April 1998. The former prime minister became his country's ambassador to the United States in June 1998, a position he held until 2001. Bolger also farms part time with Joan, his wife since 1965, and is a keen fisherman.

Bondevik, Kjell Magne (Norway)

Introduction

A Lutheran minister and leader of the Kristelig Folkeparti (Christian Democratic Party; KrF) party from 1983–95, Kjell Magne Bondevik was appointed prime minister for the second time in 2001. He retired from politics at the end

of his term in 2005, having headed a centre right coalition of Høyre (Conservative), Venstre (Liberal Party) and the KrF. His first term as prime minister (1997–2000) was cut short when a disagreement over the construction of a power plant forced his resignation.

Early Life

Bondevik was born on 3 Sept. 1947 in Molde, eastern Norway. He graduated from the Free Faculty of Theology Norway in 1975, and 4 years later he was ordained a minister in the Church of Norway. Politically active from an early age, his political career took precedent over his religious duties. His uncle, Kjell Bondevik, had served as social security and education minister in the 1960s. By 1968 Kjell Magne Bondevik was vice president of the party's youth movement, being made its president 2 years later. In 1972 he joined the office of the prime minister and the following year became a member of the Storting (parliament) as a representative for his home county of Møre og Romsdal. In 1975 Bondevik was made KrF vice president under Kåre Kristiansen. In 1983 he succeeded as party leader. He served as education and religious affairs minister (1983–86) and foreign minister (1989–90). In 1995 he was succeeded as party leader by Valgerd Svarstad Gaugland.

Career Peak

In the 1997 elections, the Labour party won with 35% ahead of the KrF's 15.3%. But Labour leader Thorbjørn Jagland had promised to resign if his party polled less than 36.9% of votes. Despite his party coming second, Bondevik was made prime minister of a centrist coalition with Venstre and the Centre party.

In 1998 Bondevik, suffering from depression, took a month's leave. His openness on the matter with the public won him support. Nonetheless, the new prime minister became unpopular with the opposition when he suggested delaying the construction on environmental grounds of two new natural gas power stations. Despite arguing that the project should be delayed until the plant's potential for high carbon dioxide emissions could be reduced, the opposition called for immediate construction. A confidence vote was called which the government lost in March 2000 by 81 to 71. Bondevik was forced to resign and the opposition Labour leader Jens Stoltenberg saw out his term.

Bondevik led the party into the 2001 elections. The KrF came third with 26 of 165 seats behind the outgoing Labour party (43) and Høyre (38). Despite the KrF having six less seats, Bondevik managed to form a coalition with Høyre with himself as prime minister. They were joined by Venstre. Høyre's leader Jan Petersen was made finance minister.

On election, Bondevik pledged to invest in schools, hospitals and international aid, but also to cut taxes by 25bn. kroner. A year on, his 2003 budget outlined public sector spending but not the promise tax cuts. His government was opposed to EU membership.

Bondevik announced his retirement from frontline politics in 2005 and opted not to defend his parliamentary seat at the general elections. The elections were won by a Labour–Socialist Left–Centre Party coalition and Labour's Stoltenberg was appointed prime minister.

Later Life

In Jan. 2006 he established the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, a foundation whose work is related to human rights, democracy, and inter-religious and intercultural dialogue.

Bongo, Omar (Gabon)

Introduction

El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba was Africa's longest serving head of state, ruling as president of Gabon from 1967 to 2009. After Fidel Castro of Cuba stood down in Feb. 2008 Bongo became the world's longest-serving president. His period in office was characterized by political stability, with Gabon having the highest per capita wealth in West Africa. Despite introducing multi-party democracy in the early 1990s, he was widely accused of corruption and a flawed electoral system gave concern to the international community.

Early Life

Bongo, given the name Albert-Bernard, was born in 1935 in what was then French Equatorial Africa. He was educated in Brazzaville (in present-day Republic of the Congo), went to Chad for military training and served in the French air force. He joined the civil service in 1958 and developed a close relationship with Leon M'ba, who became president following Gabon's independence in 1960. M'ba appointed Bongo director of the president's office in 1962.

The military attempted a coup in 1964 and held both M'ba and Bongo in custody until M'ba was returned to power with the support of French forces. Bongo was appointed minister of defence in 1965 and minister of information and tourism the following year. Bongo then became vice president and assumed the presidency following the death of M'ba in Nov. 1967.

Career Peak

Bongo declared Gabon a one-party state in 1968 and under this system was re-elected to the presidency in 1973, 1979 and 1986. In 1973 he converted to Islam and took the name Omar. In 1982 an opposition group, the Movement for National Renewal (MORENA), was founded and pushed for the return of a multi-party system. Gabon's economy had benefited greatly from oil revenues but was affected by declining world oil prices in the late 1980s. Popular dissatisfaction spilled over into violent protests in 1990, during which French forces entered the country to protect its nationals. With the democratic movement newly invigorated, Bongo agreed to a national conference which included opposition figures. Multi-party politics were formally reintroduced in 1991.

Bongo was again victorious at the presidential elections of 1993 but his leading rival, Father Paul M'ba Abessole, voiced widely-held suspicions of electoral irregularities. Serious civil unrest was narrowly averted when Bongo agreed a deal, known as the Paris agreement, which allowed for the establishment of an electoral commission and improved electoral processes. In 1997 a constitutional amendment extended the presidential tenure from 5 to 7 years, and Bongo's victory at the 1998 presidential polls was again widely questioned. An offer by Bongo to meet for talks with Pierre Mamboundou of the Gabonese People's Union (UPG) was rejected. The UPG called for a boycott of the 2001 parliamentary elections, which were dominated by Bongo's Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG). In an apparent gesture of reconciliation, the PDG invited opposition figures into the government.

A controversial constitutional amendment was then passed allowing the president to serve two consecutive 7 year terms, potentially granting power to Bongo until 2012. This was followed in June 2003 by further revisions permitting the president to contest the presidency as many times as he wished. In the following elections in Nov. 2005, Bongo was again re-elected with 79.2% of the popular vote, and in Dec. 2006 the PDG maintained its majority in polling for the National Assembly. In Jan. 2008 the government temporarily banned 20 non-governmental organizations for alleged interference in domestic politics.

In foreign policy, Bongo was involved in attempts to resolve regional conflicts, notably in Burundi, the Central African Republic, and in both the Republic of the Congo and Democratic Republic of the Congo. In March 2003 Cándido Muatetema Rivas, then prime minister of Equatorial Guinea, claimed Gabon's occupation of the oil-rich island of M'bagne was illegal. Both countries agreed in Feb. 2006 to start talks over the disputed territory. In April 2001 Bongo signed agreements with Russia on military and technical co-operation as well as trade and culture. Despite Gabon's relatively prosperous economy, boosted by oil sales and high levels of foreign investment, Bongo's lavish expenditure attracted international criticism.

Following a period of ill health, Bongo died from cancer on 8 June 2009.

Botha, P. W. (South Africa)

Introduction

P(eter) W(illem) Botha served as South Africa's prime minister from 1978–84. In Sept. 1984 he became the country's first state president, a post he held until illness forced him from office in 1989. He was the last South

African leader to remain committed to white supremacy, although his tenure did witness some reforms of the apartheid system.

Early Life

Botha was born in Paul Roux in the Orange Free State on 12 Jan. 1912. In 1932 he began a law course at the University of Orange Free State in Bloemfontein, but left without taking his degree to pursue a full-time career in politics. He worked in administration for the National Party from the age of 20, and in 1948 he was elected as a Nationalist member of parliament. By the late 1950s he had risen to the rank of deputy minister for the interior, and went on to hold successive ministerial positions in the departments of commercial development, public works, defence and coloured affairs. Following the resignation of Vorster in 1978, Botha was appointed prime minister.

Career Peak

In his time as prime minister, the independence of several African states from white rule re-energized the opponents of segregation in South Africa. Student demonstrations and civil disobedience greatly increased.

In 1983 Botha re-wrote the country's constitution, making himself state president with extensive additional powers. The new constitution created three separate elected bodies for whites, Africans and Asians. The white body was larger than the other two combined. Two thirds of the white population approved of the constitution but the rest of the country was not given the chance to express a view and became increasingly alienated. Botha attempted to assuage black protesters and the international community by permitting independence to black homelands, and granting limited powers to the African and Asian population. These reforms were not enough to lift sanctions, while they were too much for the far right of the National Party which broke away to form the Conservative Party. Violent protest continued, and in 1985 Botha declared a state of emergency which remained in place until 1990. The media was censored and political dissidents were imprisoned without trial. Aside from African opposition to his policies, Botha was also threatened by the emergence of neo-Nazi paramilitary groups, the most notorious of which was the AWB led by Eugène Terre' Blanche.

The final years of Botha's leadership were marked by a failure to reconcile the many disparate factions involved in South African politics. In early 1989 Botha fell ill and resigned as party leader. He did not surrender the presidency until pressured by cabinet colleagues.

Later Life

After the 1994 elections Botha's conduct in power was investigated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In 1998 his refusal to appear before the Commission brought him a fine and a suspended 5 year prison sentence. In July 1999 he was implicated in the 1985 murder of eight anti-apartheid activists. He died from a heart attack on 31 Oct. 2006.

Boumedienne, Houari (Algeria)

Introduction

Houari Boumedienne was leader of Algeria from 1965–78 (initially as chairman of a Revolutionary Council and, from 1976, as president). He died in office from a rare blood disorder.

Early Life

Boumedienne was born Mohammed Ben Brahim Boukharouba on 23 Aug. 1932 in Clauzel, eastern Algeria. He adopted his *nom de guerre*, Houari Boumedienne, in 1957. He had avoided conscription to the French colonial army in 1952 because he was studying at Al Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt.

A prominent member of the Algerian independence movement from 1955, he became chief of staff of the National Liberation Army in 1960. After Algeria gained independence in July 1962, Boumedienne served as defence minister and deputy to President Ahmed Ben Bella. However, he became increasingly dissatisfied with Ben Bella's rule and led a bloodless coup in June 1965.

Career Peak

Boumedienne initially headed a revolutionary council of 26 members, most of whom came from the military. He moved away from Ben Bella's agrarian-focused political programme in a bid to spur the nation's industrial development. While initially content to co-operate on equal terms with France—the former colonial power—relations soured when in 1971 Boumedienne nationalized the oil industry that had previously been two-thirds owned by French interests. He reinvested the resulting oil and gas wealth into his industrialization efforts. Meanwhile, on the international stage he fostered closer ties with the USA, and in 1974 the two nations exchanged ambassadors for the first time in 7 years.

Following a failed coup against him in 1967 and an assassination attempt the following year, Boumedienne took an increasingly hard line against his opponents, demoting potential enemies and regularly purging his political ranks. In 1976 a new constitution paved the way for a directly-elected president. In Dec. that year Boumedienne was duly elected to the post. However, his public appearances became infrequent. In Nov. 1978 he lapsed into a coma having contracted Waldenstrom's disease, an illness that attacks the blood and bone marrow. With rule effectively in the hands of the ministry of defence, he died on 22 Dec. 1978.

Bourguiba, Habib (Tunisia)

Introduction

Habib Ben Ali Bourguiba was the first president of post-independence Tunisia. Nicknamed the 'supreme Warrior', he served from 1957–87 and is widely recognized as having been the driving force behind the country's liberation from French colonial rule.

Early Life

Bourguiba was born in Monastir on 3 Aug. 1903. In 1927 he graduated in law and political science from the University of Paris in France, and in 1932 set up a nationalist newspaper, *L'Action Tunisienne*. Two years later he founded the pro-independence Neo-Destour Party, serving as its secretary-general. As a result of his activism, Bourguiba was jailed and censured on numerous occasions by the French authorities. Shortly after Tunisia gained independence in 1956, he was elected prime minister and the following year he abolished the monarchy and became the president of a one-party state.

Career Peak

Bourguiba's main policy priorities as president were women's rights and education. He outlawed polygamy, legalized abortion, set up a free public education system and prohibited child labour. In the early years of his presidency per capita income and the literacy rate soared.

In foreign policy he maintained economic and trade connections with the West and sought closer ties with the USA. In 1962 he successfully negotiated the withdrawal of French troops from the country. He spent much of his presidential tenure fighting Islamic fundamentalism and supported recognition of Israel in defiance of broader Arab opinion. Despite boycotting the Arab League, he did offer Yasser Arafat and his Palestine Liberation Organization sanctuary in Tunisia when they were exiled from Lebanon in 1982.

In 1975 Bourguiba was elected president for life, but by the end of the decade and into the 1980s he was struggling both economically, against mass unemployment, and politically, with radical Islamist groups who violently opposed his style and direction of governance. In Nov. 1987 doctors declared him mentally unfit for office and he was impeached by the then prime minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who subsequently held the presidency until 2011.

Later Life

Bourguiba was kept under house arrest in Monastir for the last 13 years of his life and died on 6 April 2000. He was nevertheless buried with national honours in a mausoleum engraved with the words 'Liberator of women, builder of modern Tunisia'.

Bozizé, François (Central African Republic)

Introduction

Gen. François Bozizé declared himself president of the Central African Republic following a military coup in March 2003, having been a prominent figure on the CAR's political scene during the regimes of Andre Kolingba and Ange-Félix Patassé. He was suspected of involvement in coup attempts in 1983, 2001 and 2002 before seizing control.

Early Life

Bozizé was born in 1946. He came to political prominence as a leading critic of Kolingba's military rule which began in 1981. Having led an unsuccessful coup in 1983, he was arrested and tortured by government forces before going into exile in Togo. There he met Patassé with whom he established strong ties. The two stood against each other at the free elections of 1993 and Bozizé lost. Nonetheless, he remained a Patassé ally, defending him against several uprisings during 1996 and 1997.

However, the relationship became increasingly strained. Bozizé accused Patassé's regime of mismanagement as popular discontent grew at government corruption and failure to pay salaries. In May 2001 Patassé used Libyan forces to put down a coup headed by former president Kolingba, who had been assisted by Bozizé. Bozizé was sacked as head of the army. In Nov. 2001 government troops attempted to arrest Bozizé, but fighting broke out with forces loyal to him. Bozizé held the north of Bangui for a period before taking around 300 troops into exile in Chad. In Oct. 2002 pro-Bozizé factions attempted to depose Patassé, but were defeated amid allegations that Bozizé had instigated the coup with support from Chad.

Career Peak

While Patassé was away in Niger in March 2003 Bozizé led around 1,000 troops into Bangui. They faced little opposition and secured vital strategic locations within a day. Patassé attempted to fly back into the city but was diverted to Cameroon. The Congolese rebels, on whose support Patassé had relied, meanwhile fled over the country.

Having seized power, Bozizé imposed a curfew, dissolved parliament, suspended the constitution and was named president amid promises of free elections. He announced plans to negotiate aid from the IMF and World Bank and promised to address government inefficiency and corruption, disunity in the armed forces and the growing AIDS threat.

Reaction to the coup was mixed. Opposition groups within the CAR welcomed the removal of Patassé, as did many central African nations. However, France, the former colonial power, described the coup as 'unacceptable' and the African Union threatened the CAR's expulsion. There was widespread looting and rioting in Bangui in the days following Bozizé's assumption of power and he appealed to the Economic Community of Central African States to restore order. He was also accused of using backing from Chad in the coup, a charge which provoked widespread unease throughout the country. There followed a period of transitional government until the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections, in which Bozizé retained power with 43% of the vote.

The poverty-stricken country has, however, remained unstable owing to continuing violence spilling over from the conflict in Darfur in neighbouring Sudan and internal rebel violence in the northeast of the country. In Jan. 2008 civil servants and teachers began a series of strikes in protest at unpaid salaries over several months. At the same time, the prime minister, Élie Doté, resigned and was replaced by Faustin-Archange Touadéra, an academic with no previous political experience.

Following the adoption of an amnesty law, the government reached a peace accord with rebel forces in Dec. 2008 envisaging the formation of a unity government and fresh elections in March 2010. In Jan. 2009 Bozizé dissolved the government and reappointed Touadéra as prime minister of a reshuffled cabinet including representatives of rebel groups. However, sporadic clashes between government and rebel forces have since continued. The elections scheduled for March 2010 were postponed and Bozizé's term of

office was extended, but eventually polling took place in Jan. 2011 with Bozizé securing a further term in office.

Fighting escalated in Dec. 2012 with the Séléka rebel coalition capturing several major towns. Although a ceasefire agreement was signed the following month that saw Bozizé appointing a prime minister chosen by his opponents, the peace broke down and the rebels renewed their offensive. Despite foreign troops safeguarding the capital the Séléka rebels seized control of Bangui in March 2013. Bozizé and his family fled abroad and sought political asylum in Benin.

Brandt, Willy (Germany)

Introduction

Willy Brandt was West German Chancellor from 1969–74 and leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) from 1964–87. He was Mayor of West Berlin (1957–66) and Vice Chancellor (1966–69). A pragmatist, he sought to improve ties with the Soviet Union and the rest of the Eastern Bloc, a policy which came to be known as *Ostpolitik*. He was criticized by some for what was perceived to be bowing towards the communist East, but Brandt believed that long term European peace and development would be most easily secured by recognition of a divided Germany. He resigned as Chancellor after a spying scandal in 1974, but remained a high-profiled and widely respected statesman for the next 18 years.

Early Life

Brandt was born Herbert Ernst Karl Frahm in Lübeck, Schleswig-Holstein on 18 Dec. 1913, the illegitimate son of a shop assistant. As a teenager he joined the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) before defecting to the more radical Socialist Workers' Party. He was in the early stages of his university career when the Nazis came to power and, because of his socialist leanings, was forced to flee the country. It was around this time that he adopted the name Willy Brandt. He went to Norway where he enrolled at the University of Oslo and began work as a journalist. He did administrative work for a Norwegian charity but following the German occupation fled to Sweden. He was active in the anti-German resistance movements throughout World War II. The Nazis repealed his German citizenship in 1938.

He returned to his native country in the aftermath of the war and was again involved with the SPD. In 1948 he married Rut, a Norwegian. He was elected Berlin's representative on the Social Democratic Party Executive Committee and entered parliament as the member for Berlin in 1949. In 1957 he became the Governor Mayor of West Berlin and in the troubled years that followed made his name on the international stage. The Soviets demanded the removal of Western troops from the city in 1958 and when this was refused relations between East and West deteriorated, leading to the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Brandt appeared to the world as a strong and reliable civic leader. He fought unsuccessfully for the Chancellorship in 1961, in 1964 became Chairman of the SPD, and lost elections for the Chancellorship again in 1965.

In the Christian Democrat/Social Democrat coalition government of 1966–69, under Kurt Georg Kiesinger, Brandt was Minister of Foreign Affairs and Kiesinger's Deputy. At the elections of 1969 he was elected Chancellor and headed a coalition of the SPD and Free Democrats.

Career Peak

Brandt worked hard to relax the tension between East and West Germany with his 'Ostpolitik' (Eastern Policy). He signed a nuclear non-proliferation treaty and also agreed non-aggression treaties with Poland and the Soviet Union in 1970. The latter gave recognition to the controversial Oder-Neisse line, confirming Poland's western border and signalling Germany's acceptance of the loss of its former territory. Many accused Brandt of surrendering to the communist East but Brandt himself believed that European relations would not improve unless the practicalities were accepted. He had previously made clear his commitment to West Germany's continuing alignment with the West, stating that West Germans would not be 'wanderers between two worlds'. This attitude was balanced by his belief, on which he was campaigning as early as 1965, that 'there will never be any real peace until we come to a settlement with our Eastern neighbours'.

In 1970 Brandt met the East German Premier, Willi Stoph, which led to a treaty of mutual recognition and co-operation between the two Germanies. The following year a treaty with Czechoslovakia was promulgated, and in 1973 East and West Germany both joined the United Nations. He also did much to promote the expansion of the European Economic Community. Brandt received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971 for his efforts to bridge East and West, and his popularity was confirmed by unprecedented success for the SPD at the polls in 1972.

Disaster struck in May 1974 when Brandt was forced to resign as Chancellor after it was revealed that his colleague and aide, Günther Guillaume, was an East German agent.

Later Life

Brandt retained influence as an internationally respected statesman. He remained Chairman of the SPD until 1987, was president of Socialist International from 1976–92 and was also a member of the European Parliament from 1979–83. In the late 1970s he headed an international commission, which in 1980 published *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, calling for the prosperous nations to do more to help the development of poorer countries. He died on 8 Oct. 1992, some 3 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and 2 years after German re-unification. Brandt summarized his political goals asserting that 'For centuries Germany was a bridge between East and West'. and adding, 'We are striving to build anew the shattered bridge, better, sturdier and more reliable'.

Bratušek, Alenka (Slovenia)

Introduction

Alenka Bratušek, leader of the Positive Slovenia party (PS), became prime minister in March 2013 after the previous government fell to a no confidence vote. Heading a four-party coalition covering a wide spectrum of political opinion, Bratušek pledged to balance austerity policies with measures to boost growth.

Early Life

Born on 31 March 1970 in Celje, Alenka Bratušek graduated from the faculty of natural sciences and technology at Ljubljana University in the early 1990s and earned a master's degree in management from the same institution in 2006. Entering public administration in 1995, she took a job at the ministry of the economy before moving to the ministry of finance in 1999. She became head of the ministry's budget directorate, responsible for administering the national budget, overseeing local government finances and drawing on European Union funding.

Bratušek stood unsuccessfully for parliament for the Zares party in 2008. Having joined the newly formed PS in 2011, she was elected to parliament in the election of Dec. that year when the PS unexpectedly claimed the largest share of the vote. However, the party was unable to form a government and went into opposition to Janez Janša's centre-right administration. In this period, Bratušek chaired the commission for public finance control and served on the committee for finance and monetary policy, as well as on the committee for justice, public administration and local self-government.

Following the publication of a report that alleged corruption against both Prime Minister Janša and PS leader Zoran Jankovič, Bratušek replaced Jankovič as acting party leader in Jan. 2013. When the government fell to a no confidence vote in Feb. 2013, Bratušek led all-party negotiations and emerged as leader of a broad coalition, uniting the centre-left PS and Social Democrats (SD) with the right-leaning Civic List (DL) and the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DeSUS).

Career Peak

Bratušek was voted in as prime minister on 20 March 2013 with the backing of 52 of 90 MPs. She took office with the country facing acute economic problems. She has sought to address the immediate financial crisis while implementing policies to secure long-term stability. In May she put forward a set of measures including an increase in value added tax, a major privatization programme and a restructuring of the troubled banking sector to arrest its

capital shortfall and avoid the need for an EU/IMF financial rescue package. In Nov. 2013 her government won a parliamentary vote of confidence.

Bratušek resigned as prime minister on 3 May 2014, after losing the leadership of the Positive Slovenia party to its founder Zoran Jankovič in a vote held a week earlier. She remained in her post in a caretaker capacity until 18 Sept. 2014, when Miro Cerar, who had won early parliamentary elections in July, was named premier.

Brazauskas, Algirdas (Lithuania)

Introduction

A former Communist Party first secretary and Lithuanian president (1992–98), Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas became prime minister of Lithuania in July 2001, representing the A. Brazauskas Social Democratic Coalition. After his election he concentrated on leading Lithuania to European Union (EU) and NATO membership. He resigned from office in late May 2006 after his ruling coalition collapsed.

Early Life

Brazauskas was born on 22 Sept. 1932 in Rokiškis, northeast Lithuania. He studied engineering and economics at Kaunas Polytechnic, graduating in 1956. Over the next 10 years he worked in industry while becoming active in the Lithuanian Communist Party. In 1965 he joined the government of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, serving first as construction materials minister and then as deputy chairman of the state planning committee 2 years later. By 1988 he was the first secretary of the Communist Party's central committee. As Communism weakened throughout the Eastern Bloc, Brazauskas was part of a group of pro-independence Communists who formed the Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (LDDP), modelling the movement on social democratic lines. As deputy prime minister between 1990–91 he was involved in Lithuania's transition to independence. The Communist Party became illegal in 1991. A year later the LDDP successfully contested parliamentary elections.

Career Peak

In 1993 Brazauskas stood in Lithuania's first post-independence presidential elections against the independent candidate Stasys Lozoraitis. Winning the presidency with 60.1% of votes, Brazauskas stood down as leader of the LDDP in keeping with the impartiality of the largely ceremonial position. Over the next 5 years, despite slow progress, Lithuania moved towards a free market economy and forged links with Western governments, including an EU membership application in 1995 and involvement in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme from 1997. In 1994 a national currency, the litas, was introduced. Regionally, Lithuania strengthened its ties with Estonia and Latvia and signed a treaty to cement good relations first with Poland in 1994 and then Belarus the following year. In 1998 Brazauskas was succeeded as president by Valdas Adamkus.

Brazauskas returned to party politics heading the LDDP in opposition. The party joined forces with several other parties (including the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party—LSDP) as the A. Brazauskas Social Democratic Coalition, successfully contesting the 2000 parliamentary elections. The Lithuanian Liberal Union party's Rolandas Paksas became prime minister. The LDDP and the LSDP merged in 2001, and Brazauskas retained the party leadership.

When in June 2001 Paksas' coalition government collapsed over privatization disputes, President Adamkus nominated Brazauskas as Paksas' successor. The following month he was appointed with 84 votes to 45. As prime minister he continued his predecessor's reforms needed for EU membership. Lithuania joined in May 2004. Two months earlier Lithuania also joined NATO.

The Oct. 2004 elections left no party with a majority of seats in parliament, but Brazauskas agreed to form a broader power-sharing coalition (including the Labour Party which had won the most seats). He was nominated by the president to continue as prime minister and his appointment was approved by parliament in Dec. 2004.

Brazauskas' position came under pressure when one of his coalition partners, the New Union, withdrew in April 2006, and became untenable when another party, the Labour Party, left government after the president stated he did not trust two of their ministers following a party funding scandal. Brazauskas left office on 31 May 2006 and announced his retirement from politics. He died on 26 June 2010.

Brezhnev, Leonid Ilich (Russia)

Introduction

Leonid Brezhnev succeeded Nikita Khrushchev as Soviet leader in 1964 following a coup. He ruled until his death in 1982. Brezhnev devoted much of his tenure to military and foreign affairs. Less charismatic than his predecessor, under him the USSR strengthened its position as a superpower though at the expense of living standards for the average citizen.

Early Life

Leonid Brezhnev was born on 19 Dec. 1906 in Kamenskoye (later renamed Dneprodzerzhinsk) in Russified eastern Ukraine. His father was a steelworker and Brezhnev followed him into the industry at the age of 15. He graduated from a land management technical school in Kursk in 1927 and worked as a land surveyor in the region. Having joined the Communist Party in 1931, he rose steadily through the party ranks over the next decade. He was appointed propaganda secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk regional committee in 1939. During World War II, he served as a political commissar attached to the armed forces, becoming a major general in 1944.

After the war Brezhnev worked under Nikita Khrushchev in the Ukraine, later serving as communist party chief in Moldavia (1950–53) and Kazakhstan (1954–56). He was accepted on to the Communist Central Committee and as a candidate member of the Politburo in 1952. He lost these posts following the death of Stalin in 1953 but regained them 3 years later. In Feb. 1956 he was given control over the defence industry, space programme, heavy industry and capital construction. After supporting Khrushchev during an unsuccessful attempt to remove him in 1957, Brezhnev won full membership of the Politburo. In 1960 he was elevated to chairman of the presidium.

Though the nominal head of state, Brezhnev resigned the chairmanship in 1964 to work as Khrushchev's number two on the central committee. In Oct. 1964 he led a coup against Khrushchev and replaced him as first secretary.

Career Peak

Supreme power was theoretically held jointly between Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin, chairmen of the council of ministers. However, it was soon apparent that Brezhnev was the dominant partner and he often opposed Kosygin's economic reforms while protecting conservative, often corrupt bureaucrats.

Alexander Dubček's reformist regime in Czechoslovakia prompted Brezhnev to formulate a doctrine that was to be named after him. It asserted the right of the Warsaw Pact partners to intervene against 'anti-socialist degeneration' within the Soviet bloc. He ordered the invasion of Czechoslovakia after the Prague Spring in 1968, provoking international outrage, and his tenure also saw border clashes with China.

His foreign policy extended to assisting left-wing movements in Vietnam, the Middle East and the Third World. Throughout the 1970s he attempted to improve relations with West Germany and followed a policy of détente with the US. US–Soviet relations peaked in 1972 when Brezhnev and his opposite number Richard Nixon signed the SALT treaty that curbed the development of certain nuclear projects.

However, both sides remained deeply suspicious of the other. In 1979 the US congress failed to ratify SALT II and Brezhnev (by now titular head of state as well as party) ordered the invasion of Afghanistan to support its ailing leftist government. Relations between the two further soured when Brezhnev encouraged the suppression of the Polish Solidarity trade union movement in the early 1980s.

Brezhnev oversaw a rapid expansion of the Soviet military and industrial bases during the 1970s and agreed massive spending to ensure the USSR led the space race. The domestic price was great, with the agricultural and

consumer-goods sectors failing badly and the standard of living declining. In addition, political oppression and persecution of dissidents was rife under his regime.

His last years in power were spent in senility. He suffered a mild stroke in March 1982 and died of a heart attack on 10 Nov.

Brooke, Basil (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Basil Brooke, who became 1st Viscount Brookeborough in 1952, was a British Ulster Unionist who served as Northern Ireland's prime minister from 1943 until 1963. A hard-line anti-Catholic, the later years of his tenure were dominated by a declining economy. He resigned the premiership on health grounds.

Early Life

Basil Stanlake Brooke was born on 9 June 1888, in Colebrooke Park, Brookeborough, County Fermanagh. His father was Sir Arthur Douglas Brooke, the 4th Baronet, and the family was raised on a 30,000-acre estate.

Basil was schooled for 5 years in Pau, in southwest France before attending Winchester College and then the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. He succeeded his father to become the 5th Baronet in 1907. In 1908 he joined the Royal Fusiliers and, 3 years later, the 10th Hussars. He served with distinction in the First World War before giving up military life for farming in 1920.

In 1921 he entered the Northern Ireland senate but served only a year before becoming commandant of the Ulster Special Constabulary, which was focussed on defeating the IRA. In 1929 he won the Lisnakea constituency in County Fermanagh and took his seat in Northern Ireland's parliament on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party. He became minister of agriculture in 1933, urging landowners not to employ Catholics, whom he accused of being 'out to destroy Ulster'. He took over the commerce portfolio in 1941.

Career Peak

When John Andrews came under pressure to resign as prime minister in 1943, Brooke stepped in to replace him. He remained in parliament despite being made a Viscount in 1952 (which qualified him for a seat in the House of Lords). During his tenure, he sought to tighten links between the government and the Orange Order while distancing Catholics and trades unionists.

Northern Ireland's industrial base crumbled badly from the 1950s on. Popular support for Brooke fell away and his inability to reverse the economic decline prompted doubts over his leadership from within his own party. In 1963 he gave up the premiership because of poor health but remained in the Northern Irish parliament for another 5 years.

Later Life

From the back benches Brooke strongly opposed the conciliatory approach to Dublin taken by his successor, Terrence O'Neill. Away from politics, Brooke built up a large portfolio of business interests. He died at his family home on 18 Aug. 1973.

Brown, Gordon (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Gordon Brown became prime minister in June 2007, fulfilling the long-held expectation that he would succeed Tony Blair, his co-architect of New Labour

in the 1990s. Before taking over the premiership, Brown was for 10 years chancellor of the exchequer, the longest serving holder of that office since the 1832 Reform Act. His tenure at the treasury coincided with a long period of economic growth but his premiership was progressively been overshadowed by the global banking and financial crisis that escalated from the autumn of 2008. With poor opinion poll ratings in the lead-up to the general election on 6 May 2010, Labour lost 91 seats and Brown failed to secure a fourth term in office. Subsequently he resigned as both prime minister and leader of the Labour party.

Early Life

James Gordon Brown was born on 20 Feb. 1951 in Glasgow, Scotland. His father was a Church of Scotland minister. Brown attended Kirkcaldy High School until, at 16, he went to Edinburgh University where he graduated with a first in history and undertook a PhD (*The Labour Party and Political Change in Scotland, 1918–29*). He joined the Labour Party in 1969 and between 1972–75 served as rector of Edinburgh University and chair of the University Court. From 1976–80 he was a lecturer at Edinburgh and Caledonian universities. In 1979 he ran an unsuccessful campaign to win the Edinburgh South seat at the general election. The following year he took a job with Scottish TV until 1983.

At the general elections of 1983 Brown was elected MP for Dunfermline East in Fife. He was appointed opposition spokesman on trade and industry before becoming shadow chief secretary to the treasury then shadow secretary of state for trade and industry. When John Smith, then shadow chancellor, suffered a heart attack in 1988, Brown took up Smith's position on an interim basis. His success in this role confirmed him as shadow chancellor in 1992. By then Smith had succeeded Neil Kinnock as party leader.

When Smith died in May 1994, Brown and Tony Blair were the two front-runners to take over. It is widely believed that they struck a deal allowing Blair a clear run for the party leadership and potentially the premiership, with Brown as heir apparent to Blair at a future date. This was to become a matter of personal contention.

Blair and Brown were the architects of New Labour in the mid-1990s. It was essentially a party rebranding that sought to banish memories of the high inflation, high unemployment and union unrest that marred Labour's last period in government in the 1970s. Espousing a political 'Third Way', rooted between capitalism and liberal socialism, Brown used his time as shadow chancellor to convince the management and financial sector that he would be a safe pair of hands when in charge of the treasury.

The New Labour project came to fruition with a landslide victory over the Conservatives at the 1997 general election. Brown was duly appointed chancellor. Among Brown's first actions was to grant independence to the Bank of England in setting interest rates. This allayed fears that he would overly intervene in economic affairs. He also set out five economic tests for joining the European single currency (which remain unmet), including evidence of long-term convergence with other European economies. Under Brown the economy was to enjoy its longest ever period of sustained economic growth. Despite claims by opponents that he was reaping the rewards of careful management by his Conservative predecessors, he won a reputation as an 'Iron Chancellor' exercising responsible fiscal control.

It is generally accepted that relations between Brown and Blair deteriorated markedly from 2005. When Blair indicated that he would not fight a fourth election, pressure mounted on him to specify the date when he would leave office. The issue came to a head in Sept. 2006 when several Labour MPs spoke out, seemingly with tacit support from Brown, against Blair's silence. Blair announced that he would step down by Sept. 2007.

Brown's suitability to be prime minister was under scrutiny before he took office. Blairites accused him of hindering the 'Labour project', with Alastair Campbell, Blair's chief spin doctor for many years, describing him as 'psychologically flawed'. While Brown's supporters considered him to be intellectually strong and highly principled, his critics objected to his over-reliance on a closed circle of confidantes.

Career Peak

On taking office on 27 June 2007 after winning the leadership of the Labour Party, Brown faced a resurgent Conservative party attempting to reclaim the political middle ground under the leadership of David Cameron. The threat from terrorism also remained, and the public

finances were coming under greater strain than at any point during his term as chancellor. Nevertheless, early optimism about the Brown government's political prospects fuelled temporary speculation about a possible snap general election.

In Sept. 2007 a financial crisis (linked to a wider international credit contraction) at Northern Rock, the UK's fifth largest mortgage lender, led to emergency short-term support by the Bank of England and the first run on a British bank for 140 years. In Feb. 2008 the Brown government announced the bank's temporary nationalization. Further bad press from late 2007, relating to losses of computerized personal data held by public sector agencies on millions of citizens, also damaged the government's reputation. Renewed controversy over alleged covert and undeclared financial donations to the Labour Party prompted the first ministerial resignation from the Brown cabinet in Jan. 2008. By May, the fall in Labour's popularity was evident in its worst local election results in 40 years.

As the global financial crisis deepened and the threat of economic recession gathered pace in the autumn of 2008, the government nationalized three leading UK banks as part of a massive rescue package. A further major funding injection to support the domestic banking sector followed in Jan. 2009. Meanwhile, the Bank of England cut its base interest rate progressively to reach just 0.5%—the lowest level in its history—by March 2009. Nevertheless, unemployment continued to surge. Although Brown was praised in international forums such as the G20 for his leadership and decisive response to the global financial crisis, the UK's prolonged recession (with six consecutive quarters of contraction before slight growth was recorded in Oct.–Dec. 2009) had a negative effect on his poll ratings. Labour also fared poorly in elections to the European Parliament and the English local elections in June 2009, and there were rumblings of discontent within the party over Brown's leadership. A cabinet reshuffle in June 2009 followed damaging ministerial resignations, Labour lost a safe seat in a parliamentary by-election in Norwich in July, and in Jan. 2010 Brown survived a plot by backbench Labour MPs to dislodge him. Meanwhile, Parliament was undermined in the eyes of the public after a damaging scandal over members' expenses claims.

In foreign affairs, Brown maintained Britain's military commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq, although in Dec. 2008 he confirmed that British forces would end all combat operations in Iraq by the end of May 2009 and leave the country at the end of July. In Nov. 2009 he ordered a further 500 British soldiers to Afghanistan, despite mounting fatalities and dwindling public support for the war. Within the European Union, he endorsed the controversial new treaty on institutional and administrative reform, which was signed in Lisbon, Portugal in 2007 and eventually came into force in Dec. 2009. Despite early speculation that he would put some distance between UK and US foreign policy, Brown and President Barack Obama reaffirmed the special relationship between the two countries in March 2009 when the prime minister became the first European leader to meet his US counterpart in Washington.

In the run-up to the general election in May 2010, allegations were made about Brown's aggressive and bullying attitude to staff and colleagues, casting another shadow over Labour's prospects for victory. The Conservatives took 306 seats and 36.1% of the vote to Labour's 258 and 29.0%. Owing to the Conservatives' lack of an absolute majority Brown initially remained prime minister while coalition negotiations took place between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. A 'rainbow' alliance between the Labour party, the Liberal Democrats and other minor parties was mooted but the Liberals eventually decided in favour of a Conservative coalition. Brown resigned on 11 May admitting that he held himself personally accountable for the Labour defeat and was succeeded by David Cameron as prime minister. Harriet Harman became acting Labour party leader.

Later Life

After leaving office Brown devoted time to helping more children have access to schooling around the world and boosting internet development, working for organizations such as the World Wide Web Foundation (as a board director) and the Global Campaign for Education. His book dealing with the global financial crisis, *Beyond the Crash*, was published in 2010. In April 2011 Brown was appointed to an unpaid advisory role at the World Economic Forum. He remained MP for Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath until 2015.

Brundtland, Gro Harlem (Norway)

Introduction

Doctor and politician, Gro Harlem Brundtland was three times prime minister of Norway between 1981–96 representing the Labour party. The first female Norwegian prime minister, she aimed to appoint an equal number of male and female ministers and set a minimum of 40% for the proportion of Labour party female candidates. Nationally, Brundtland implemented leftwing economic and social policies. Internationally, she championed global health and environment issues, her role leading to her appointment as Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1998. Her international work raised Norway's profile within the international community.

Early Life

Born on 20 April 1939 in Baerum, Oslo, Brundtland's father was a doctor and an active member of the Labour party who served as defence minister. Brundtland herself was enrolled in the Labour party's junior section at the age of seven. Following her father's career to the US and later to Egypt, Brundtland developed an international outlook from an early age. She studied medicine at Oslo before winning a scholarship to the Harvard School of Public Health. In 1960 she married the leader of the opposition Conservative party, Arne Olav Brundtland. Gaining experience in public health from 1965 she worked for the health ministry, concentrating on children's health and in 1970 became director for the Oslo children's health service. In the 1970s her pro-abortion activism raised her public profile.

Brundtland's early politic activity was spent in local government, but her work for the health ministry led to her appointment as environment minister in 1974, a post she held for 5 years. Concurrently, she was raising her profile within the Labour party and between 1975–81 she was deputy leader. In 1979 she left her ministerial post to concentrate on modernizing the Labour party. In 1981 she ran for the party leadership and once secured, held the position for the next 11 years.

Career Peak

When in 1981 Prime Minister Nordli retired through ill health, Brundtland saw out his term, leading a minority Labour government. At 41 she was the youngest Norwegian leader and its first female prime minister. After 9 months, and with Labour's defeat by Kåre Willoch's Conservatives, she left national politics and concentrated on international issues concerning public health and the environment. In 1983 she was invited by the UN to found and lead the World Commission on Environment and Development, termed the Brundtland Commission, which promoted sustainable development. The commission produced the 1987 report *Our Common Future*, and its work was instrumental in bringing about the 1992 UN Rio Summit on environment. In 1985 she joined the board of the 'Better World Society' and also worked on the UN Commission for Disarmament and Security. Her international efforts for health, development and environment brought her recognition and in 1988 she was granted the Third World Foundation prize.

In 1986 Brundtland returned to national politics leading the Labour party to victory. In her second term her appointed cabinet comprised nine men and eight women, creating the most balanced female–male government in Western politics. She also created a 40% minimum rate of female candidature within the Labour party. On a domestic level, Brundtland implemented leftwing social and economic policies, but plummeting global oil prices led to the introduction of austerity measures. In the 1989 elections, Brundtland was defeated by a centre-right coalition led by Jan Peder. Its success was short lived and by the following year Brundtland was again appointed prime minister.

Three years later she was elected for a second consecutive term. She resigned as Labour leader in 1992 and was succeeded by Thorbjørn Jagland. Her international outlook put her in favour of EU membership and she led a strong campaign in the early 1990s. Despite these efforts, Norwegians voted against in a 1994 referendum. In 1996 she retired from national politics.

Later Life

Following her departure from Norwegian politics, Brundtland turned to international politics. Her dedication to the advancement of sustainable development led to her appointment in 1998 as Director-General of WHO, succeeding Hiroshi Nakayima. Her main initiatives were measures against malaria and tuberculosis. She retired in July 2003.

Bruton, John (Ireland)

Introduction

John Bruton was Irish Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) from Dec. 1994–June 1997, heading a coalition government which included his Fine Gael party. He played a leading role in the Northern Irish Peace Process, arguing that a united Ireland would occur only if it received majority support in the North. His firm stance against the IRA and other paramilitary groups brought him into conflict with nationalists.

Early Life

John Gereard Bruton was born in Dublin on 18 May 1947. He studied economics at University College, Dublin before qualifying as a barrister from Kings Inn, Dublin at the age of 23. In 1969 he entered the Dáil as a member of Fine Gael. He worked in farming throughout his political career. During the 1970s he was the parliamentary secretary for the minister of education and later of industry and commerce.

In 1981, in Garret FitzGerald's coalition government, Bruton was appointed minister of finance, a post he held from mid-1981 to early 1982. He was minister at the time of the controversial budget clause imposing tax on children's shoes that precipitated the fall of the FitzGerald government. Between 1983 and 1986 Bruton was the minister for industry and trade, then finance minister and briefly minister for the public service.

In 1990 Bruton took over from Alan Dukes as leader of Fine Gael and led the party to a poor showing at the 1992 elections. However, the administration of Prime Minister Albert Reynolds was seriously undermined by internal party conflict and scandal. It collapsed in late 1994 and Bruton, without having to go to the polls, formed a coalition government. Known as the Rainbow Coalition, it comprised Fine Gael, Labour and the Democratic Left.

Career Peak

Bruton was criticized as a weak leader but his tenure coincided with an economic upsurge. He also won support for liberalizing divorce. As for Northern Ireland, he continued Reynold's work in establishing a framework with the British government for a negotiated peace. He positioned himself firmly against terrorist groups within the Republic and considered majority support in Ulster to be a pre-requisite for a re-unification. Shortly after he assumed office he launched a *Framework Document* with British Prime Minister John Major which set out the necessary conditions for a negotiated peace.

A *Joint Communiqué* followed in Nov. 1995 which invited parties to peace talks and established an international advisory group to investigate arms decommissioning. The subsequent report, known as the *Mitchell Report* after US senator George Mitchell and published in Jan. 1996, proposed discussions on a political formula and decommissioning proceeding in tandem. Talks, headed by Mitchell, began in June.

The IRA ended its ceasefire in 1996 but peace negotiations continued for the duration of Bruton's time in office. After losing the 1997 election he was replaced as prime minister by Bertie Ahern. The peace talks culminated in the *Good Friday Agreement* of 1998 which made provision for the devolution of government powers to a Northern Irish assembly.

Later Life

Bruton remained Fine Gael leader after the 1997 defeat. In 2000 the Northern Irish Assembly was suspended over the decommissioning of weapons. Bruton responded by urging an end to paramilitary attacks and by calling for paramilitary groups to sign up to the *Mitchell Principles* on which the

Good Friday Agreement was based. Bruton survived several party leadership challenges but in Jan. 2001 he lost a vote of confidence and resigned. He was succeeded by Michael Noonan.

Burnham, Forbes (Guyana)

Introduction

Forbes Burnham was the first prime minister of independent Guyana. He was in office for 21 years and was responsible for the formation of his country's political structure. Elected to government with the aid and approval of the USA in 1964 after a campaign of harassment against the previous government, Burnham proceeded to follow a pro-capitalist and moderate programme of reforms. His increasingly autocratic style at the end of the 1960s damaged the economy and quality of life deteriorated. His party was widely believed to have rigged the elections in 1968, 1973, 1978 and 1980 to maintain power. He was married twice, to Sheila Lataste in 1951 and to Viola Harper in 1967; he had five daughters.

Early Life

Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham was born in Kitty, East Demerara, British Guiana on the 20 Feb. 1923 to parents of African descent. He attended Queen's College in Georgetown, and in 1942 won the British Guiana Scholarship. He travelled to England in 1945 to study law at the University of London and gained his LLB in 1947.

In 1949 he returned to Guyana to enter politics, co-founding, with Cheddi Jagan, the People's Progressive Party in 1950. He was appointed chairman. Burnham was elected to Georgetown City Council in 1952, and to the Legislature a year later. He was made minister of education after the first general elections with universal suffrage. He challenged Jagan for the leadership of the party but was forced to back down. After 133 days the British, fearing the socialist direction of the new government, suspended the constitution on 9 Oct. 1953.

Encouraged by the British, on 13 Feb. 1955 Burnham led a split of the PPP. He proposed a more moderate party, less committed to socialism and acceptable to the British. The divide followed mainly racial lines, with Burnham leading the Afro-Guyanese section and Jagan heading the Indo-Guyanese faction. In the general election held under limited suffrage in Aug. 1957, Burnham's party performed worse than anticipated, winning only 3 out of 14 seats. Burnham was appointed leader of the opposition, merging with two other small parties to form the People's National Congress (PNC).

From 1957–64, Burnham continued to lead the opposition, with the PPP winning the 1961 election with 20 seats out of 35. The period of 1961–64 was characterized by strikes, riots and protests against the PPP and between the divided ethnic groups. The PNC combined with the United Front (UF) and was aided by CIA in attempts to destabilize the government. In May 1963 PNC headquarters were raided and ammunition and documents detailing assassination plans for PPP leaders were found.

The British government changed the voting system in 1964 in a response to pressure from the PNC as they believed it unfairly represented the East Indian community. The switch to proportional representation in the general election on 7 Dec. 1964 saw the vote split between the PPP (46%), the PNC (41%) and the UF (12%). At the invitation of the governor the PNC and the UF proceeded to form a coalition government and Burnham was elected prime minister.

Career Peak

In May 1966 Guyana became independent and Burnham was appointed prime minister. He enforced a moderate line, cutting ties with Cuba and encouraging local and foreign investment. He steered towards a non-aligned socialist state, but held to a pro-capitalist economic policy. He implemented a wider range of benefits especially in health (including the establishment of rural clinics) but also in education, housing, road and bridge building, agriculture and rural development. With these policies he attempted to attract members of the Afro-Guyanese middle class, differentiate himself from the PPP and attract international investment and aid. His tenure was disturbed by border disputes with Venezuela from Oct. 1966.

By the general election of 1968 the PNC, aided by defections from the PPP and the UF, held a majority in the National Assembly. The PNC won 30 seats, the PPP 19 and the UF 4; Burnham retained his position as prime minister though it was claimed by many that the elections were fraudulent.

Burnham's second term was marred in 1969 by a rebellion among ranchers in Rupununi region, which was put down by the military. Burnham started moving in a new political direction, proclaiming Guyana as a Cooperative Republic in 1970 and taking an increasingly socialist stance. His leadership also became increasingly autocratic. He re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union and between 1971–76 carried out a nationalization programme, reducing the private sector's share of the economy to 10% by seizing American and Canadian-owned mines and British sugar plantations and refineries.

In the general election of 10 July 1973 the PNC won a two third majority, though accusations of vote-rigging were again widespread. Burnham endeavoured to extend government control by amending the constitution and abolishing legal appeals to the Privy Council in London and politicizing the civil service. All mechanisms of state were considered part of the PNC and under its control. Burnham also sought a position of leadership among third world countries, becoming a force in the non-aligned movement. In 1972 he hosted the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries.

In an attempt to consolidate his rule, Burnham cancelled the general election of 1978 in favour of a national referendum. Burnham claimed a 75% turnout and 97% approval for his government. In 1978 the mass suicide of 900 people of a religious cult called Jonestown, preceded by their assassination of a USA government official, put Burnham's government under intense foreign scrutiny.

Constitutional changes in 1980 gave Burnham even wider executive powers when he became president of Guyana. Elections later that year saw the PNC claim 77% of the vote. In the 1980s, Burnham held to his ambition to build a socialist society. The economy stagnated, the quality of life decreased and the country's infrastructure and public services deteriorated.

Burnham died in office on 6 Aug. 1985 whilst undergoing a throat operation.

Bush, George H. W. (United States of America)

Introduction

The 41st president of the United States, George Herbert Wallace Bush was vice-president of the United States under Ronald W. Reagan from 1991–89 and served one term as president from 1989–93. He is best remembered for establishing a multi-national military force which defeated Iraq during the 1991 Persian Gulf War and forced it to withdraw from Kuwait.

Early Life

Born on 12 June 1924 in Milton, Massachusetts, Bush's father was a senator and an investment banker. Bush grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut. After graduating from Phillips Academy in Andover he joined the U.S. Naval Reserve and during World War II served for 2 years as a torpedo bomber pilot in the Pacific. He flew 58 combat missions and won the Distinguished Flying Cross for his services. In 1945 Bush married Barbara Pierce with whom he would have six children, one of which died aged three of leukaemia. He attended Yale University and then moved with his family to Texas. In 1953 he co-founded the Zapata Petroleum Corporation and became president of the company's new subsidiary in 1954.

In 1964, Bush stood down as president of the Zapata Offshore Company to pursue a career in politics. He won the Republican nomination for a senate seat, although he lost to Democrat Ralph Yarborough. Bush was elected to the House of Representatives in 1966 and was re-elected 2 years later. He gave up his seat in 1970 to run for the senate but lost again this time to Democrat Lloyd Bentsen, Jr.

President Richard M. Nixon appointed Bush as the United States' ambassador to the United Nations and in 1973 he became chairman of the Republican National Committee. Bush initially supported Nixon during the Watergate crisis, but when it became clear that the president had been lying he wrote to

him urging him to resign. Under President Gerald R. Ford, Bush served as the chief of the U.S. Liaison Office in Beijing for 2 years before becoming head of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1976. He resigned his post with the CIA in 1977 when James E. Carter became president and returned to Texas to work as the chairman of the First National Bank in Houston.

In 1979, Bush announced that he would seek the Republican presidential nomination. A more moderate candidate than his main rival Reagan, Bush was easily defeated but accepted Reagan's offer to be his running mate and helped him defeat Jimmy Carter his Democrat rival by a wide margin.

Career Peak

Bush was inaugurated as vice-president on 20 Jan. 1981 and 2 months later was forced to assume some presidential duties after Reagan was hospitalized by an assassination attempt. As vice-president, Bush visited more than 60 countries and headed task forces on terrorism and drugs. In 1984 Reagan and Bush were successfully re-nominated as Republican candidates and won a second term in office. Like Reagan, Bush denied direct involvement in the Iran-Contra affair claiming he was 'out of the loop'.

Bush published an autobiography in 1987 entitled *Looking Forward* and in Oct. announced that he would seek the Republican presidential nomination. After sweeping to success in the southern primaries, he was nominated by the Republican Convention in Aug. Choosing Dan Quayle as his running mate, he campaigned for a 'kinder, gentler nation'. famously announcing: 'Read my lips, no new taxes'. In the election, Bush defeated Democratic opponent Michael S. Dukakis by 54% to 46% to become the first vice-president to succeed directly to the presidency via election since 1836.

During his single presidential term, foreign affairs dominated Bush's agenda. In Dec. 1989 he authorized an invasion of Panama to topple General Manuel Antonio Noriega from power. In Nov. 1990, after the virtual collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, Bush signed a non-aggression pact with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev which effectively ended the Cold War and went on to agree a mutual reduction of nuclear weapons.

In 1990–91 Bush assembled a coalition of European and Arab states to counter the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Around 500,000 US troops were stationed in the Persian Gulf and when trade embargoes and diplomacy failed to persuade Iraq to withdraw, Bush authorized a military offensive, beginning on 16 Jan. 1991. By the end of Feb. Kuwaiti independence had been restored. The same year Bush helped initiate peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbours and withheld \$10bn. in loan guarantees to Israel until it halted the building of new settlements in the occupied territories.

Domestically, Bush's hand was hampered by Democrat control of both houses of Congress. In 1990, Bush reneged on his pledge that there would be 'no new taxes'. a reversal that did much to damage his popularity. Bush was forced to draft a new budget proposal after his deficit-reduction plan was rejected and had to drop his plans to cut capital gains tax. Unemployment grew throughout 1991. Bush introduced new bills to supplement unemployment benefits and visited several countries in an attempt to increase exports and create new jobs.

In 1992, the uncertainties affecting the economy and his broken tax promise undermined Bush's campaign for re-election and he was defeated by William J. Clinton by 43% to 38% with third party candidate Ross Perot winning 19% of the vote

Later Life

After losing the 1992 election Bush returned to live in Houston and retired from political life. His son Jeb was elected governor of Florida in 1998 and his son George W. graduated from twice governor of Texas to the presidency by beating Al Gore in the 2000 presidential election—thereby rivalling the achievement of John Quincy Adams in 1824 by following his father into the White House.

Bush, George W. (United States of America)

Introduction

The 43rd president of the USA, George Walker Bush took office in 2001 after one of the most controversial presidential elections in history. He was the first

president since 1888 to reach the White House despite losing the popular vote. Within 9 months of taking office, Bush was plunged into one of the most challenging periods of any presidency after the USA was attacked by Islamic extremists on 11 Sept. 2001. There followed military action against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In Feb. 2003, against opposition in the UN, Bush authorized US-led forces to attack Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power. He was re-elected in Nov. 2004 for a second term with 51% of the popular vote and inaugurated in Jan. 2005. His approval ratings subsequently declined as public hostility to US military involvement in Iraq increased, culminating in defeat for his Republican Party in mid-term congressional elections in Nov. 2006. He left office on the completion of his second presidential term in Jan. 2009.

Early Life

Bush was born in New Haven, Connecticut on 6 July 1946 and grew up in Midland and Houston, Texas. He attended Phillips Academy, Yale University and the Harvard Business School, and was awarded a degree in history and an MBA. Bush served as a pilot in the Texas National Guard in the 1960s and set up his own oil and gas business in the mid-1970s.

Failing to get elected as a Republican Party candidate to the House of Representatives in 1978, he returned to his oil business until 1986 when he sold his interests to help his father George H. W. Bush in his successful campaign to become US president in the 1988 elections. In 1989 Bush headed a group of investors who bought the Texas Rangers baseball team and acted as managing general partner of the team for 5 years. In 1994 he successfully challenged Ann Richards, the Democratic governor of Texas, winning 53.5% of the vote.

Bush's tough stance on drugs and crime, allied with large tax cuts, a welfare reform programme and increased spending on education, proved popular and he was re-elected governor in 1998. In 1999 he announced that he would try for the Republican presidential nomination. His campaign fund raised \$100 m., a figure that persuaded many of his opponents to withdraw from the race. Despite losing the New Hampshire primary, Bush recovered to secure the nomination and to pick former secretary of defense Richard Cheney as his running mate.

Bush's campaign focused on promises of tax cuts and 'compassionate conservative' social policies. Despite taking an early lead in the polls, the gap between Bush and his Democratic opponent Al Gore narrowed as the election approached. Bush lost the popular vote by 500,000 votes, but the outcome of the election ultimately hinged on Florida's 25 electoral college votes. Bush narrowly led Gore in Florida after machine counts, but Gore sought a manual recount of several counties and the final result of the election remained uncertain for 5 weeks as the courts debated legal challenges and counter-challenges. The Florida Supreme Court ordered a manual recount in two counties but the US Supreme Court reversed this decision, handing Bush the election by 271 electoral college votes to 266.

Career Peak

Bush was inaugurated as the 43rd president of the USA on 20 Jan. 2001, becoming only the second son of a former president to also reach the White House. With much controversy still surrounding his election he immediately struck a conciliatory stance, declaring: 'I was not elected to serve one party, but to serve one nation'.

In April 2001 Bush presented his first detailed budget proposals, including a \$1.6 trn. tax cut. He was forced to trim this figure to \$1.25 trn. in May after bowing to pressure from Congress. The same month, the Republicans lost control of the Senate for the first time in 7 years when Senator James Jeffords left the party to serve as an independent. Nevertheless, Bush still won approval from the House and the Senate for millions of tax refund cheques, reductions in most tax rates and tax relief measures for married couples and the parents of young children.

In March 2001, Bush refused to ratify the environmental measures recommended by the Kyoto Agreement on global warming and climate change, attracting criticism from European nations. In Aug. Congress approved his plan to stimulate energy production, involving billions of dollars in tax breaks and exploration incentives for energy producers.

Bush also initiated a highly controversial plan to replace the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with a new accord so that he could introduce a US missile defence system. Having discussed this proposal with the Russian president Vladimir Putin, the two leaders agreed in May 2002 to reduce their respective strategic nuclear warheads by two-thirds over the next 10 years.

Bush's presidency and the US's relationship with the rest of the world were transformed by the events of 11 Sept. 2001 when two hijacked passenger airliners were crashed into the World Trade Center towers in New York City. Another hit the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., while a fourth came down in a Pennsylvania field before reaching its intended target, which may have been the White House. Both World Trade Center towers collapsed and part of the Pentagon was destroyed. The total number of people killed was around 3,000, including many rescue workers.

The attacks had international political and economic ramifications. Bush announced a war against terrorism. With evidence pointing to the involvement of Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda organization, the president threatened military action against Afghanistan's Taliban regime which had been sheltering the terrorist network. Bush sought to establish a global alliance to put pressure on Afghanistan, receiving support from Europe as well as co-operation from Pakistan and Uzbekistan and the acquiescence of Iran. In Oct. 2001 mainly US and British forces attacked Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and the following month the Northern Alliance, an Afghan group opposed to the Taliban, retook the capital, Kabul. Meetings of various Afghan leaders were organized by the UN to produce a new interim government (headed by Hamid Karzai) and to ratify an agreement allowing a UN peacekeeping force to enter Afghanistan.

As well as maintaining his war on terror, Bush also sought to counter the economic effects of the Sept. 11 attacks as the USA entered recession. He announced an economic revitalization package, including an extra \$18 bn. for emergency military spending, and sent the US budget into deficit for the first time in 5 years. Defence remained Bush's priority into 2002. In Nov. he announced the creation of a department of homeland security, an amalgamation of 22 agencies with a budget of \$40 bn. He also set up a commission to investigate the failure of intelligence agencies to prevent the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks. In Jan. 2003 Bush announced a further stimulus for the US economy including tax cuts and extended unemployment aid.

In Jan. 2002, in his State of the Union address, Bush referred to North Korea, Iran and Iraq as 'an axis of evil'. From the following Sept. he began to focus on Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq which he accused of stockpiling weapons of mass destruction (WMD). He successfully campaigned for a UN resolution demanding a renewal of weapons inspections. UN inspectors began their investigation in Nov. 2002 and were scheduled to make their final report in Jan. 2003. The resolution required Iraq's full co-operation, and in Dec. 2002 the government provided a dossier detailing Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear capabilities. The document was sent to UN experts for analysis to decide if it complied with the resolution's demands. The USA increased its military presence in the Middle East throughout Dec. 2002 and Jan. 2003.

In his report to the Security Council on 27 Jan. 2003, the head of the UN weapons inspectors criticized Iraq's insufficient co-operation but concluded that the investigations neither proved nor disproved that Iraq had a nuclear weapons programme. Following talks with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in early Feb. Bush agreed to work with the UN towards a further resolution sanctioning action against Iraq unless it disarmed. Deep divisions within the Security Council emerged, notably between the USA, UK and Spain in favour of a military threat and France, Germany, Russia and China opposing military intervention. With Bush emphasizing his right to act independently of the UN, attempts to draft a second resolution acceptable to all parties were abandoned.

US-led forces launched an invasion of Iraq in March 2003. By early April 2003 troops were in control of the country and Saddam Hussein's regime had collapsed. Bush also threatened Syria with sanctions after suggesting that the Syrian government was harbouring members of Saddam Hussein's regime and was developing chemical weapons. In May 2003 the UN ratified a resolution, co-sponsored by the USA, UK and Spain, on Iraq's future. Under its terms UN special representatives were to co-operate with the occupying forces to form a new government and the occupying forces were to remain until an internationally-acceptable government was in place. In July 2004 a critical US Senate report said that the USA and its allies had gone to war in Iraq on flawed intelligence.

While substantial US forces remained in Iraq helping to quell an Islamic insurgency, Bush supported moves to introduce representative government. National elections to a new parliament were held in Dec. 2005. However,

despite the formation of an Iraqi government of national unity, sectarian violence between the Shia and Sunni Muslim communities escalated during 2006. There was also much publicity surrounding the alleged abuse of Iraqi prisoners in US military custody (and similarly of terrorist suspects detained since the Afghanistan campaign at the US naval base at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba). Meanwhile, military involvement in Iraq was becoming increasingly unpopular with US voters. In Nov. 2006 Bush's authority was seriously undermined when the Republican Party lost control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate in mid-term congressional elections and his secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, resigned. In Dec. 2006 a US bipartisan commission (known as the Iraq Study Group) suggested that the Bush administration could reduce the number of US troops in Iraq by the spring of 2008. Bush rejected the idea of troop withdrawal, choosing instead to deploy around a further 20,000 troops in 2007 to reinforce security in Baghdad.

Meanwhile, US policy towards Iran in particular remained hostile, based on alleged Iranian interference in Iraq and Lebanon and on Iran's continuing nuclear development programme in defiance of UN Security Council demands (in response to which the USA imposed further economic sanctions in Oct. 2007).

Attempts to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led in April 2003 to the 'roadmap to peace', jointly produced by the USA, UN, EU and Russia. This called for an immediate ceasefire to pave the way for a Palestinian state. Then in April 2004, in a major shift of US policy, Bush announced his endorsement of Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's plan to remove all Jewish settlements in Gaza (completed in summer 2005) while holding on to larger settlement blocs in the occupied West Bank, accepting that Israel would not make a full and complete return to its pre-1967 borders. Any prospects of peace in 2006 were undermined by a brief but destructive war in Lebanon in July-Aug. between Israel and the radical Lebanese Hizbollah Shia militia, for which Bush held Iranian and Syrian interference largely responsible. Meanwhile, the US administration sought to isolate the militant Islamist Hamas government which had come to power in Palestinian parliamentary elections in Jan. 2006. By mid-2007 factional hostility between Hamas and the mainstream Palestinian Fatah movement led by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas had escalated into civil war, resulting in Hamas taking control of Gaza and Fatah's ascendancy in the West Bank. In Nov. 2007 Bush hosted an international conference in Annapolis, Maryland, in an attempt to relaunch Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for peace. However, the early months of 2008 saw only an intensification of Israeli military action against the Palestinians in Gaza and Hamas rocket and suicide bombing attacks against Israel.

Relations with North Korea worsened from late 2002/early 2003 when Pyongyang reactivated a nuclear plant unused since a treaty was signed in 1994 while demanding the withdrawal of UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors. Kim Jong Il then withdrew from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, accusing the USA of posing a nuclear threat and planning to overthrow his government. Bush outlined a 'tailored containment' strategy, involving economic sanctions, but the proposals faced opposition from the South Korean government. There followed 2 years of inconclusive negotiations between North Korea and the USA, together with South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. During this period Kim's regime admitted publicly in Feb. 2005 that it had built nuclear weapons for self-defence before agreeing in principle in Sept. 2005 to give up its development programme in return for aid and security guarantees. However, that accord was almost immediately undermined when North Korea demanded the delivery of civil nuclear equipment. International tensions were then heightened in Oct. 2006 when North Korea announced that it had carried out its first nuclear weapon test. As the crisis threatened to escalate, Kim's regime signalled its willingness to rejoin multilateral negotiations and in Feb. 2007 agreed to shut down its nuclear facilities and readmit international inspectors in return for fuel aid. Bush gave the deal a guarded welcome but progress was slow, and by the end of 2007 North Korea had failed to deliver an inventory of its weapon development activities.

In Feb. 2008, in response to the threat of recession and a global financial downturn triggered by a bad debt crisis in the mortgage lending industry, Bush signed a major economic stimulus package worth \$168 bn. His final year in office saw further economic decline and the highest number of job losses in a year since 1945, at 2.6 m.

Later Life

After leaving office, Bush retired to Dallas, Texas and has maintained a low public profile. His memoir, *Decision Points*, was published in Nov. 2010. Following the Haitian earthquake in Jan. 2010, he and Bill Clinton founded the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund to aid victims of the disaster.

Butkevičius, Algirdas (Lithuania)

Introduction

As leader of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (LSDP), Algirdas Butkevičius became prime minister in Dec. 2012 at the head of a coalition government. He remained in office until 2016.

Early Life

Born on 19 Nov. 1958 in Paežeriai in Radviliškis district, Butkevičius graduated in engineering economics from the Vilnius Civil Engineering Institute in 1984 and worked in the Vilkaviškis district for the industrial association žemūktechnika from 1982–85. From 1985–90 he was an architect and inspector for the state construction and architecture unit. In 1991 he gained a diploma in technical management from the Lithuanian Management Academy and in 1995 was awarded a master's degree in management from the Kaunas University of Technology.

After serving as deputy governor of Vilkaviškis district from 1991–95, Butkevičius spent a year as director of research and marketing for the private company, AB Vilkautė. He joined the LSDP in 1992 and was chairman of the party's Vilkaviškis branch from 1995–97. He sat on the Vilkaviškis municipal council from 1990–97 and again from 2000–02. Elected to parliament in 1996, he chaired its budget and finance committee from 2001–04. In 2004 he was appointed finance minister, serving for 5 months in the administration of Prime Minister Brazauskas. He resigned in April 2005 in protest at government proposals to introduce a corporate turnover tax. From 2006–08 he was minister for transport and communications under Prime Minister Kirkilas, overseeing Lithuania's participation in the 'east-west corridor' project to develop a transport network from Sweden to Vilnius.

After the LSDP lost power in 2008, Butkevičius was elected party chairman in March 2009 and unsuccessfully contested the presidency later that year. After 4 years of stringent austerity by the government of Andrius Kubilius, Butkevičius campaigned ahead of the 2012 parliamentary election on a platform of observing fiscal discipline and keeping the budget deficit under control while relaxing wage restraints to boost the economy. In Oct. 2012 the LSDP became the biggest party in parliament and entered negotiations to form a coalition government.

Career Peak

Butkevičius took office on 13 Dec. 2012 at the head of a four-party centre-left coalition after prolonged disagreement with President Grybauskaitė, who opposed the inclusion in the coalition of Labour Party members facing allegations of misconduct.

On the economic front Butkevičius had to combat high unemployment and low economic growth, while keeping to agreed borrowing targets.

In foreign affairs he initially signalled his intention to build better relations with Russia, although Moscow's perceived aggression towards Ukraine from 2014 raised concerns over the long-term security of the Baltic states and prompted the reinforcement of NATO's military presence in the region. Butkevičius also encouraged closer integration with the European Union. In July 2013 Lithuania took over the rotating 6 month EU presidency for the first time since its accession in 2004. Then, on 1 Jan. 2015, having earlier gained the agreement of his coalition partners to target accession to the eurozone, he oversaw Lithuania's adoption of the single currency. He left office after his party came only third in the general election of Nov. 2016.

Calderón, Felipe (Mexico)

Introduction

Felipe Calderón of the centre-right National Action Party (PAN) became president after winning the election of July 2006 by a margin of less than 1%. When his closest rival, López Obrador, disputed the result there were mass protests. Calderón pledged to reduce rising crime and to tackle poverty by creating incentives for foreign investment, but his anti-drugs strategy failed to stem a rising tide of related violence.

Early Life

Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa was born on 18 Aug. 1962 in Morelia, Michoacán. He studied law at the Escuela Libre de Derecho in Mexico City and economics at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, before gaining a master's in public administration from Harvard University in the USA.

From a young age Calderón was a member of PAN, which his father had helped to found in 1939. Calderón became the organization's national youth leader in 1986 and served in the federal chamber of deputies from 1991–94. In 1993 he was elected the party's secretary-general when his mentor, Carlos Castillo Peraza, assumed the party presidency. Calderón succeeded Peraza in 1996 and during 3 years as leader maintained control of 14 state capitals.

However, Vicente Fox was selected to succeed him as party president in late 1999 and went on to contest the 2000 national elections. Fox forged a centre-right alliance (the Alliance for Change) with the Ecologist Green Party of Mexico and won elections to end 71 years of continuous rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Calderón was appointed parliamentary co-ordinator of PAN and president of the council of political co-ordination. He also served as a director of the state-owned development bank, Banco Nacional de Obras y Servicios Públicos (BANOBRAS), and in 2002 joined the cabinet as energy secretary. He resigned in 2004 in protest at Fox's support for Santiago Creel as PAN's presidential candidate. In a series of party primaries in late 2005, Calderón decisively defeated Creel and another contender, Alberto Cardenas.

During the election campaign he initially trailed Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the left-wing Party of the Democratic Revolution but closed the gap with promises of job creation and a clampdown on crime and corruption. In the election of 2 July 2006 both Calderón and López Obrador claimed victory before Calderón was declared victor by 0.56% 4 days later. López Obrador's claims of voting irregularities and electoral fraud resulted in large-scale public protests. A partial recount saw the result upheld but López Obrador continued to protest and formed a 'parallel administration'. Calderón was sworn in on 1 Dec. 2006 inside a barricaded parliament building.

Career Peak

During his first year in office Calderón introduced significant reforms to public sector pensions and the tax system, and launched an employment programme giving cash incentives to companies taking on new employees. He also agreed to an electoral reform law put forward by the opposition.

The economy was hit hard by the global downturn in 2008, forcing the government to respond with a package of emergency measures in Jan. 2009. Approval ratings for the president and the PAN slumped, and in mid-term congressional elections in July 2009 the opposition PRI made large gains to become the main force in the Chamber of Deputies.

Calderón's high-profile campaign against illegal drugs cartels has proved largely ineffective, despite the establishment of a new federal police force and the deployment of troops in an anti-trafficking drive. A US Justice Department report in Dec. 2008 stated that Mexican drug traffickers posed the largest organized crime threat to the USA. It was reported in Jan. 2011 that 34,600 people had died in drug-related killings since the presidential election, including 15,273 in 2010 (up from 9,616 the previous year). Thousands of people joined protests against drug crime during the summer of 2011 but acts of violence continued, including an attack in Aug. by armed gangsters on a

casino in Monterrey. Fifty-two people died in the incident, which Calderón described as an abhorrent act.

Calderón's tenure came to an end on 30 Nov. 2012 and he left office as the Mexican constitution bans presidents from running for a second term. He subsequently became a fellow at the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Callaghan, James (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

James (Jim) Callaghan was British Labour prime minister from 1976–79 and one of the few politicians to hold all four great Offices of State—home secretary, foreign secretary, chancellor and prime minister. A moderate chosen as Labour leader in the hope that he might unify the fractured party, his premiership was characterized by a failing economy and crippling trade union action. In 1977 Callaghan embarked on a pact with the Liberal party to ensure his minority administration could continue. In 1979 his government became the first to lose a vote of confidence in the House of Commons for over 50 years.

Early Life

Leonard James Callaghan was born on 27 March 1912 in Portsmouth on the south coast of England, the son of a Chief Petty Officer in the Navy. He left school at the age of 14 and was a tax officer at 17, while heavily involved in trade union politics. He joined the Labour Party in 1931 and by 1937 was a full-time trade union official. During World War II he served with the Navy, becoming a Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, and in 1945 he entered the House of Commons as the member for Cardiff South (later Cardiff Southeast), the constituency he would serve for the duration of his career.

He was briefly parliamentary private secretary to the under secretary of state for dominion affairs and then served for 3 years until 1950 as parliamentary secretary to the ministry of transport. During his time here he was active in implementing legislation to introduce zebra crossings and cats' eyes. He was then made parliamentary and private secretary to the treasury until the Conservative general election victory of 1951, before acting as opposition spokesman on successively transport, fuel and power and colonial affairs. He was appointed shadow chancellor in 1961, and became chancellor of the exchequer following Harold Wilson's Labour victory at the 1964 general election. As chancellor, Callaghan provoked controversy by introducing new corporation and capital-gains taxes. In addition, Callaghan spoke out strongly against devaluing sterling and when Wilson, faced by mounting economic pressure, gave permission for devaluation in Nov. 1967, Callaghan resigned.

He was subsequently appointed as home secretary, guiding the Race Relations Act through parliament in 1968 and sending troops into Northern Ireland in 1969. His firm defence of trade unions in the face of proposed reforms earned him the nickname 'Keeper of the Cloth Cap'. He served as home secretary until Edward Heath's Conservatives came to power in 1970 and was shadow home secretary until 1971 when he became opposition spokesman for employment. He was appointed shadow foreign secretary a year later. Wilson returned as prime minister in 1974, with Callaghan holding the office of secretary of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs. In this post he played an integral part in re-negotiating British membership of the European Economic Community. Wilson announced his shock resignation in March 1976, leaving the party in disarray. With the economy in crisis and the party split, six candidates put themselves forward to succeed Wilson. Callaghan was regarded as the least divisive and after a third ballot he defeated his eventual successor Michael Foot to become prime minister and Labour leader.

Career Peak

Callaghan's premiership was plagued by difficulties. He had to turn to the IMF to resolve a sterling crisis but the IMF demanded reduced spending and pay constraints in return. The unions and left wing of the party were outraged and, at the subsequent Labour conference, supported increased government spending. In addition, the unpopular government lost numerous by-elections

and this combined with a succession of defections left Callaghan as head of a minority government. In March 1977 he struck up a deal with David Steel's Liberals, the Lib-Lab Pact, which ensured that the Liberals would back the government in the event of a confidence motion, but the deal ended in Aug. 1978.

Tensions in Northern Ireland were heightened during Callaghan's administration. Extra troops were sent to the province during 1976–77 and a year later the number of Northern Irish MPs was increased from 12 to 17. However, terrorism and sectarian violence did not abate and in March 1979 Airey Neave, Conservative spokesman on Northern Ireland, was murdered by the Irish Republican Army. In addition, Callaghan's relationship with the unions continued to deteriorate. As wage increase limits were imposed, the first ever national fire-fighters' strike took place in late 1977, and by the end of 1978 Britain was crippled by a succession of strikes that came to be known as 'the winter of discontent'. Ford workers, oil-tank drivers, grave diggers, water workers, sewerage staff, refuse collectors, ambulance and hospital workers, railway workers and large parts of the Civil Service all stopped work. On returning to the crisis from abroad, Callaghan commented that 'I don't think other people in the world would share the view that there is mounting chaos'. This was turned into a popular headline 'Crisis? What crisis?' and Callaghan came to be seen as out of touch. A vote of confidence was called in the Commons for 28 March 1979.

The Scottish National Party withdrew its support from the government over the issue of devolution and Callaghan lost the no confidence motion by one vote. On the same day he called a general election for 3 May. The Conservatives, under Margaret Thatcher, won with a majority of 43. Callaghan stayed as leader of the Labour party until Oct. 1980 and was then succeeded by the left-winger Michael Foot.

Later Life

Callaghan became a rather distant figure as the left-wing dominated the party for much of the 1980s and he left the Commons at the 1987 election. He was made a life peer shortly afterwards, becoming Lord Callaghan of Cardiff, and he remained active in the Lords for many years. He wrote numerous books, including his memoirs, and died on 26 March 2005.

Cameron, David (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

David Cameron became prime minister of a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats on 11 May 2010, 5 days after the general election that returned the Conservatives to power following 13 years of Labour rule. On taking office he became the UK's youngest prime minister in nearly 200 years. In government he embraced broadly the same foreign policy as the previous Labour administration, aligning Britain with the USA and supporting British military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, he adopted a more sceptical stance on further integration with the European Union, pledging to negotiate a new relationship with the EU and to put the outcome to a national referendum. Regarding economic policy, he promised to reduce the large deficit in the public finances, while protecting key public services, but had to contend with the recurring threat of recession before signs of a recovery emerged by late 2013. His working relationship with the Liberal Democrats in his first term proved fractious but after his party attained an outright majority at the May 2015 polls he began his second premiership at the head of an all-Conservative government. However, only a year later and following his bruising and ultimately unsuccessful campaign to convince voters in the promised national referendum in June 2016 to maintain Britain's membership of the EU he resigned, with Theresa May succeeding him in July 2016.

Early Life

David William Duncan Cameron was born on 9 Oct. 1966 in London, the son of a stockbroker and a baronet's daughter. He grew up in Peasemore, Berkshire and was educated at Heatherdown Preparatory School and Eton College. From 1985–88 he studied politics, philosophy and economics at Brasenose

College, Oxford, after which he worked for the research department of the ruling Conservative party. He rose to lead the department's political section and in 1992 headed the economic section of the Conservatives' general election campaign team. Following their victory, he was appointed special adviser. He was working for the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Norman Lamont, when the government was forced to withdraw sterling from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism on 'Black Wednesday'. 16 Sept. 1992.

In May 1993 he was appointed adviser to the Home Office where, under home secretary Michael Howard, he helped introduce criminal justice legislation and promoted initiatives for private companies to build and run prisons. Cameron left politics in 1994 to work in corporate affairs at media company Carlton Communications, where for 7 years he worked closely with chairman Michael Green, handling public relations and communications. At the 1997 general election he unsuccessfully contested Stafford for the Conservatives. In the June 2001 election, he was elected MP for Witney in Oxfordshire, increasing the Conservative share of the vote. In the subsequent Conservative leadership contest he initially supported modernizer Michael Portillo, before finally voting for Iain Duncan Smith, who was seen as an outsider candidate and a eurosceptic.

Cameron was appointed to the Home Affairs Select Committee, where he argued for a review of legislation on illegal drugs. He supported British participation in the 2003 Iraq war, in line with Conservative party policy, despite expressing doubts in the press. In June 2003 he was appointed shadow minister in the Privy Council office and in Nov. that year became deputy chairman of the Conservative party under newly elected leader Michael Howard. Cameron was named spokesman on local government finance in March 2004 and in June 2004, following poor local election results for the Conservatives, he was given responsibility for party policy co-ordination.

Cameron played a key role in developing the party's 2005 general election manifesto, which promised to cut taxes, increase numbers of police and prisons, and oppose the introduction of a European constitution. In May 2005 the Conservatives gained votes but failed to prevent a third successive Labour victory. Cameron was subsequently appointed shadow education secretary and when Howard resigned in Sept. that year he entered the contest for the party leadership. He positioned himself as a modernizer, able to appeal to a wide range of voters, while also winning the support of eurosceptics with a pledge to withdraw Conservative Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from the European People's Party (EPP—the EU's main centre-right grouping) on the grounds that it was too federalist. After initially trailing his main rival, right-winger David Davis, he won support with his speech at the party conference in Oct. 2005. In the final ballot on 6 Dec. 2005 he defeated Davis, taking 67% of the vote.

In his acceptance speech he promised to address the under-representation of women among Conservative MPs, to reformulate the party's approach to the inner cities and to end 'Punch and Judy politics' by supporting government initiatives where they were in line with Conservative thinking. In July 2006 Cameron fulfilled his campaign promise and withdrew Conservative MEPs from the EPP, forming a new alliance with Czech and Polish MEPs, a move criticized by some as taking the party too far to the right. Identifying himself as a liberal conservative on social matters, he spoke in support of civil partnerships for gay couples at the 2006 party conference. During the same year he introduced the 'A-list' initiative, which required constituency parties to choose their parliamentary candidate from a centrally approved list. Intended to improve representation of women and ethnic minority candidates, this met resistance at local level.

In March 2007 Cameron launched a review into the quality of childhood in Britain and promised to promote marriage through taxation reforms. He repeatedly depicted Britain as a society in moral and economic decline, an interpretation summed up in his phrase 'broken Britain'. and declared his support for economic liberalism combined with the promotion of voluntary and charity work.

During 2007 he said that a Conservative government would aim for lower taxes, with priority given to reducing inheritance tax liability. These proposals were widely credited with prompting Labour government reforms to inheritance tax thresholds in Oct. 2007. Cameron also announced his intention to diversify provision of public services, in particular in education and the health service, proposing that funds could be diverted from state agencies to private enterprise or the voluntary sector.

In foreign policy Cameron continued to support British troop deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan. On domestic security issues, in June 2008 he opposed increasing the maximum period of detention without charge from 28 to 42 days, arguing that it threatened civil liberties. He advocated a new border protection service that would include armed police officers. In Feb. 2009 he pledged to repeal the Human Rights Act and replace it with a British

bill of rights, in response to public anxieties that the Act could be used to protect criminals. Cameron advocated increased prioritization of environmental policies, including proposals to expand nuclear energy, and he opposed plans—at that time—to build a third runway at Heathrow airport.

At the start of the international financial crisis in the autumn of 2008, he supported the Labour government's bank rescue package, though he strongly criticized its record of financial management, particularly the high level of the public finance deficit. The subsequent downturn forced him to reassess his party's policies. In 2009 he announced that tax cuts would be contingent on economic improvement and confirmed that this meant postponing further inheritance tax reforms. In Dec. 2009 ratification of the Lisbon Treaty on the European constitution obviated his previous pledge to hold a referendum on the issue. Instead he promised to introduce a sovereignty bill that would prevent any further transfer of power to the EU without a referendum. Cameron fought the 2010 general election on a platform of reduced government spending (with the exception of the NHS and overseas aid), fewer business regulations and increased choice in health and education services.

Career Peak

Cameron became prime minister on 11 May 2010. Although the Conservatives failed to secure an absolute majority in the election of 6 May they did win 306 seats compared to 258 for Labour and succeeded in forming a coalition (the UK's first since the Second World War) with the Liberal Democrats, who had won 57 seats.

Cameron's key challenges were to address the faltering economy and the growing gap between rich and poor. Following an initial austerity budget in June 2010, the coalition government went on to announce a raft of deep, and unpopular, public spending cuts aimed at reducing the UK's large budget deficit and also measures overhauling the state welfare system to be implemented over the course of the parliament.

On security issues Cameron pledged to maintain Britain's military commitment to, and offensive engagement in, Afghanistan until the anticipated withdrawal of NATO combat troops from the country in 2014. In 2011 Britain played a prominent military role in UN-sanctioned NATO intervention in Libya to protect civilians against the Gaddafi regime, which was overthrown in Oct. that year. In early 2013 the UK government provided logistical support for French military intervention in Mali to counter Islamist extremists controlling much of the north of the country. However, in response to the continuing civil war in Syria and the Assad regime's apparent use of banned chemical weapons, the rejection by the House of Commons in Aug. 2013 of any military intervention by UK forces in the conflict at that time proved a major setback for Cameron's political authority.

In June 2010 a long-running independent inquiry into 'Bloody Sunday' in which unarmed Catholic civil rights demonstrators in Northern Ireland were shot dead by British troops in 1972, concluded that the killings were unjustified, prompting an apology by Cameron as prime minister on behalf of the British state.

In May 2011 voters in a national referendum rejected by a large margin a proposal to replace the first-past-the-post electoral system for the House of Commons with the alternative vote (AV) system. Cameron had strongly opposed the plan, placing considerable strain on his governing partnership with the Liberal Democrats, for whom such a change had been a central policy objective.

In Aug. 2011 the worst rioting and looting in decades erupted in London and other English major cities and was only contained by police after several days of disorder and mass arrests. The violence prompted Cameron to recall Parliament from its recess to debate appropriate responses.

The effects of the debt crisis in several eurozone countries further aggravated the UK's parlous financial situation in 2011 and 2012, and highlighted the political divisions within the Conservative Party towards the EU. In Oct. 2011 Cameron suffered a major revolt by Conservative MPs who, in defiance of government policy, supported a motion calling for a referendum on continued membership. The motion was only defeated with the support of Liberal Democrat and opposition Labour members. In Dec. 2011, aware of Conservative hostility to further European integration, Cameron vetoed an EU-wide treaty change proposing greater fiscal union on the grounds that it would undermine London's position as a leading international financial hub. Although popular with his own parliamentary eurosceptics, the move put Cameron's relationship with his pro-EU Liberal Democrat coalition partners under further pressure. This was exacerbated in Jan. 2013 when Cameron, acting after rising support for the anti-EU UK Independence Party in several parliamentary by-elections in 2012, promised a renegotiation of Britain's relationship with the EU and, more controversially, a referendum on continued membership after 2015. The following month Cameron claimed credit for

spearheading successful intergovernmental negotiations to reduce the EU's 7-year budget for the first time in the Union's history.

The UK economy continued to struggle as official figures in Jan. 2012 indicated that net public sector debt (excluding bank bailouts) had risen above £1 trn. for the first time and the Chancellor of the Exchequer warned in Dec. that year of an extended period of austerity. There were, however, some signs of accelerating growth by the end of 2013, including a rise in employment figures and a more buoyant housing market. Discontent with the government's austerity measures had meanwhile been aggravated by public concerns over Cameron's championing of controversial reforms to the National Health Service and deep cuts in the level of social welfare provision.

In Jan. 2011 Cameron's director of communications, Andy Coulson, resigned amid allegations that he was aware of illegal telephone hacking by the national Sunday newspaper of which he was editor before his political appointment in 2007. The subsequent escalation of the controversy, which saw some commentators cast doubt on Cameron's personal judgment, led to an inquiry under Lord Justice Leveson that published its report in Nov. 2012 into the culture, practices and ethics of the newspaper industry. Cameron's rejection of Leveson's central recommendation of statutory press regulation again highlighted differences with his Liberal Democrat coalition partners. Tensions were aggravated further by the Conservatives' failure to fully embrace Liberal Democrat aspirations to reform the House of Lords and by the Liberal Democrat refusal to back Conservative efforts to update parliamentary constituency boundaries.

In addition to the coalition friction, Cameron courted further dissent within his own party in Jan. 2013 as government legislation to approve same-sex marriage failed to attract the support of over half of Conservative MPs and only passed with Liberal Democrat and opposition backing.

In Oct. 2012 Cameron and Alex Salmond, the First Minister of Scotland, agreed to stage a referendum in Sept. 2014 on Scottish independence from the rest of the United Kingdom. Cameron campaigned successfully against the breakaway, which was rejected by 55% of voters.

Throughout the parliament Cameron had faced increasing public pressure for government action on levels of immigration which, together with growing scepticism about continued EU membership, underpinned a surge in support in several by-elections in 2013 and 2014 for the UK Independence Party (UKIP). This was principally at the expense of the Conservative Party, which lost its Clacton constituency seat to a defector to UKIP. In July 2014, with the next general election on the political horizon, Cameron sought to revitalize his cabinet with an extensive reshuffle.

Despite polls suggesting a very close result, the Conservatives won an outright majority at the general election in May 2015 and Cameron formed an all-Conservative administration. In an early political setback, the new government announced its intention to impose swingeing cuts in welfare payments in continuance of its economic austerity strategy. However, proposed legislation limiting claimants' tax credits was controversially blocked by the House of Lords in Oct. and subsequently shelved in what was widely labelled a government climb-down. Cameron's authority was more persuasive in Dec. when the House of Commons voted overwhelmingly to extend British anti-jihadist military action from Iraq to Syria, reversing the earlier vote in Aug. 2013.

It was the contentious issue of EU membership that was nevertheless to define Cameron's ultimately brief second term of office. Against the background of Europe's worst refugee crisis in recent times and domestic opposition within the UK to further immigration, he sought a renegotiation of Britain's position within the EU. In Feb. 2016 he claimed to have secured a draft deal offering revised terms of membership, including an 'emergency brake' on EU migrants' entitlement to in-work benefits, a mechanism allowing national governments to block some EU legislation, prohibition of discrimination between EU currencies and a declaration that the UK would not be committed to further political integration into the EU. This proposed settlement failed to satisfy eurosceptic opinion, not least among some prominent members within Cameron's own Conservative Party who defied him and actively campaigned against continued membership in the national referendum held on 23 June. Following the narrow vote to leave the EU, Cameron announced that he would resign his office upon the election of a new Conservative leader. Theresa May subsequently took over as premier on 13 July 2016.

Later Life

In March 2017 Cameron became chairman of the LSE-Oxford Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development, established under the auspices of the International Growth Centre (which is funded by the UK Department for International Development).

Campbell, Kim (Canada)

Introduction

The first woman to serve as prime minister of Canada, Kim Campbell held a brief tenure as leader from June to Oct. 1993 before her party suffered a crushing defeat at the general election.

Early Life

Born Avril Phaedra Campbell in March 1947, in Port Alberni, British Columbia, Campbell changed her name to Kim when she was 12, shortly after her mother had left the family. Campbell studied political science at the University of British Columbia, where she was elected president of the student's council, before attending the London School of Economics (1970–73) on a fellowship.

Returning to the University of British Columbia in 1980 to study law, she was elected a Vancouver school trustee in the same year and went on to gain a reputation for endorsing moderate fiscal policies.

After serving as a key policy adviser for Premier Bill Bennett, she won a seat in the Legislative Assembly in 1986 and ran for the leadership of the Social Credit Party the same year. Running against provincial leader Bill Vander Zalm, she made her mark by publicly opposing the premier's restrictive stance on abortion.

In 1988 she turned her attention to Federal politics and was elected to the House of Commons representing the Progressive Conservative Party for the British Columbia riding of Vancouver Centre.

Fostered as a successor to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney she became minister of state for Indian affairs and northern development (1989), minister of justice and attorney general of Canada (1990), and minister of defence and minister of veteran affairs (1993).

While justice minister she proved her political tenacity by introducing a bill amending the gun laws. In the wake of the 1989 Montreal massacre she had to satisfy both a public demanding more restrictive gun laws while a powerful gun-owning lobby within the Conservative support.

Career Peak

With the retirement of prime minister Brian Mulroney in 1993 Campbell was encouraged to run for the office, beating nearest rival Jean Charest in a close contest to become Canada's first female prime minister.

Articulate and photogenic, Conservatives hoped she would attract a new generation of voters, however, despite a brief surge in popularity she was unable to shake off the unhappy legacy of the party's long term in office. A sweeping tax on goods and services and the free trade agreement with the United States proved deeply unpopular, with Campbell herself proving to be an inexperienced and ineffective campaigner. In consequence, the Conservatives won only two Commons seats under her leadership, with Campbell herself losing her seat and resigning as leader in Jan. 1994.

Later Life

Retiring from politics Campbell accepted a fellowship from Harvard, before being appointed to the post of Consul General of Canada in Los Angeles.

Campbell, Menzies 'Ming' (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Ming Campbell succeeded Charles Kennedy as leader of the Liberal Democrat party in March 2006. Despite concerns about his age, he was hailed within the party as an astute intellect and a steadying influence. In Oct. 2007 Campbell resigned as leader of the party.

Early Life

Walter Menzies Campbell was born on 22 May 1941 in Glasgow, Scotland. He studied at the University of Glasgow and was elected as president of the University Union. He later undertook a scholarship at Stanford University in California.

In 1964 he competed as a sprinter at the Tokyo Olympics. His athletics career encompassed captaining Scotland at the Empire and Commonwealth Games in Jamaica in 1966, captaining the British squad in 1965 and 1966 and holding the British 100 m record between 1967 and 1974.

Having qualified as a lawyer, he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1968 and appointed a QC in 1982. Becoming chairman of the Scottish Liberals in 1975, he unsuccessfully stood for parliament three times before winning the North East Fife seat from the Conservatives in 1987. Five years later he was appointed party spokesman on defence issues and foreign affairs, becoming shadow foreign secretary in 1997.

Campbell decided not to contest the party leadership when Paddy Ashdown stepped down in 1999. In 2002 he was diagnosed with and made a full recovery from non-Hodgkins lymphoma. The following year he succeeded Alan Beith as deputy leader of the party. In 2004 he received a knighthood for 'services to Parliament'. In late 2005 party leader Charles Kennedy was plagued by allegations of a drink problem and eventually stood down in Jan. 2006. Campbell faced Simon Hughes, a former London mayoral candidate, and the relatively unknown Chris Huhne for the leadership. Hughes fell after the first round of voting and Campbell went on to defeat Huhne in a second round.

Career Peak

Campbell spoke of the need for his party to raise its game in the face of the renaissance of the Conservatives under David Cameron. However, he oversaw a disappointing performance at local elections and came in for personal criticism for his performances at prime minister's question time. On 15 Oct. 2007 Campbell stepped down as leader of the Liberal Democrats. In his letter of resignation, addressed to party president Simon Hughes, he said questions about his leadership were 'getting in the way of further progress by the party'.

Carcasses Kalosil, Moana (Vanuatu)

Introduction

Moana Kalosil became prime minister in March 2013. A naturalized citizen, he was the first non-native-born head of government in the country's history.

Early Life

Kalosil was born on 27 Jan. 1963 in Taravoa, Tahiti, to a French father and a Tahitian mother. He joined the Green Confederation Party in 2000 and successfully stood as its candidate for the parliamentary seat in the capital, Port Vila, in 2002. From 2003–04 he served as foreign minister in the cabinet of Edward Natapei.

In July 2004 Kalosil became finance minister in Serge Vohor's government, staying in the post after Ham Lini became premier. Losing his cabinet seat when Lini resigned in 2005, Kalosil led the opposition at the 2008 general election and retained his Port Vila seat.

With Natapei forming the government, Kalosil was the opposition whip until joining the government in 2009 as minister of internal affairs and labour (despite having been threatened with suspension from parliament earlier in the year amid allegations of abetting a prison breakout, although the charges were subsequently dropped).

When Natapei left office in 2010 after a vote of no confidence, Kalosil joined the administration of Sato Kilman as minister of finance and economic management, positions he kept until Kilman was himself ousted by a no confidence vote in 2011.

Kalosil retained his seat at the 2012 election and sat as a backbencher to the reinstated Kilman government. In March 2013 he and eight other MPs defected to the opposition, forcing Kilman's resignation. Three days later, Kalosil was voted premier by parliamentary ballot, winning support from 34 of 52 MPs.

Career Peak

Only the world's second Green prime minister, Kalosil began his tenure by establishing a ministry of climate change. He was also expected to pursue closer ties with foreign partners including France, Australia and Vanuatu's Melanesian neighbours. He is a strong advocate of self-determination for the people of West Papua—a province of Indonesia in the island of New Guinea—and has opposed a decision made by the previous administration to grant Indonesia observer status at the intergovernmental Melanesian Spearhead Group.

In May 2014 Kalosil lost a parliamentary motion of no-confidence having survived three previous attempts to remove him from power. He had been accused of overspending on projects including the construction of a new international airport, whilst offsetting spiraling costs by selling diplomatic passports to foreign nationals. Joe Natuman was subsequently appointed to the premiership, replacing Kalosil on 15 May 2014.

Cardoso, Fernando Henrique (Brazil)

Introduction

Fernando Henrique Cardoso was president of Brazil from 1994–2002, becoming the first president to serve two consecutive 4 year terms. An academic, former finance minister and leader of the Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (Social Democratic Party; PSDB), he oversaw a period of rapid economic development, albeit incurring a large public debt.

Early Life

Born in Rio de Janeiro on 18 June 1931, Cardoso was educated at the University of São Paulo and the University of Paris. An opponent of the military regime in power from 1964, he was stripped of his academic position. Having founded the Centre for Analysis and Research, a social science think tank, in late 1968, he was investigated by military intelligence and his institute was bombed by right-wing terrorists. He went into exile in the 1970s and 80s, working in Chile, the US and France and studying international relations.

In 1986 Cardoso was elected senator for São Paulo and a such campaigned for democratic reform. Two years later he helped found the Social Democratic party and was prominent in the re-drafting of the Brazilian constitution. In 1992 he resigned from the senate to become foreign minister in the government of Itamar Franco. Appointed finance minister in 1993, he introduced the Real Plan, a strategy to promote economic recovery and counter Brazil's rampant inflation which peaked at 10,000%. His success raised his public profile and he triumphed in the presidential election of 1994.

Career Peak

Cardoso's rule saw a period of economic growth and reform including the privatization of Brazil's state-run monopolies, the introduction of a new currency, a reduction in trade restrictions and increased spending on education and welfare. By the end of his term inflation was at 7%, infant mortality had fallen and unemployment remained steady.

A constitutional amendment in 1997 provided for consecutive presidential terms and the following year he won re-election. In Cardoso's second term a growing trade deficit led to reduced government spending, increased taxes and a slowing of the economy, in part affected by problems in neighbouring countries. Brazil had also accrued a public debt of US\$260bn. In the 2002 presidential elections, Cardoso's successor José Serra was defeated by the leftwing leader Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Later Life

Cardoso has been involved in a number of international initiatives and organizations since leaving the presidency. He was the president of the Club of Madrid from 2003–2006 and is also a member of 'the Elders'. An organization of elder statesmen describing themselves as 'independent global leaders working together for peace and human rights'.

Carmona, Anthony (Trinidad and Tobago)

Introduction

Anthony Carmona served as president from March 2013 until March 2018. Previously a high court judge, he had served on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and resigned from the International Criminal Court (ICC) following his election. He is regarded as a political independent.

Early Life

Carmona was born on 7 March 1953 in Fyzabad and educated at Presentation College, San Fernando. After studying English and political science at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Jamaica, he studied law, first at the UWI in Barbados, then at the Sir Hugh Wooding Law School in Trinidad and Tobago, graduating in 1983. In this period he also taught in schools and at the UWI.

Carmona served as deputy director of public prosecutions from 1995–99, when he was appointed acting director. He was legal adviser to President A. N. R. Robison on matters of criminal law relating to the establishment of the ICC, and was a member of the Trinidad and Tobago legislative review committee. He also advised the ministry of foreign affairs and the attorney general on international treaties and conventions.

From 2001–04 he served on the ICTY, dealing with the appeals of those convicted of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. From 2004–13 he was a high court judge in Trinidad and Tobago. Elected one of six ICC judges in 2012, he was scheduled to take up his post in The Hague in March 2013. However, on 4 Feb. 2013 the then prime minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, nominated him for the presidency. Carmona was elected to the post by the Electoral College of parliament on 15 Feb. 2013, resigning from the ICC in order to take up the role.

Career Peak

Carmona took office on 18 March 2013. He pledged to champion a more open style of government. He was succeeded by Paula-Mae Weekes when his term finished in March 2018.

Carter, James Earl 'Jimmy' (United States of America)

Introduction

James Earl Carter, Jr was the 39th president of the United States, serving one term in office after defeating incumbent Republican president Gerald Ford in the 1976 election.

Early Life

Popularly known as 'Jimmy' Carter, he was born on 1 Oct. 1924 in Plains, Georgia to James Earl Carter and Lillian Gordy Carter, a staunch Baptist family. The young Carter attended Georgia Southwestern College and the Georgia Institute of Technology before graduating from the US Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1946. The same year he married Rosalynn Smith. After 2 years serving on battleships, Carter spent 5 years working on nuclear submarines before resigning his commission in 1953 after his father's death and returning to run the family's peanut farming and warehouse business in Georgia.

While transforming the family business Carter also embarked on a public career, serving as chairman of the Sumter county school board as well as the county hospital authority and acting as the president of the Plains

Development Corporation and the Crop Improvement Association. He entered the political arena in 1962 when he won election as a Democrat to serve on the Georgia State Senate. Carter was successfully re-elected 2 years later with his terms in office characterized by a conservative approach to spending and a liberal view of social issues.

In 1966 Carter failed in a bid to become Governor of Georgia when he came third in a Democratic primary. This experience left him depressed and he became a born-again Baptist before launching another bid for Governor in 1970. This time he was successful, defeating Carl Sanders before attracting national attention by his vigorous opposition to racial discrimination—Carter ensured the state's offices were opened to blacks—and reorganizing the state government by condensing some 300 agencies and offices into 22 new, more streamlined units.

After the end of his term as governor in Jan. 1975, Carter immediately began to focus on winning the Democratic nomination for president. Campaigning as an anti-Washington candidate with no links to the Vietnam War or Watergate, Carter vowed to deliver honest, open government. His campaign gathered momentum and he saw off all his Democratic party challengers despite his low national profile and lack of major financial backers. He chose Walter F. Mondale as his running mate.

Career Peak

From the beginning of his presidential campaign against Republican rival Gerald D. Ford, Carter was the front-runner, a position that was bolstered by his well-received performances in three televised debates with the incumbent president. Despite a late charge from the Ford campaign Carter was elected president after winning 51% of the popular vote and gaining 297 electoral college votes to 240.

From his inauguration on 20 Jan. 1977 Carter made a conscious effort to project a more open, less formal style of presidency. But if Carter's image as a Washington outsider helped him gain election, it hamstrung his relations with Congress and the Senate. Despite Democratic majorities in both houses he failed to win support for many of his programmes. Proposals concerning tax, welfare reform, hospital costs and national health insurance all floundered. Like his predecessor Carter also struggled to contain inflation and unemployment. By 1980 inflation had risen to 12% from 4.8% in 1976 and unemployment was running at approximately 7.7%.

Carter had success with other domestic policies. The civil service was overhauled and he also initiated, with mixed success, a series of measures aimed at energy and environmental conservation. In 1979, with the dollar losing value in response to a petrol shortage, Carter successfully implemented many portions of a far-ranging energy programme that sought to limit wasteful uses of energy and introduce alternative sources such as solar power into the mainstream.

The centrepiece of Carter's foreign policy was his commitment to human rights. Carter also proved an effective diplomat, signing two treaties with Panama which guaranteed the neutrality of the Panama Canal, brokering an agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1978 (known as the Camp David accord) and establishing full diplomatic relations with China in 1979. Furthermore in 1979, Carter and Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev signed a strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT II) in Vienna, although approval from the Senate for the treaty was not forthcoming and it was put on ice after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979—an invasion that also led to Carter insisting that the US team withdrew from the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.

The most severe problem Carter faced in office was the seizure of US hostages by radical Iranian students who stormed the US embassy in Tehran on 4 Nov. 1979. After trying for over a year to secure the hostages release, he oversaw the failure of a secret US military rescue mission. With the hostages still unreleased Carter was easily defeated in the 1980 presidential election by Republican rival Ronald W. Reagan, gaining just 49 electoral college votes to Reagan's 489. The hostages were finally released on 20 Jan. 1981, the day of Reagan's inauguration.

Later Life

After the end of his term Carter returned to his hometown of Plains. He has written several books and has continued to play an active role in foreign affairs, visiting Nicaragua, Panama, Ethiopia, North Korea, Haiti and Bosnia on peacekeeping and diplomatic missions. He has also established, with his wife Rosalynn, the Carter Presidential Centre in Atlanta. In 2002 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Castro, Fidel (Cuba)

Introduction

Lawyer and revolutionary guerrilla, Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz led Cuba for almost 50 years after he headed the 1959 revolution that overthrew the military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Premier until 1976 when a new constitution created a presidency, Castro set up a socialist state, implemented agrarian reforms, nationalized industries and imposed single party rule. Full employment, free education and universal health care were promised, although all opposition was repressed and freedoms restricted. Strong Soviet links bolstered Cuba in the face of US hostility, but since the collapse of the USSR Castro became increasingly isolated. He transferred power provisionally to his brother after his health deteriorated seriously in July 2006. On 19 Feb. 2008 Castro announced in a letter published in the state-run newspaper *Granma* that he would be stepping down as president.

Early Life

Castro was born on 13 Aug. 1926 (his official birthday, although some sources dispute this date) in the Oriente province (now Santiago de Cuba) in eastern Cuba, the illegitimate son of a prosperous Spanish sugarcane farmer and his cook. From the age of six, Castro was educated at Jesuit schools in Santiago de Cuba, and in 1945 went to study law at the capital's Universidad de la Habana, where he became politically active. He was a supporter of Eduardo Chibas who formed the Ortodoxos party (Cuban People's Party) in 1947. After joining the party, Castro was involved with preparations for a coup to depose the Dominican Republic's leader Gen. Rafael Trujillo.

After graduating in 1950, Castro set up a law firm in Havana to help the poor and his political allies. He continued his involvement with Ortodoxos and was their candidate for Havana in the 1952 elections. Before they could take place former premier Batista deposed Prime Minister Carlos Prío Socarrás and set up a military dictatorship. Following unsuccessful legal challenges, Castro began recruiting for a revolutionary movement. After a failed raid on the Moncada army barracks on 26 July 1953, Castro was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment.

He was pardoned in 1955 following an amnesty and went to Mexico where he formed the revolutionary Movimiento 26 de Julio. There he met Ernesto 'Che' Guevara Lynch, who became the Movimiento's doctor. On 2 Dec. 1956 Castro and his followers attacked his native Oriente province. After losing nearly all of their number, the remaining few fighters took refuge in the Sierra Maestra mountains where Castro continued to recruit, gathering together as many as 800 volunteers. Following numerous battles, Batista was forced into exile on 1 Jan. 1959. Castro became commander-in-chief of the army while the premiership was taken by Manuel Urrutia. Forcing the latter out, in July 1959 Castro appointed himself premier, promising to restore civil and political liberties.

Career Peak

Despite promising moderate reforms, Castro's radicalism soon intensified, as did his affiliation to Marxism. Communists were favoured for governmental positions while enforced land distribution ended tenancy and private ownership. Foreign investors left and all industry and commerce was nationalized. By early 1960 Castro had established a favourable trade agreement with the USSR which provided Cuba with oil, weapons and loans while importing Cuban sugarcane at an advantageous price. In 1961 the Organizaciones Revolucionarias Integradas was created (the Cuban Communist Party—Partido Comunista de Cuba; PCC—from 1965), comprising Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio, the Popular Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Popular) and the Revolutionary Directorate (Directorio Revolucionario). All opposition was outlawed. The immediate effect of Castro's reforms was the improvement of life for the poorest Cubans. Social services were made available, full employment was promised and illiteracy decreased. However, civil rights abuses led many middle class Cubans to flee the country.

In 1960 US suspicion of Castro and his links to communism led the USA to suspend trade agreements, impose an embargo and sever diplomatic relations. In April 1961 the US government supported and financed an

attempted coup by 1,300 Cuban exiles. The unsuccessful invasion at the Bay of Pigs was soon contained by the Cuban army. The USA also mounted several assassination attempts. In 1962 Soviet ballistic missiles were secretly placed in Cuba in range of US cities. In retaliation the US navy surrounded Cuba. The world hovered on the brink of nuclear war until the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles in exchange for a removal of US missiles based in Turkey and a promise of an end to hostilities with Cuba.

In 1976 Castro created a new constitution and national assembly and appointed himself president. His brother Raúl was appointed minister of armed forces becoming *de facto* vice president. In 1980 Castro opened the northern port of Mariel for 5 months allowing thousands of Cubans to flee, including 125,000 who emigrated to the USA.

On an international level, Castro supported revolutionary activity in Bolivia, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. Between 1975–89 the Cuban army aided communists in the Angolan civil war and helped Ethiopia combat Somalia's invasion in 1978. But Cuba's military expenditure was detrimental to its economic progress. Castro was unable to stimulate the country's industry or agriculture. In 1991 Cuba suffered heavily from the withdrawal of Soviet trade and rationing had to be imposed, leading to economic and social unrest in 1993. After public demonstrations, Castro agreed to relax restrictions on leaving the country. In 1994 the Cuban economy reached its nadir. Although Castro refused to change his regime after the fall of the USSR (free speech is still effectively banned), he was forced to adopt a pragmatic approach and to open up the economy and encourage a tourist industry. A two-tier financial system has meant plentiful supplies in tourist dollar shops but shortages for most Cubans.

At the end of the 1990s Castro formed an alliance with the Venezuelan premier Hugo Chávez and agreed a preferential trade arrangement exchanging Venezuelan oil for Cuban goods and services. Castro and Chávez also signed a co-operation agreement on agriculture and tourism. In Nov. 1999 relations with the USA were further strained by the Elián González affair, in which the two governments were involved in a custody battle over the fate of a 6-year old Cuban refugee.

Castro was re-elected for his sixth presidential term in 2003 with 100% of the 609 available parliamentary votes. In March 2003 relations with the USA deteriorated further when Castro arrested several dozen political dissidents who had met with the US envoy, James Cason. Castro accused Cason of subversion and restricted the movement of diplomats within the country in a tit-for-tat response after the USA imposed similar restrictions in Washington. The EU threatened sanctions in June 2003, but the following month promised to continue aid despite Castro attacking the EU as a 'Trojan horse' of the USA. Diplomatic contacts with the EU were restored in Jan. 2005. In May 2005 Castro unusually allowed a dissident group to hold a public meeting, although foreigners seeking to attend were turned away.

Concerns over Castro's declining health increased markedly from late July 2006 as he underwent intestinal surgery and, for the first time in 47 years, handed over power provisionally to his brother Raúl. Speculation about his condition heightened as he failed to attend Havana's May Day parade and the annual celebrations in July 2007 marking the anniversary of the revolution. However, he maintained that he was anticipating for a full recovery and in Sept. appeared in an hour-long interview on state television.

In Oct. 2007 President George W. Bush reaffirmed that the US trade embargo would be maintained while the Castro regime kept a 'monopoly' of power.

In Feb. 2008 Castro announced he would be resigning as president citing his 'critical condition'. He said that it would be a betrayal to his conscience to accept responsibility which required mobility and dedication that he was physically unable to offer. Castro added that retirement would not stop him from carrying on 'fighting like a soldier of ideas', promising to continue writing essays entitled *Reflections of Comrade Fidel*. George W. Bush responded to the news by saying that the United States will 'help the people of Cuba realise the blessings of liberty'. Five days after Castro's announcement Cuba's National Assembly chose his younger brother Raúl to be the country's new president.

Later Life

In July 2010 Castro made his first appearance in public since the announcement of his illness in 2006. Photographs of the leader were tightly controlled by the state media although essays that he still wrote regularly published in state newspapers. He died at the age of 90 on 25 Nov. 2016 having been in bad health for several years.

Castro, Raúl (Cuba)

Introduction

Raúl Castro was elected president by the National Assembly of People's Power on 24 Feb. 2008. His first 5 year term began when he replaced his brother, Fidel, who had held office for 49 years. While less charismatic than his brother, he preserved the essence of Cuba's brand of socialism. He was re-elected in Feb. 2013.

Early Life

Raúl Castro was born on 3 June 1931 in Birán, in the Oriente province (now Santiago de Cuba). His father was a sugar plantation owner of Spanish origin and his mother a housemaid. After expulsion from his first school Raúl attended the Jesuit-run Colegio Dolores in Santiago and the Belén School in Havana, before graduating as a sergeant from military college. He attended the University of Havana until 1953, when his involvement in politics cut short his studies.

Raúl was a member of the Socialist Youth group, affiliated to the Moscow-orientated Popular Socialist Party. His travels to the Soviet bloc in 1953 prompted him to turn against the then president, Fulgencio Batista, culminating that year in the failed 26 July attack on the Moncada barracks alongside brother Fidel. Both were imprisoned but then exiled to Mexico 22 months later. Raúl subsequently helped organize the 26 July Revolutionary Movement and the failed coup attempt of 1956.

Raúl then took charge of the military campaign in the east of the country and victory was achieved in 1959 when Batista went into exile. Raúl secured his place as Fidel's right hand man, politically and militarily. He was appointed minister for the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) and played a key role during the Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 and in the Cuban missile crisis the following year.

In 1965 he was promoted to the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) Politburo and made second secretary of the central committee behind Fidel. In 1972 he became first vice-premier and 4 years later the new National Assembly of People's Power elected him vice-president. The Castro hierarchy was endorsed with total support at each of the congressional party sessions from 1975–97. As vice-president he was pivotal in the close relationship with the Eastern European communist bloc until the 1990s when he engineered the economic shift away from former Soviet dependency. From 2000–02 his public profile grew as he stood in for Fidel on diplomatic tours of China and South East Asia.

When Fidel underwent abdominal surgery in July 2006, Raúl became acting president. On 19 Feb. 2008 Fidel announced his formal resignation and Raúl was elected his successor by the National Assembly.

Career Peak

Raúl's key challenges have been economic. Early signs of greater market freedom included allowing Cubans to stay in tourist hotels and rent cars and the lifting of bans on ownership of consumer products such as mobile phones, computers and DVD players. However, such products have remained unaffordable to average citizens.

In mid-2008 the government relaxed restrictions on the amount of idle state-owned land available to private farmers and announced plans to abandon salary equality in a radical departure from Marxist principles. In the wake of two hurricanes in 2008 that devastated homes and crops in Cuba, a US offer of emergency aid was rejected by Raúl, who instead demanded a lifting of the long-standing US trade embargo.

In March 2009 and again in Jan. 2011 the Obama administration eased the US embargo, lifting restrictions on remittances and visits to Cuba by Cuban-Americans. Despite this slight thaw in relations, Raúl continued to crack down on political dissent. Nevertheless, in Sept. 2010 he unveiled limited plans to further liberalize the economy by laying off thousands of state employees while legalizing self-employment in many areas and allowing more private enterprise. In Nov. he also announced the convening of a long-overdue PCC congress to be held in April 2011 (the first since 1997) to approve the plans, at which he was elected first secretary of the party. The Organization of American States had meanwhile voted in June 2009 to end Cuba's diplomatic suspension dating back to 1962.

In Nov. 2011 legislation enabling individuals to buy and sell property for the first time since the revolution was passed. A subsequent papal visit to Cuba in March 2012 prompted a government amnesty for some 2,500 prisoners, including political detainees, and the restoration of recognition for a religious holiday. Then in Oct. the government abolished the requirement that most citizens, other than certain professionals, acquire exit visas to travel abroad.

Having been re-elected in Feb. 2013, Raúl announced that he would stand down at the end of his second term and in July that year he removed several senior figures from the PCC central committee in an apparent gradual transfer of power to a younger generation. In early 2014 parliament approved a new foreign investment law allowing Cubans living abroad to invest in certain enterprises for the first time, and the government also began talks with the European Union on restoring political relations and boosting economic ties.

In Dec. 2014 Castro and US president Barack Obama agreed a landmark deal, brokered in part by Pope Francis, to begin normalizing bilateral relations and in April 2015 they held the first leaders' summit in nearly 60 years. This was followed in July that year by the full restoration of diplomatic ties, and in March 2016 Obama became the first US president to visit Cuba since 1928. On 25 Nov. 2016 Castro announced the death of his brother Fidel at the age of 90.

First Vice-President Díaz-Canel was elected president by the National Assembly on 18 April 2018 and took office the next day, although Castro stayed on as head of the Communist Party.

Cavaco Silva, Aníbal (Portugal)

Introduction

Aníbal Cavaco Silva was elected president on 22 Jan. 2006, the first centre-right politician to fill the largely ceremonial post since the 1974 revolution. The free-market economist played a key role in preparing Portugal's entry in 1986 to the European Economic Community (EEC; later the European Union) and served as prime minister from 1985–95. He was re-elected president in Jan. 2011.

Early Life

Aníbal António Cavaco Silva was born in Boliquiteime, Algarve on 15 July 1939. After graduating in finance in 1964, he worked at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon from 1967–71 before studying for a PhD in economics at the University of York in the UK.

Returning to Portugal in 1974—the year when the Caetano dictatorship was toppled—Cavaco Silva taught economics at the Catholic University of Portugal. He joined the new centre-right Popular Democratic Party, which became the Social Democratic Party (PSD) in 1976. From 1977 he headed the research and statistics department of the Bank of Portugal. Elected to parliament for the PSD in Oct. 1980, he served as minister of finance and planning.

An advocate of free-market economics, Cavaco Silva's reforms, combined with a constitutional reduction in presidential power, paved the way for Portugal's entry into the EEC in 1986. Elected head of the PSD in June 1985, he led the party to victory in elections the following Oct. He retained the position for 10 years, the longest tenure of any democratically elected prime minister in Portuguese history. The PSD won a clear majority of seats in legislative elections in both 1987 and 1991, with analysts attributing Cavaco Silva's success to economic liberalization, tax cuts and the flow of funds from the EEC.

Cavaco Silva stepped down as leader of the PSD prior to the 1995 elections, which were won by the Socialist Party (PS). He contested the 1996 presidential election but, after losing to the Socialist candidate, retired from politics to advise at the Bank of Portugal and teach economics at the Catholic University. In Oct. 2005 he returned to the political fray and announced his candidacy for the forthcoming presidential election. He received 50.5% of the votes cast and was sworn in on 9 March 2006.

Career Peak

Cavaco Silva's victory was a setback for the Socialist prime minister, José Sócrates, who had presided over a period of economic stagnation. However,

the result ushered in a new era of ‘cohabitation’ in politics, with analysts predicting that the two leaders would find common ground to implement economic reform. Although a Roman Catholic, Cavaco Silva endorsed legislation in April 2007 liberalizing abortion and aligning Portuguese law with that of most other European Union countries. In Oct. 2009, following parliamentary elections the previous month, he invited Sócrates to form a new PS government.

In Jan. 2011 Cavaco Silva’s re-election as president coincided with a turbulent economic period. High debt levels and flat growth forced the negotiation in May that year of a financial rescue package with stringent deficit reduction conditions from the EU and IMF. Parliamentary elections in June 2011 saw the PS government replaced by a centre-right PSD/Democratic and Social Centre–People’s Party coalition. Continuing austerity generated social and labour unrest and undermined the cohesion of the governing coalition—particularly in July 2013 when several senior ministers resigned over the handling of the economic situation—although the administration has survived.

Since Cavaco Silva was constitutionally barred from running for a third consecutive term, the winner of the Jan. 2016 presidential election, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, took over in March.

Ceașescu, Nicolae (Romania)

Introduction

Nicolae Ceaușescu was the Communist leader of Romania from 1965 until 1989. An opponent of excessive intervention from the Soviet Union, he led a more independent foreign policy than many Eastern Bloc nations. However, disastrous domestic policies led to widespread poverty and starvation while Ceaușescu’s regime, with the aid of the secret police, became ever more oppressive. He was executed following a revolution in Dec. 1989.

Early Life

Ceașescu was born on 26 Jan. 1918 in Scornicești in Oltenia, southwest Romania. He was the third of 10 children and at the age of 11 he was employed as a shoemaker’s apprentice in Bucharest. By the age of 14 he was a member of the Romanian Workers’ Party and the illegal Union of Communist Youth and a year later he had joined the Romanian Communist Party. In 1933 he was arrested for the first time for his political activities and in 1935 he was exiled from Bucharest, though he remained in the city to continue undercover activities. In 1936 he was sentenced to 2 years in prison.

In 1939 Ceaușescu married Elena Petrescu, a fellow communist with whom he would have three children, but in 1940 he was again sent to prison, escaping 4 years later. During this period he shared a cell with Gheorghiu-Dej, who would become Romania’s Communist leader in 1952. Following his escape Ceaușescu became Secretary of the Union of Communist Youth and, following the Communists’ rise to power in 1947, served as Minister of Agriculture until 1950. He then spent 4 years as Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces before being elected on to the party’s Central Committee.

Career Peak

When Gheorghiu-Dej died in March 1965, Ceaușescu was his natural successor as First Secretary of the party. 2 years later he became Chairman of the State Council and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. Effectively head of state, he would create the post of President for himself in 1974. Ceaușescu’s independent foreign policy initially boosted his popularity. He was highly critical of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and had little involvement in Warsaw Pact activities. In addition, he pursued trade with the West (with Romania enjoying most favoured nation trading status with the US for many years) and established diplomatic relations with West Germany. In later years he was critical of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and broke an Eastern Bloc boycott, allowing the Romanian team to attend the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

However, his approach to home affairs was more hardline. He established the Securitate, a secret police force of around 60,000 loyal to Ceaușescu.

Opposition was put down ruthlessly and the media forced to endure severe constraints. In 1966 he pushed through a series of reforms outlawing abortion and contraception, making divorce more difficult and imposing punitive taxes on childless couples.

In the 1970s, influenced by meetings with China’s Mao Zedong and North Korea’s Kim Il-sung, Ceaușescu set about establishing a cult of the personality. He re-enforced this through nepotism, most notably by the promotion of his wife, Elena. In 1975, on the back of an almost entirely manufactured set of qualifications, she was made director of the Institute of Chemistry of the Romanian Academy. Cabinet positions followed and by the time of her death she was the second most powerful person in the country. Her brother was given influential roles in the trade union movement while Ceaușescu’s brothers were placed in charge of the armed forces, the intelligence service and the Ministry of Agriculture. His son, Nicu, who was groomed as his successor, was made head of a county government in 1987.

Financial mismanagement during the 1970s led to a huge foreign debt which Ceaușescu set about clearing in the 1980s with disastrous results. Rates of agricultural and industrial production were increased but the results were sent *en masse* for export. Bread rationing was introduced in the early 1980s, followed by rationing of other basic food provisions and energy. The economy went into freefall, starvation became a genuine threat and many citizens died owing to the lack of medical provisions.

Against this background, the Ceaușescus continued with their own lavish lifestyles. Grandiose parties were given in their palaces and food was hoarded while the public starved. In 1984 Ceaușescu cleared 10,000 hectares of land near Bucharest to build Victory of Socialism Boulevard, which was planned to eclipse the Champs Elysees in Paris. He also devised an ill-conceived plan to destroy 7,000 out of around 13,000 villages and relocate the population to urban apartments in the 10 years following 1984. By the end of the 1980s Romania had one of Eastern Europe’s lowest standards of living and one of its highest rates of infant mortality.

Riots broke out in the southwestern town of Timisoara on 16 Dec. 1989 and Ceaușescu responded by ordering the shooting and killing of dozens of protesters. The protests then spread to Bucharest. On 21 Dec., captured by television cameras, Ceaușescu was drowned out by calls for change as he tried to give a speech. The army turned against him and the following day he and Elena fled the city. They were captured by the army and there followed a 3 day long secret trial by a military court. Charged with genocide and other crimes against the people, the Ceaușescus refused to acknowledge the legality of the court. On 25 Dec. 1989 Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu were convicted and executed by firing squad.

Chamoun, Camille (Lebanon)

Introduction

A Maronite (a member of the Christian sect which by political and religious convention holds the state presidency, while the prime minister must be a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of the National Assembly a Shia Muslim), Chamoun was president of Lebanon from 1952–58 and leader of the National Liberal Party (NLP) from 1958–86. He held various other government posts during a long political career that ended in 1987 when he died while still serving as minister of finance.

Early Life

Born on 3 April 1900, Chamoun qualified as a lawyer in 1924. He entered parliament in 1934 and was minister of finance in the pre-war French mandate regime. At independence he was minister of the interior, subsequently serving as a delegate to various United Nations conferences and committees and as Lebanese representative to London. By the late 1940s he was one of the most prominent members of a mainly Christian political faction known as the Constitutional Bloc. In Sept. 1952 a general strike forced the resignation of the then long-serving president Bishara al-Khuri and Chamoun was elected as his successor.

Career Peak

His 6 year presidential term, despite some early constitutional reforms, ended in political turmoil. In the Suez crisis of 1956 Muslim leaders demanded that Chamoun break off relations with Britain and France. His pro-Western alignment contributed to increasing resentment against his Christian-dominated government that erupted into a Muslim insurrection in May 1958. Chamoun appealed to the United States for military assistance and US marines landed near Beirut in July to re-establish government authority. He resisted demands for his resignation but did not seek re-election and left office in Sept. 1958.

Having founded the NPL in 1958, Chamoun retained an influential political role as a radical defender of Maronite Christian interests and was an uncompromising opponent of the Palestine Liberation Organization's presence in Lebanon when civil war broke out in 1975. At that time he rejoined the cabinet, holding several ministerial portfolios until Dec. 1976. He remained leader of the NPL until 1986, when his son Dany succeeded him. However, the party's ascendancy among Maronite Christians had by then been undermined by the rival right-wing Phalangist Party. In April 1984 he returned to government as minister of finance and died in office of a heart attack on 7 Aug. 1987.

Charles, Eugenia (Dominica)

Introduction

Dame Mary Eugenia Charles, nicknamed the 'Iron Lady of the Caribbean' was prime minister from 1980 to 1995.

Early Life

Mary Eugenia Charles was born on 15 May 1919 in the village of Pointe Michel in Dominica. She studied law at the University of Toronto in Canada and at the London School of Economics in the UK. After being called to the bar, she returned home to set up a practice specializing in property law, becoming Dominica's first female lawyer.

In the 1960s she campaigned against the ruling Labour Party, helping to found the Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) in 1968. She entered the House of Assembly in 1970 and became leader of the DFP 2 years later. Dominica gained formal independence in 1978 and, amid growing popular discontent with the government, the party won the country's first post-independence general election in June 1980. Charles thus became the Caribbean's first female prime minister.

Career Peak

She initiated reforms to the economy, education and health, as well as vowing to tackle government corruption. Corrupt officials were dismissed and the nation's 200-strong defence force was disbanded after military officials were found to have authorized an illegal arms deal. Charles also oversaw a reduction in spiralling inflation and cut the balance of trade deficit by a half. She secured aid to bolster the banana-dependent economy and improved the transport infrastructure.

On the international stage, she served as the chair of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), appealing for US intervention following the execution of Grenada's prime minister, Maurice Bishop, in a coup in 1983. Having herself survived two attempted coups during her first term in office, she won renewed mandates in 1985 and 1990. However, against a backdrop of rising unemployment, she opted not to contest the 1995 election.

Later Life

After retiring from frontline politics, Charles lectured in international relations and forged close ties with the Carter Center, the human rights organization founded by the former US president, Jimmy Carter. Charles was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1991 and died on 6 Sept. 2005.

Chávez, Hugo (Venezuela)

Introduction

Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías of the Movimiento V República (Movement for the Fifth Republic/MVR—which he founded in 1997) was elected president in Dec. 1998 as the candidate for the left-wing 'Patriotic Pole' coalition. Although re-elected in 2000, he was subsequently challenged by anti-government protests and a failed coup. He was nevertheless re-elected again at the end of 2006. In Dec. 2007 he suffered his first defeat in a popular vote when proposals to extend his powers and accelerate his socialist revolution were rejected in a referendum. His further re-election in Oct. 2012 was soon overshadowed by a serious relapse in his health, and his failure to attend his scheduled official inauguration in Jan. 2013 heightened concerns about his ability to resume his presidential duties.

Early Life

The son of teachers, Chávez was born on 28 July 1954 in Sabaneta, Barinas state. Embarking on a military career, he completed his higher education at the Academia Militar de Venezuela, graduating in 1975 with a degree in military science. After further military training, he took a master's degree in social science at the Universidad Simón Bolívar.

In 1982 Chávez co-founded the MBR-200, based on the ideals of the independence hero, Simón Bolívar. In Feb. 1992 Chávez led an abortive military coup attempting to overthrow the government of Carlos Andrés Pérez. He was captured and imprisoned until 1994 when he was pardoned by President Rafael Caldera. Having reformed the MBR-200 as the Movement for the Fifth Republic/MVR, he promised to fight social inequality in Venezuela, a country rich in natural resources but where the wealth benefited the minority elite. By 1998 over 90% of Venezuelans lived below the poverty line, social services had deteriorated to pre-1950s levels and inflation was high.

In Nov. 1998 Chávez's Patriotic Pole coalition won 34% of seats in legislative elections. The following month he ran for the presidency against the Proyecto Venezuela candidate, Henrique Salas Romer. With the highest majority for 40 years, Chávez won 56.5% of votes to 39.5%. His win ended the 40-year domination of Acción Democrática (Democratic Action) and the Partido Social Cristiano (Social Christian Party).

Career Peak

On election, Chávez pledged to modernize the government, root out corruption, implement radical reforms and revive the economy. In April 1999 he called a referendum in which 92% of voters called for a new constitution. In July elections to the constitutional assembly, Chávez supporters won 121 seats against ten for the opposition. A second referendum was called for Dec. in which 72% approved a new constitution, modelled on France's Fifth Republic. The two-tiered congress was combined into one National Assembly, the presidential term was extended from 5 to 6 years, presidential power over legislation and the budget was increased, and a second consecutive presidential term was permitted. Further changes included a reformed judiciary, an extension of universal economic and social rights, increased rights for indigenous Venezuelans, and more military involvement in policy implementation. Despite Chávez's popular support, members of the business community and the middle classes were wary of the power granted the president and US \$4 bn. was transferred out of the country. Nonetheless, a rise in oil prices compensated for this financial loss and inflation fell, although the country suffered a recession following the 1998 economic crisis. Disastrous mudslides in Dec. 1999 in which tens of thousands of people died brought further financial strain for the government.

In the July 2000 presidential elections Chávez beat his former ally from the 1992 coup Lt.-Col. Francisco Arias Cárdenas with 59.8% of votes to 37.5%. His MVR party was equally successful in regional elections. Opposition candidates claimed the votes had been rigged and the military was called in to disperse protestors. On re-election Chávez pledged to fight unemployment with public spending, introduce a land rights bill to ease rural poverty, offer tax breaks for businesses, build new schools and encourage foreign investment. Though lacking a MVR majority in the assembly, Chávez was able to secure wide legislative powers. One of his first moves was

to seek a union with the oil-producing Arab states which would reject Western pressure for increased output (and thus lower prices). In Sept. he made his international position clear by criticizing US involvement in Colombian military efforts to combat left-wing rebels (the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia or FARC), and by praising Cuban leader Fidel Castro's defiant rejection of US domination, as well as his economic and social policies. During a visit by Castro, Chávez agreed to sell oil to Cuba at a discounted price. In April 2001 Chávez hosted talks with Mexico and Colombia to pursue the implementation of a free trade zone, and to work towards extending free trade throughout the Americas. Despite international fears of a Castro reincarnate, he also visited the USA and Europe on numerous occasions.

As his 'Bolivarian Revolution' failed to produce the promised social and economic improvements, the country became increasingly divided between Chávez's supporters and opponents. In April 2002 anti-government protesters descended on the capital demanding his resignation. Taking advantage of the instability, a military coup was mounted with businessman Pedro Carmona Estanga at its head. Chávez was forced to resign and Carmona assumed the presidency. Western and Latin American governments (but not the USA) condemned the coup, refusing to acknowledge the new government, and protests by Chávez supporters quickly led to his reinstatement.

Nevertheless, Venezuelans remained polarized and more protests were staged in June and July. In Dec. 2002 a national strike was called by the opposition following a decision by the Supreme Court to overrule a referendum on Chávez's presidency called for Feb. 2003 by the Electoral Council. Protests focused on the state-owned petrol company *Petróleos de Venezuela* (PDVSA), the provider of around 40% of the country's revenues. Oil production plummeted and world prices increased, causing OPEC to increase production. The strike continued into 2003, threatening to destabilize the country's economy, but Chávez remained defiant. The strike abated in Feb. 2003, although workers at PDVSA continued to protest and the opposition petitioned for early elections.

In Aug. 2004 Chávez survived a national referendum on whether he should be allowed to serve the remainder of his term of office until 2006. Although credited with about 59% of the vote, opposition parties denounced the victory as electoral fraud. Then, in parliamentary elections in Dec. 2005 boycotted by the opposition, his MVR party won 114 of 167 National Assembly seats, with the remaining seats being won by his allies.

In Dec. 2006 Chávez won a third presidential term, defeating the main opposition candidate Manuel Rosales with 63% of the vote in the election. Pledging to maintain his socialist revolution, including widespread nationalization, he was granted sweeping powers by parliament at the end of Jan. 2007 to legislate by decree for an 18-month period. In the same month he announced that key energy and telecommunications utilities would be nationalized and in May the government took control of oil projects in the Orinoco Delta. Nationalizations continued into 2008, including in the banking, cement, steel and fuel sectors.

Popular discontent meanwhile surfaced over the closure in May 2007 of Radio Caracas Televisión (RCTV), the country's most popular-but anti-Chávez-television channel, which provoked large domestic demonstrations as well as international condemnation. Then in Dec. the president's proposal to reform the constitution and allow him to run for continuous re-election and to reinforce his socialist agenda was unexpectedly rejected by voters in a national referendum. Some disaffection with Chávez was also reflected in opposition gains in regional and mayoral elections in Nov. 2008. However, in a further constitutional referendum in Feb. 2009, there was a 54% majority in favour of abolishing presidential limits, clearing the way for Chávez to run for re-election in 2012.

In 2007 Colombia's president Uribe invited Chávez to try and broker a peace deal with the FARC. However, Uribe subsequently ended Chávez's involvement after a series of apparent diplomatic breaches. Relations between the two countries then deteriorated sharply in March 2008 after Colombian armed forces raided a FARC base in Ecuador, a Venezuelan ally. Chávez mobilized troops along Venezuelan-Colombian border and briefly threatened war before the crisis was defused diplomatically. Bilateral tensions resurfaced in late 2009 as US-Colombian plans for closer military ties in a drive against drug trafficking culminated in an agreement allowing US forces the use of Colombian bases, and escalated again in mid-2010 when diplomatic relations were temporarily severed.

As an oil-producing economy Venezuela suffered from the fall in the international price of oil that accompanied the global economic downturn from 2008. The economy continued to shrink in 2009 (by 5.8% in the last 3 months of the year alone) and in Jan. 2010 Chávez devalued the currency

against the US dollar (by up to 50% under a dual exchange rate) to boost revenue from oil exports. The downturn nevertheless persisted and in Jan. 2011 the government devalued the currency for the second time in a year while unifying the exchange rate.

Meanwhile, there were increasing signs of popular discontent with Chávez's rule. In Jan. 2010 the resignation of the vice president and defence minister, Ramón Carrizález, prompted speculation about tensions within the regime. Then, in congressional elections in Sept. 2010, the PSUV retained control but lost the two-thirds majority in parliament needed to carry out constitutional changes and make judicial appointments as the opposition made significant gains. However, Chávez was able to by-pass this setback as the outgoing congress approved measures at the end of the year allowing him to rule by decree again for 18 months and to appoint new Supreme Court judges. The opposition claimed that this amounted to a coup by the executive against the other branches of government.

In June-July 2011 Chávez underwent surgery for cancer in Cuba but on his return to Venezuela said that he would stand as his party's candidate in presidential elections scheduled for Oct. 2012. He had further treatment for his condition in Cuba in Feb. and April 2012 before his re-election for a fourth term in Oct. with 55% of the vote. However, in Nov. he was forced to return to Cuba for more cancer surgery and his inauguration ceremony was subsequently postponed. Vice-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs Nicolás Maduro, whom Chávez had named in Dec. 2012 as his preferred political successor, delivered the state-of-the-nation address to the National Assembly on the president's behalf in Jan. 2013.

Chávez's last public appearance was in Dec. shortly before he travelled to Cuba to undergo a fourth surgery. He returned home 2 months later but almost no information on his condition was revealed. Chávez was officially announced dead on 5 March. Seven days of mourning followed and elections were to be held in 30 days. Chávez had named vice president Nicolás Maduro as his successor, despite the constitution stating that in such cases the National Assembly President should assume temporary power.

Chehab, Fuad (Lebanon)

Introduction

Fuad Chehab, commander of the Lebanese army, succeeded Camille Chamoun as state president in Sept. 1958 in the wake of widespread sectarian conflict between Lebanon's Christian and Muslim communities. His term in office ended in 1964 and he was widely credited with restoring political stability and promoting economic and infrastructure development.

Early Life

Chehab was born in 1902 in Ghazir. Pursuing a military career, he served with French mandatory forces in Syria after World War I and by 1945 was commander of the Lebanese army.

Career Peak

Having adopted a non-partisan stance as military commander during the internal unrest at the end of Chamoun's term, Chehab enjoyed support from Christian and Muslim factions alike. He was elected by the National Assembly at the end of July 1958 and assumed presidential office on 23 Sept. While observing the terms of the 1943 national pact determining the allocation of political power between the main religious communities, he instituted some electoral reform and increased the membership of the National Assembly to encourage wider direct representation. In foreign affairs he effected the prompt withdrawal of the US troops deployed towards the end of his predecessor's presidency. Thereafter he followed a neutral foreign policy, with the aim of maintaining good relations with Arab as well as Western nations. Limited opposition to his regime was reflected in a coup attempt in 1961 by an extremist party advocating the creation of a greater Syria of several Arab states. Chehab rejected appeals that he should run for the presidency again, despite a parliamentary proposal for a constitutional amendment allowing him a second term. He left office in Sept. 1964 and died on 25 April 1973 in Beirut.

Chernenko, Konstantin (Russia)

Introduction

Konstantin Chernenko led the Soviet Union between 1984 and 1985. A favourite of Brezhnev, he was defeated in the 1982 contest to succeed him as general secretary by Yuri Andropov. Chernenko came to office after the death of Andropov in 1984 but was soon beset by ill-health and achieved little while in office.

Early Life

Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko was born on 24 Sept. 1911 (11 Sept. by the Orthodox calendar) in Bolshaya Tes in the Yeniseysk region of Russia. In 1930 he served with the frontier guards on the Sino-Soviet border. The following year he joined the Communist Party, having joined Komsomol (the junior branch of the party) 5 years earlier.

He became a producer of propaganda for Stalin and in 1941 was named director of the Krasnoyarsk territorial party committee. He attended the higher school for party organizers from 1943 until 1945 and 8 years later completed his studies at the Kishinev pedagogical institute. Between 1948 and 1956 he was responsible for agitation and propaganda for Moldavia. In 1956, having gained the notice of Leonid Brezhnev, he took up an equivalent position in Moscow. When Brezhnev became general secretary in 1964 he appointed Chernenko chief-of-staff. Chernenko became a full member of the central committee 7 years later and in 1978 won full membership of the politburo.

As it became apparent during 1982 that Brezhnev's health was rapidly deteriorating, Chernenko began to rally support to succeed him. However, in Nov. 1982 he was defeated by Yuri Andropov, who was able to call on support from the KGB (which he had previously headed) and the emerging generation of reformers (including Mikhail Gorbachev). Andropov was immediately beset by ill health and when he died in Feb. 1984 Chernenko was selected to replace him as general secretary.

Career Peak

Chernenko also assumed the chairmanship of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in April 1984. Gorbachev, Andropov's favoured successor, was promoted to second in the party hierarchy. Chernenko was widely perceived as a conservative throwback to the stagnation of the later Brezhnev years. Domestically he achieved little and party privilege remained undiminished. In foreign policy he brokered trade agreements with China but relations with Ronald Reagan's US deteriorated, despite agreement in Jan. 1985 to a new round of arms talks. Chernenko suffered from poor health throughout his tenure and died in Moscow on 10 March 1985.

Chiang Kai-shek (Taiwan, China)

Introduction

Chiang Kai-shek (transliterated as Chiang Chieh-shih in the modern Wade-Giles romanisation) was leader of the Nationalist government of China from 1928 to 1949 and President from 1928 to 1931 and from 1943 to 1949. Defeated in the civil war against the Communists (1946–49), Chiang fled with the remains of his forces to Taiwan where he continued to style himself President of the Republic of China until his death in 1975.

Chiang was born on 31 Oct. 1887 in Zhejiang province into a prosperous commercial and farming family. He trained for a military career, first at a military academy in northern China (1906–07) and then in Japan (1907–11), where he met young Chinese who were conspiring against the Manchu imperial dynasty. Chiang became a convert to revolutionary ideas. When the 1911 uprising against the emperor broke out, Chiang returned home.

Early Life

Chiang took part in the fighting that overthrew the imperial system and was equally involved with the revolutionaries against the authoritarian president, Yuan Shih-kai, in 1913–16. In 1918 Chiang joined Sun Yat-sen's Nationalist Party and became Sun's close ally. Following the overthrow of Yuan, China disintegrated at the hands of local warlords. Sun reorganised the party on Soviet lines and sent Chiang to Moscow to study the Soviet system and Red Army in 1923. Returning to China, Chiang was placed in charge of a military academy at Huangpu, near Guangzhou, and built an effective army. At this stage the Nationalists were co-operating with the Communists to re-establish national unity, but rivalry between the two parties increased, particularly after the death of Sun in 1925.

As commander in chief of the Nationalist army from 1925, Chiang's power grew. In April 1927, he tried to suppress the Chinese Communist Party in a bloody campaign in which thousands of Communists were slaughtered. The remains of the party fled to the far western province of Jiangxi, beyond the reach of the Nationalists. In 1928 Chiang's army entered Beijing. With the greater part of the country reunited under Chiang's rule, he formed a government in Nanjing, which became the capital of China.

Career Peak

Chiang's power was illusory. The Communists controlled part of the southwest where they had established a Chinese Soviet Republic, the warlords could rebel again at any time and, in 1931, the Japanese invaded and occupied Manchuria. Chiang ignored the Japanese, concentrating on crushing the Communists. After a long campaign, the noose tightened round the Communist "statelet" but its leaders and a sizeable army escaped across China on the Long March (1934–35). Attempting to revive national unity, Chiang reinstated Confucianism as the state religion in 1934—although he was a Christian. In Dec. 1936 Chiang was kidnapped by military leaders who wanted to confront Japan rather than the Communists.

The full-scale invasion of China by the Japanese in 1937 obliged Chiang to call a truce with the Communists to face the common enemy. Compared with the Communists, Chiang's armies made little headway against the Japanese. In 1938 Chiang removed his capital to Chongqing, where he sat out the war. After the defeat of Japan following the use of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States, Nationalists and Communists began negotiations concerning the future shape of China's government. But the talks broke down and civil war resumed in 1946. A crushing series of defeats led to the Communist victory. Chiang retreated to Taiwan with the remains of his forces.

Backed by the United States, Chiang insisted that he continued in office as President of the Republic of China. But his territory had been reduced to the island of Taiwan and a few small islands off the coast of China. Still technically at war with the Communists, Chiang maintained martial law and ruled as a dictator. American aid allowed Chiang to achieve remarkable economic development and soon Taiwan had a much higher standard of living than mainland China. Despite a defence pact with the USA in 1955, which guaranteed American assistance if the Communists should attack Taiwan, a rapprochement between Washington and Beijing troubled Chiang's final years. He died on 5 April 1975, 4 years before the United States severed its diplomatic ties with the Nationalists.

Chichester-Clark, James (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

James Chichester-Clark was prime minister of Northern Ireland from April 1969–March 1971, a period of growing sectarian conflict. In 1969 he called in British troops to quell unrest, an act widely considered the start of 'the Troubles'. Chichester-Clark resigned in 1971 amid the polarization of Northern Ireland's politics.

Early Life

James Chichester-Clark was born on 12 Feb. 1923 in Moyola Park, Castledawson, Londonderry. His landowning family was prominent in Unionist politics and had regularly held the South Londonderry constituency. Educated at Eton College, Chichester-Clark joined the Irish Guards in 1942, serving in North Africa and Italy during the Second World War. In 1947 he was appointed Aide-de-camp to Lord Alexander of Tunis, then governor general of Canada. Following tours of duty in Germany and Egypt, he left the army in 1960 and succeeded his grandmother as Unionist MP for South Londonderry.

In 1963 he was appointed chief whip and in 1966 became leader of the Commons and a full cabinet member. From 1967–69 he served as minister of agriculture, offering qualified support to Prime Minister Terence O'Neill's policies of warmer relations with the Republic of Ireland and civil rights reform. In April 1969 Chichester-Clark resigned in protest at the introduction of 'one man one vote' in local government elections. This precipitated O'Neill's resignation on 28 Aug. Chichester-Clark won the leadership election against Brian Faulkner by 17–16, with O'Neill using his casting vote for Chichester-Clark.

Career Peak

He made an early effort to promote harmony by granting an amnesty for those charged with political offences since Oct. 1968. However, conflict escalated and Aug. 1969 saw riots in Londonderry and Belfast. The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and its auxiliary forces, particularly the B Specials, were accused of helping loyalists attack Catholic neighbourhoods. Over 1000 Catholic and 300 Protestant families fled their homes. On 14 Aug. Chichester-Clark called in British troops and the UK army took control of security operations in the province.

An uneasy calm soon prompted resentment among Catholics, who saw the troops as pro-Loyalist. By late 1969 paramilitary organizations, including the provisional IRA and the Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), were carrying out attacks. Meanwhile, under pressure from the UK government, Chichester-Clark reorganized the police force and enacted reforms in housing and local government, angering many Unionists.

In 1970 breakaway Unionist parties campaigned against his leadership. In March 1971, after the IRA had killed three soldiers and the British government had turned down his request for draconian intervention, Chichester-Clark resigned.

Later Life

Given a life peerage as Baron Moyola of Castledawson, Chichester-Clark returned to Moyola Park and retired from public life. In 1998 he endorsed the Good Friday Agreement, which laid the foundations for power sharing. He died on 17 May 2002.

Chiluba, Frederick (Zambia)

Introduction

Frederick Chiluba, Zambia's first elected president following the return of multi-party democracy, held office from 1991–2002. Initially welcomed by the West, his tenure became mired in allegations of embezzlement and corruption.

Early Life

The son of a copper miner, Frederick Jacob Titus Chiluba was born on 30 April 1943 in Kitwe, in what was then Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). After expulsion from secondary school for political activism, Chiluba worked as a sisal cutter, a bus driver, a city councillor and an accounts assistant. He joined the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, eventually becoming its president. In 1981 Chiluba, along with several other opposition figures, was detained by President Kenneth Kaunda for calling a wildcat strike that paralyzed the economy. The detentions were declared unconstitutional by the judiciary and Chiluba was released after 3 months.

In 1990 he co-founded the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMC), a loose coalition of unions, civic and church groups and former government loyalists disillusioned with Kaunda's autocratic rule. In the first multi-party elections since 1968, Chiluba won the presidency with 76% of the vote. Initially Chiluba was widely hailed for bringing an end to the country's one-party rule and was welcomed by the West for halting Kaunda's 27 years in power.

Career Peak

Once in office, Chiluba sought to rescue the failing economy and usher in a free market system. Import duties were slashed, currency controls abolished and copper mines privatized. However, these policies failed to deliver the hoped-for results and the majority of the population remained in poverty.

A charismatic speaker and born-again Christian, Chiluba originally positioned himself as a defender of civil liberties while deriding Kaunda's authoritarian approach. However, he adopted increasingly similar tactics against political opponents, jailing journalists and firing colleagues who dared to criticize him. In 1997 he imprisoned Kaunda for allegedly conspiring in a coup against him, before attempting to deport the former president and strip him of his citizenship.

In 1996 Chiluba was elected for a second 5 year term. His subsequent move to amend the constitution to allow for a third term failed to win support and sparked public protests. Consequently, Chiluba reluctantly left office at the end of his term in Jan. 2002. He was replaced by his vice president, Levy Mwanawasa.

Later Life

Mwanawasa proceeded to lift Chiluba's immunity from prosecution and targeted the former president in an anti-corruption drive. In Feb. 2003 Chiluba was charged, along with several other former ministers and senior officials, with embezzlement, amid claims he stole public funds to finance his extravagant lifestyle (he was accused of spending over US\$500,000 on jewellery and clothing). After 6 years of drawn-out court proceedings, he was acquitted. However, in 2007 a UK civil court found him guilty of theft and money laundering through London and ordered him to repay US\$58m.

Following the death of Mwanawasa in 2008, Rupiah Banda, a close friend of Chiluba, became president and the ruling, which Chiluba rejected on the basis of the court lacking jurisdiction, was never enforced. Nevertheless, others close to Chiluba, including his wife, were convicted on related charges. On 18 June 2011 Chiluba died of heart and kidney failure in Lusaka.

Chinchilla, Laura (Costa Rica)

Introduction

Laura Chinchilla was elected Costa Rica's first female president in Feb. 2010, continuing the centre-right National Liberation Party's (PLN) hold on government. A former justice minister, she has won praise for her attempts to tackle drug networks and improve public security.

Early Life

Laura Chinchilla Miranda was born on 28 March 1959 in Desamparados, a suburb of the capital, San José. She graduated in political science from the University of Costa Rica in 1981 and went on to earn a master's in public administration from Georgetown University in the USA. Returning to Costa Rica, she worked as a consultant to various international organizations including the US Agency for International Development, the UN Development Program and the Inter-American Development Bank, on issues such as public safety, border security, human rights and judicial reform.

Consultancy for the ministry of national planning and economic policy in the early 1990s led to Chinchilla being offered a senior role in government. In May 1994 she was appointed deputy minister of public security in the administration of José María Figueres Olsen, whose PLN had won the general election 3 months earlier. Chinchilla also led the national council of migration and foreign affairs and was a member of the board of the national drug council. She was promoted to minister for public security in 1996 and gained a reputation for her tough stance on criminal drugs activities.

Chinchilla was elected to the legislative assembly as a deputy for the province of San José in 2002 and served as vice-president under Oscar Arias of the PLN. Arias, who had served as president in the late 1980s and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to democracy and peace in central America, enjoyed popular support and won a further term in Jan. 2006. Chinchilla served as both vice-president and justice minister until she left office in Oct. 2008 to mount a presidential campaign. She emerged victorious after the first round on 7 Feb. 2010, taking 47% of the vote, well ahead of nearest rival Ottón Solís of the left-leaning Citizens' Action Party on 25%.

Career Peak

Chinchilla was sworn in on 8 May 2010. She pledged to make Costa Rica the first developed country in Central America, confirmed her commitment to carbon neutrality by 2021 and promised to improve health care, safety and security.

In Nov. 2010 a dispute with neighbouring Nicaragua over a river border area led to the deployment of security forces by both countries. In March 2011 the International Court of Justice ruled that all troops should be withdrawn from the area in a judgment viewed as favouring Costa Rica.

Luis Guillermo Solís of the PAC succeeded Chinchilla as president after winning elections held in Feb. 2014. Since the constitution prohibits an incumbent president from serving successive terms, Chinchilla was not eligible to stand for re-election.

Chirac, Jacques (France)

Introduction

President Jacques René Chirac was elected president in 1995 on the ticket of the right-wing Gaullist party, *Rassemblement pour la République* (Rally for the Republic; RPR), of which he was the founder. He was prime minister under the right-wing *Républicains Indépendants* president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing between 1974–76 before resigning to form the RPR. Between 1986–88 he was again prime minister under Socialist Party (PS) president François Mitterrand. He was mayor of Paris between 1977–95. In the 2002 presidential elections he stood for re-election as the candidate of the UMP (*Union pour la Majorité Présidentielle*) right-wing coalition. Following the shock success of National Front candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen, popular opinion rallied around Chirac in the second round run-off, which he won with a landslide majority. He subsequently disbanded the RPR and formalized the UMP as the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement). His opposition to US pressure for a war on Iraq in 2003 won him domestic popularity but led to a deterioration of relations with the USA and UK.

The French electorate's rejection in a referendum in May 2005 of the proposed EU constitution was a major political setback for Chirac, prompting his appointment of a new government. Later in the year, confronting the social devastation left by rioting during Oct.–Nov., Chirac asked parliament to extend a national state of emergency and pledged to fight unemployment and discrimination among disadvantaged sections of the population. However, unpopular labour legislation caused further unrest in spring 2006 and his political standing declined markedly through the year.

Early Life

Chirac was born in Paris on 29 Nov. 1932. The son of a banker, he was educated at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris before studying business at a Harvard University summer school. He was in Algeria for his national service between 1956–57. From 1957–59 he studied at the *École Nationale d'Administration*, the elite training institution for civil servants. As a young man Chirac was inclined to left-wing politics but his sympathies shifted right when he embarked on his career in the civil service. Chirac rose swiftly through the ranks of the civil service, becoming head of department and secretary of state. In 1967 he was elected parliamentary representative of his family's native Corrèze in Limousin, a post he held until he became president in 1995. Chirac was a close ally and protégé of former president Georges Pompidou, who supported Chirac's rise through the party and his election to the National Assembly in 1967. During Pompidou's premiership

under the presidency of Charles de Gaulle, Chirac aided Pompidou in resolving the May 1968 student-worker revolts.

Chirac's career advanced further after Pompidou became president. He served as minister for parliamentary relations (1971–72), agriculture minister (1972–74) and minister for the interior (1974). In the 1974 presidential elections Chirac refused to support the candidature of the official Gaullist candidate, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, choosing instead to support the successful right-wing *Républicains Indépendants* candidate, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The latter appointed Chirac prime minister in 1974 but he was soon at odds with the president and resigned in 1976. He then founded the RPR, based on de Gaulle's *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* (Rally of the French People) party. Between 1976–81 the RPR was well represented in the National Assembly.

In 1977 Chirac was elected Mayor of Paris, the first since the post was abolished in 1871. In 1981 Chirac stood in his first presidential election against François Mitterrand and Giscard d'Estaing. The right divided, Mitterrand won and Chirac came third. Between 1981–86 Chirac led the right-wing opposition in the Assembly. In 1986 the PS lost its majority and Chirac was appointed prime minister in the first *cohabitation* (power sharing). Over the next 2 years Chirac reversed Mitterrand's policy of nationalization, implementing widespread privatization schemes and abolishing the wealth tax. In 1988 he stood again for the presidency. In a run-off with Mitterrand, Chirac came second with 46% of votes. Over the next 7 years he remained mayor of Paris.

Career Peak

In 1995 Chirac stood for his third presidential election against the PS candidate Lionel Jospin and the prime minister and fellow RPR member Édouard Balladur. The latter had proved a popular prime minister and had the support of the right-wing *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (Union for the French Democracy). Chirac lost some right-wing support by defending the Maastricht Treaty which allowed for a closer European Union. But with strong campaigning, helped by a financial scandal involving Balladur, he came out ahead in the first round. In the second round run-off with Jospin, Chirac gained 52.6% of votes. Alain Juppé replaced Chirac as RPR president.

The first few months of Chirac's presidency were overshadowed by international condemnation of France for controversial nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean. Reaction was such that Chile and New Zealand recalled their ambassadors and riots broke out in Tahiti. A poll showed 60% of French people against the testing and Chirac's popularity suffered. The timing of the testing was all the more controversial as it threatened the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

Chirac went on to end conscription and to reform the military and the health service. To qualify for the European Monetary Union, the government needed to reduce budget deficits. He began a series of spending cuts including a reduction in welfare and a freezing of public-sector wages. Public discontent was coupled with rising unemployment which reached 12.6% by 1997. Chirac dissolved the Assembly and called early elections, hoping to gain support for his policies. The result was the loss of the parliamentary majority to a coalition of Socialists, Communists and Greens. Chirac was forced to appoint the Socialist Lionel Jospin prime minister in a second *cohabitation*.

The end of 2000 was difficult for Chirac. Allegations of corruption centred on the claim that when Chirac was mayor of Paris, bribes from building companies had been taken in exchange for construction and maintenance contracts. An estimated €95 m. was extorted, 70% of which went to the RPR, the rest being divided between the PS and the *Parti Communiste Français* (French Communist Party). In Sept. 2000 a posthumous confession from a former property developer and RPR official, Jean-Claude Méry, claimed the RPR had been bolstered by €5.5–6.5 m. a year. Although Chirac as the head of state is exempt from prosecution, his former aide, Michel Roussin, was investigated and imprisoned for refusing to answer questions.

Chirac's chairmanship of the 2000 EU summit in Nice was widely criticized. It was claimed that he was too much concerned with national interest, fighting hard to retain France's voting power against demands for votes to be allocated relative to population.

The 18 March 2001 municipal elections led to a shock left-wing victory in Paris, traditionally held by the right. The alleged corruption of the Chirac years was a major factor. In June 2001 an investigation began into how Chirac spent an alleged 2.4 m. francs on family air travel tickets while he was mayor in the early 1990s.

Chirac entered the first round presidential elections in April 2002 expecting to fight Jospin in the second round. But in a shock result, the

National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen came in second with 16.86% of votes to Chirac's 19.87%. Jospin, who came third with 16.17%, promptly resigned as prime minister and leader of the PS. The result caused a series of anti-Le Pen protest rallies across France and jolted voter apathy for the second round, for which the turnout was 79.7%. Socialist leaders urged their supporters to vote for Chirac and moderate voters, frightened by the prospect of a far-right government, rallied to the president. In a landslide victory, Chirac took 82.21% of votes. The success was consolidated in parliamentary elections the following month, giving Chirac control of policy for the first time in 5 years. He appointed Jean-Pierre Raffarin as his prime minister.

For his second presidential term, Chirac pledged to tackle crime and bolster national security—both issues which Le Pen had highlighted to his advantage—with increased prison capacity and a strengthened police force. He proposed a business-friendly fiscal policy and a more flexible integration of the 35-h working week, which had troubled many businesses. He also pledged to cut taxes by a third over his term. On the international stage, Chirac won domestic support but courted US anger for his refusal to support the US stance on Iraq. As one of the five countries in the UN with the power of veto, Chirac held the right to block UN-supported military action in Iraq. His position also found support in Algeria, which he visited in March 2003 on the first official visit by a French head of state since the end of the Franco-Algerian War in 1962. In May 2003 there were widespread strikes in protest at plans to increase pension contributions, raise the retirement age and to reduce benefits.

On Bastille Day 2002 Chirac survived an assassination attempt by a far-right extremist. In 2003 he came under the international spotlight again by threatening to veto any US-brokered UN resolution supporting an armed attack on Iraq. US-led troops invaded Iraq in March 2003 without a clear UN mandate and overthrew the Saddam Hussein regime the following month. France, Germany and Russia were among the most vociferous opponents of the war and the breakdown in relations between the USA and what it called 'Old Europe' led to renewed questions over the role of the UN, NATO and the EU in international politics. However, in May 2003 France voted to accept a UN resolution on Iraq's future which had been jointly proposed by the USA, UK and Spain. Chirac justified this acceptance as France's responsibility to the world, although he continued to emphasize the importance of the UN as an organization to prevent countries acting in isolation. In return for the immediate ending of sanctions, the UN was to co-operate with the occupying forces to form a new government. In addition France would be able to complete longstanding contracts with Iraq.

In July 2003 voters in a referendum in Corsica narrowly rejected plans to increase regional autonomy. Under the proposals, Corsica would have established a single regional assembly (streamlining three existing institutions) and would have won limited control over energy, transport and regional aid. Chirac had declared his support for the motion, but campaigning became dominated by the question of eventual full independence. In the same month Chirac caused consternation among several of the EU's smaller nations by calling for a relaxation of the stability and growth pact rules, under which the budget deficit of euro-zone countries is not to exceed 3% of GDP.

Despite the EU's emphasis on France reducing its deficit, the government endorsed €3.3 bn. worth of tax cuts in Sept. 2003. In March 2004 the governing party suffered local election defeats, resulting in the UMP holding on to only one of the 21 mainland regions. Despite the losses, Chirac urged ministers to press on with reforms aiming to boost economic growth, create more jobs and improve the healthcare system.

At the June 2004 European summit clashes occurred between France and the UK as Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair disagreed on the proposed new EU constitution and on candidates for the European Commission presidency. Also in June, Chirac rejected tentative US calls for NATO to become more involved in Iraq following the handover of power.

In May 2005 the French electorate voted against the new EU constitution in a referendum. Although it was a bitter defeat for Chirac, he resisted calls to stand down and responded by appointing a new government with Dominique de Villepin as the prime minister. Further discontent with his government was apparent during Oct.–Nov. in a 24-h national strike against the privatization programme and pension reform plans and in rioting across many French towns and cities. The riots started in the poorer suburbs of Paris before spreading more widely, leading to extensive destruction and the introduction of emergency security powers. Having been criticized for his silence during the riots, Chirac made his first formal speech on the subject as the disturbances subsided in mid-Nov. He confirmed that the government would extend the state of emergency by 3 months, but also pledged to improve life in the deprived suburbs. Acknowledging that the violence had highlighted a

'profound malaise' in France, he spoke of the need to recognise 'the diversity of French society'. There was further unrest in spring 2006 as new government proposals giving employers greater freedom to hire and fire young people triggered weeks of street demonstrations and strikes across the country, ultimately leading to the scrapping of the legislation.

In Sept. 2005 Chirac spent a few days in hospital after what officials called a vascular incident affecting his sight.

Later Life

On leaving office, Chirac was appointed a life-long member of the Constitutional Council of France. He also established the Jacques Chirac Foundation for Sustainable Development and Cultural Dialogue. Having lost his immunity from investigation, Chirac was questioned by police in connection with allegations that during his tenure as mayor of Paris the city authority was paying salaries to individuals not working for the city. On 7 March 2011 he was scheduled to stand trial on charges of embezzlement and breach of trust but hearings were suspended the next day following a legal challenge. He was the first current of former French head of state since the Second World War to stand trial. On 15 Dec. 2011 the Paris court declared Chirac guilty and gave him a 2-year suspended prison sentence for diverting public funds and abusing public confidence. Despite reiterating his innocence, the former French president announced that he would not seek appeal owing to ill health.

In Nov. 2009 the first volume of his memoirs was published to notable success.

Chissano, Joaquim (Mozambique)

Introduction

One of the founding members of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), Joaquim Chissano served as prime minister of the transitional government that led the country to independence in 1975, and was Mozambique's second president from 1986–2005. He was credited with transforming Mozambique from a war-torn state into one of Africa's more stable, modernising and democratic nations.

Early Life

Joaquim Alberto Chissano was born on 22 Oct. 1939 in the remote village of Malehice, Gaza Province, in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. He was the first black student to enrol at the Liceu Salazar school in Lourenco Marque (later the capital city, Maputo). Chissano joined the African Secondary School Students' Organization in Mozambique (NESAM), later becoming the group's leader. He went on to study medicine at the University of Lisbon in Portugal, where he continued his involvement in politics. His opposition to Portuguese colonialism brought him to the attention of the Portuguese secret police and he was one of several students smuggled out of the country in June 1961.

While in France in 1961, Chissano, with the help of fellow activist Eduardo Mondlane, formed and headed the National Union of Mozambican Students (UNEMO). The following year other liberation groups united with UNEMO to form FRELIMO, the Mozambique independence movement led by Mondlane. Chissano fought with FRELIMO in the Mozambique War of Independence, attaining the rank of major-general. Following the assassination of Mondlane in 1969, Chissano was appointed FRELIMO's chief representative in Tanzania and played a key role in reconciling the group's hard-line Marxists with its more moderate pragmatists.

He had a lead role in negotiating the 1974 Lusaka Agreement, which paved the way for Mozambique's independence on 25 June 1975. In Sept. 1974 he took office as prime minister of the transitional government. During his sole year as premier, he nationalised the medical and legal systems as well as agricultural estates, prompting many white professionals to leave the country.

In June 1975 Chissano was appointed foreign minister under Mozambique's first independent president, Samora Machel. Seeking aid from both capitalist and communist nations, the new government followed a policy of political non-alignment, which allowed for good relations with China, the USSR and many Western nations. Chissano continued to strengthen Mozambique's ties with the West and by 1984 the country had

become the world's largest recipient of US food aid. In Oct. 1986 Machel died in an air crash and the following month Chissano succeeded him as national president, head of FRELIMO and chief of the armed forces.

Career Peak

Chissano's presidency coincided with a devastating civil war between FRELIMO, the conservative Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) and the national armed forces. At the same time, Chissano was faced with a collapsing economy. He established an economic recovery programme, devalued the currency and secured a major IMF loan. He continued to attract foreign investment and negotiated debt reductions to alleviate the strain of payments to international lenders. Although Mozambique remained one of the world's poorest countries, poverty levels fell during his tenure.

In Oct. 1992 Chissano and Afonso Dhlakama, RENAMO's leader, signed the Rome General Peace Accords to bring an end to the civil war. A UN peacekeeping force oversaw a 2 year transition to democracy.

After the war Chissano implemented a shift from Marxist-Leninist ideology to multiparty democracy and within 2 years had organised Mozambique's first multi-party elections. He became the country's first democratically elected president in 1994 and won a second term in 1999.

From July 2003–July 2004 he served as chairman of the African Union. Refusing to cling to domestic power, his favoured successor, Armando Guebuza, won the elections of 2004 and Chissano left office in Feb. 2005 with his reputation intact.

Later Life

After relinquishing power Chissano established the Joaquim Chissano Foundation, a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of peace, economic development and Mozambican culture. He also led several international peace initiatives, serving as special envoy of the UN secretary general to Guinea-Bissau, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan.

In 2006 he was awarded the Chatham House Prize for his contribution to improving international relations and the following year won the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, an honour worth US\$5m. He sits on the board of several companies including the Harmony Gold Mining Co., Teal Exploration & Mining inc. and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Chrétien, Jean (Canada)

Introduction

Jean Chrétien served as prime minister from Nov. 1993 to Dec. 2003.

'Jean Chrétien in youth is small, skinny, deaf in one ear, deformed at the mouth, slightly dyslexic, poor of pocket and intellectually unadorned,' wrote biographer Lawrence Martin in the *Globe and Mail* before the 1997 Canadian election. However, from this inauspicious beginning, Jean Chrétien earned a reputation as an incisive and shrewd administrator and a man of the people, often receiving more public support than from his own party. He stepped down to allow his closest rival and one-time finance minister Paul Martin succeed him.

Early Life

Born on 11 Jan. 1934, the eighteenth of nineteen children in a working class family in Shawinigan, Quebec, Joseph-Jacques-Jean Chrétien inherited a passion for Liberal politics from his activist father and by the age of 15 was distributing pamphlets and attending rallies for the party. After attending the classical college in Trois-Rivières, Chrétien studied law at Laval University and, having married Aline Chaîné with whom he had three children, he was called to the bar in 1958.

By 1960 he was principal organizer for Jean Lesage, leader of the provincial Liberal party, standing for his first term in the House of Commons in 1963, representing the constituency of Saint-Maurice-Laflèche. He held several jobs in successive administrations including parliamentary secretary to the prime minister Lester Pearson in 1965, minister of state in 1967 and minister of national revenue in 1968.

After becoming minister of Indian affairs and northern development in 1968, one of his first tasks was to draft a policy paper on native issues. In 1972 he set up the Berger Commission to make recommendations on a proposed pipeline in the Mackenzie River Valley and later was the leading force behind the creation of ten new national parks. In 1977 he became the first French Canadian to become minister of finance, overseeing the removal of the wage and price controls that had been in effect since 1975.

As minister of justice and attorney general of Canada and minister for state for social development in 1980, he was responsible for supporting the 'no' campaign in the Quebec referendum on sovereignty. Despite popular support, in 1984 Chrétien narrowly lost to John Turner in a contest to succeed Pierre Trudeau as leader of the Liberal Party. Instead he became deputy prime minister and secretary of state for external affairs, before resigning his Commons seat in 1986.

After 4 years as a counsel with law firm Lang Michener Lawrence and Shaw, Chrétien returned to Parliament in 1990, defeating Paul Martin for the leadership of the party. He set about rebuilding the divided and demoralized Liberals and in Oct. 1993, with an electorate disillusioned by the Kim Campbell's governing Progressive Conservative Party, led the Liberals to a landslide victory.

Career Peak

His popularity remained high despite narrowly avoiding defeat in the 1995 referendum on Quebecois independence. As the champion of maintaining Canada's integrity he was criticized for not defeating the secessionists with a larger majority—50.1% rejected independence for Quebec. To secure further federal unity, Chrétien ensured the passage of the Clarity Act, that demands a 'clear majority' (considerably more than 50%) in support for Quebecois independence before the recognition from the federal government.

His credentials as a supporter of the welfare state were challenged after unpopular cuts in health and education transfer payments to the provinces. Winning a slim majority (with 155 out of 295 seats) in his second election in 1997 on the back of a booming economy, Chrétien oversaw the near total annihilation of the traditional Conservative opposition as a credible force. His government's ability to balance the budget gave Chrétien and his finance minister, Paul Martin, long-lasting fiscal credibility. Early elections were held in 2000, giving the Liberals an increased majority (a total of 170 seats), after pledges to increase spending after a series of austerity budgets.

Chrétien established a reputation in the international arena by renewing Canada's commitment to humanitarian intervention and the UN peacekeeping forces. His government made commitments to support development in Africa through humanitarian assistance, economic programmes and conflict management. In the aftermath of the 11 Sept. 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, the government explored new methods of intelligence sharing with the US authorities and agreed to cooperate on border control and immigration policies. Nevertheless, in Sept. 2002 Chrétien objected to unilateral US attacks on Iraq and urged cooperation with the UN Security Council. His refusal to support US President George W. Bush in the invasion of Iraq soured relations with the Bush administration. Despite popular support in Canada for his anti-war stance, Chrétien was criticized by the opposition for putting Canada's relationship with the USA in jeopardy.

Chrétien's position within the Liberal Party was less secure than in the country. His background and opinions were markedly different to the increasingly liberal and affluent party membership. His chief rival, Paul Martin, was popular as a successful businessman and for his record as finance minister. When Martin was dismissed from the government for launching an unsuccessful leadership challenge in June 2002, dissent within the party was halted but only temporarily. In Aug. 2002 Chrétien announced that he would not remain for another election, effectively paving the way for Martin to succeed him as prime minister. Martin was elected with 94% of the party vote in Nov. 2003 and became prime minister on the 12 Dec. 2003.

Christie, Perry (The Bahamas)

Introduction

Perry Christie was elected prime minister in May 2012. He had previously served as premier from 2002–07.

Early Life

Perry Gladstone Christie was born in Nassau on 21 Aug. 1943. He was schooled in New Providence before moving to the UK, where he graduated from Birmingham University in 1969 and was called to the Bar at London's Inner Temple. He represented The Bahamas in the triple jump at the 1962 Central American and Caribbean Games.

Christie was appointed to the Bahamian Senate in Nov. 1974 by Prime Minister Lynden Pindling. He became head of the national gaming board in Jan. 1977 and in the same year successfully stood in the general election as the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) candidate for the Centreville constituency. He was subsequently named minister of health and national insurance and after the 1982 election took over the tourism portfolio. However, he left the government 2 years later amid allegations that several of his party colleagues had taken bribes. Reclaiming his parliamentary seat in 1987 as an independent, he rejoined the PLP in March 1990 and was appointed minister for agriculture, trade and industry.

At the general election of 1992 the PLP lost power for the first time since independence, giving way to the Free National Movement. In Jan. 1993 Christie was elected PLP deputy leader. He succeeded Pindling as leader in April 1997 and led the party to a landslide victory at the polls in May 2002.

In government the PLP was dogged by scandal, including the resignation of the immigration minister, Shane Gibson, over charges that he expedited the residency application of the actress and model Anna Nicole Smith. At parliamentary elections on 4 May 2007 the PLP was defeated by the Free National Movement but Christie remained at the head of the party. As leader of the opposition he proposed a referendum on the inauguration of a national lottery as a means of tackling mounting national debt.

He campaigned for the 2012 election on a platform of lowering the cost of electricity, helping struggling homeowners and championing national health insurance.

Career Peak

Sworn into office on 8 May 2012, Christie pledged to tackle unemployment (which had risen to 15%), address the escalating crime rate, and diversify the economy to reduce its dependency on tourism and the country's status as an offshore financial centre. He also appointed a constitutional commission to advise on possible amendments to the constitution, which has remained unchanged since the country gained independence in 1973.

In Jan. 2013 proposals to legalize gambling outside of casinos and to create a national lottery were rejected in a referendum.

Christie left office in May 2017 after the defeat of the PLP in the parliamentary elections. He was succeeded by Hubert Minnis.

Christofias, Dimitris (Cyprus)

Introduction

Dimitris Christofias became the European Union's only communist head of state when he was sworn in as president in Feb. 2008. Christofias, the leader of the far-left Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL), was elected after two rounds of presidential elections. He vowed to pursue talks with the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' ('TRNC') to find a solution to the division of the island.

Early Life

Christofias was born on 29 Aug. 1946 in Kato Dikomo, Kyrenia province, which is now under Turkish control. His father was a member of the Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO), an umbrella organization of trade unions in Cyprus with close ties to the AKEL. Christofias attended the Nicosia Commercial Lyceum where he joined the Pancyprian United Student Organization (PEOM) at the age of 14. In 1969 he became a member of AKEL, PEO and the United Democratic Youth Organization (EDON; AKEL's youth wing). At the fifth congress of EDON held the same year, he was elected to the central council. From 1969–74 Christofias studied at the Institute of Social Sciences and the Academy of Social Sciences in Moscow, where he graduated with a doctorate in history.

On his return to Cyprus in 1974, Christofias was elected to the post of central organizing secretary of EDON. In 1976 he was elected member of the Nicosia-Kyrenia district committee of AKEL and the following year became general secretary of EDON. He was appointed to the AKEL central committee in 1982 and was elected a member of the political bureau in 1986. In 1987 he resigned as general secretary of EDON to take on his new post on the secretariat of the AKEL central committee and in April 1988 was made general secretary, a post he still holds.

In the 1991 parliamentary elections Christofias was voted into the House of Representatives, winning re-election in 1996 and 2001. On 7 June 2001 he became president of the House and retained the post in 2006. In his capacity as AKEL general secretary and president of the House, Christofias was a member of the national council, the advisory body to the president on the 'Cyprus problem'.

Ahead of the 2008 presidential election Christofias campaigned on finding a solution to reunite the divided island—despite backing the 2004 rejection of a UN reunification plan. In the first round of voting he came second with 33.3% of the vote, displacing the incumbent Tassos Papadopoulos of DIKO (Democratic Party). In the second round he received the support of DIKO and defeated right-winger Ioannis Kasoulidis, obtaining 53.4%.

Career Peak

Despite widespread reservations about his communist background, Christofias promised to preserve the country's market economy. He also quickly kick-started talks with Northern Cyprus, meeting Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat in March 2008. Agreement was reached on reopening a key crossing in the divided capital, Nicosia, and they declared their intention to relaunch formal reunification talks. Meeting again in May, they acknowledged their differences but reaffirmed their commitment to 'a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality'. Following a further review in July, Christofias and Talat met again in Nicosia in Sept. to begin direct intensive negotiations.

Substantive progress was nevertheless slow, reflecting the underlying fragility of the peace process and the complexity of the issues of contention, such as governance and power-sharing, territorial adjustment, property ownership and security guarantees. In addition, parliamentary and presidential elections in the 'TRNC' in April 2009 and April 2010 respectively, were won by the right-wing nationalist National Unity Party and its hardline leader Derviş Eroğlu, casting doubts on the prospects for further progress towards a reunification settlement.

Parliamentary elections for the House of Representatives in May 2011, which resulted in a narrow victory for the right-wing opposition DISI party, reduced Christofias' room for manoeuvre in negotiations. His political position was further undermined in Aug. when DIKO withdrew from the coalition government. At the same time, the already strained public finances came under increasing pressure in July following a munitions blast that knocked out the country's main power station, and in the same month Cyprus' international credit rating was downgraded.

The impasse in communal negotiations persisted in 2012. In April the UN acknowledged that progress to date was insufficient to warrant holding an international conference to finalize a durable settlement. Moreover, the prospects for any further political advance were complicated by the Cypriot assumption of the rotating presidency of the European Union from July and by Greek Cypriot presidential elections scheduled for Feb. 2013. In Nov. 2012 the Cypriot government agreed a financial bailout with the EU and International Monetary Fund in support of the flagging economy.

Christofias did not seek re-election at the presidential elections held in Feb. 2013.

Churchill, Winston (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Winston Churchill, politician, writer and orator, served two terms as British prime minister. His first term, 1940–45, was as head of the coalition government during World War II. During this testing time he was to display

considerable personal skills and qualities that played a significant role in uniting the British people for the duration of the war and which were essential to Allied victory. His second term of office was between 1951 and 1955 as head of a Conservative administration. His contributions during World War II established him as one of the most highly regarded figures of British history.

Early Life

Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born on 30 Nov. 1874 at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire to Lord Randolph Churchill (descendant of the 1st Duke of Marlborough) and Jennie Jerome, who came from a wealthy American background. Winston was schooled at Harrow but was a lonely boy who failed to shine. After two unsuccessful applications, he was accepted into the Royal Military College at Sandhurst and in the late 1890s he saw active service in Cuba, India and South Africa. He also wrote dispatches from these areas for various newspapers. In 1899 he resigned his commission and returned to England to pursue his interests in writing and politics.

He became Conservative MP for Oldham in 1900 at the second attempt and, despite a speech impediment, began to make a name for himself as a talented speech-maker, though he was less successful as a debater. Unhappy at Conservative proposals for tariff reform, he defected to the Liberals in 1904. A close ally of future prime minister David Lloyd George, he was appointed President of the Board of Trade in 1908, the same year he married Clementine Hozier and won a seat in Dundee. In response to the House of Lords refusal of the budget in 1909, Churchill clashed with the upper house and, allied with his social reforms such as the introduction of labour exchanges, he became something of a working class hero for a short while. He was appointed Home Secretary in 1910 and First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911, where he began building up naval forces in response to German competition for dominance at sea.

World War I did not come as a surprise to him, but his involvement in the ill-fated Dardanelles and later Gallipoli campaigns led to his demotion under the coalition government of Herbert Asquith. In Nov. 1915 Churchill resigned from the government and saw active service in France before returning as an independent MP in June 1916. In July 1917 he was made minister for munitions, a largely administrative role, but returned to frontline government in Jan. 1919 when he was made Secretary of State for War. He moved to the Colonial Office in 1921 and in 1922, in the face of renewed Turkish aggression in the Dardanelles, he encouraged a firm response. However, he misjudged the mood of a war-weary public and, as the coalition crumbled, Churchill's reputation took a further knock.

He lost his seat at the 1922 elections but, after two unsuccessful campaigns elsewhere, he took Epping in Nov. 1924 as a 'Constitutionalist'. Stanley Baldwin, the Conservative prime minister, offered him the post of Chancellor, but his reintroduction of the gold standard led to an economic crisis and his handling of the 1926 general strike affected his popularity still further. He resigned from the cabinet in 1929 and was out of office for 10 years. Baldwin and Chamberlain both regarded him as too dangerous a maverick to include in government, a belief not unsupported by his championing of Edward VIII during the 1936 abdication crisis. He spent much of the decade writing, but he was also vociferous in his opposition to Nazi Germany and the policy of appeasement, even as Chamberlain was guaranteeing 'peace in our time'. When Britain declared war with Germany on 3 Sept. 1939 Churchill was again appointed First Lord of the Admiralty.

Career Peak

Chamberlain resigned following the German invasion of Norway in 1940, and despite high profile opposition from the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, Churchill emerged as the choice to head an all-party coalition. Backed by a remarkably united cabinet and parliament, he determined to defeat Hitler at virtually any cost. To this end he maintained good relations with the US, whose involvement he realized would be essential to eventual victory. Throughout crisis after crisis (the Dunkirk evacuations, the fall of France, the Battle of Britain) Churchill's mastery of oratory and his unique leadership skills ensured that the war effort did not falter.

Though profoundly critical of Communism, the invasion of the USSR in 1941 led Churchill to seek out an alliance with Stalin, which was achieved in May 1942. A pact was also struck with American President Franklin D. Roosevelt following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the 'grand alliance' of the USA, USSR and UK came into being. The fortunes of the war continued to fluctuate. Germany secured North Africa in 1942 and took the war into Russia in 1943, but by the time of the allied D-Day landings in June 1944 the Soviet forces were also advancing and victory was in sight.

Relations had not always been easy with Roosevelt and Stalin and when the three leaders met at Yalta in 1945 to discuss the final stages of the war and the post-war zones of occupation, Churchill was aware of the problems that lay ahead. But he could do little to prevent the threat of Soviet expansion. Germany surrendered on 8 May 1945 and the war finished with Japan's surrender on 2 Sept.

Churchill lost the general election of July 1945 to the Labour party, who had captured the public mood with promises of social reform. In Oct. 1951 Churchill was re-elected Prime Minister. His second premiership was more concerned with foreign than with domestic issues. He approved the construction of a British atom bomb but before this could come to fruition he resigned as prime minister on 5 April 1955. Having rejected a peerage, he remained an MP until 1964.

Later Life

Churchill was made a Knight of the Garter in 1953 and also received the Nobel Prize for Literature. As a writer and historian, Churchill was responsible for many works including the monumental *The Second World War* and *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*. In 1963 he was given honorary American citizenship. He died in London on 24 Jan. 1965 and was honoured with a full state funeral. Churchill's skills and versatility led to a long and varied career that was not always harmonious and error-free. However, at the time of World War II, when the need for a strong, competent and charismatic leader was at its strongest, he proved himself unrivalled. At a memorial service on 29 Jan. 1965, American statesman Adlai Stevenson paid tribute to 'the voice that led nations, raised armies, inspired victories and blew fresh courage into the hearts of men'.

Ciampi, Carlo Azeglio (Italy)

Introduction

With no party affiliation, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi was brought into politics from his position as bank governor of the Bank of Italy, where he had worked for 47 years, to be prime minister of a caretaker government in 1993–94, a time of corruption scandals in Italy. He brought public expenditure under control and advanced the privatization of state assets. From 1996–99 he served as treasury minister, overseeing Italy's success in meeting the economic criteria for membership of the single European currency. In May 1999 he was elected president of the Italian Republic. His term ended on 15 May 2005.

Early Life

Ciampi was born in Livorno on 9 Dec. 1920. He obtained an arts degree and diploma before serving in the Italian army (and winning the Military Cross) in the Second World War. After the war he changed academic direction to study law, graduating from the University of Pisa in 1946. That year he joined the Bank of Italy and worked in a number of branch offices with administrative and supervisory functions. In 1960 he moved to the research department, of which he became director in 1970. Thereafter, Ciampi progressed to secretary-general of the Bank in 1973, deputy director-general in 1976, director-general in 1978, and then, in Oct. 1979, to Bank governor, a post he retained until 1993. He also served as chairman from 1979 of the Ufficio Italiano dei Cambi.

Career Peak

Ciampi agreed to be prime minister for 1 year from April 1993, overseeing a time of political and economic turbulence in Italy. In order to meet the economic criteria for economic and monetary union set out in the 1992 Maastricht treaty, his government pursued a vigorous programme of privatization. From 1994 he served as vice-president of the Bank for International Settlements, before returning to government as treasury minister in Romani Prodi's centre-left coalition following elections in April 1996. Widely respected in international banking circles, Ciampi was responsible for restructuring the public finances and enabling Italy to qualify for membership of the single European currency. When Massimo D'Alema replaced Prodi as

prime minister in Oct. 1998, Ciampi was asked to continue in office. He was elected president in May 1999, securing over two-thirds of the electoral college votes in the first ballot. He advocated the need for Italy to move to a bipolar system of government, with stable majorities, and institutional and structural reforms to improve the performance of the Italian economy.

In May 2006 attempts were made by parliament to persuade Ciampi to stand for a second term as president. These were rejected by Ciampi and he tendered his resignation on 3 May. He was succeeded by Giorgio Napolitano on 15 May 2006.

Later Life

Ciampi died aged 95 in Sept. 2016.

Cioloș, Dacian (Romania)

Introduction

Dacian Cioloș became prime minister on 17 Nov. 2015. A former European Union commissioner, he was appointed after his predecessor, Victor Ponta, resigned in the wake of protests over the circumstances of a nightclub fire that left 63 dead. Cioloș, a political independent who specializes in agriculture, leads a technocrat government tasked with restoring public confidence in the state.

Early Life

Dacian Cioloș was born on 27 July 1969 in Zalău, in the northwest of Romania, and graduated in horticultural engineering from the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Cluj-Napoca. He undertook postgraduate studies in France at the École Nationale Supérieure Agronomique in Rennes and later at the University of Montpellier, where he gained a doctorate.

Before entering politics, Cioloș worked as a consultant on several rural development projects as Romania transitioned to a market economy. In 2002 he was tasked with managing an agricultural programme designed by the European Commission to assist countries preparing to join the EU. In Jan. 2005 he was made an adviser to Romania's agriculture minister, and also served as the country's spokesman on the EU Council's special committee on agriculture. He was appointed minister of agriculture in Oct. 2007, after Decebal Traian Remeș resigned over a corruption scandal, serving in the post until the parliamentary elections of Dec. 2008.

In Feb. 2010 Cioloș was approved as the commissioner for agriculture under European Commission president José Manuel Barroso. In the course of his 4 year term he led a major reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, as well as negotiating a series of international trade agreements on behalf of the EU. In July 2015 he was named special adviser on food security to the new European Commission president, Jean-Claude Juncker.

The high death toll resulting from a fire at a Bucharest nightclub on 30 Oct. 2015 prompted thousands of people throughout Romania to protest against civic corruption. Prime Minister Victor Ponta, who was under investigation at the time for alleged corruption, was forced to step down. With public opinion ranged against the political classes, President Klaus Iohannis appointed Cioloș as his successor.

Career Peak

Although a political independent, Cioloș was often been aligned with the centre-right European People's Party, which first nominated him for a job at the European Commission. His appointment as prime minister was supported by both the ruling Social Democrats and opposition conservative parties, and his cabinet won parliamentary approval by 389 votes to 115 on 16 Nov. 2015.

Cioloș led a cabinet of 21 technocrats, which included experts on the EU and leaders from the private sector. He was charged with restoring public confidence in the government by implementing institutional reform and measures against corruption.

Following parliamentary elections in Dec. 2016 in which the Social Democratic Party won a convincing victory Cioloș was succeeded as prime minister by Sorin Grindeanu.

Clark, Helen (New Zealand)

Introduction

Formerly a university lecturer and the country's second successive female premier, Clark was elected leader of the centre-left Labour Party in Dec. 1993 and came to power as prime minister following the Nov. 1999 election. She won another two terms before Labour lost the general election of Nov. 2008 to the National Party.

Early Life

Born into a farming family in Hamilton on 26 Feb. 1950, Clark was educated at secondary level in Auckland before reading politics at the University of Auckland. Between 1973–75, while a junior lecturer at the university, she was also president of the Labour Party's Youth Council, and served on the Auckland Labour Regional Council. In 1975 she unsuccessfully contested the safe National Party seat of Piako, and in 1976 represented Labour at an international socialist congress. Clark returned to the University of Auckland to lecture in political studies from 1977–81, during which time she was secretary of the Labour Women's Council (1977). She joined the party's Executive in 1978 and became an MP at Labour's 1981 election victory.

In 1985 Clark represented New Zealand at the United Nations conference in Nairobi marking the close of the Decade for Women. As chair of the foreign affairs and defence select committee between 1984–87, and of 1984s ad hoc disarmament and arms control select committee, her promotion of international nuclear disarmament earned her the Danish Peace Foundation's 1986 peace prize. During this parliamentary term, Labour introduced 'nuclear free' legislation.

Following the party's re-election in 1987, Clark was appointed to the cabinet, initially as conservation minister (Aug. 1987–Jan. 1989) and housing minister (Aug. 1987–Aug. 1989), and then as health minister (Jan. 1989–Oct. 1990) and labour minister (Aug. 1989–Oct. 1990). Her responsibilities during this period included chairing the cabinet's social equity committee, and membership of its economic development and employment committee. As health minister, Clark promoted tobacco control legislation.

Aug. 1989 marked her appointment as deputy prime minister, and the following year she joined the Privy Council; she was the first New Zealand woman to hold these positions. Labour's defeat in the 1990 election placed Clark as deputy leader of the opposition. Until replacing Mike Moore as opposition leader on 1 Dec. 1993 she was additionally Labour's spokesperson for health and labour, and sat on the social services and labour select committees.

Career Peak

Clark was elected prime minister on 27 Nov. 1999, when Labour, in partnership with the Alliance Party and supported by the Green Party, won 39% of the vote. She also became minister for arts, culture and heritage, and assumed the ministerial services and security intelligence service portfolios. Advocating a democratic socialist 'third way', her key policies included the allocation of NZ\$142m. to the arts over a 4 year period; the Employment Relations Act 2000 (intended to foster 'good faith' employment); a 5 year NZ\$187m. biodiversity conservation strategy; the establishment of an industrial apprenticeship scheme; financial support for Maori land claims; and the implementation in 2001 of a Disability Strategy and Positive Aging Strategy.

In 2002 Clark won a second term in office and formed a centre-left government with the Progressive Party. Then, at the following parliamentary elections in Sept. 2005, Labour was again returned to power, but by a narrow margin against a resurgent National Party under Don Brash's leadership. Clark formed a new minority coalition with the Progressive Party, with conditional support from the centrist United Future New Zealand, the populist New Zealand First Party and the Green Party.

In mid-2006 her government authorized the deployment of New Zealand troops in an intervention force to Timor-Leste to quell violent unrest. In Oct. 2007 police carried out anti-terrorist raids in North Island, citing a threat to public safety from Maori activists and a more specific threat to the prime minister.

At the general election of Nov. 2008 John Key replaced Clark as prime minister, having led the National Party to victory.

Later Life

In April 2009 Clark was appointed Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the first woman to hold the post. She also became Chair of the UN Development Group. In Feb. 2010 she was awarded the Order of New Zealand, the country's highest honour.

Clark, Joe (Canada)

Introduction

Charles Joseph Clark was prime minister of Canada from June 1979 to March 1980, the youngest ever to hold the post. Clark headed a minority Progressive Conservative government for 6 months before his government fell on a budget question and in the general elections that followed was defeated by Pierre Trudeau's Liberals.

Early Life

Born in High River, Alberta on 5 June 1939, Charles Joseph Clark was the son of a newspaper owner and editor. Raised and educated in Alberta, where he obtained degrees in history and political science before studying law at Dalhousie University, Clark worked as a journalist from 1964–66 before first becoming involved in mainstream politics as director of Peter Lougheed's campaign to become premier in Alberta and then as executive assistant to Robert L. Stanfield, the leader of the opposition in Ottawa from 1967–70.

Clark acquired a reputation as an expert political tactician and entered parliament as a Progressive Conservative MP for Rocky Mountain Riding in 1972.

He became party leader in 1976, beating political heavyweights such as Claude Wagner and Flora MacDonald, and set about reuniting the badly split party. Having overhauled the fundraising structure and introduced executive caucus meetings to concentrate attacks on government policy, Clark set about challenging the charismatic Pierre Trudeau's premiership.

Despite being lampooned in sections of the media as awkward and inept, Clark went on to defeat Trudeau at the May 1979 general election. Having won significant numbers of seats in Ontario and Western Canada, the Conservatives fell only six seats short of an overall majority, proceeding to govern as a minority.

Career Peak

Clark's period in office proved unpopular with a stringent budget of program cuts and tax increases fostering little parliamentary support outside the party, forcing a general election in Feb. 1980, which returned Trudeau's Liberals to power with a majority government. Clark's 272 day government turned out to be the shortest of any elected administration in Canada's history.

Clark remained as Conservative leader until 1983, when he was defeated at a leadership selection meeting by Brian Mulroney. Clark was re-elected as head of the Progressive Conservative party in 1998, the first Canadian leader to be directly elected by the grassroots members of a federal Party.

As one of the first leaders to recognize that Canada had to be prepared for the interdependent, global economy of the future, Joe Clark helped to initiate both the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement and the launch of the Uruguay Round/GATT negotiations. His other achievements as Minister of External Affairs included a new Asia-Pacific focus for foreign policy, a larger role for public input into the development of foreign policy, and Canada's entry into the Organisation of American States and La Francophonie, as well as the Canadian Freedom of Information Act, drafted when Clark was prime minister and kept by the incoming Liberal government.

Later Life

Despite the defeat, Clark continued to maintain a high profile political life with his reputation for integrity and competence enabling him to successfully hold the post of foreign minister from 1984–91 and Minister for Constitutional Affairs from 1991–93.

After 5 years out of politics, Joe Clark returned as leader of the Progressive Conservatives in Nov. 1998, returning to the House of Commons in Sept. 2000 after winning a by-election in the riding of Kings-Hants in Nova Scotia.

He was re-elected again 2 months later in the general federal election as the Member of Parliament for the riding of Calgary Centre in Alberta.

Clegg, Nick (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Nick Clegg succeeded Sir Menzies Campbell as leader of the Liberal Democrats in Dec. 2007. Clegg had served as an MEP for 5 years and as an MP for two, and was widely seen as representing a new generation. He identified his priorities as defending civil liberties, democratizing public services and safeguarding the environment. In the 2010 general election Clegg's public profile was raised in a series of televised leader debates in which he was credited with outperforming his rival candidates at times but this success failed to translate into increased parliamentary representation. With the absence of a majority for any of the parties, Clegg entered coalition negotiations with the Conservatives and on 11 May a joint government was announced with David Cameron as prime minister and Clegg as deputy prime minister.

Early Life

Nicholas William Peter Clegg was born on 7 Jan. 1967 in Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire, to a Dutch mother and half-Russian father. Brought up bilingually in Dutch and English, he attended Westminster School in London and from 1986–89 studied archaeology and anthropology at Robinson College, Cambridge University. After studying political philosophy at the University of Minnesota in 1989, he worked as an intern on *The Nation* magazine in New York. Clegg then moved to Brussels as an intern in the G24 Co-ordination Unit, administering aid to the countries of the former USSR. He obtained an MA in European Affairs from the College of Europe, Bruges in 1992.

After a brief period in journalism, Clegg worked for the European Commission from 1994–96, where he was again involved in developing aid projects to former Soviet Bloc countries. In 1996 he became policy adviser to EC vice president and trade commissioner Sir Leon Brittan and was closely involved in EC negotiations over Chinese and Russian accession to the World Trade Organization.

In 1999 Clegg was elected Liberal Democrat MEP for the East Midlands constituency. He served till 2004, gaining a reputation as a supporter of devolution and market liberalism within the EU. He was appointed trade and industry spokesman for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, co-founded a campaign for parliamentary reform, and was active in promoting legislation to open telephone networks to competition.

In May 2005 he was elected Liberal Democrat MP for Sheffield Hallam and was appointed spokesperson on Europe. Following Charles Kennedy's resignation in Jan. 2006, Clegg supported Menzies Campbell's successful leadership bid and was made home affairs spokesperson. He led the Liberal Democrats' campaign against compulsory identity cards and argued for decentralizing reform of the criminal justice system. In Oct. 2007 Campbell resigned the party leadership and on 18 Dec. 2007 Clegg was elected to succeed him, narrowly defeating rival Chris Huhne.

Career Peak

In March 2008 Clegg survived an early rebellion when 13 of his MPs defied his order to abstain on a Conservative proposal to force a referendum on the EU Lisbon Treaty. In June 2008 he led his party's campaign against the extension to 42 days of the UK limit of pre-charge detention for suspected terrorists. At the general election of May 2010 Clegg campaigned to raise the initial income tax threshold to £10,000 and introduce an electoral system based on proportional representation, as well as scrapping the Trident missile defence system. During the televised leader debates, his performances were widely acclaimed and opinion polls showed an increase in Liberal Democrat support. However, the party came third in the polls with 23.0% of the vote and lost five seats, bringing their total down to 57. Despite their poor electoral performance, the Liberal Democrats were instrumental in establishing a new government when coalition talks began in the absence of any party gaining a

majority. Clegg was courted by both the Conservatives and the Labour Party but eventually agreed a deal with David Cameron to form a joint government. He was appointed deputy prime minister and four other Liberal Democrats were allocated ministerial posts in the cabinet.

Within the coalition Clegg pushed for electoral reform but in the nationwide referendum on the voting system in May 2011 Britain rejected the Alternative Vote system. On the same day the Liberal Democrats suffered heavy defeats in English local elections and the Scottish parliamentary election. The coalition was put under strain in Dec. 2011 when Clegg criticized Cameron's decision to veto EU treaty changes. The government's controversial policies to tackle the UK's deficit contributed to further defeats for the Liberal Democrats in the May 2012 local elections.

The Liberal Democrats lost ten of 11 seats at the 2014 European Parliament elections, prompting sections of Clegg's party to call for his resignation. However, Clegg promised to continue in his position as leader.

Following the Liberal Democrats' crushing defeat at the 2015 general election, Clegg stepped down as party leader.

Clerides, Glafcos (Cyprus)

Introduction

Clerides has been the dominant figure in Cypriot politics since the country gained independence in 1960. A member of the House of Representatives from 1960–76 and from 1981–93, he was elected president of the Republic in Feb. 1993 (having assumed that role briefly in an acting capacity from July–Dec. 1974 during Archbishop Makarios' exile). He was also the founder and leader of the Democratic Rally, the main party in government from 1985–2001. Clerides was a staunch supporter of the UN formula for reuniting Cyprus as a bizonal and bicomunal federation and of Cyprus' application for membership of the European Union (EU). He was defeated in presidential elections in Feb. 2003, shortly before Cyprus was due to give its verdict on UN proposals for reunification.

Early Life

Born in Nicosia on 24 April 1919, Clerides was the son of an eminent Cypriot barrister. After his formal education at the Pancyprion Gymnasium, Nicosia, and in the UK, he volunteered for the British Royal Air Force in 1939. Shot down over Germany in 1942 during a bombing raid on Hamburg, he was captured and, despite several escape attempts, remained a prisoner until the end of the war. Having returned to the UK to study law at the University of London's King's College, he was awarded an LLB degree in 1948. Called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1951, he practiced law in Cyprus until 1960. He often represented Cypriots before the British colonial courts and was also responsible for drawing up documentation about alleged British breaches of human rights.

In 1959–60 he was a pivotal Greek Cypriot figure in the Zurich and London negotiations leading to independence and the adoption of a new power-sharing constitution. In the transitional period to independence he also served as minister of justice. Clerides backed Archbishop Makarios in 1959 for the presidency (despite his own father's proposed candidacy). In July 1960, representing the Patriotic Front for the Nicosia District, he was elected to the House of Representatives, which in turn elected him as its president the following month (a post he held until July 1976).

From 1968 Clerides represented the Greek Cypriot community in the UN-sponsored intercommunal talks with the Turkish Cypriots. However, policy differences with Archbishop Makarios led to his resignation in 1976, when he launched a new right-wing political party, the Democratic Rally Party (DISY). Under his leadership DISY was the largest parliamentary party by 1985. Clerides stood unsuccessfully in the next two presidential elections. In 1983 he was defeated in the first round (with 34% of the vote) by the incumbent President Kyprianou; and in 1988 he lost in the second round, winning 48.4% of the vote, against the independent candidate George Vassiliou.

Career Peak

Clerides defeated Vassiliou in the second round of voting in the Feb. 1993 presidential election. His victory (with 50.3% of the vote) was attributed

partly to the transfer of support from other parties opposed to a 1992 UN proposal for making Cyprus a federal state. Despite campaigning for reunification, Clerides distanced himself from the UN plan. After the election, the UN-sponsored negotiations with Turkish Cypriots to implement confidence-building measures resumed but failed to produce any positive results. Having been narrowly re-elected in the presidential run-off in Feb. 1998 (this time with 50.8% of the vote) Clerides formed an all-party national government to begin accession talks with the EU, describing membership as 'a catalyst for better or worse' in terms of ending the island's divisions. In 1998, responding to international pressure, Clerides agreed to shelve a controversial plan to deploy Russian anti-aircraft missiles.

In a potential diplomatic breakthrough, Clerides and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş, met face to face for the first time in 4 years in Jan. 2002, agreeing to continuing negotiations. The UN proposed a plan under which Cyprus would be run as a 'common' state with two 'component' states, along the lines of Switzerland and its cantons. Although resolutely opposed it, Clerides gave it a more favourable response. However in the presidential elections of Feb. 2003, Clerides lost to Tassos Papadopoulos of the Democratic Party after one round of voting. Papadopoulos took over negotiations with Denktaş and the UN but failed to reach an agreement by the 10 March deadline. He died at the age of 94 on 15 Nov. 2013.

Clinton, William J. 'Bill' (United States of America)

Introduction

The 42nd president of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton served for two terms from 1993–2001. Only the second president to be impeached, Clinton was charged with obstruction of justice and perjury over his attempted concealment of an extra-marital affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. He was acquitted by the senate in 1999. Despite media fixation with his private life, Clinton oversaw a period of economic prosperity, helped expand the concept of free trade and helped broker several peace agreements in Europe and the Middle East.

Early Life

Born William Jefferson Blythe IV on 19 Aug. 1946 in Hope, Arkansas, Clinton's father died in a car accident before his son's birth. His mother Virginia Dell Blythe remarried to Roger Clinton, who she would later divorce and then remarry. Clinton studied international affairs at Georgetown University, graduating in 1968, and worked as an intern for Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas. Clinton was firmly opposed to the Vietnam War and was able to defer being drafted after he won a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford University in England. After returning to the United States Clinton enrolled at Yale Law School. He graduated in 1973 and became a teacher at the University of Arkansas School of Law for the next 3 years. In 1975 Clinton married Hillary Rodham, a law student he had met at Yale.

Clinton failed in a bid to be elected to the House of Representatives in 1974 and campaigned for Democratic presidential hopefuls George McGovern (1972) and James E. Carter (1976). In 1976 he was elected attorney general of Arkansas. Two years later he became the United States' youngest governor after a successful campaign in Arkansas. However his policies (which included raising car tax) and abrasive style did not prove popular and he failed in his bid for re-election in 1980. The same year his wife gave birth to the couple's only child, Chelsea.

In 1982, Clinton regained the governor's office and would go on to serve a total of five successive terms in office. As governor Clinton helped raise the standard of education in Arkansas and by 1992 the state had the highest high school graduation rate of any southern state. He also oversaw a 61% increase in state income and several welfare reforms including job creation and training programmes and the introduction of school-based health clinics. In 1990, Clinton was elected chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council and began planning a bid for the presidency.

Clinton announced his candidacy for the White House towards the end of 1991 and was seen as the party's frontrunner. His campaign was nearly ruined by claims of marital infidelity made before the New Hampshire primary, but a

television interview rallied Clinton's support, earning him the sobriquet the 'comeback kid'. He secured the Democratic nomination in June 1992 at the national party convention in New York City and selected Al Gore of Tennessee as his running mate.

Clinton fought an inspired and energetic campaign against incumbent president George H. W. Bush. Despite accusations of draft-dodging, further speculation about his private life and allegations of financial impropriety, Clinton defeated Bush and independent candidate Ross Perot, securing 43% of the popular vote and 370 electoral college votes to Bush's 168.

Career Peak

On his inauguration, Clinton inherited a Democrat-controlled Congress but found legislative success hard to come by in his first 2 years in office. His campaign promise to end discrimination against homosexuals in the military was opposed by Congress and criticised by prominent conservatives. A compromise policy was introduced which seemed to satisfy neither party. Clinton's proposed system of universal health insurance and a campaign finance reform initiative were also thwarted.

Economically Clinton enjoyed more success, securing the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which created a free-trade zone between the United States, Canada and Mexico. In his first term Clinton cut the United States budget deficit by 50% and initiated important anti-crime measures, as well as the Family and Medical Leave Act. The Clinton administration was praised for promoting women and members of the ethnic minorities to important posts in his administration, including, in his second term, the appointment of Madeleine Albright as the first-ever female secretary of state.

In foreign affairs, Clinton enjoyed some notable successes. In 1993 he played host to Palestinian Liberation Organisation chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the White House when they signed an accord granting a measure of Palestinian self-rule in Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Clinton sent peacekeeping troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Haiti. In 1995 the presidents of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina signed a peace pact at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio. Clinton normalised relations with Vietnam, ending a trade embargo against the Asian state, and improved relations and trade links with China after meeting President Jiang Zemin in New York in 1995. Clinton maintained the hard-line stance against Iraq formulated by his predecessor, sending forces to protect Kuwait in 1994. Two years later he ordered air strikes on Baghdad after Iraqi forces attacked the Kurdish city of Irbil.

In 1994 the Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress. The House of Representatives, led by Newt Gingrich, adopted a confrontational stance towards the Clinton presidency. A year later a congressional investigation began into the land deals made by the president and his wife in Arkansas in the 1980s in what became known as the 'Whitewater affair'. Nevertheless, continued economic growth served to galvanise support for the president and he was re-elected in 1996 after defeating Republican opponent Bob Dole by 379 electoral college votes to 159.

In his second term Clinton took advantage of the favourable economic climate to secure congressional approval for a tax cut, the first in the United States since 1981, and other measures intended to reduce the country's budget deficit. At the same time Clinton introduced a welfare reform bill, negotiated an increase in the minimum wage and oversaw a 30-year low in national unemployment figures. In 1998 the United States had a federal budget surplus of \$70 bn., the first surplus since 1969.

Clinton continued to play an active role in foreign affairs during his second term in office. In 1996 and 1998 he ordered air strikes against Iraq for contravening the terms of the treaty that had ended the Persian Gulf War and for failing to cooperate with United Nations' weapons inspectors. Clinton authorised the firing of cruise missiles at targets in Sudan and Afghanistan in 1998 in response to intelligence reports linking the bombing of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya to a terrorist network controlled by Osama bin Laden. The president took an active interest in trying to bring peace to Northern Ireland, with American mediators helping broker the Good Friday agreement in 1998. In 1999, a Clinton-led NATO began a campaign of air strikes against Yugoslavia when the country's leaders refused to end a campaign of violence against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. The air strikes ended when Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic agreed to withdraw his forces from Kosovo and allow an international peacekeeping force to be established there.

Despite his foreign policy and domestic economic successes Clinton's second term in office was overshadowed by revelations about his private life.

In 1998 he settled a 4-year long sexual harassment case brought against him by paying Arkansas State employee Paula Jones \$850,000. Meanwhile from Jan. 1998 the Whitewater investigations expanded to focus on Clinton's alleged extramarital relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Clinton denied the accusation under oath but by Aug. the emergence of further evidence forced him to admit an 'inappropriate relationship'. This admission left Clinton open to charges of perjury and on 9 Sept. independent counsel Kenneth Starr delivered a report to the House of Representatives that led the House Judiciary Committee to begin impeachment proceedings against him. The Democrats proposed a motion censuring the president but on 19 Dec. Clinton was impeached for perjury and obstruction of justice. He was only the second US president ever to be impeached. On 6 Feb. the senate trial ended when neither motion gained a simple majority. In 2000 independent counsel Robert Ray closed the 6-year Whitewater affair by clearing Clinton and his wife of any criminal wrongdoing.

Clinton's final year in office was spent battling with the Republicans in Congress over health and gun control issues. Congress and the president did come together to normalise trade relations with China. Clinton supported his vice-president Al Gore's presidential campaign, only to see him defeated by George W. Bush.

Later Life

After leaving office, Clinton continued to travel widely giving talks and lectures and signed a publishing deal with Alfred A. Knopf, reportedly worth over \$10 m., for his memoirs. He became increasingly active in philanthropy, setting up the William J. Clinton Foundation to tackle issues such as AIDS, poverty and childhood obesity. Between 2005 and 2007 he served as UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery and worked with fellow former president George Bush Sr to establish a fund for the victims and for those of Hurricane Katrina. Clinton's reputation was dented by his perceived role in the failed campaign of his wife, Hillary, to gain the Democratic nomination for the presidential election in 2008. His state of health was cause for concern after he needed an emergency heart operation in Feb. 2010 having previously undergone a quadruple heart bypass in 2004.

Collor, Fernando (Brazil)

Introduction

Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello was president of Brazil from 1990 to 1992. He pursued a modernising programme but rising inflation and charges of corruption forced his resignation.

Early Life

Born in 1949, an economist by education, Collor entered politics as a Social Democrat. He soon rose to become mayor of Maceió, the capital of Alagoas state. He was subsequently appointed its governor and joined the National Congress in 1982, where he gained a reputation as a health and education reformer able to work within tight budgets. On assuming the presidency in 1990 as the National Reconstruction candidate, he became Brazil's youngest ever head of state.

Career Peak

As president, Collor set about radical economic reforms. He supported the free market and privatization and worked to reduce government intervention. He sought to lower Brazil's crippling national debt and entered into an economic affiliation with Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. But inflation remained a major problem. His concern for Brazil's environment led to his ending the country's nuclear programme and hosting the 1992 Earth Summit.

Allegations of corruption emerged in Oct. 1992 when Collor was suspended from the House of Congress. When impeachment proceedings began in Dec. 1992 he chose to resign in favour of Itamar Franco.

Later Life

Collor was barred from holding office until 2001 despite being found innocent of corruption charges in late 1994.

Colom Caballeros, Álvaro (Guatemala)

Introduction

Álvaro Colom was elected president on 4 Nov. 2007, the first social democrat to hold the office since 1954. Colom replaced Oscar Berger of the Gran Alianza Nacional and served until Jan. 2012.

Early Life

Colom was born into a politically active family in June 1951 in Guatemala City. He studied at the Liceo Guatemala, a private Catholic school, and then the state University of San Carlos (USAC). After graduating in 1974 as an industrial engineer, he entered the textile industry, becoming a leading representative in the 1980s.

In 1990 President Jorge Serrano Elias—a fellow alumnus of both Liceo Guatemala and USAC—appointed Colom vice minister for the economy and director of the Fund for Peace (FONAPAZ). After the 1997 peace accords ended decades of civil war, Colom worked in land conflict resolution and the promotion of reconciliation.

In 1999 he unsuccessfully ran for president for the centre-left ANN party. In 2003 he ran again, this time for the social democratic UNE, but was defeated by Oscar Berger in the second round. Nonetheless, it was the best left-wing showing in an election for almost 50 years though critics accused him of illegal campaign financing.

Career Peak

Colom's 2007 campaign centred on his 'Plan de la Esperanza', extending to 2032. As well as pledging to fight poverty and improve health, education and public security, he promised to create 700,000 new jobs, build 200,000 new homes and increase GDP growth to 6%. In May 2009 the government denied any complicity in the murder of a prominent lawyer who had claimed that Colom was seeking to kill him. Following presidential elections in 2011, Colom was succeeded by Otto Pérez Molina of the Partido Patriota in Jan. 2012.

Compaoré, Blaise (Burkina Faso)

Introduction

Blaise Compaoré came to power in 1987 after the assassination of Thomas Sankara, the president of the Conseil National de la Révolution (CNR; National Revolutionary Council). He was deposed in Oct. 2014. Compaoré attempted to deregulate the economy and improve relations with the West. Politically, however, his tenure was marked by strikes, unrest and political murders. His human rights record also attracted international condemnation.

Early Life

Born on 3 Feb. 1951 in Ouagadougou, Compaoré received his early education in Burkina Faso and became a secondary school teacher. In 1971 he joined the army and in 1975 went to Cameroon and France for military training. His friendship with Sankara began in Morocco in 1978 while he was serving as a parachute instructor. By 1981 Compaoré had achieved the rank of captain.

Although involved in the establishment in 1982 of the Conseil de Salut du Peuple (CSP; People's Salvation Council, led by Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo), Compaoré and Sankara broke with the CSP in 1983 to form the more left-wing CNR. When Sankara was later arrested, Compaoré led an anti-government revolt that overthrew Ouédraogo and brought Sankara and the CNR to power. Compaoré was appointed vice-premier. However, growing dissatisfaction with Sankara's increasingly autocratic leadership led in 1987 to his assassination by soldiers loyal to Compaoré, who replaced his former ally as head of state.

Career Peak

Compaoré took office promising a continuation of the CNR's guiding principles, but with 'rectification'. He restored links with the business community, traditional chiefs and the army, and sought to reassure the West on whom he relied for aid. A new party—the Organization for Popular Democracy/Labour Movement (ODP/MT; Organisation pour la Démocratie Populaire/Mouvement du Travail)—was created in 1989 and provision made for the return of multi-party elections. However, political dissent was still treated heavily-handedly and the government virtually controlled the media. That year, two stalwarts of the Sankara era still holding senior office (Boukari Lingani and Henri Zongo) were accused of plotting a coup and executed. In 1991 an amnesty was called on all those guilty of 'political crimes' since 1960 and exiles were offered safe return.

Despite Compaoré's ostensible democratization of the election process and more moderate regime, the 1991 elections were boycotted by opposition groups. Compaoré, the sole candidate, won 90.4% of votes but less than 25% of the population participated. He was sworn in as president on 24 Dec. 1991. Amid high political tension, the assassination of opposition leader Clément Oumarou Ouédraogo and the postponement of legislative elections, Compaoré called a development forum of diverse political and social leaders. In the same year he agreed to a World Bank structural adjustment programme, although the resultant austerity measures led to strikes and protests by students.

The 1991 constitution was amended in 1997, allowing the president to stand for re-election more than once, and also restructuring parliament and provincial government. In addition the national anthem and the flag were modified to break with the revolutionary past. Compaoré was re-elected president in Nov. 1998 with more than 87% of votes (in a 56.1% turnout), although doubt was cast on the legitimacy of the electoral process. On 13 Dec. 1998 a journalist critical of Compaoré, Norbert Zongo, and three of his colleagues were murdered. There followed public protests and the arrest of opposition leaders.

A report of May 1999 suggested that the presidential bodyguard was behind the murders of Zongo and his colleagues. The conclusions led to student protests in the capital. Compaoré's human rights record fell under further scrutiny as more opposition leaders and independent journalists were arrested. Despite the offer of compensation to the victims' families and the release of several political prisoners, tensions remained high, and strikes and other protests persisted.

In parliamentary elections in May 2002, despite a stronger opposition performance, the pro-Compaoré Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP) won 57 of the 111 National Assembly seats, and it took 73 of the 111 seats in the May 2007 elections. Meanwhile, although deemed unconstitutional by opposition politicians, Compaoré was re-elected for further presidential terms in Nov. 2005 and Nov. 2010, winning an overwhelming share of the vote on each occasion. In April 2009 the parliament adopted legislation requiring at least 30% of political party candidates in future elections to be women. A serious challenge to Compaoré's authority was posed in April 2011 by a military revolt over unpaid allowances, following popular protests over rising prices, which prompted his appointment of a new prime minister and cabinet. In Dec. 2012 legislative elections returned the CDP to power with an overall majority in an enlarged 127-member National Assembly.

Compaoré resigned as president on 31 Oct. 2014 and fled to Côte d'Ivoire following a popular uprising against the government. Hundreds of thousands of people had protested against his bid to extend his 27 year term of office as president, and violence had broken out near government buildings in the capital. The military subsequently installed Lieut.-Col Isaac Zida as interim president. Compaoré's regime was accused of corruption and alleged interference in civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The country also suffered from increased levels of unemployment during his final years as president.

Compton, John George Melvin (St Lucia)

Introduction

Sir John Compton led St Lucia to independence in 1979. Serving as its first prime minister until electoral defeat later that year, he returned as prime

minister from 1982–96. He came out of retirement in 2005 to lead the United Workers' Party (UWP) back to power, winning 11 of the 17 seats in the House of Assembly and was sworn in for his third term as prime minister on 15 Dec. 2006. He died in office the following Sept.

Early Life

John George Melvin Compton was born on Canouan Island, St Vincent and the Grenadines in 1926. He studied economics and law at the London School of Economics before becoming a barrister in England. He moved back to the West Indies and established his own law practice on St Lucia in 1951. He formed the UWP in 1961 and was elected chief minister in 1964, serving as premier until St Lucia attained independence in 1979. He was then appointed prime minister.

Losing the elections in that same year, he returned as prime minister in 1982, remaining in office until he resigned in 1996. His tenures were marked by right-wing policies and fierce support for democracy and the rule of law. He was an ardent supporter of the US-led intervention in Grenada in Oct. 1983. Having retired he was knighted in 1997 but came back in 2005 to lead the party he founded.

Career Peak

Compton was elected on a platform of tackling crime and unemployment. He pledged to create new jobs in the construction industry through a programme of refurbishing public buildings and repairing roads, as well as focusing on tourism and the IT industry. In a bid to boost agriculture, a mission was sent to the UK to secure a larger market share for St Lucian bananas. Compton also raised the subject of foreign interference in domestic politics after two other Caribbean prime ministers visited St Lucia before the 2005 election to campaign for his opponent.

In 2007 much of the government's activity was centred on the country's role as co-host of the cricket world cup. In April 2007 St Lucia and Taiwan established diplomatic ties, despite protests from China and a split in Compton's cabinet. After several months of ill health, he died on 7 Sept.

Conté, Lansana (Guinea)

Introduction

Gen. Lansana Conté won a third term as president on 21 Dec. 2003. Many opposition parties boycotted the election claiming fraud and irregularities. He remained in control, despite reports of his declining health, until his death on 22 Dec. 2008.

Early Life

Lansana Conté was born in 1934 in Dubréka, Guinea. He was educated in Dubréka before completing his military training at preparatory schools in France and West Africa.

In 1955 he enlisted in the French army and was posted to Algeria during the war of independence. Guinea gained independence from France on 2 Oct. 1958, and when Conté returned home from military service he joined the new national army as a sergeant. In 1962 he attended the Camp Alpha Officer's School in Conakry, Guinea. He became a second lieutenant the following year before being promoted to lieutenant in 1965. In Nov. 1970 Guinean exiles invaded the country in an attempt to overthrow President Ahmed Sékou Touré. Conté was part of the military team that repelled the invasion and, in recognition of his contribution, was promoted to captain in 1971. Four years later he became assistant chief of staff of the army.

In 1977 Conté began his political career when he headed Guinea's delegation during negotiations to resolve a border dispute with Guinea-Bissau. In 1980 he was elected to the National Assembly. On 3 April 1984, following the death of President Touré, Conté led a bloodless coup to overthrow the interim government of Prime Minister Louis Lansana Beagui. Conté created the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN), suspended the constitution and the National Assembly and banned all political activity. He denounced the Touré regime, released over 200 political prisoners and encouraged those Guineans exiled during Touré's rule to return to the country. He was proclaimed president 2 days later.

Career Peak

Conté's presidency was plagued by controversy. In July 1985 Prime Minister Diarra Traoré tried to seize power while Conté was attending an ECOWAS summit in Togo. Conté's troops prevented the coup and on his return 100 military personnel, including Traoré, were executed.

Conté assumed the rank of army general in 1990 and shortly afterwards the government introduced a new constitution which included provision for the establishment of civilian government. In June 1991 the CMRN was replaced by the Transitional Committee for National Recovery (CTRN).

In 1992 Conté legalized political parties in the build-up to presidential elections in Dec. 1993, the first multi-party election since independence. Conté's new party, the Party of Unity and Progress (PUP), was victorious but the elections were blighted by serious irregularities. In 1996 the government was subject to another unsuccessful coup attempt. Around a quarter of the Guinean army mutinied in protest over salaries and poor conditions and many died. A multi-party presidential election was held in 1998 and, despite a number of flaws and protests, Conté was confirmed as president.

In Nov. 2001 Conté's government approved constitutional amendments allowing the president to run for more than two consecutive terms. The referendum was boycotted by the opposition, who referred to the move as a 'constitutional coup' designed to ensure Conté's lifelong rule. Conté was confirmed for a third term in Dec. 2003 with all but one of the opposition parties boycotting elections. In Jan. 2005 he survived an assassination attempt and two general strikes were staged in Feb.–March and June 2006. In April 2006 Conté sacked the prime minister, Cellou Diallo, who was not replaced until Eugène Camara was appointed premier on 9 Feb. 2007. However, faced with a further general strike and growing violent protests against his regime, Conté dismissed Camara just over 2 weeks later, appointing Lansana Kouyaté in his place. In the midst of further unrest in 2008, Conté sacked Kouyaté in May and replaced him with Ahmed Tidiane Souaré, a former cabinet minister. Conté remained in office until his death on 22 Dec. 2008, after which the army seized control in a widely condemned coup.

Correa, Rafael (Ecuador)

Introduction

Rafael Correa started his 4 year presidential term in Jan. 2007. An economist educated in Europe and the USA, he has mostly enjoyed strong popular support and was re-elected in April 2009 and again in Feb. 2013.

Early Life

Correa was born in April 1963 in Ecuador's second city, Guayaquil. He graduated in economics from the Catholic University of Guayaquil and worked for a year in an indigenous community in the Cotopaxi region. He went on to postgraduate studies at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA).

Correa embarked on an academic career, rising to become dean of economics at the private University San Francisco de Quito. An economic analyst known for his anti-neoliberal and nationalist stance, he worked as a consultant for the UN Development Programme and the Japanese Development Bank among others. He was a notable opponent of Ecuadorian dollarization in 2000.

When popular revolts forced Lucio Gutiérrez to resign as president in April 2005, his successor Alfredo Palacio appointed Correa as finance minister. Correa held the position for 4 months, during which time he was critical of the World Bank and IMF and advocated poverty reduction and economic sovereignty schemes. When the World Bank withheld a loan in protest at various economic policies, Correa resigned his office. In 2006 he founded the Alianza PAIS movement, which allied itself with the Socialist Party in the run-up to general elections.

Career Peak

Correa campaigned for sustainable socio-economic revolution and Latin American integration. On taking office, he pledged a referendum on the establishment of a constitutional assembly to draft a new constitution, aimed at maintaining good relations with the USA (although his rejection of

a free trade agreement, Ecuador's refusal to extend US use of the Manta military base in the Pacific and, in 2011, US allegations of corruption in the Ecuador police have strained ties) and promised that dollarization would remain in place during his tenure. He also guaranteed Ecuador's non-involvement in Colombia's internal conflict. Other policies included engagement with Colombia and Brazil in trade negotiations and talks with Argentina to renegotiate the terms of Ecuador's multi-billion dollar debt. In addition, Correa announced that he would renegotiate 'entrapping' oil contracts with transnational companies, consider Ecuador's re-entry into OPEC (which happened in Nov. 2007) and limit debt repayment in favour of social spending (although quick repayment of IMF debts would remain on the agenda).

In April 2007 he won referendum approval to set up a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution. Elections to the assembly in Sept. resulted in a majority victory for Correa's allies over opposition parties that had dominated the Congress since the Oct. 2006 polls. In Nov. 2007 the assembly voted to dissolve the Congress and proceeded to act as a legislature. A new draft constitution increasing presidential powers and tenure, banning foreign military bases and enhancing state influence over the economy was approved by the assembly in July 2008 and endorsed in a national referendum on 28 Sept.

In March 2008 Ecuador's relations with Colombia were seriously undermined by a cross-border Colombian strike against a FARC guerrilla target in Ecuadorian territory, prompting Correa to cut diplomatic ties and send troops to the border. Relations worsened in July 2009 when a FARC military commander claimed that his organization had contributed funding to Correa's 2006 election campaign, and have remained strained.

Correa won an outright victory in the April 2009 presidential elections, avoiding the need for a second round run-off. His party won a legislative majority at the same time. However, in Sept. 2010 Correa was assaulted and then besieged in hospital by rebellious police officers protesting against pay cuts. The incident was denounced as a coup attempt by Correa and prompted the government to declare an indefinite state of emergency. In a further constitutional referendum in May 2011 voters approved a range of amendments, including extra presidential powers over the judiciary and media.

In June 2012 Julian Assange, the Australian founder of the WikiLeaks website that publicized secret US diplomatic documents, took refuge in Ecuador's embassy in London, England to evade extradition to Sweden on sexual assault charges. In Aug. Correa granted Assange diplomatic asylum, which has generated continuing tensions with the UK government.

Correa won a third term of office in Feb. 2013, winning over 50% of the vote against seven opponents. He promised 'another four years of revolution'. Although critics have accused him of autocratic tendencies. His economic policies have also generated increasing opposition from business interests and the middle class, which manifested itself in a series of organized protests in mid-2015.

Correa did not seek re-election in Feb. 2017. Lenin Moreno, who won a second round run-off 6 weeks later, took office as president on 24 May 2017.

Career Peak

In the 1954 elections Coty was nominated President on the 13th ballot, taking over from Auriol who declined to stand for re-election. He inherited an unstable government and a rocky economy, both of which continued to give trouble. While Coty was in office, eight prime ministers served—Joseph Laniel, Pierre Mendès France, Edgar Faure, Guy Mollet, Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, Félix Gaillard, Pierre Pflimlin and finally Charles de Gaulle.

Throughout his term, Coty was forced by the constitution to leave much of the policy making to his prime ministers. But implementing policy was made near impossible by inter-party squabbling.

In 1954 there was disagreement over the European Defence Community (EDC), a plan originated by René Pleven, when prime minister under Auriol, and advanced by Robert Schuman. On 13 Aug. 1954 Gaullist ministers opposed to the EDC resigned with the result that the EDC was rejected by the Assembly. As one who supported the proposal, Coty was frustrated by political wrangling and favoured a strengthening of presidential authority.

Conflict dominated Coty's presidency. No sooner was peace achieved in Indochina in 1954 than violence broke out in Algeria. The Algerian Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front; FLN) began their drive for independence. The FLN recruited other nationalist organizations to their cause and by 1956 they had set up their own provisional government. Open warfare in Algeria spilled over into France where terrorist activity caused more than 4,000 casualties. The Assembly was divided between those who were prepared to concede independence and those who believed Algeria was an integral part of France. In Jan. 1956 Jules Moch suggested splitting Algeria into two nations, part French, part Algerian Republic. Prime minister Mollet rejected the plan. Further fuel was added to the FLN's campaign when both Morocco and Tunisia gained independence on 3 and 20 of Jan. 1956 respectively.

To add to Coty's troubles, in July 1956 the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, responded to the withdrawal of American funding for the Aswan High Dam by announcing the nationalization of the Suez canal. Fearing the move would block oil supplies to Western Europe, France and Britain joined forces with Israel to oppose. On 29 Oct. Israeli forces invaded. Under the guise of a UN peace keeping force, France and Britain occupied the canal region a week later. Failing to gain support from the USA, the French and British forces withdrew on 22 Dec. The Israeli's followed 3 months later.

By 1958 France had reached crisis point in the Algerian War. On 13 May Coty threatened to resign if de Gaulle was not made prime minister. The then prime minister Pflimlin resigned and de Gaulle was instated on 1 June. The following day de Gaulle was given full power to end the Algerian War with extended authority over domestic affairs. On 8 Jan. 1959 the Fourth Republic gave way to the Fifth with the installation of de Gaulle as president.

Later Life

Coty retired to Le Havre and died of a heart attack on 22 Nov. 1962.

Coty, René (France)

Introduction

René Coty was the second and final president of the Fourth Republic. Serving from 1954–59, his term embraced the Indochina War, the Suez Crisis and the Algerian War. The crisis point reached in 1958 forced the emergency reinstatement of Charles de Gaulle as prime minister and the end of the Fourth Republic.

Early Life

Coty was born in Le Havre on 20 March 1882. Coty took degrees in law and philosophy before becoming a solicitor at Le Havre in 1902. He was town councillor from 1907 and served in the 1914–18 War. In 1923 Coty was elected deputy of Seine-Maritime and, after a brief period as undersecretary of the interior in the Third Republic, became a senator in 1935. After the German invasion he voted to give Pétain full control of the Vichy government and then went into semi-retirement. He was minister of reconstruction between 1947–48 before returning to the Senate as its vice president.

Cowen, Brian (Ireland)

Introduction

A member of the Dáil since 1984, Brian Cowen took over as Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) in May 2008 following the resignation of Bertie Ahern. Strongly pro-European, he regarded close ties with the EU as vital for Ireland's economy. Having presided over increases in public spending as finance minister, he took office facing the challenges of an economic downturn that ultimately unseated his government.

Early Life

Brian Cowen was born on 10 Jan. 1960 in Clara, Co. Offaly, the son of Fianna Fáil politician Bernard Cowen. He was educated at Clara National School, Ard Scoil Naomh Chiaráin and the Cistercian College of Mount St Joseph. He then studied law at University College Dublin and the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland, qualifying as a solicitor. In 1984 he contested the Laois–Offaly by-election, caused by the death of his father, and succeeded him as the Fianna Fáil representative. Aged 24, he was the Dáil's youngest member. In the same year he was also elected to Offaly County Council.

Cowen served as a backbench MP for 7 years, gaining a reputation as a tough, outspoken politician. He opposed Fianna Fáil's decision to enter into a coalition government with the Progressive Democrats in 1989 and in Nov. 1991 he supported Albert Reynolds' campaign for the party leadership. Reynolds became *Taoiseach* the following year and in Feb. 1992 appointed Cowen minister for labour.

Following the inconclusive election of Nov. 1992, Cowen was active in negotiating a coalition between Fianna Fáil and the Labour Party. In Jan. 1993 he was appointed minister for transport, energy and communications. After Fianna Fáil was defeated in the 1994 general election, Cowen became opposition spokesman on agriculture, food and forestry under the new party leader, Bertie Ahern. In 1997 he was named spokesman for health. After the June 1997 general election he became minister for health and children in the governing Fianna Fáil–Progressive Democrat coalition. His handling of this newly expanded portfolio raised his profile and he was increasingly viewed as a possible successor to Ahern. In Jan. 2000 he was appointed minister for foreign affairs and his influence in the party was strengthened when he became its deputy leader in 2002.

As minister of foreign affairs, Cowen oversaw Ireland's term in 2002 as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and was closely involved in the Northern Ireland peace process. A firm supporter of the EU, he backed Ireland's conversion to the euro in 2002. During Ireland's presidency of the European Council in 2004, Cowen helped the EU prepare for expansion.

As minister for finance from 2004–08, he introduced tax reforms and directed funds to public services and welfare, introducing a new childcare package and increased pension allowances. In June 2007, following Fianna Fáil's success in the general election, Cowen became deputy prime minister as well as minister of finance. Ahern announced his resignation in April 2008 amid controversy over his personal financial affairs. Cowen was elected unopposed as leader of Fianna Fáil on 9 April 2008 and took office as *Taoiseach* on 7 May 2008.

Career Peak

Despite coming to office in a period of economic uncertainty, Cowen pledged to maintain public investment while controlling borrowing. He also signalled his continuing belief in the importance of the EU to Ireland's long-term prospects. Although voters in Ireland in a referendum in June 2008 rejected the Lisbon Treaty (signed in Dec. 2007) on EU institutional and administrative reform, this setback was reversed in a further referendum in Oct. 2009 after Cowen had secured assurances that Ireland would retain a permanent representative on the European Commission and that its strict anti-abortion laws and policy of neutrality would not be undermined.

Meanwhile, the economy deteriorated markedly into recession in the second half of 2008 in the wake of the global financial crisis, prompting a dramatic decline in public support for Cowen's government. Having announced plans in Feb. 2009 to rescue two of the country's largest banks, tough budgetary measures to address the widening deficit in the public finances and Ireland's declining credit rating status, including tax increases and public sector pay cuts, were introduced by the government in April 2009 and again in Dec.

The economy continued to deteriorate in 2010 and in Nov. Cowen agreed to an €85bn. EU–IMF bailout. To ensure coalition support for a new austerity budget outlining 4 years of spending cuts and tax rises, Cowen called a general election for Feb. 2011. Fianna Fáil were ravaged, coming third with 20 seats (down from 78 seats in 2007). Cowen, who had resigned as party leader on 22 Jan. but stayed on as *Taoiseach* until the election, left office with an approval rating of 8%.

Craxi, Benedetto (Italy)

Introduction

Bettino Craxi served as Italy's first Socialist prime minister from 1985–87. He led the Socialist Party from 1976–93 and made a profound impact on the Italian political landscape from the late 1970s onwards. His achievements in office, which included the radical reform of tax and pensions, have been overshadowed by allegations of corruption which were made towards the end of his tenure.

Early Life

Craxi was born in Milan on 24 Feb. 1934, the son of a local government official. He joined the Socialist Youth Movement and was president of the national student union. In the 1950s he worked as a journalist for the political review *Energie Nuove*. His political career began in 1960 when he won a seat on Milan's city council. Eight years later he was elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, and rapidly made his mark within his party and parliament. In 1976, after the Socialists had suffered their worst election results for years, Craxi was elected party secretary. He took the opportunity to move the party towards the centre, away from the Communist old guard. The elections of 1982 saw an increase in the Socialist vote, and in 1983 he was elected prime minister.

Career Peak

Craxi's first cabinet remained in power until June 1986, making it the longest continuous government since the war. In power Craxi oversaw an upturn in Italy's economic fortunes and declared war on corruption, tax evasion and Mafia activities. His anti-inflationary domestic policies and pro-American foreign policies were highly successful. Craxi formed a new coalition government in 1986 but was forced to resign in Apr. 1987.

Later Life

After an election campaign in 1992 which stressed Craxi's credentials as an honest politician, he was investigated for securing illegal funds for his party. Craxi argued that alternative funding was necessary because of the gross inefficiency of the existing system. This was to make him personally accountable for the scandal, and although parliament voted to grant him continued immunity from prosecution, there was public uproar and Craxi was forced to leave the country for Tunisia. His final years were marked by illness and increasingly desperate efforts to absolve himself from wrongdoing. In 1996 he was convicted in absentia, and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. He was ordered to stand trial, but he managed to avoid doing so, despite receiving medical treatment in Italy. He died in Tunis on 19 Jan. 2000.

Crvenkovski, Branko (Macedonia)

Introduction

Branko Crvenkovski, a former prime minister of Macedonia, became president in 2004. He was the first to promote Albanian participation in Macedonian politics, and has made Macedonian membership of the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) key objectives. He chose not to stand for re-election in 2009 and left office in May.

Early Life

Crvenkovski was born 12 Oct. 1962 in Sarajevo. In 1986 he graduated with a degree in computer science and automation from the St Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. His political career began on his election to the assembly of the Republic of Macedonia at the first multi-party elections in the former Yugoslavia in 1990. In 1991 he became the head of the SDSM despite having been a communist.

Career Peak

In Aug. 1992 Crvenkovski became Macedonia's first prime minister after its secession from Yugoslavia. At only 29 years of age, he was the youngest government leader in Europe. Re-elected in the Dec. 1994 elections, he retained the premiership until Nov. 1998. At the head of the SDSM, he implemented wide-ranging economic and social reforms, and guided the country out of the immediate post-Yugoslav era. He became prime minister again in 2002 after his SDSM party won elections. In April 2004 he won the presidential elections, defeating the centre-right candidate Saško Kedev, and took office on 12 May 2004, resigning as prime minister. In Dec. 2005 the EU agreed to make Macedonia a formal candidate member. However, NATO's invitation to Macedonia to join the alliance was blocked by Greece in April 2008.

Following the 2006 parliamentary elections, Crvenkovski's SDSM went into opposition as a new VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition government took office. The VMRO-DPMNE retained power in June 2008 as the largest party in early elections that were marred by violence.

In March 2009 Crvenkovski announced he would not run in the presidential elections later in the month. Gjorgje Ivanov claimed victory in the elections and Crvenkovski handed over power to him on 12 May.

Da Costa Gomes, Francisco (Portugal)

Introduction

Francisco da Costa Gomes was president between 1974–76. The successor to the short-lived president Gen. António Spínola, he was appointed by a revolutionary junta established after the April 1974 Carnation Revolution had ended 50 years of right-wing dictatorship of António da Oliveira Salazar. Costa Gomes presided over Portugal's turbulent transition from dictatorship to democracy, stabilized opposing left and right-wing radical forces while surviving several coups. He finally handed over to a democratically elected president in 1976.

Early Life

Costa Gomes was born on 30 June 1914 in the northern town of Chaves. The son of an army captain, he attended the Escola de Guerra national military academy in Lisbon before continuing his training at a cavalry school. After graduating with a maths degree from the University of Oporto, Costa Gomes forged a successful career in the Portuguese army from 1931 until he was appointed army chief of staff in 1972 by Salazar's successor, Marcello Caetano. He served in the colony of Macao in 1949 and was appointed undersecretary of the armed forces in Salazar's *Estado Novo* regime.

In 1961 Costa Gomes was implicated in a bungled coup against Salazar carried out by an army faction who objected to Portugal's contentious position in colonial Africa. Sacked, he took the opportunity to advance his studies at the Institute of Military Studies, where he also taught. He resumed his army career in 1964 and the following year served in Mozambique and then Angola where Portugal waged bloody wars with revolutionary guerrilla forces striving for independence. In 1974 Spínola, then Costa Gomes' second in command, wrote the controversial book *Portugal e o Futuro* describing his disaffection with Portugal's colonial wars. As a result, Caetano demanded Costa Gomes and Spínola pledge their support to his rule. On their refusal, both men were sacked in March 1974. The following month the Carnation Revolution led by the Movimento das Forças Armadas (Armed Forces Movement; MFA) ousted the dictatorship. A revolutionary junta appointed Spínola its president with Costa Gomes as his second in command.

Career Peak

The junta restored civil liberties to Portugal. Banned political parties were reinstated, freedom of speech and the press was allowed and Salazar's PVDE secret police (Policia de Vigilancia e Defesa do Estado) was abolished. In Sept. 1974 Costa Gomes succeeded Spínola as president, the latter proving too right wing for the junta. He inherited a chaotic situation. Portugal was struggling to reinvent itself while different factions pulled in opposite directions and wars in the colonies still raged. Strikes and demonstrations were commonplace. Costa Gomes' ability to avoid or survive the crises of the first 2 years of fragile transition led to his nickname 'the cork'. He acted as a conciliatory figure, neutralizing the extremist forces within the country and avoiding civil war. He negotiated with revolutionaries in Angola and Mozambique and helped set in motion their transition to independence. The Portuguese also quitted Timor-Leste.

Spínola's desire to create an extreme right-wing government led him to attempt a coup in 1975 which the president survived. The other end of the political scale, Costa Gomes prevented a coalition of MFA members and the Partido Comunista Português creating a Marxist state on a Soviet model. A constituent election for the provisional government on 25 April 1975, exactly a year after the revolution, was won by the moderate left, the Partido Socialista. Costa Gomes successfully installed a parliamentary democracy

and was able to hand over power to the first democratically elected president in 1976, the army chief General Antonio Ramalho Eanes.

Later Life

Costa Gomes did not stand for president in the first democratic elections due to lack of support and withdrew from Portuguese politics. After leaving government, he was involved in international causes related to peace and the environment. He died in Lisbon on 31 July 2001.

Dabwido, Sprent (Nauru)

Introduction

Sprent Dabwido became Nauru's third president in less than a week on 15 Nov. 2011, following the resignation of Marcus Stephen amid corruption allegations and the removal of Freddy Pitcher by a parliamentary vote of no confidence. In accordance with the constitution Dabwido became both head of government and head of state.

Early Life

Born on 16 Sept. 1972 Sprent Dabwido was elected to parliament at the 2004 general election when he won the seat of Meneng. He was re-elected in 2007 and 2008, and in 2009 he was appointed minister of telecommunications in Stephen's government. In this role Dabwido oversaw the introduction of a mobile telephone system to Nauru and retained his Meneng seat at the June 2010 general election.

On 15 Nov. 2011 Dabwido cut his ties with the ruling faction in parliament and joined the opposition in support of a motion of no confidence that brought down Pitcher. Dabwido was subsequently elected president by nine votes to eight in a parliamentary vote.

Career Peak

Dabwido represented the Pacific Small Island Developing States at the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban in Dec. 2011. He highlighted the problem of rising sea levels for Pacific island nations and called for a legally binding protocol to complement the existing Kyoto Protocol and Bali Action Plan.

In June 2012 he appointed a new cabinet, including opposition members, following an impasse over proposed constitutional reforms.

In Feb. 2013 the resignation and dismissal of several members of Dabwido's government produced a constitutional crisis. Parliament was dissolved in March and elections scheduled for April. However, the elections were postponed and set for 22 June. Dabwido declared a state of emergency and brought the elections forward to 8 June. Baron Waqa emerged victorious and was subsequently elected president. Dabwido did not contest the presidential election but won a seat and became an active member of the opposition. In June 2015 he was arrested and faced criminal charges amid protests against government corruption.

Dadis Camara, Moussa (Guinea)

Introduction

Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara claimed the presidency in Dec. 2008 as leader of the Conseil National de la Démocratie et du Développement/National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), after a coup d'état following the death of President Lansana Conté. Camara's stated aim was to restore order to a country crippled by corruption, inflation and high unemployment, and he vowed to hold free and fair elections.

Early Life

Moussa Dadis Camara was born in 1964 to a farming family in the south-eastern village of Koure, Lola Prefecture. He went to school in the regional capital of Nzérékoré before graduating in law and economics from Abdel Nasser University in Conakry. He later earned a master's degree in economics from the University of Conakry.

Camara joined the army in 1990 and was sent abroad on training courses, including 18 months in Germany from 2004–05. In May 2008 he was a prominent figure in a military revolt over unpaid bonuses and the release of military prisoners. In Nov. 2008 Camara became head of the army's fuel supply corps reporting to the defence minister.

Within hours of Conté's death on 23 Dec. 2008 Camara led the way in dissolving the government. Having suspended the constitution and all political and trade union activity, he set out the CNDD's plan to appoint a president from the military who, with a civilian prime minister, would head an ethnically balanced transitional government (to include 26 officers and six civilians). On 24 Dec. 2008 the appointment of Camara as leader of the CNDD and national president was announced.

Career Peak

Camara announced that the CNDD did not intend to stay in power indefinitely and promised 'credible and transparent' elections by the end of Dec. 2010. In Aug. 2009, under international pressure, he agreed to hold presidential elections at the end of Jan. 2010 and parliamentary elections in March, and he reiterated his promise not to stand.

Although members of the dissolved government had disputed the authority of the CNDD, most accepted Camara's leadership when ex-prime minister Ahmed Tidiane Souaré pledged to work with the junta. Camara declared zero tolerance on corruption, promised to renegotiate Guinea's numerous mining contracts and, in an apparent concession to the international community, called on the opposition, including the unions, to help choose a prime minister. However, his popular support waned amid reports of military abuse since the CNDD came to power. In particular, government troops in Sept. 2009 fired on pro-democracy protesters at an opposition rally in Conakry against the military junta, killing nearly 160 people and injuring over 1,000. In Oct. the European Union, African Union and USA imposed sanctions on Camara's regime.

On 3 Dec. 2009 Camara was wounded in an apparent assassination attempt by his military aide commanding the presidential guard and flown to Morocco for medical treatment. Sékouba Konaté was appointed acting president.

Dahal, Pushpa Kamal 'Prachanda' (Nepal)

Introduction

Pushpa Kamal Dahal was voted prime minister for the second time on 3 Aug. 2016 following the resignation of K. P. Oli. He previously held office from Aug. 2008 to May 2009 as head of a coalition government, following many years as leader of the military wing of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), later renamed the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and now called the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre). Known as Prachanda ('The fierce one'), he led a Maoist insurgency from Feb. 1996 until Nov. 2006.

Early Life

Prachanda was born on 11 Dec. 1954 in central Nepal to a poor farming family. In 1966 his family moved to Chitwan district, where he was introduced to communism. He graduated from the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science in Rampur, Chitwan, in 1975. He briefly taught in a primary school before becoming active in the Communist Party of Nepal. The party underwent a series of splits, during which Prachanda joined the CPN (Mashal) wing. He became a member of the politburo, rising to the post of general secretary in 1989.

Following the popular uprising that forced King Birendra to relinquish absolute power and form a constitutional government in 1990, several radical parties merged to become the Communist Party of Nepal (Unity Centre), with Prachanda as general secretary. In 1995, following splits within the party, he renamed his wing the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)—known as CPN (M)—and developed the 'Prachanda Path'. A plan that combined the Maoist rural-based theory of revolution with the Marxist–Leninist urban-based approach. It proposed to establish a people's republic, to redistribute property and to dismantle existing patterns of capital and ownership, particularly those that gave economic control to Indian interests. Prachanda took command of the CPN (M)'s military wing, with the political wing headed by Dr Baburam Bhattarai.

In early 1996 Prachanda presented the government with a list of demands including the abolition of the monarchy and redistribution of land. When these were rejected he launched an insurgency, beginning a civil war that lasted for 10 years and resulted in 13,000 deaths. Prachanda spent the period in hiding, living in India for much of the time despite having identified it as an enemy of the Nepalese people. CPN (M) militia established control over many rural areas and in Nov. 2005, following King Gyanendra's resumption of absolute rule, Prachanda led the CPN (M) into an alliance with Nepal's mainstream political parties. After public unrest forced King Gyanendra to restore parliament in 2006, Prachanda entered negotiations with the government and signed a comprehensive peace agreement in Nov. of that year. His party won national elections in April 2008 but without an overall majority.

In Aug. 2008, 2 months after the monarchy was abolished, Prachanda was elected prime minister by an alliance consisting of the CPN (M) and several smaller groups, on a promise of radical reforms. However, his government struggled to tackle endemic poverty, rising food prices and fuel shortages, and was criticized for alleged human rights abuses and suppression of the press. In May 2009 Prachanda sought to dismiss the chief of the army over attempts to integrate former Maoist rebel fighters into the army but the dismissal was revoked by the president. Prachanda announced his resignation the following day.

In the 2013 parliamentary election, Prachanda was surprisingly defeated while defending his Kathmandu-10 constituency but won Siraha-5, the second constituency he was contesting, by a narrow margin. From 2013 he was heavily involved in the drawing up and promulgation of the new constitution that came into effect on 20 Sept. 2015. Following K. P. Oli's resignation in July 2016, Prachanda's candidacy for a second term as prime minister was announced with backing from the Nepali Congress and Madhesi Front coalition. On 3 Aug. Prachanda received 363 of the 573 votes cast in the 595-seat parliament. He was the only candidate.

Career Peak

Prachanda's main challenges were promoting economic development and bridging the ethnic divides brought about by the new constitution that redefined the boundaries of the country's provinces. He resigned in May 2017, with Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress assuming the premiership the following month in accordance with an agreement reached in 2016 between the two leaders.

Davutoğlu, Ahmet (Turkey)

Introduction

Ahmet Davutoğlu was sworn in as prime minister on 29 Aug. 2014 and also confirmed as leader of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). He succeeded Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the long-time party leader and prime minister, who became president of Turkey on the same date. A foreign policy specialist and proponent of pan-Islamic co-operation, Davutoğlu was instrumental in shaping Turkey's regional and international strategy after the AKP came to power in 2002.

Early Life

Davutoğlu was born on 26 Feb. 1959 in Taşkent. He graduated in economics and political science from Boğaziçi University, subsequently gaining a PhD in international relations from the same institution in 1983. He then embarked

on an academic career, founding the political science department at the International Islamic University of Malaysia and becoming a professor at Marmara and Beykent Universities, both in İstanbul. In the mid-1990s he was a regular columnist for the conservative, Islamist newspaper *Yeni Safak*.

After the AKP swept to power in 2002 Davutoğlu was appointed ambassador-at-large and chief adviser to the prime minister. In May 2009 he was named foreign minister in Erdoğan's cabinet despite not being a member of parliament, although he successfully ran as an AKP candidate in the general election of June 2011. The architect of Turkish policy in the Middle East, Davutoğlu was among those to press for the removal of Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, in the wake of the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011.

The election of Erdoğan as president in Aug. 2014 necessitated the election of a new leader of the AKP party, who would by extension become prime minister, and a meeting of the party's executive committee nominated Davutoğlu as the only candidate.

Career Peak

In his first cabinet Davutoğlu appointed Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu as foreign minister but left other key posts unchanged, feeding speculation that Erdoğan would continue to control the political agenda despite the traditionally ceremonial role of Turkey's presidents.

In the first months of his tenure Davutoğlu was criticized for Turkey's failure to intervene against the rise of Islamic State jihadist insurgents in the Middle East. The passage of fighters through Turkey's borders incited tensions with the restive domestic Kurdish community and strained relations with international partners, but Davutoğlu said that Turkey would only become involved militarily if operations included action against President Assad's regime.

Davutoğlu's AKP party lost its parliamentary majority at the June 2015 elections, with the prime minister leading an interim government that was formed in order to preside over new elections. The party then regained its majority at the Nov. 2015 pollings and the prime minister was able to form a new government.

Davutoğlu resigned as prime minister in May 2016, reportedly over President Erdoğan's plans to increase his executive powers, thereby reducing the premier's mandate. He was replaced by Binali Yıldırım, also of the AKP.

De Gasperi, Alcide (Italy)

Introduction

Alcide De Gasperi served as Italy's prime minister from 1945–53, leading eight successive coalition cabinets, all of which were dominated by his Christian Democrat Party. He is regarded as the architect of Italy's post-war recovery programme and was responsible for overseeing his country's entry into NATO.

Early Life

De Gasperi was born on 3 April 1881 in the village of Pieve Tesino in Trento province. At the time this region was annexed to the Austro-Hungarian empire, and from a young age De Gasperi was active in defending the cultural values of its Italian-speaking population. Voicing his opinions in the journal *Il Nuovo Trentino*, he became a member of the Christian Socialist movement in 1896. In 1905 he took a degree in philology from the University of Vienna. In 1921, after Trentino was incorporated into Italy, he helped found the Popular Party and was elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Initially the party joined a coalition government with Mussolini, but De Gasperi soon came into conflict with the fascists and was imprisoned in Nov. 1926. When he was released 2 years later he took a job as a cataloguer in the Vatican library where he worked until July 1943 when the Fascist regime was toppled from power. During this period of political exile he wrote extensively about his ideas for the country's restoration, and drew up a manifesto for a new Christian Democrat party. He was able to put some of these ideas into practise, when after a brief term in office as foreign minister, he was elected Prime Minister in Dec. 1945.

Career Peak

In 1946 Italy voted to become a republic, and a year later De Gasperi signed a peace treaty with the Allied forces, thus ensuring Marshall Plan financial aid for Italy's reconstruction. De Gasperi then devised a new constitution which became law at the beginning of 1948. In April that year the Christian Democrats retained a majority in the parliamentary elections, a victory enabled De Gasperi's government to press for Italian membership of NATO. This was granted in 1949. In domestic politics, De Gasperi was responsible for a land reform programme in the impoverished southern and central areas of Italy.

Later Life

In the early 1950s, De Gasperi was active in organizing several European political bodies, including the Council of Europe and the European Coal and Steel Community. By this stage the left wing had grown increasingly intolerant of De Gasperi's centrist politics and although the party membership endorsed his leadership in 1952, his influence declined. In 1953 his government fell from power and he became general secretary and then president of his party, a post he held until his death in Aug. 1954.

De Gaulle, Charles (France)

Introduction

Charles André Joseph Marie de Gaulle, army general, statesman and writer, was the head of the Free French during World War II, the head of the Provisional French Government in 1944, president between 1959–69 and founder of the Fifth Republic. De Gaulle is considered by many to be the creator of modern France.

Early Life

Born in Lille on 22 Nov. 1890, de Gaulle, the son of a schoolteacher, was from a traditional, middle-class, Catholic family. He studied at the military academy in Saint-Cyr before serving under Maréchal Philippe Pétain in 1913. De Gaulle was captured in 1916 and spent the rest of the War as a prisoner despite attempts to escape. During the interwar years, he served in the Rhine (1927–29) and in the Middle East. In 1923 de Gaulle lectured at the Saint-Cyr academy before Pétain promoted de Gaulle to the Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre (Supreme War Council) in 1925. Later, he was a member of the Conseil Supérieur de la Défense Nationale (National Defence Council). Concurrently, de Gaulle wrote books on military tactics, including his most famous, *L'Armée du Métier* (1934). His outspoken views occasionally brought him trouble from traditionalists. His criticism of the Maginot Line incurred Pétain's wrath. Nevertheless, he commanded a tank brigade at the beginning of World War II and was brigadier general when he joined premier Paul Reynaud on 6 June 1940 as undersecretary of state for defence and war. Both de Gaulle and Reynaud supported French resistance to the German invasion.

With pressure from the rest of his cabinet to capitulate to the Germans, Reynaud gave way to his vice-premier Pétain on 16 June 1940. Equally opposed to Pétain's armistice, de Gaulle fled to London. On 18 June, de Gaulle broadcast an address to the French people calling on them to reject German occupation and to continue the war. This marked the beginning of the Free French movement. De Gaulle's relationship with the Free French was not always easy. He was at first treated with suspicion and it took political skill to assert himself as France's natural leader. On 2 Aug. 1940 de Gaulle was tried *in absentia* by a French military court and sentenced to death.

Career Peak

De Gaulle's relationship with the British was never straightforward and in 1943 he moved to Algeria to head the Committee of National Liberation. It was only when de Gaulle returned to a liberated Paris in 1944 that he was considered a saviour and his reputation was established. The provisional government chose de Gaulle as their leader. Over the next 2 years he headed two provisional governments. Whilst the parties prepared their electoral campaigns for the election of a Constituent Assembly in Oct. 1945, De Gaulle

remained passive, feeling perhaps he deserved automatic ascension to head of government. The leaders dominating the Assembly were not of this view and, in protest at a party coalition of the Fourth Republic, de Gaulle resigned in 1946. He strongly disapproved of a powerful Assembly, being in favour of presidential control.

In 1947 de Gaulle established his own party, Rassemblement du Peuple Français (Rally for the French People; RPF). The RPF had the sole aim of reinstating de Gaulle. Initially successful, the RPF received 120 seats in the Assembly in 1951 but, in 1953, when RPF members accepted ministerial posts, de Gaulle abandoned the party and retired to Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises to concentrate on his writing. In 1955 the RPF was dissolved. In 1958 de Gaulle returned to politics. The French government under René Coty was in crisis. Economic problems coupled with the Algerian War had made France unstable. On 13 May Coty threatened to resign if de Gaulle was not brought in as prime minister. The then prime minister, Pierre Pflimlin, resigned and de Gaulle was instated on 1 June 1958. He was granted full power to end the Algerian War as well as extended control over domestic matters. This move signalled the end of the Fourth Republic. De Gaulle decreed a new constitution that would restrict the influence of the National Assembly, while securing for the president overall control. The Fifth Republic was accepted on 28 Sept. 1958 and de Gaulle was elected its first president 7 weeks later.

In 1962 de Gaulle awarded Algeria its independence. This move was supported by the majority of French people except the far right and the *Pieds Noirs* (settlers). During the early 1960s de Gaulle led an economic recovery. He also sought to establish France as a power independent of the USA. In 1966 France withdrew from NATO. He refused to sign the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and he rejected Britain's entry into the EEC. His opposition to US involvement in the Vietnam War angered Americans, whilst his support for an independent Quebec riled the British.

The May 1968 riots signalled the end of de Gaulle's political career. Students, unhappy with the archaic authoritarian education system marched in Paris. Workers, demanding more pay and better working conditions, held widespread strikes. The government appeared vulnerable and de Gaulle called on the support of the military. With the necessary backing De Gaulle refused to allow the government to resign. In the elections of June 1968 the government retained its power with a large majority, although it was for the restoration of law and order not de Gaulle himself that the public voted. On 27 April 1969 de Gaulle was narrowly defeated in a referendum on constitutional and regional reform. He resigned and was succeeded by his prime minister of 8 years, Georges Pompidou.

Later Life

He retired to Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises where he died of a heart attack in 9 Nov. 1970. On 18 June 2000, 60 years after de Gaulle's London radio address appealing to the French to fight on, a museum named after de Gaulle was opened in Les Invalides, Paris, by Jacques Chirac.

De Klerk, F. W. (South Africa)

Introduction

F. W. de Klerk, served as the President of South Africa from 1989–94, and whilst in power was the joint architect of the end of apartheid and the introduction of universal suffrage.

Early Life

De Klerk was born in Johannesburg on 18 March 1936 the son of a prominent politician, Jan de Klerk, a cabinet minister and president of Southern Africa's Senate. De Klerk studied at Potchefstroom University and graduated with a law degree in 1958. He began his political life in 1972 when he was elected to parliament as a National Party representative for Vereeniging. In 1978 he joined the cabinet as minister of posts and telecommunications in the Vorster government. He went on to hold successive ministerial portfolios under the leadership of Pieter W. Botha, including environmental planning (1979–80), internal affairs (1982–5) and education (1984–9). In 1982 de Klerk was

named as the head of the National Party in Transvaal and was chosen as the party's leader in 1989. In the same year he became president of South Africa following the resignation of PW Botha.

Career Peak

De Klerk made it clear from the beginning of his tenure that he would attempt to dismantle the apparatus of apartheid. In 1990 he lifted a 30 year ban on the African National Congress and freed the ANC leader, Nelson Mandela, from Victor Verster Prison on Robben Island. De Klerk's government gradually began to introduce legislation that reduced segregation and discrimination. A referendum was held in 1992 in which almost 70% of the white population endorsed the programme of reforms. In 1993 de Klerk and Nelson Mandela agreed on a timetable for the implementation of majority rule. In the same year the two men were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 'their work for the peaceful termination of the apartheid regime, and for laying the foundations for a new democratic Southern Africa. . .'. In the democratic elections that took place in 1994 de Klerk lost to Mandela but subsequently served as deputy president in the National-ANC coalition government.

Later Life

De Klerk retired from politics after resigning as leader of the National Party in 1997. In Jan. 1999 he published his autobiography *The Last Trek—A New Beginning*. He has since established the FW de Klerk Foundation which encourages the development of peaceful co-operation between conflicting ethnic, tribal and religious communities.

De la Madrid Hurtado, Miguel (Mexico)

Introduction

Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado was president of Mexico between 1982–8, representing the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI). During his presidency de la Madrid attempted to correct the country's economic crisis his predecessor had left behind. He sought to change the tradition of corruption within the party.

Early Life

Born in Colima on the Pacific coast on 12 Dec. 1934, Miguel de la Madrid moved to Mexico City at the age of two following the death of his father. In 1957 he graduated from the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Mexico (National Autonomous University; UNAM) in the capital with a degree in law and subsequently studied at Harvard University. Graduating in 1965 with a master's in public administration, de la Madrid went to work as an advisor for the National Bank of Foreign Commerce and then for the Bank of Mexico. He also lectured in law at the UNAM; one of his pupils was his successor Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

De la Madrid's political career began in 1965 when he joined the ruling PRI party. He was soon called upon to use his economic knowledge in the Treasury. After working as Assistant Manager for Finance for the state owned oil company Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), de la Madrid became Minister of Planning and Budget under José López Portillo. He was a key player in the governmental exploitation of PEMEX's discovery of large petroleum resources. The resulting economic problems would challenge de la Madrid throughout his presidency.

Career Peak

De la Madrid was elected president in 1982. He faced the worst economic situation of any post-revolutionary president. The enormous foreign debt accumulated during Echeverría's presidency was made worse by a fall in oil prices; a falling GNP; 100% inflation and a 40% loss in the value of the peso. These problems were exacerbated by one of the fastest growing birthrates in the world and an increasing public dissatisfaction with the PRI and particularly with one-party rule. De la Madrid adopted a policy of crisis management including new taxes, interest rate increases, price increases and federal budget cuts.

The measures did not go down well with the voters. Made cynical by the corruption surrounding the López Portillo presidency and conscious of the growing disparity between Mexico's rich and poor, the public was unwilling to suffer further for what they considered the governments' ineptitude.

During the early years of de la Madrid's presidency the hardline policies were largely ineffectual. On 19 Sept. 1985 an earthquake measuring 8.1 on the Richter scale decimated Mexico City. Destroying 100,000 housing units and many buildings and killing over 8,000 people, the earthquake was a huge set back to economic recovery. The government's tardy reaction served to fuel criticism. Local elections sparked off allegations of vote fraud. In March the body of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration special agent Enrique Camarena was found in the state of Michoacán. It appeared he had been brutally murdered by Mexican drug traffickers. Already nervous about Mexico's economic instability, relations with the USA were further hampered by Mexico's apparent reluctance to combat the drug trafficking problem highlighted by the murder. According to American sources, by the end of 1985 Mexico was the biggest trafficker of marijuana and heroin into the USA. In the elections of 1988 de la Madrid was succeeded by his fellow PRI candidate Carlos Salinas de Gortari.

Later Life

After leaving office, De la Madrid largely steered clear of political life. He died in Mexico City on 1 April 2012, aged 77.

De la Rúa, Fernando (Argentina)

Introduction

Fernando de la Rúa was president of Argentina between 1999–2001, replacing the Peronist Justicial president, Carlos Menem. A member of the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), de la Rúa represented the coalition Alianza para el Trabajo, la Justicia y la Educación (Alliance for Work, Justice and Education). His term in office was spent trying to stave off the country's deepening recession with a number of increasingly unpopular austerity measures. In Dec. 2001 following disastrous election results and amidst widespread anti-government demonstrations, de la Rúa resigned.

Early Life

De la Rúa was born on 15 Sept. 1937 in Córdoba. He studied law at the city's university. After graduation he joined the UCR and served as an advisor to the interior ministry between 1963–66 under President Arturo Illia. Having been elected senator for the Capital Federal region in 1973, de la Rúa was a legislator in the upper chamber until the military coup of 1976. Over the next few years he worked in universities in Mexico, USA and Venezuela. De la Rúa was re-elected the capital's senator in 1983 and again in 1989, when an agreement between the UCR and the PJ forced him to cede to a minority candidate. Three years later, he was restored to office. Traditionally appointed by the government, in 1996 de la Rúa became the first democratically elected mayor of Buenos Aires with 40% of votes.

In 1997 the UCR combined with the left-wing coalition Frepaso to form the Alianza as a challenge to the dominant PJ. Profiting from corruption charges surrounding Menem's government, the Alianza proved popular in the 1997 congressional elections, winning seats at the expense of the PJ. For the 1999 presidential elections, de la Rúa was chosen as the coalition's candidate. His main rival was the PJ candidate, Eduardo Duhalde. Du la Rúa's campaign to fight corruption and continue tight economic policies won him the presidency with 48% of votes. The victory was not enough for an Alianza majority and the PJ remained stronger by four seats, including the most important seat, Buenos Aires.

Career Peak

On election de la Rúa pledged to tackle corruption, unemployment, the widening gap between rich and poor and rampant tax evasion. In 1999 Argentina was suffering a recession and still had large debts, especially in the provinces. The economy was under pressure to perform well to meet IMF demands. In 1999 Argentina's fiscal deficit was at 3.8% of GDP compared to 2.2% in 1998. The IMF demanded a reduction to 1998 levels by 2000. De la

Rúa announced a continuation of key economic policies begun by Menem. He introduced large cuts in public spending, raised tax and set up an anti-corruption office. He outlined plans to streamline ministries, combining smaller ones to lower cost.

Despite the anti-corruption office, the end of 2000 saw corruption charges against several senators, mainly PJ members, accused of accepting bribes. In Oct. 2000 the vice president, Carlos Alberto Álvarez resigned rocking the Alianza coalition. In the same year, continued economic problems necessitated a US\$39.7bn. IMF aid package.

By March 2001, the economy was in crisis as Argentina failed to meet IMF targets agreed in Dec. 2000. Argentina's 33 month recession continued and devaluation and default looked likely. Unemployment was up, the budget deficit was high and consumer spending had fallen sharply. The crisis was exacerbated by a fall in agricultural prices and the threat of foot and mouth disease, both affecting Argentina's lucrative beef exports. As an emergency measure, de la Rúa enlisted the aid of Domingo Cavallo, a successful finance minister in the early 1990s. Cavallo's austerity package included emergency spending cuts of US\$1.5bn. in 2001 and US\$4.3bn. in 2002 to cure the fiscal deficit. Cavallo was granted special powers to lower taxes, raise tariffs in order to attract investment and encourage production. He agreed a 'zero deficit' policy with the IMF allowing the government to spend only what it receives in tax. 13% pay cut for civil servants in Aug. increased the tension, as did the announcement that their salaries will be paid partly in bonds. Fearing a devaluation of the peso many Argentines removed their money from dollar bank accounts, further destabilizing the economy. In reaction, the government restricted offshore transfers and prevented Argentines from withdrawing more than US\$1000 directly from their bank accounts. In Dec. 2001 the IMF refused to grant US\$1.3bn. in loans to the flailing economy. As unemployment passed 18%, a nationwide strike was called. Public discontent at austerity measures coupled with severe economic hardship led to mass anti-government protests. By 19 Dec. the government had declared a state of siege as rioting intensified and the country teetered on the brink of bankruptcy. Cavallo's special powers were revoked and he along with the entire cabinet, resigned soon after, followed on 20 Dec. by de la Rúa himself. He was forced to flee by helicopter from the rooftop of the presidential palace.

The crisis continued into the New Year as three acting or interim presidents resigned. On 1 Jan. 2002 Congress elected the PJ member Eduardo Duhalde as the country's new president to see out de la Rúa's term until 2003, and to attempt to stabilize both the country and the economy.

Later Life

In Aug. 2012 de la Rúa was put on trial, accused of bribing senators for votes during his presidency.

De Oliveira Salazar, António (Portugal)

Introduction

António de Oliveira Salazar was prime minister of Portugal between 1932–68. He created the Estado Novo (New State), an authoritarian constitution over which he maintained complete control.

Early Life

Salazar was born on 28 April 1889 at Santa Comba Dão, near Coimbra in central Portugal. The son of a farmer he was educated from 1900 at the Viseu seminary before studying economics at the Universidade de Coimbra. Graduating in 1914, Salazar began an academic career at the University becoming its professor of economics in 1918. The following year Salazar co-founded the Centro Academico para la Democracia Crista (Academic Centre for Christian Democracy) in opposition to anticlerical republican parties of the First Republic. In 1921 Salazar served a year in the national assembly before returning to academic life.

Following a military coup in 1926, Salazar was appointed finance minister. Disagreements over the amount of control granted to Salazar led him to resign after 5 days. Two years later he was reappointed by president General António Oscar de Fragoso Carmona with control over government spending. A respected economist, Salazar implemented hardline policies which

stabilized the economy in under 2 years and created money for development. He was appointed minister for the colonies in 1930.

Career Peak

Salazar's success as finance minister led Carmona to appoint him prime minister in 1932. Given near total control the premier transformed the government, creating an authoritarian regime. He implemented a corporatist system along lines with undertones of Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum* (Of New Things). Salazar appointed his own ministers, and his Estado Nuevo assembly was henceforth dominated by his supporters. Salazar led the only legal party, the União Nacional (Portuguese National Union). Opposition was outlawed and the PVDE secret police (Policia de Vigilancia e Defesa do Estado) was established in 1933 to enforce his rule. The PVDE set up its own prisons, the most notorious of which was the Tarrafal camp on the Cape Verde Islands, established in 1936. Propaganda and censorship were widespread. The Catholic Church, sidelined in 1910 with the establishment of the First Republic, regained political influence.

A supporter of Franco during the Spanish Civil War, Portugal remained neutral during World War II, although Salazar granted concessions to the British in the Azores. Portugal suffered shortages that led to industrial unrest in 1943–44. Underground opposition groups, boosted by popular discontent, tried to force elections in 1945. Salazar managed to suppress the opposition and survived several attempted coups in the late 1940s. In 1949 Portugal joined NATO, although it was not accepted into the UN until 1955.

Salazar kept tight control over economic matters, retaining the post of finance minister until 1940. His rule was economically successful and Portugal's economy strengthened further after World War II. Debt was reduced and annual economic growth from 1960 was consistently 5–7%. Industry, transport networks, energy and the military were developed. Investment in infrastructure was nonetheless to the detriment of education, health and welfare.

1961 brought the beginning of the colonial wars and a change in Salazar's fortunes. Rebellion in Angola and the Indian invasion of Goa and Damao Diu, was followed by revolutionary activity in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Colonial wars were costly and domestic investment suffered. Portugal came under pressure from other European nations that had shed their colonies. But a wave of liberalism stimulated opposition including the student movement and the Portuguese Socialist Action, founded in 1964 and led by future president Mário Soares. Salazar reacted brutally. The Portuguese Writers' Society was closed and the left-wing General Humberto Delgado, defeated in presidential elections in 1958, was assassinated in Spain by the PVDE (renamed the PIDE).

In 1968 Salazar suffered a stroke, and was replaced by Marcel Caetano. He died on 27 July 1970 in Lisbon. Although effectively leaving office in 1968, Salazar's regime remained in place under Caetano until the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974 re-established democracy.

De Valera, Éamon (Ireland)

Introduction

Éamon de Valera was the dominant figure of twentieth century Irish politics. Determined to achieve a united independent Ireland, he served as President of the Provisional Government of Ireland (1919–21), Prime Minister of the Irish Free State (1932–48, 1951–54, 1957–59) and President of the Republic of Ireland from 1959–73. He emerged as a leader in the 1916 Easter Uprising and by the time of his death was a world-renowned statesman.

Early Life

De Valera, who was called Edward as a child, was born to an Irish mother and Spanish father in New York on 14 Oct. 1882. When his father died 2 years later, de Valera was sent to Co. Limerick where he was brought up by his mother's family. A talented mathematician, he graduated from Dublin's Royal University in 1904 and then held a series of teaching posts. In 1910 he married Sinead Flanagan, with whom he had seven children, and 3 years later he joined the Irish National Volunteers.

Operating within this organization, he led a battalion in the 1916 Easter Uprising and won recognition for his refusal to surrender until the last moment. The following year he was condemned to death but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment, partly in recognition of his American birth. Meanwhile he was elected president of Sinn Féin (*We ourselves*), having become the MP for Clare. He was released from prison in a general amnesty but was re-arrested and sentenced in 1918, serving his time in Lincoln in England. He escaped the following year and fled to the USA where he solicited support for the nationalist cause and raised substantial finance.

While de Valera was in America, the Irish MP's formed an Irish Assembly (Dáil Éireann) and declared a republic under de Valera's presidency. In de Valera's absence, Arthur Griffith held the reins of power. The British government introduced the Government of Ireland Act in 1920, which allowed for most of Ulster to remain British while giving dominion status to the rest of Ireland. It failed to satisfy either side and Griffith (along with Michael Collins) negotiated a new Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921–22) with British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, which allowed for a slightly enlarged Irish state.

De Valera disapproved of the agreement because of the partition of Ireland, and he resigned his presidency of the Dáil and Sinn Féin. De Valera fought against the treaty in the ensuing civil war and served a spell in prison during 1923–24. In 1926 he formed a new party, Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny). He allowed his members to take the required oath of loyalty to the British sovereign but, as the main opposition, he campaigned for the removal of the oath, the end of partition and the termination of land purchase annuities to Britain.

Career Peak

After election success in 1932, de Valera became Prime Minister and in the same year became head of the Council of the League of Nations. The troubled relations with Britain resulted in economic hardship in Ireland, but Britain's 1936 abdication crisis strengthened de Valera's bargaining position. In 1937 he drafted the constitution that established Eire as a sovereign republic and removing many of the symbols of British domination. During World War II Ireland remained neutral and de Valera retained the premiership until 1948.

Ironically, it was the successor government of John Costello, that lasted until 1951, which withdrew Ireland from the British Commonwealth. de Valera had resisted such a move considering it detrimental to the chances of re-uniting the two Irelands. He re-gained power in 1951, was succeeded by Costello in 1954 and served a final spell as Prime Minister from 1957–59. His periods in government during the 1950s were overshadowed by mass emigration, declining industrial output and spiralling unemployment. de Valera's style of leadership was informed principally by his devout Catholicism and sense of social conservatism.

Later Life

By 1959 de Valera had failing eyesight and resigned as Prime Minister (a position known as *Taoiseach* since 1937). He successfully stood for election as President in June 1959 and won a consecutive term in 1966. He retired in 1973, moving into a nursing home near Dublin where he died on 29 Aug. 1975. He overshadowed virtually every other Irish politician of his age but, although he succeeded in creating an independent Irish state, Ireland remained divided.

De Villepin, Dominique (France)

Introduction

Dominique de Villepin, a flamboyant former diplomat and poet, was appointed prime minister of France by the president, Jacques Chirac, on 31 May 2005 following the electorate's dramatic rejection in a referendum of the European Union constitution that had been championed by the government. Villepin faced an uphill struggle to revive the French economy and reduce the high level of unemployment. Critics questioned his ability to unite the country, given that he was a member of the political elite who had never stood for election to public office and with little experience of domestic

economic or social policy. Nevertheless, faced with the worst civil unrest in France since the troubles of 1968, he took tough emergency measures in Oct.–Nov. 2005 to deal with widespread rioting across the country. He courted further unpopularity in spring 2006 with controversial legislation on youth employment which was later withdrawn in the face of street demonstrations and strikes. In Dec. 2006 he became only the second serving prime minister to testify before judges over an alleged plot to discredit the interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, one of his political rivals.

Early Life

Dominique Marie François René Galouzeau de Villepin was born on 14 Nov. 1953 in Rabat, Morocco (then a French protectorate), the son of a senior civil servant and a businessman. The family moved from Morocco to Caracas, Venezuela, where Villepin attended the French lycée, and then New York, USA.

Villepin attended university in France, first studying literature in Toulouse in the early 1970s, followed by a law degree in Paris at the Institute of Political Studies. His military service included a spell as a naval officer on the aircraft carrier *Clemenceau*. In 1977 he joined the *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR), which had been launched the year before by the former prime minister, Jacques Chirac. Villepin consolidated his place among France's governing elite by attending the prestigious *École Nationale d'Administration* (ENA) in Paris—graduating in May 1980 and being swiftly recruited by the ministry for foreign affairs. He spent 3 years as an adviser at the department for African and Malagasy affairs, before being posted to Washington, D.C. to work as press officer for the French embassy in 1984. He was responsible for dealing with enquiries on French policy in the Middle East at the time of 'Irangate' and the arms-for-hostages scandal. In 1987 Villepin was promoted to head of the press and information unit at the embassy.

Two years later he was transferred to the French embassy in New Delhi, India, serving as second councillor and then first councillor, before returning to Paris in 1992 to resume work at the ministry for foreign affairs. Villepin was assistant director in the department for African and Malagasy affairs in 1993, the year in which France offered support to the government of its former colony, Algeria, in its 'struggle against terrorism and religious fanaticism'. Later that year he became principal private secretary to Alain Juppé, the minister for foreign affairs. Following Jacques Chirac's victory in the presidential elections of May 1995, Villepin was appointed secretary-general of the presidency of the republic, a post he retained until May 2002. He became one of the president's closest confidants, and is thought to have advised Chirac to dissolve parliament in 1997, a year earlier than necessary, in an attempt to give the by then unpopular prime minister, Juppé, a mandate to see through an economic austerity package. However, Villepin and Chirac misjudged the mood of voters, who delivered an outright majority for the left and forced the appointment of Lionel Jospin as prime minister, heralding 5 years of *cohabitation* with the left.

When the centre-right regained control of the government in the 2002 legislative elections, Villepin was appointed minister for foreign affairs. He is credited with negotiating a peace settlement between the government and rebels in Côte d'Ivoire, which was enforced by 3,000 French troops. In early 2003, in the build-up to the US-led invasion of Iraq, Villepin became known internationally as one of the war's main opponents, particularly after his impassioned address to the United Nations on 14 Feb. 2003. Less well publicized, however, was his backing for French military intervention in the Central African Republic a few weeks later, following a coup in the former colony.

In a reshuffle in March 2004 Villepin succeeded Nicolas Sarkozy as minister for the interior, internal security and local freedoms. He built on Sarkozy's police service reforms and won plaudits for tightening visa regulations and cracking down on Islamic militancy. When, in a referendum on 29 May 2005, the French public voted against the ratification of the new EU constitution, the government, which had campaigned for the 'yes' vote, was forced to make changes. President Chirac accepted the resignation of his unpopular prime minister, Jean-Pierre Raffarin, on 30 May and immediately appointed Villepin as his successor.

Career Peak

Villepin formally took over from Raffarin in a brief handover ceremony at the prime minister's official residence on 31 May 2005. On 2 June the deputy secretary-general of the Elysée Palace unveiled the new cabinet of 31 ministers appointed by Villepin. In a television interview, Villepin gave himself

100 days to 'restore the confidence of the people'. and promised to make reducing France's high rate of unemployment his priority. In his general policy declaration to parliament on 8 June, Villepin restated his desire to 'win the battle for jobs'. He added that France, as 'a founding country, will occupy a full place in the European Union. It will respect its commitments. It will continue to pull the European adventure upwards. . . Europe has been built on the economy and pragmatism. People are now demanding more humanity and more protection: greater job security, increased attention to environmental issues, better defence of the values of respect and equal opportunities.' He continued: 'The meaning of Europe can be found in these values. It cannot be constructed through market forces alone'. Villepin's speech was followed by a vote of confidence from the National Assembly which he won by 363 votes to 178 (with 4 abstentions).

In Sept. 2005 Villepin announced his economic recovery plan. This included proposals for tax reform, financial incentives to encourage job seekers and to reduce the numbers of people receiving state benefits, and tighter controls on welfare payments. He also introduced new employment contracts with easier-dismissal rules for companies with fewer than 20 employees. Despite opposition from the trade unions, Villepin accelerated the privatization programme, selling a first government stake in Gaz de France. In Oct. there was a national strike in protest at new labour laws and welfare reforms. Later in the month rioting began in the largely immigrant suburbs of northeastern Paris. As the unrest escalated and the destruction spread across the country, Villepin declared a state of emergency, invoking a 1955 law that allowed local authorities to impose curfews and restrict movements in troubled areas. The government extended the state of emergency for 3 months as the country gradually calmed down after 3 weeks of unrest. Villepin acknowledged that the government had made mistakes in its treatment of its immigrants and promised to improve life in the suburbs for poorer communities with high levels of unemployment. In April 2006 his government was forced to scrap unpopular legislation on youth employment in response to widespread strikes and protests. Later in the year he was questioned about an attempt to smear his interior minister and political rival, Nicolas Sarkozy, over alleged secret payments and accounts relating to defence deals. Villepin tendered his resignation on 15 May 2007, the final day of Jacques Chirac's term.

Later Life

In Jan. 2010 Villepin was acquitted of attempting to smear Sarkozy. He also defeated a prosecution appeal against the verdict in Sept. 2011. The case strengthened Villepin's position as one of Sarkozy's leading right-wing opponents and in June 2010 he established a new centre-right party to challenge the UMP president. However, he failed to garner sufficient support to contest the presidency in 2012.

Demirel, Suleiman (Turkey)

Introduction

Demirel served seven terms as Turkey's prime minister, before becoming the country's ninth president in 1993. He retired from office in May 2000, and was replaced by Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

Early Life

Demirel was born on 6 Oct. 1924 in Islâmköy. He took a degree in engineering at İstanbul Technical University. In 1949 he started working for the Department of Electrical Works, and later went to the USA to work on a number of irrigation and electrification projects. He began his lengthy political career in 1961 when he was elected to parliament as a member of the Justice Party. He rose to be party leader 3 years later.

Career Peak

In Oct. 1965 Demirel was elected prime minister for the first time. In power he set out to strengthen Turkey's links with the West, and in particular the members of NATO. He also endeavoured to improve the lot of the Turkish peasantry by initiating a rural development programme.

Demirel went on to lead four successive coalition governments until 1971, when military opposition to his moderate policies forced his resignation. Demirel refused to capitulate to senior army officials who demanded an active political role in combating terrorism. He was restored to power in 1975 by a coalition of the Justice Party and a number of smaller, nationalist parties.

The major difficulties that dogged Demirel's ministry were inflation, a widening trade deficit, growing civil unrest and the terrorist activities of fundamentalist Islamic groups. In spite of these obstacles he continued to pursue a policy that aimed to generate economic growth, but was frustrated by the weak and fractured nature of his coalition governments. His fourth tenure in office ended in June 1977, but he returned to power intermittently until the end of the year when he became the leader of the opposition. His sixth term as prime minister began in Nov. 1979, and ended the following year, when the military again ousted him in the wake of further terrorist bloodshed. A ban was imposed on his participation in politics, and the Justice Party was barred from parliament. The ban was rescinded in 1987, and Demirel re-entered the political arena as the chairman of the new True Path Party (DYP). The electoral defeat of the Motherland Party returned him to prime ministerial office for a seventh time in Nov. 1991.

After the sudden death of Turgut Özal, Demirel was elected president. He retired from politics in May 2000.

Demirel died on 17 June 2015 aged 90.

Deng Xiaoping (China)

Introduction

Despite never having held any of the major state offices, Deng Xiaoping became one of the most influential leaders of modern China. His economic reforms rescued China from the chaos wrought by the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and laid the foundations for his country's current economic progress.

Early Life

Deng was born on 22 Aug. 1922 in Sichuan province, into a prosperous family of landowners. Family money allowed him to study abroad between 1921–26, first in France, where he was first involved in the Communist movement, and then in the Soviet Union.

Returning to China after 1926, Deng made for the Chinese Soviet, established by the Communists in the south-west. He was soon involved in both political and military activities as the Communist 'statelet' was besieged by the Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek (Chiang Chieh-shih). On the Long March (1934–35) Deng became a trusted colleague of the party leadership and was appointed political officer to the Communist Eighth Route Army in 1937.

Deng's career progress was slow. Although appointed to the Central Committee of the party in 1945 and to the leadership of the Second Field Army in 1948 during the civil war against the Nationalists, when the People's Republic of China was established on 1 Oct. 1949, Deng was not rewarded with a position in national government. Instead he was posted to the south-west as a regional party official. In 1952 Deng finally received the call to come to Beijing and became one of the deputy premiers. In 1955 he became a member of the Politburo.

As his reputation increased, Deng began to influence state policy, but he became a victim of the divisions within the party leadership. Mao Zedong placed emphasis on continuing revolution and equality. Deng, allied with the head of state, Liu Shaoqi, recognised that most individuals are motivated by personal economic rewards. Deng's pragmatism was out of tune with the revolutionary zeal of the Cultural Revolution and he was purged from high office in 1967. By 1969 Deng had vanished from public life. When the Cultural Revolution had been discredited, Deng's climb back was rapid. He was reappointed to a deputy premiership by Zhou Enlai in 1973, and by 1975 he was back in the Politburo and was deputy chairman of the Central Committee. As Zhou Enlai's health declined, his protégé, Deng, exercised more of the levers of power. But a second fall awaited him.

When Zhou died in Jan. 1976, the radical Gang of Four secured Deng's removal from government again. Nine months later, following Mao's death, the radicals in turn were purged and Deng's second return to power began.

Mao's successor Hua Guofeng lost the battle for the leadership of the party. In mid-1977 Deng was back in office in the Politburo and the Central Committee. In 1980 Hua was forced out of the premiership and in the following year had to resign the party leadership. Yet Deng did not take on either position.

Career Peak

From 1980–81 Deng Xiaoping was effectively the ruler of China, but he ruled through 'lieutenants'. Zhao Ziyang was appointed premier in 1980 and Hu Yaobang party leader in 1981. Deng and his allies were now free to implement reforms.

State-owned industries gained economic independence and managers were encouraged to make profits. Throughout the economy personal financial incentives were introduced. On the small scale, for example, peasants were allowed to determine their own production plans. On the macro-scale, free ports and development zones along the southern and eastern coasts were opened to foreign investment and enterprise. Many aspects of planning were decentralised. The result was strong economic growth and greatly increased agricultural production. Social reforms too were introduced, not all of them liberal. A rigid policy of family planning—including a legal requirement for families not to have more than one child—was introduced.

With his reform programme bringing success, Deng stepped further out of the limelight. He gave up his posts on the Politburo and Central Committee in 1987, but continued to govern the country through loyal colleagues. Yet one the biggest challenges to his plans was still to come. Economic reform increased public appetite for greater personal freedom and political reform—neither was forthcoming. Party leader Hu Yaobang gave some indication of sympathy towards these expectations and was subsequently removed as general secretary of the party in 1987. Hu's death in 1989 coincided with the death throes of Communism in eastern Europe, and his funeral was marked by large-scale student protests in favour of political freedoms. Students and workers occupied Tiananmen Square in central Beijing. In the face of this challenge to authority Deng momentarily wavered. But he came down in favour of the authoritarian old guard and the protests were crushed by force and loss of life.

After the Tiananmen Square massacre Jiang Zemin was appointed party leader, but Deng remained in charge of the country's economic development until his death on 19 Feb. 1997.

Denktaş, Rauf (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Cyprus)

Introduction

Turkish Cypriot leader and President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) since 1984, Rauf Denktaş was one of the key players in the proclamation of the breakaway Turkish Federated State of Cyprus in 1975. He sought international recognition for the sovereignty of the TRNC and maintained that Cyprus should be reunited as a confederation of two equal states. All attempts at peace talks between Denktaş and the Greek Cypriot government were unsuccessful. His fourth consecutive term as president ended in April 2005.

Early Life

Denktaş was born on 27 Jan. 1924 near Paphos. The son of a judge, he graduated from the Lefkosa British School in 1942, where he taught for a year before studying law in the UK. Admitted to the Bar from Lincoln's Inn in 1947, he returned to Cyprus to set up his own legal practice and from 1949–57 was a leading lawyer for the prosecution under the British colonial regime. When the Enosis issue created further tension in Cyprus after World War II, Denktaş served as the Turkish Affairs representative (in 1948–49) to the Constitutional Council established by the UK to consider constitutional reforms leading to Cypriot self-government.

In 1959–60 Denktaş led the Turkish delegation at the independence negotiations and the drafting of the new constitution. However, once the power-sharing agreement between the Turkish minority and Greek majority broke down in 1963 and sectarian violence escalated, Turkey demanded the

partition of the island. In 1964 Denktaş was banned from returning to Cyprus from Ankara, the Turkish capital, and remained in exile until 1968. On his return, he assumed the vice-presidency and then from 1973 the presidency of the Turkish Cypriot Autonomous Administration. He was Turkish Cypriot spokesman at intermittent intercommunal talks until 1974 when Turkish forces invaded and effectively partitioned the island.

Career Peak

In 1975 Denktaş was declared president of the independent 'Turkish Federated State of Cyprus'. The following year he founded the conservative National Unity Party (UBP), which dominated the first Turkish Cypriot Assembly elections. He was re-elected in 1981 as the UBP candidate, but with a reduced majority (51.8% of the vote) as opposition groups, seeing their part of the island becoming poorer in contrast to the Greek Cypriot territory, advocated greater flexibility in the UN-sponsored talks.

In Nov. 1983, Denktaş proclaimed the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which was condemned by the UN Security Council and recognised only by Turkey. However, he was returned in the June 1985 presidential election by an increased margin (70.5% of the vote). He began direct UN-sponsored negotiations with the newly-elected president of the Greek-Cypriot zone in 1988, but these were eventually abandoned in 1990 because Denktaş insisted on the right to self-determination for Turkish Cypriots.

In 1992 fresh talks based on a bicomunal approach for a settlement stalled over disagreements on the powers of the central government, demilitarization and the division of the territory. Denktaş was deemed responsible by the UN for the lack of progress. There was also conflict between Denktaş (who earlier had won the 1990 TRNC presidential election standing as an independent candidate) and the UBP Prime Minister Derviş Eroğlu (who advocated partition) over the handling of the talks. This divergence resulted in the setting up in July 1992 of the pro-Denktaş Democratic Party which included former UBP deputies. In the April 1995 and April 2000 elections Denktaş retained the presidency, defeating UBP leader Erođlu on both occasions.

Despite further negotiations on a federal settlement, including in 2002 the first face-to-face meetings between Denktaş and the Greek Cypriot leader Glafcos Clerides in 4 years, little progress was made. In Dec. 2002, Reçep Tayyip Erdoğan, leader of Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party, urged Denktaş to embark on new talks with the Greek Cypriot government, based on the UN's plans to create a demilitarized country divided into Swiss-style cantons. But by the March deadline, Denktaş and his new opposite number Tassos Papadopoulos had failed to accept the reunification proposals. Denktaş believed the agreement compromised too much land while Papadopoulos was unhappy with the number of Greek Cypriots allowed to return to the North.

As a result of the failure of the talks, it seemed likely that the Greek sector would accede alone to the EU in May 2004. Under increasing pressure from the Turkish Cypriot population, Denktaş made an unexpected gesture in April 2003 by opening the border in Nicosia to allow day-passage for members of both communities. The decision was welcomed by the Greek Cypriot government, which responded by lifting the trade ban and by offering the Turkish-Cypriot community healthcare and benefits.

Denktaş announced in May 2004 that he would not stand for president in the 2005 elections. He was succeeded by Mehmet Ali Talat on 25 April 2005. He died aged 87 on 13 Jan. 2012.

Deuba, Sher Bahadur (Nepal)

Introduction

Sher Bahadur Deuba has served four terms as prime minister of Nepal, most recently from June 2017–Feb. 2018.

Early Life

Sher Bahadur Deuba was born on 13 June 1946 in Dadeldhura. While at university, he was a founding member of the Nepal Students Union and was elected its president in 1971.

In 1994 he became the Nepali Congress parliamentary leader, and then prime minister in Sept. 1995. This term lasted until March 1997, and during this time he oversaw the Mahakali Treaty, signed with India, which regulated the development and use of the Mahakali River.

Deuba strengthened his position within his own party in 2001 after defeating Sushil Koirala in the election for parliamentary party leader. He began his second term as prime minister in July that year. However, he failed to bring Maoist rebels to any kind of agreement, which led to several states of emergency being announced, and King Gyanendra ended his premiership in Oct. 2002.

Deuba's third brief period as prime minister from June 2004–Feb. 2005 resulted once again in him being dismissed by the king, who was in the midst of establishing his own undisputed rule. Deuba was imprisoned under charges of corruption but released in Feb. 2006.

Disagreements in the party in 2002 led to the Nepali Congress splitting, with Deuba leading the Nepali Congress (Democratic) faction, although there was a reconciliation in 2007. Deuba successfully ran as the candidate for the Dadeldhura and Kanchanpur-4 constituencies for the Constituent Assembly elections of 10 April 2008. However, he lost his bid for the premiership in the Aug. elections of that year. In 2009 Ram Chandra Paul defeated Deuba in the race for parliamentary leader.

Career Peak

Pushpa Kamal Dahal of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre), who had been elected prime minister in Aug. 2016, resigned in May 2017, in what was an expected move. His coalition government with the Nepali Congress had scheduled such a power-sharing rotation, and he was replaced by Deuba, who had earlier become president of the Congress, on 7 June 2017.

Entering his fourth term as premier, Deuba promised to implement the new constitution of 2015, and pledged to hold the second phase of local elections in 2018.

However, he faced strong domestic opposition; he accused the Left alliance, comprising the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre), of trying to derail democracy. Parliamentary elections in Dec. 2017 further undermined his position as the Left alliance won 174 seats against 63 for the Nepali Congress. Deuba resigned on 15 Feb. 2018 and was succeeded as prime minister by Khadga Prasad Oli.

Dewar, Donald (Scotland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Donald Campbell Dewar was the Labour first minister (1999–2000) of Scotland's first parliament since the seventeenth century. A prominent Labour politician who had championed the cause of Scottish devolution since the late 1960s, he played a key role in Labour's general election success of 1997. However, his most important work came in establishing a Scottish parliament and serving as its first minister. He was plagued by ill health during its first year and died in office.

Early Life

Dewar was born on 21 Aug. 1937 in Glasgow, Scotland to Dr Alasdair Dewar, a consultant dermatologist, and Mary, who ran the Scottish Culture Society. His parents both suffered ill health and Dewar spent an unhappy spell at boarding school before attending the Glasgow Academy. He then studied law at Glasgow University, where he honed his debating skills as a member of the Labour Club and president of the University Union. He also became close friends with contemporaries including the future Labour leader John Smith and the future Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman Menzies Campbell. He trained and practised as a solicitor and in 1964 he married Alison, whom he had met at university. They would have two children.

In the same year Dewar narrowly lost a parliamentary election in the seat of Aberdeen South but entered the house as the member for that constituency following the 1966 election. In Oct. 1967 he was appointed as parliamentary

private secretary to Anthony Crossland, the president of the board of trade. The Scottish National Party were gaining in influence at this time and in response Dewar made a speech in support of Scottish devolution. Three years later Dewar narrowly lost his seat. In addition, he developed a back problem that would afflict him for the rest of his life and his wife left him for a former university friend, Dery Irvine, who would later become Lord Chancellor. It would be 8 years before Dewar returned to the Commons, winning the seat of Glasgow Garscadden in the face of strong Scottish Nationalist opposition. He served this constituency, which evolved into Glasgow Anniesland following boundary changes, until the end of his career.

Dewar campaigned with Conservative and Liberal representatives for devolution in the first referendum to be held on the subject in 1979. They won a small majority but less than the required 40% to proceed with the motion. In opposition he was chairman of the select committee on Scottish affairs, 1980–81, before becoming spokesman for Scottish affairs, a post he held until 1992. He vociferously supported Scottish industry throughout the Conservative administration and spent much of the 1980s on the moderate wing of the Labour party in conflict with the far left. In 1984 he successfully defended a move by the left to deselect him from his parliamentary seat. In 1990 he played an instrumental part in the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which brought together Labour politicians, members of rival parties, trade union and church members to discuss a potential Scottish parliament. The blueprint would provide a foundation for his work in the years to come.

When John Smith became Labour leader in 1992 he named Dewar as shadow social services secretary, where he established a commission on social justice. Smith died suddenly in 1994 and his successor, Tony Blair, made Dewar the party's chief whip in 1996. Dewar became a privy counsellor in the same year and, as chief whip, ensured that there was a minimum of party dissension in the lead up to the May 1997 general election. Labour returned to power with a landslide victory and Dewar was rewarded with the post he most desired, secretary of state for Scotland. He immediately drew up plans for a Scottish Parliament and in the referendum on Scottish devolution held on 11 Sept. 1997, 74.3% voted for a parliament with 63.5% wanting it to have tax raising powers. He guided the relevant legislation through parliament and elections for the first Scottish parliament took place in May 1999.

Career Peak

Dewar was elected as first minister of an executive that included both Labour and Liberal Democrat members. The first year of the parliament was not to prove an easy one. There were divisive rows over university tuition fees and Section 28, a clause in the Local Government Act prohibiting the promotion of homosexuality as a 'pretended family relationship' by local authorities. There was also considerable controversy at the rising costs of the proposed Scottish parliament building. In May 2000 Dewar underwent major heart surgery at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, before returning to work 3 months later. While retaining his enthusiasm for his work, his health had clearly suffered. In Oct. 2000 he had a fall outside his home in Edinburgh. His condition quickly deteriorated and it was found he had internal bleeding in the head. On 11 Oct. his children took the decision to switch off his life support machine. A politician respected across party boundaries for his intellect, wit and personal charm, his lasting monument was the establishment of the Scottish parliament.

Dhoinine, Ikililou (Comoros)

Introduction

Ikililou Dhoinine was sworn in as the president on 26 May 2011, assuming power five months after securing electoral victory. Dhoinine had previously served for 5 years as vice president to the departing head of state, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi. The 2001 constitution demands that the presidency rotates every 4 years between representatives of the three islands of which the archipelago is composed. Dhoinine is the first president to hail from the federation's smallest island, Mohéli, and his appointment was only the second peaceful handover of power.

Early Life

Ikililou Dhoinine was born in Djoïèzi, a village on Mohéli, on 14 Aug. 1962. Before entering government he qualified as a pharmacist. As vice president, he took responsibility for the budget and women's entrepreneurship. He also served for five days in March 2008 as provisional president of Anjouan (one of the Comorian islands) after a diplomatic crisis there resulted in an armed intervention by the federal government.

Following the second round of presidential elections on 26 Dec. 2010 the electoral commission announced that Dhoinine had won 61.1% of the popular vote. His closest rival, Mohamed Said Fazul, alleged electoral fraud but the election monitoring group concluded that any breaches of protocol had not been sufficient to alter the result. The opposition later complained that the five-month gap between polling and the new leader's inauguration amounted to an unconstitutional extension of office for the outgoing president. Sambi's tenure had exceeded its mandate by several months even before the election.

Career Peak

Dhoinine's peaceful assumption of the presidency suggested a degree of political stability that has hitherto eluded the country. He pledged to consolidate national unity while tackling the endemic corruption that has blighted the federation's governance since it gained independence. He campaigned specifically on a policy of much-needed infrastructure investment. An alleged plot against his government prompted several arrests in April 2013, and inter-island disputes and political rivalries have since persisted. Dhoinine left office in May 2016 and was succeeded by former coup leader and president Azali Assoumani, who won elections held in April.

Di Rupo, Elio (Belgium)

Introduction

Elio Di Rupo became prime minister in Dec. 2011 at the head of a six-party coalition, bringing to a conclusion talks that lasted 541 days. A French speaker from the Walloon region, Di Rupo is regarded as a pragmatist and a skilled negotiator.

Early Life

Born on 18 July 1951 in Morlanwelz to Italian migrant parents, Elio Di Rupo was awarded a PhD in chemistry from the University of Mons-Hainault (UMH). He taught at Leeds University in the UK from 1977 before returning to Belgium the following year to work at UMH and the Institute for Scientific Research in Industry and Agriculture.

He joined the Socialist Party (PS) and was elected a municipal councillor in Mons in 1982. In 1987 he entered parliament as MP for Mons-Borinage, serving until 1989 when he was elected a Member of the European Parliament. In 1991 he became a senator and from 1992–94 was minister of education for the French-speaking community, as well as minister for audiovisual policy from 1993–94. In 1994 Di Rupo was appointed deputy prime minister and minister for communications and public enterprises. He remained deputy prime minister following the 1995 parliamentary election but was named minister for the economy and telecommunications. In 1998 he was also put in charge of foreign trade.

After the 1999 election Di Rupo helped negotiate the 'rainbow coalition' of Liberals, Socialists and Greens. As minister-president of the Walloon region, he initiated a 10 year programme designed to lift the region out of economic decline. In Oct. 1999 he was elected president of the PS and resigned his minister-president post. He also became vice-president of the Socialist International group.

While serving as mayor of Mons from 2000–05, he was appointed minister of state, representing Belgium in talks on a European constitution. As president of the PS, Di Rupo oversaw a review to widen the party's appeal and, following its strong performance in the 2003 election, brought it into the 'Purple Coalition' of Liberals and Socialists. After updating his development plan for the Walloon region, he was reappointed its minister-president in Oct. 2005, holding the post until July 2007 when he again became mayor of Mons.

In the June 2010 general election the PS became the second largest party in parliament, one seat behind the nationalist New-Flemish Alliance (N-VA). Di Rupo participated in negotiations with N-VA to form a coalition government but differences over increased autonomy for the regions resulted in deadlock. In Oct. 2011 he instigated talks with five other parties to form a government. In Nov. 2011, after Belgium's credit status was downgraded, the parties agreed a package of budget cuts and constitutional reforms, including increased fiscal autonomy for the regions.

Career Peak

Di Rupo took office on 6 Dec. 2011 at the head of a coalition of Liberal, Socialist and Christian Democrat parties, promising to cut €11.3bn. from the national budget. In early 2012 his austerity measures provoked strikes and his centre-right coalition partners resisted planned tax increases. His principal task has been to maintain a coalition of diverse partners while addressing Belgium's economic difficulties. In addition, he faced opposition from Flemish nationalists, who favoured greater regional autonomy and who made major gains at local elections in Oct. 2012.

Di Rupo's stint as prime minister came to an end in Oct. 2014 when he was replaced by Charles Michel of the Reformist Movement, who had formed a new government in the aftermath of elections in May.

Díaz Ordaz, Gustavo (Mexico)

Introduction

Representing the dominant Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI), Gustavo Díaz Ordaz was president of Mexico from 1964 to 1970. His presidency aimed to promote economic development for Mexico, but any achievements were clouded by civil unrest and discontent, and especially by the 1968 student massacre in Mexico City.

Early Life

Díaz was born in Ciudad Serdánin in the state of Puebla on 12 March 1911. He was a relative of an associate of the nineteenth century Mexican president Benito Juárez (ruler between 1858–76), a Zapotec Indian from Oaxaca. A trained lawyer, Díaz's political career began as a Supreme Court president in Puebla and in 1946 he was elected to the Mexican senate, becoming interior minister in 1958. Díaz was elected president on 1 Dec. 1964, succeeding his fellow PRI colleague Adolfo López Mateo.

Career Peak

During his presidency, Díaz aimed to implement economic developments in Mexico, but his government did little to change the image of its party as conservative, restrictive and undemocratic. As in many countries across Europe, a wave of civil unrest began in 1966 with anti-government student demonstrations. These culminated in 1968 with the student protest in Mexico City that resulted in the Tlaelolco Massacre. The principle complaints about the government were its single party rule, restricted freedom of speech and excessive government spending. In 1968, as Mexico prepared to be the first 'third world' country to host the Olympic Games, there was much criticism of the amount of public money spent on the preparations and the consequent neglect of social programmes. On 2 Oct. 1968, 5,000 students and workers gathered in Mexico City's Plaza de las Tres Culturas to protest against the government. Their demands included the freeing of political prisoners and autonomy for the universities. The army surrounded the protesters and opened fire killing more than 250 people and injuring thousands, although the official death toll was much lower. The massacre led to a series of guerrilla movements that would disrupt Mexican society throughout the 1970s and blight the presidency of Díaz's successor Luis Echeverría Álvarez who took over the presidency from 1970.

Later Life

Díaz died in Mexico City on 15 July 1979.

Diefenbaker, John (Canada)

Introduction

John George Diefenbaker was the Progressive Conservative Prime Minister of Canada 1957–63. A social and economic reformer, he was a strong advocate of greater racial harmony within Canada and sought to reduce Canada's reliance on the United States. He was elected for a record 13 parliamentary terms, his last term starting just 3 months before his death.

Early Life

Diefenbaker was born in Neustadt, Ontario on 18 Sept. 1895. He was educated by his father and graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1916 with a degree in Political Science and Economics. He then served with the 105th Saskatoon Fusiliers in World War I, achieving the rank of lieutenant before being invalided home. In 1919 he qualified from the University of Saskatchewan with a degree in Law and was called to the Bar in that same year. He had a successful law practice and in 1930 he was created a King's Counsel.

In 1925 and 1926 Diefenbaker was unsuccessful in attempts to enter the House of Commons, and he also failed at the provincial elections of 1929, the mayoral elections for his adopted home of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1933 and again at the provincial elections of 1938. Having become head of the Saskatchewan branch of the Conservatives in 1936, his party failed to gain any seats at the 1938 elections. However, in 1940 he was voted into the House of Commons as the member for Lake Centre, Saskatchewan. This would remain his constituency until 1953 when he became the member for Prince Albert, the area he would serve until his death.

Two years later he stood for the party leadership but was defeated. After the Conservatives changed their name to the Progressive Conservatives (PC) Diefenbaker again made an unsuccessful bid for the leadership. In 1956, at the third attempt, he won the battle to head his party, replacing George Drew.

Career Peak

In 1957 he led the Conservatives to election victory, ending 22 years of Liberal rule and replacing Louis St Laurent as Prime Minister on 11 June. The following year, PC made further election gains, claiming 208 out of 256 available seats, the Conservatives' largest ever majority.

As Canada's leader, Diefenbaker sought to improve ethnic relations within the country. 'In my party,' he said 'we have members of Italian, Dutch, German, Scandinavian, Chinese and Ukrainian origin—and they are all Canadians'. In 1958 he issued a Canadian Bill of Rights and made James Gladstone Canada's first aboriginal senator. In 1960 he extended the vote to all aboriginal groups. Diefenbaker supported the independence movements sweeping through many Commonwealth countries and he protested against South Africa's entry into the Commonwealth in 1961 on the grounds of its apartheid regime.

To reduce Canada's dependence on the United States he sought closer ties abroad, notably with Britain, though it was not a policy that was wholly successful. He introduced numerous social and economic reforms, including the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act, which rejuvenated the industry and prompted vigorous trade with the Far East. He initiated schemes to boost the economy of Canada's northern area and to improve health and welfare.

In the debit side there was rising unemployment. The party also suffered when it cancelled the landmark Avro Arrow aircraft in 1959. Relations with America were variable as when Diefenbaker refused to support US intervention in Cuba in 1961. At the elections of 1962, the Conservatives were returned with a reduced majority, claiming only 116 seats. The following year saw a crisis over the proposed manufacture of nuclear weapons. On 5 Feb. 1963 Diefenbaker's government succumbed to two no-confidence motions. In the subsequent elections the Liberals won 129 seats against 95 for the PC.

Later Life

Diefenbaker retained the party leadership until 1967 when he was succeeded by Robert Stanfield. In 1969 he became Chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan, his *alma mater*. He died at his home in Ottawa on 16 Aug. 1979.

Diouf, Abdou (Senegal)

Introduction

Abdou Diouf was Senegal's first prime minister from 1970–80 and president from 1981–2000. A socialist, he was defeated in the elections of 2000 bringing to an end 40 years of socialist rule.

Early Life

Diouf was born on 7 Sept. 1935 in Louga, Senegal. Schooled in Saint-Louis, he attended the University of Dakar and in 1958 went to the Sorbonne in Paris to study law.

Diouf returned to Senegal in 1960 to take up a civil service post. He was appointed a regional governor the following year and became general secretary to the presidency in 1964. He was minister of planning and industry from 1968–70 when he was nominated prime minister in the government of President Senghor. When Senghor resigned the presidency in 1980, Diouf succeeded him, taking office on 1 Jan. 1981.

Career Peak

Continuing Senghor's policy of inter-African co-operation, Diouf was instrumental in the establishment of the Confederation of Senegal and Gambia in 1982, an affiliation that lasted for 7 years. He was re-elected president with more than 80% of votes in 1983. Diouf's international reputation grew particularly with involvement with the Organization of African Unity. He was its president in 1985–86, a post he held again 7 years later. He was also a prominent figure in the Economic Community of West African States, the Group of 15 (a summit group for emerging nations) and the Islamic Conference.

Despite his international stature, Diouf's tenure was often troubled. In the aftermath of the 1983 elections there were riots by separatists in the Casamance region of the country. Diouf's re-election in 1988 with more than 73% of votes were challenged by the opposition who accused him of fraud, which led to further rioting. Diouf responded by declaring a state of emergency, during which Abdoulaye Wade (later president and then in opposition) was arrested.

Tensions with neighbouring Mauritania seriously deteriorated in the late 1980s, resulting in an unofficial border war in 1990. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored in 1992. Diouf secured another term of office in 1993 but, despite significant international aid, the national economy was crippled and devaluation followed in 1994. In addition, a ceasefire agreed with Casamance separatists in 1993 fell apart 2 years later.

At the elections of March 2000 Diouf was defeated by Abdoulaye Wade, who became head of Senegal's first non-Socialist government.

Djibo, Salou (Niger)

Introduction

Salou Djibo came to power in Feb. 2010 after a military coup. An army squadron leader, he was one of a faction that objected to President Mamadou Tandja's law change allowing him to extend his term of office. Despite a low public profile, Djibo was named leader of the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy by fellow coup members. He has pledged to prepare the country for democratic elections.

Early Life

Salou Djibo was born on 15 April 1965 in the village of Namaro in western Niger. He joined the army in 1987, serving in several divisions before training as an officer in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire. He rose through the ranks, becoming squadron leader by 2006. During this period he became a specialist in artillery warfare, participating in training programmes in China and Morocco. He served on two UN peacekeeping missions, in Côte d'Ivoire in 2004 and in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2006, after which he returned to Niger to take command of a garrison in Niamey.

Following President Tandja's amendment of the constitution to extend his term of office, Djibo joined an army faction opposed to his actions in late 2009. Against a background of domestic protests and growing international pressure, during which Niger was suspended from the Economic Community of West African States, a group of senior officers including Djibo, planned a takeover. On 18 Feb. 2010 troops stormed the presidential palace and seized control of government, imprisoning Tandja. Djibo was named leader of the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy and announced that he was forming a transitional government.

Career Peak

On taking power Djibo dissolved the constitution and put government business under the control of regional and ministerial leaders. On 24 Feb. 2010 he appointed Mahamadou Danda, a civilian and former spokesman of Niger's 1999 transitional government, as temporary prime minister. In March 2010 Djibo acknowledged that Niger would suffer famine later in the year. His government also announced a review of uranium contracts in a bid to ensure transparency. After enjoying initial widespread public support and cautious co-operation from the international community, Djibo insisted that the military-led government would work towards holding general elections and that no member of the junta would be allowed to stand in the presidential election (scheduled for Jan. 2011). In Oct. 2010 a new constitution designed to facilitate the restoration of civilian rule was approved in a national referendum. Djibo decided not to run in the 2011 presidential elections and was succeeded by Mahamadou Issoufou, who won the run-off on 12 March 2011.

Djohar, Saïd Mohamed (Comoros)

Introduction

Saïd Mohamed Djohar became interim head of state in Nov. 1989 after the death of Ahmed Abdallah Abdereman and the subsequent coup led by the mercenary, Bob Denard. Djohar was president from 1990–95.

Early Life

Djohar was born in the 1920s but little is known of his early life.

Career Peak

Following the death of Abdallah, Denard and the Garde Présidentielle (PG, Presidential Guard) installed Djohar as head of state. Djohar created a provisional government until elections of Feb. 1990, which were marred by accusations of fraud. In March 1990, Djohar was elected president with 55.3% of the votes. In Aug. 1991 the president of the Supreme Court announced the dismissal of Djohar on the grounds of negligence after which Djohar imposed a state of emergency.

International reaction was strong. France and South Africa (believed to have been the principal funders of the PG), cut off aid to the country and demanded Denard leave the country. He went to Pretoria, although a French commission ultimately exonerated him of blame in the death of Abdallah.

Djohar eventually formed a coalition government, including opposition parties that favoured the secession of Mwali, one of the four Comoran islands. In Nov. 1991, Udzima (Comoran Union for Progress), formerly supporters of Djohar, came out in opposition to his rule. New constitutional provisions were approved by 74% of voters in June 1992 and another government was formed.

In Oct. 1992, a demonstration by opposition parties demanding Djohar's resignation was forcibly suppressed. In Sept. 1992, there was another failed coup and the perpetrators were sentenced to death. Later that year, government forces attacked rebels in Mbenu (northeast of Moroni) and there was fighting on Nzwani. Dozens of people died in clashes between rebels and government forces. The Nov. 1992 elections were marked by violence and fraud. Strikes occurred on a regular basis, with the aim of forcing Djohar from power or as a protest at the non-payment of civil servants.

Djohar announced the formation of a new party, the *Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Renouveau* (RDR for Democracy and Revival) in Oct. 1993. Elections in Dec. 1993 led to victory by the RDR but were marred by killings and accusations of corruption. In April 1994 after a violent suppression of strikes on Nzwani, pressure was exerted by the Comoran opposition and the French government for an amnesty on prisoners condemned to death. Djohar, however, refused to yield.

In Sept. 1995 Njazidja was invaded by mercenaries (led by Denard) and Comoran armed forces. Djohar was captured and removed from power.

Later Life

After French military intervention, Djohar was allowed to flee to Réunion. He returned to the Comoros in Jan. 1996 and died at his home outside Moroni on 23 Feb.

Djotodia, Michel Moana (Central African Republic)

Introduction

Michel Djotodia declared himself president of the Central African Republic (CAR) on 24 March 2013 after ousting François Bozizé, who himself came to power in 2003 on the back of a coup before winning two subsequent elections.

Early Life

Djotodia was born in 1949 in Vakaga, in the northeast of the CAR. He studied economics in the former Soviet Union, where he lived for 10 years. After returning to the CAR, he twice unsuccessfully attempted to win a seat in parliament in Vakaga Prefecture in the 1980s. He became a civil servant in the administration of Ange Félix-Patassé that began in 1993, working variously for the ministry of planning, the foreign ministry and as a diplomatic consul to Nyala in Sudan. When Félix-Patassé's government was overthrown by François Bozizé in 2003, Djotodia helped establish the rebel Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR).

In Oct. 2006 the UFDR captured the town of Birao in northern CAR. Djotodia, in Benin at the time, was subsequently arrested and imprisoned at Bozizé's request but was released in Feb. 2008 as part of a peace agreement between Bozizé and the rebels. Djotodia moved to South Sudan and reputedly cultivated links with Chadian and Sudanese fighters who would form the backbone of Séléka, a rebel coalition that included the UFDR. In Dec. 2012 Séléka came close to capturing the CAR capital, Bangui.

In Jan. 2013 a regionally-brokered peace treaty was signed, with Séléka forming a unity government alongside Bozizé to serve until elections in 2016. As part of the agreement Djotodia became first deputy minister for national defence. In March 2013 Séléka pulled out of the administration, accusing Bozizé of running a parallel administration and failing to release political prisoners. The group, boasting a force of 3,000, overran the capital a week later and Bozizé fled into exile. Djotodia declared himself president on 24 March 2013.

Career Peak

Djotodia established an interim government and pledged to hold elections in 2016, saying that he hoped 'to be the last rebel chief president of Central Africa'. A National Transitional Council confirmed his presidency on 13 April 2013. Nicolas Tiangaye, prime minister in the power-sharing government under Bozizé, was asked to remain in his post while 34 ministries were shared between former opposition figures and members of Séléka. Djotodia himself headed the ministry of defence and in Aug. he was officially sworn in as president.

His government incurred regional and international criticism owing to the country's descent into Christian–Muslim sectarian conflict. This prompted the deployment of additional African Union peacekeepers and further intervention by French military forces to arrest a spiralling

humanitarian crisis and threat of civil war. He resigned from the presidency in Jan. 2014 after failing to stop widespread inter-religious violence and was subsequently exiled to Benin at the request of regional leaders in the Central African Republic.

Dombrovskis, Valdis (Latvia)

Introduction

Valdis Dombrovskis became prime minister in March 2009 following the resignation of Ivars Godmanis. Before stepping down in Jan. 2014, the former finance minister's tenure was mainly focused on reversing the country's economic crisis. He became a European Commissioner in Nov. 2014.

Early Life

Dombrovskis was born on 5 Aug. 1971 in Riga, while Latvia was part of the USSR. He studied physics and economics at the University of Latvia in Riga and the Riga Technological University. He was employed at Germany's University of Mainz and at the University of Latvia's Institute of Solid-State Physics, and in 1998 became a research assistant at Maryland University in the USA.

Later that year he began working for the Bank of Latvia, leaving in 2002 after a year as chief economist. A member of the centre-right New Era party, he joined its governing board in 2002 and was also elected to parliament, serving until 2004 as finance minister in Einaris Repše's government. From 2003–04 he was Latvia's observer at the Council of the European Union and became a member of the European Parliament (MEP) in 2004.

Against the backdrop of global economic turmoil, Latvia's economy crashed in 2008. The economy shrank by over 4%. Worse was to follow, with a contraction of 18% in 2009. In Dec. 2008, having nationalized the country's second biggest bank, Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis turned to the IMF, World Bank and European Union for a US\$9.5bn. bail-out package. In return he was forced to accept public spending cuts and tax increases. After an anti-government riot in Riga in Jan. 2009, his coalition fell the following month. President Valdis Zatlers nominated Dombrovskis to form a new administration.

Career Peak

Having resigned as an MEP, Dombrovskis formed a six-party coalition and won parliamentary approval on 12 March 2009. In Aug. 2009 his government reached agreement with unions and employers on deep spending cuts and tax rises aimed at staving off bankruptcy and persuading the IMF and EU to release further tranches of loans. Subsequently, as a condition for these disbursements, the government committed to further cuts in fiscal expenditures to contain the budget deficit. Having lost his parliamentary majority in March 2010, Dombrovskis called an election in Oct. at which he was returned to power heading a Unity and Union of Greens and Farmers coalition. In further legislative elections in Sept. 2011, following a controversial dissolution of the *Saeima*, the pro-Russian Harmony Centre emerged as the largest party, but Dombrovskis retained the premiership at the head of a new coalition comprising Unity, Zatlers' Reform Party and the National Alliance, which together controlled 56 of the 100 parliamentary seats. In Feb. 2012 voters in a referendum rejected a proposal to make Russian an official language of Latvia.

He resigned as prime minister in Nov. 2013 after taking political responsibility for the collapse of a supermarket in the capital, Riga, that killed 54 people. His tenure was defined by Latvia's economic metamorphosis, with the country posting Europe's fastest GDP growth rates for two consecutive years (2011 and 2012). Dombrovskis also presided over Latvia's entry into the eurozone, which was completed in Jan. 2014.

Later Life

Dombrovskis became the European Commission's vice-president for the euro and social dialogue on 1 Nov. 2014. He joined three former prime ministers in the new Commission led by one of these, Jean-Claude Juncker.

Dos Santos, José Eduardo (Angola)

Introduction

José Eduardo dos Santos became president of Angola upon the death of the country's first post-colonial president Agostinho Neto in 1979. He is also head of the ruling Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA; Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and was prime minister from 1999–2002.

Early Life

Dos Santos was born on 28 Aug. 1942 in Luanda and in 1961 he joined Neto's MPLA rebel movement. As his party standing increased, he founded the MPLA youth movement before being sent to Moscow to study telecommunications and petroleum engineering. He returned to fight for Angolan independence, which finally came in 1975. Under Neto's presidency, dos Santos served first as prime minister (1975–78) and then planning minister (1978–79). After Neto's death in Sept. 1979, dos Santos assumed the leadership.

Career Peak

During the first 10 years dos Santos upheld the MPLA's traditional Marxist doctrine and the government's single party rule while continuing the war against the UNITA rebels begun under his predecessor. The government received Cuban military help in the conflict and the Soviet Union supplied funds. The USA and South Africa meanwhile backed UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi.

A rapprochement began in 1988 when both Cuba and South Africa withdrew their forces. In 1990, following the collapse of communism, dos Santos moved away from Marxism to adopt 'democratic socialism'. This allowed for the introduction of a free market economy and multi-party elections. The following year, a peace agreement signed in Lisbon culminated in Angola's first nationwide elections in 1992. In a turnout of 91% of registered voters, the MPLA won 54% compared to UNITA's 34%. In the presidential poll dos Santos secured 49.6%, while Savimbi polled 40.1%. Before a second round run-off, Savimbi rejected the election, claiming the first round results had been fraudulent. The civil war resumed and elections scheduled for 1997 were postponed indefinitely. In 1999 dos Santos assumed the role of prime minister and took over control of the armed forces. In Feb. 2002 Savimbi was killed by government soldiers and 2 months later a ceasefire was signed with the rebels. Since the end of hostilities, his government has committed substantial resources, financed by oil exports and diamonds, to reconstruction. Nevertheless, much of the population still lives in extreme poverty. Also, it was not until Aug. 2006 that a ceasefire agreement was achieved with separatists fighting for independence of the northern enclave of Cabinda, where much of Angola's oil wealth lies. The final stage of a United Nations refugee repatriation scheme, involving some 60,000 Angolans, began in Oct. 2006.

In Jan. 2007 dos Santos oversaw Angola's accession to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and in Feb. he declared that parliamentary elections would be held in 2008 and presidential polls in 2009. The parliamentary polls took place in Sept. and resulted in a landslide victory for the ruling MPLA. Despite some criticisms of the poll by an observer mission from the European Union and the rejection of opposition demands for a rerun of voting in the capital Luanda, UNITA leader Isaias Samakuva accepted his party's defeat. In mid-2009 presidential elections scheduled for Sept. were postponed, reportedly to allow more time for the drafting of a new constitution that came into effect in Feb. 2010. Under the constitution the party with a parliamentary majority chooses the president, who is subject to a two-term limit, is responsible for judicial appointments and appoints a vice-president (replacing the post of prime minister). Parliamentary elections in Aug. 2012 resulted in another comfortable victory for the MPLA and so secured another presidential term for dos Santos.

In Feb. 2013 the Constitutional Court rejected an opposition claim that the president had exceeded his powers by creating a US\$5bn. sovereign wealth fund, launched in Oct. 2012 to manage the country's oil wealth, without parliamentary approval. In May that year dos Santos replaced the finance and construction ministers in a government reshuffle and in a further change in

April 2014 he named a new defence minister. In May 2014 a national census was conducted for the first time since 1970.

In late 2014 human rights groups accused the government of using excessive force to deter political dissent and in May 2015 a prominent regime critic was given a suspended jail term sentence for linking senior army personnel to corruption and violence in the diamond mining industry.

Meanwhile, as Africa's second largest oil producer, Angola suffered from the collapse in world prices from mid-2014, which has impacted severely on economic growth and fuelled government unpopularity.

In Aug. 2016 dos Santos was re-elected leader of the MPLA. Earlier, in June, he had appointed his daughter to the prominent public position of head of the state-run oil firm, prompting speculation that he was intending to establish a dynasty. In Sept. he replaced the finance minister following the breakdown of government negotiations with the International Monetary Fund over emergency financing.

In Sept. 2017 the newly appointed chairman of the MPLA, João Lourenço, succeeded dos Santos as president after 38 years in office.

Douglas-Home, Alec (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Alec Douglas-Home was British Conservative prime minister from 1963 until 1964. He renounced his peerage in order to hold the post, succeeding Harold Macmillan as leader of a divided and scandal-hit administration. With a general election due, he had little opportunity to make a significant impact during his tenure, though defeat to Harold Wilson's Labour Party in 1964 was marginal. Douglas-Home was widely respected for his integrity and honesty and many of his finest achievements came during his two spells at the foreign office rather than in his time as prime minister.

Early Life

Alexander Frederick Douglas-Home was born on 2 July 1903 in London. He came from an aristocratic background, the son of Lord Dunglass (later the 13th Earl of Home) and Lady Lilian Lambton, whose father was the 4th Earl of Durham. When Douglas-Home's father took the title 13th Earl, Alexander in turn became Lord Dunglass. He was educated at Eton before reading History at Christ Church, Oxford. He played cricket for Middlesex on a few occasions, making him the only Prime Minister to have played the sport at first class level. He fought his first general election, unsuccessfully, in 1929 but entered the House of Commons 2 years later as the member for South Lanark.

In 1935 Douglas-Home was appointed by Neville Chamberlain as his parliamentary private secretary. A year later he married Elizabeth Arlington, with whom he had four children. Chamberlain became prime minister in 1937, with Douglas-Home accompanying him to Munich for talks with Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini a year later. Chamberlain's policy of appeasement proved to be ill-conceived and Douglas-Home's involvement, debatable as to its extent, was not to be forgotten. At the outbreak of World War II, Douglas-Home, a long-time Territorial Army officer, joined the Lanarkshire Yeomanry but he was invalided out and spent 2 years in a plaster cast as the result of a tubercular spinal virus.

Douglas-Home was a vehement critic of the 1945 Yalta Conference, and what he perceived to be the West's failure to protect Poland from Soviet expansionism. In Churchill's immediate post-war government, he was under secretary of state for foreign affairs, before losing his seat in the Labour landslide of July 1945. He returned as the member for South Lanark in 1950 but left the Commons for the Lords a year later as the 14th Earl of Home. He was appointed minister of state in the Scottish office by Churchill and became a Privy Counsellor in 1951, then served as secretary of state for Commonwealth relations 1955–60, also holding the posts of deputy leader and leader of the House of Lords during this period. Harold Macmillan appointed him foreign secretary in 1960. His time here coincided with an increase in Cold War tensions, the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs invasion. Douglas-Home thus played an important role in defusing these tensions and improving British relations with the USSR.

He also worked to establish an independent British nuclear deterrent and was instrumental in the creation of the Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty.

Macmillan resigned as prime minister in Oct. 1963. The Conservatives were divided and reeling from the Profumo scandal, during which secretary of state for war John Profumo was found to have had an affair with a woman linked to a Russian naval attaché. Deputy prime minister R. A. Butler and minister of science and technology Viscount Hailsham were among the favourites to take up the party leadership. Hailsham renounced his peerage by the terms of the new Peerage Act to make himself available, paving the way for Douglas-Home to follow suit. The contest between Hailsham and Butler was seen as potentially divisive by many party members, and the generally well-liked Douglas-Home was recommended by Macmillan as his successor. Having given up his peerage, Douglas-Home won a by-election in the Kinross constituency and returned to the Commons as prime minister.

Career Peak

However, Douglas-Home inherited a government with deep-rooted problems. It had already been in power for 13 years, the economy was failing, entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) had been refused and Labour was rejuvenated under Harold Wilson. In addition, Douglas-Home's appointment prompted the resignations of two prominent Conservatives and skilled politicians, Enoch Powell and Iain Macleod. The extent of Douglas-Home's problems were further evident in a speech from Jan. 1964 when he declared that 'there are two problems in my life. The political ones are insoluble and the economic ones are incomprehensible'. Though spoken in jest, he was not experienced in economic matters, a subject Wilson would use as the focus of numerous attacks. Similarly, Wilson, 'the common man', made much of Douglas-Home's aristocratic background, mocking him as 'the 14th Earl of Home', though Douglas-Home famously retorted that he assumed Mr. Wilson was 'the 14th Mr Wilson.' At the election of 15 Oct. 1964, Labour came to power with a majority of five. Shortly afterwards Douglas-Home resigned the Conservative leadership. He threw his support behind his successor, Edward Heath, and took on the post of shadow foreign secretary until Heath led the Conservatives to victory at the general election of June 1970.

Serving as foreign secretary in Heath's cabinet, Douglas-Home assisted Britain's entry into the EEC. In 1971 he expelled over 100 Soviet diplomats after spying allegations and, though criticized for the government's support of the Federalist government forces in the Nigerian civil war, he had an international reputation as a skilled and trusted statesman.

Later Life

Douglas-Home left the Commons before the general election of Oct. 1974, the second of the year following a Labour victory in March. He became Baron Home of the Hirsel of Coldstream in 1974 and supported Heath in his unsuccessful bid to retain the Conservative leadership against Margaret Thatcher the following year. Douglas-Home remained a prominent figure in the Lords until the end of his life. He published his autobiography in 1976 and two volumes of other writings and died on 9 Oct. 1995 at the Hirsel, Coldstream in Berwickshire, Scotland.

Drees, Willem (Netherlands)

Introduction

Willem Drees was the Prime Minister of the Netherlands for a decade (1948–58), and his four successive terms witnessed at least four major political developments including problematic decolonization, economic reconstruction, the augmentation of a comprehensive welfare state and the first step towards European integration in the formation of Benelux.

Early Life

Drees was born in Amsterdam on 5 July 1886. He was educated at Commercial School, Amsterdam and began his political career in 1907 as an official parliamentary stenographer, having become a member of the Social Democratic Party in 1904. He was elected to The Hague city council in 1913, and in 1919 he was appointed Alderman of the City of The Hague, an office which earned him considerable prestige and which he carried until 1933. In that

same year Drees was elected to the Lower House of the Estates General, and in 1939 he rose to become the leader of his parliamentary party and one of the first two socialists to secure cabinet office in the Dutch Parliament.

In 1940 Drees was imprisoned for attempting to ferment opposition to the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. He was released after a year, and returned to the resistance movement, acting on behalf of Dutch government which was in exile in London. He chaired the Fatherland Committee which prepared the country's course of action should German rule end.

Career Peak

When the Netherlands was liberated, Queen Wilhelmina invited Drees and Willem Schermerhorn to form the first post-war cabinet, and he was Minister of Social Affairs from 1945–8. In 1946 Drees and Schermerhorn founded the new Labour Party (Partij van den Arbeid). Drees was highly instrumental in the introduction of a temporary Old Age Pensions Act, and the legislation increased his popularity with the electorate, contributing to his appointment as Prime Minister on 6 Aug. 1948. He was to retain the office for four consecutive terms, and presided over a coalition of his own Labour Party and the Catholic People's Party.

The beginning of his tenure was marred by the outbreak of hostilities between the Dutch colonial authorities and Indonesians battling for independence. In 1949 Drees and his government partially capitulated to Indonesian demands, and recognized the United States of Indonesia as a partner in a federation. Indonesia finally dissolved this alliance in 1954. Whilst in power Drees ushered the Netherlands into NATO, the Western European Union and the European Economic Community. He also played a significant role in the creation of Benelux. His decade of leadership was brought to an end by a Cabinet dispute over tax proposals, and he reigned on 12 Dec. 1958.

Later Life

Following his official retirement from politics he was made an honorary Minister of State, and the Labour Party awarded him a permanent position on its Executive Council. Drees was unhappy with the new policy direction of the party he helped to create, and he renounced his membership as a result. In his later life he became an astute political commentator, publishing numerous books and articles until his death on 14 May 1988.

Drnovšek, Janez (Slovenia)

Introduction

Janez Drnovšek became Slovenia's president in Dec. 2002. He was independent Slovenia's first prime minister from 1992–2002, except for a brief period in opposition in 2000. Along with his presidential predecessor, Milan Kučan, he oversaw political and economic reforms resulting in entry into NATO and the European Union in 2004. Drnovšek decided not to stand for re-election, and on 23 Dec. 2007 formally handed over presidential duties to the newly-elected Danilo Türk.

Early Life

Drnovšek was born on 17 May 1950 in Celje. He studied monetary policy at the University of Maribor and worked in the banking sector before entering politics in the 1980s. Following Slovenia's democratic elections of 1989, Drnovšek was appointed Slovenian representative to the rotating presidency of Federal Yugoslavia. He was president of the collective presidency for a year until May 1990, during which time he headed the Non-Alignment Movement, which rejected association with either the USA or the USSR. He pressed for Yugoslav entry into the European Community (later the EU), economic reform, multi-party elections and the release of political prisoners held within federal Yugoslavia.

As Yugoslavia began to disintegrate, Drnovšek sought a diplomatic solution. A declaration of Slovenian independence won majority backing in a referendum during 1990 and the country announced its split with Yugoslavia in 1991. Yugoslav troops entered the country and a short war ensued. Drnovšek acted as a chief negotiator in the Brioni agreement that brought the conflict to an end. In April 1992 Slovenia held its first elections as an independent state, Drnovšek winning the premiership and Milan Kučan the presidency.

Career Peak

Drnovšek and Kučan retained their positions for 10 years, except for 7 months in 2000 when Drnovšek was out of office. Their long tenures provided Slovenia with political and economic stability that few other former Yugoslav states enjoyed. The two worked closely to ensure Slovenia's acceptance on the international stage and forged closer ties with the West. Slovenia joined the IMF in 1993 and became a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme. In 1999 it granted airspace to NATO for its bombing raids on Kosovo and Serbia. In 1996 Slovenia signed an associate agreement with the EU and opened full membership talks the following year. In Oct. 2002 the EU included Slovenia in its plans for enlargement scheduled for 2004.

Domestically, Drnovšek oversaw the implementation of major economic reforms, including privatization programmes and restructuring of the banking and commercial sectors. Unable to rely on markets in the former Yugoslavia, increased trade was established with the USA and the EU. Slovenia was one of the founding members of the WTO.

Drnovšek was re-elected in 1996 but in 2000 his coalition was destabilized by party mergers among the centre-right. He called a vote of confidence in April 2000 but was defeated and replaced as prime minister by Andrej Bajuk of the Social Democrats. The new coalition split over plans to reform the electoral system and at the elections of Oct. 2000 Drnovšek was returned as prime minister, heading a government consisting of his centre-left Liberal Democrats, United List, the Slovene People's Party, the Slovene Young People's Party and the DeSUS party.

The Slovenian constitution barred Kučan from standing for a third term as president in Nov. 2002. Drnovšek ran against Barbara Brezigar, an independent backed by the centre-right, and won with 57% of the vote. As president, he oversaw Slovenia's integration into NATO and the EU in 2004 and the country's adoption of the European single currency in Jan. 2007.

On 21 Oct. 2007 Slovenia elected a new president to replace Drnovšek, who had decided not to seek another term. On 23 Dec. 2007 following a swearing-in ceremony in parliament, Danilo Türk formally took over duties from Drnovšek.

On 23 Feb. 2008 Drnovšek, who had been suffering from cancer, died at his home in Zaplana at the age of 57.

Duarte Frutos, Nicanor (Paraguay)

Introduction

Nicanor Duarte Frutos served as president of Paraguay from Aug. 2003 to Aug. 2008. His presidency extended the rule of the Republican National Alliance–Colorado Party (ANR), which had governed Paraguay continuously since 1947. Duarte represented the party's traditionalist faction.

Early Life

Óscar Nicanor Duarte Frutos was born on 11 Oct. 1956 and brought up in Coronel Oviedo, an agricultural town in Paraguay. He joined the Colorado Party at the age of 14, and went on to study law and political science before pursuing a career in journalism.

Having served as education minister in the 1990s, Duarte took 37% of the vote at the 2003 elections, defeating three other candidates. Elected in April, he took up his position as leader in Aug. that year.

Career Peak

Upon his election as president, Duarte announced plans to fight corruption, reinvigorate the economy and improve the nation's standing in the international community. He aimed to create jobs through public work programmes and, in a bid to improved efficiency in government, promised to reform the customs and internal revenue services. In 2004 he launched an overhaul of the tax system and introduced judicial reforms, particularly relating to Supreme Court appointments. The following year Duarte promised a crackdown on organized crime in the wake of a high-profile kidnapping and murder case, and in June 2006 his predecessor as president, Luis González Macchi, was sentenced to imprisonment for 6 years for illegal financial dealings.

In 2007 Duarte's government declared two states of emergency, firstly in response to an outbreak of dengue fever and then after fires destroyed huge

tracts of forest and agricultural land. Barred by the Constitution from standing for re-election, Duarte supported the candidacy of his education secretary, Blanca Ovelar. Her defeat by Fernando Lugo, of the Patriotic Alliance for Change (APC), brought to an end more than 60 years of continuous rule by the Republican National Alliance–Colorado Party (ANR).

Dubček, Alexander (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Alexander Dubček was First Secretary of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party in 1968–69 and was responsible for a period of social and political reform that came to be known as the Prague Spring. His programme aroused opposition in the Soviet Union and a number of other Eastern Bloc countries, and led to an invasion by Warsaw Pact Troops in Aug. 1968. Dubček was removed from power and most of his reforms overturned but, following the Velvet Revolution in 1989, he returned as Chairman of the Federal Assembly.

Early Life

Dubček was born on 27 Nov. 1921 in Uhrovec in what is now Slovakia. His father was a cabinet maker and both his parents were communists. They moved to the Soviet Union (to an area that is now part of Kyrgyzstan) when Dubček was 4 years old, returning to Slovakia in 1938. The following year Dubček joined the illegal Czechoslovakia Communist Party (KSC). During World War II he worked in an armaments factory and was active in the resistance movement, also taking part in the Slovak National Uprising in 1944. After the war Dubček worked in a yeast factory and in 1949 was appointed Secretary of the Trenčín District Committee of the KSC.

By 1951 he was a member of the Slovak Communist Party Central Committee. Having taken a law degree at Comenius University in Bratislava, in 1955 he was sent to the Communist Party College in Moscow to study political science. He graduated 3 years later and a further 4 years after that he was a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the KSC. Throughout the 1960s the party was beset by problems, principally because of the faltering economy and of Slovakia's unease at the centralization of power in Prague. A reform movement gathered momentum, with Dubček at its forefront, which by late 1967 had forced the resignation of numerous leading party figures including First Secretary Antonín Novotný. Dubček took over as First Secretary on 5 Jan. 1968 with Oldřich Černík installed as Premier.

Career Peak

In March 1968 Dubček spoke of his search for 'socialism with a human face' and in April the Central Committee published an Action Programme that would have a massive impact.

It proposed greater Slovakian authority, an independent judiciary, greater freedom of expression including press freedom, workers' reforms and the rehabilitation of citizens who had previously suffered civil rights infringements at the hands of the Party. It also proposed that the National Assembly should be the principal organ of government, rather than the party itself, that KSC posts should be filled by democratic processes and that opposition parties should be permitted to stand in elections. In late June a group of citizens, independent of Dubček, published an article that came to be known as *The 2,000 Words* and which proposed even more far-reaching reforms. An already nervous Moscow summoned Dubček to a meeting with Brezhnev and other Warsaw Pact leaders in Cierna, near Bratislava. After 4 days of negotiation, a joint announcement was made on 3 Aug. promising tighter media constraints.

However, on 20 Aug. a force comprising Soviet, Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian and East German troops rolled into Prague. Dubček was one of six leaders arrested and taken to Moscow. He returned on 27 Aug. and in a famed radio broadcast in which he fought back tears, Dubček announced that the majority of his reforms would be reversed and that the Soviets would retain a military presence within the country. By the time dissident student Jan Palach had died by setting fire to himself in the middle of Prague's Wenceslas Square in Jan. 1969, the hard-liners within the KSC had begun to reassert their

dominance. Dubček was removed from his post as First Secretary on 17 April 1969, becoming Ambassador to Turkey in Dec. He was forced out of the party in June 1970, resigned as an ambassador shortly afterwards and became a lowly forestry administration official.

Later Life

However, during the Velvet Revolution of Nov. 1989 he made speeches in Bratislava and later appeared with Václav Havel in Prague as events came to a victorious conclusion. 'socialism with a human face must function for a new generation,' he told the crowd in Wenceslas Square on 24 Nov. 'We have lived in the darkness for long enough'. He became Chairman of the National Assembly on 28 Aug. and was later elected leader of the Slovakian Social Democrats before he died on 7 Nov. 1992 from injuries sustained in a car crash some weeks earlier.

Duhalde, Eduardo (Argentina)

Introduction

Duhalde was elected president on the 1 Jan. 2002, Argentina's fifth president within a week. He completed the remaining term of Fernando de la Rúa, who resigned in Dec. 2002 as a result of riots and protests among the population. Duhalde, a veteran within the Peronist party, was appointed president after the resignation of Eduardo Camaño who held office for just 1 day. Camaño acted as caretaker president following the resignation of Adolfo Rodríguez Saá who held office for a week. Previously, the constitutional successor Ramon Puerta, had held the presidency for less than 48 hours. Duhalde did not stand in the presidential elections of April 2003.

Early Life

Duhalde was born on 5 Oct. 1941 in Lomas de Zamora, outside Buenos Aires. He went to a local primary school, followed by secondary studies at Comercial 'Tomas Espora' in Temperley. He graduated in law from the University of Buenos Aires in 1970. He was appointed local councillor in Lomas de Zamora in 1971 and mayor in 1976. In 1986 he became regional president for the Justicialist Party (PJ-Peronist) and entered the Congress. He was elected governor of the biggest province, Buenos Aires, in 1995 and re-elected in 1999. His administration was accused of corruption and forcing the province into debt in order for him to win votes. Duhalde served as vice-president under Carlos Menem. In 1999 he ran for president but lost against Fernando de la Rúa.

Career Peak

Duhalde lacked popular support. The country had suffered the world's biggest debt default, the collapse of a currency board with the peso pegged to the dollar and a freeze on bank savings. The economic situation did not rapidly improve and Duhalde failed to implement the programme demanded by the IMF. Aiming to protect local industry and to use public works projects to reduce unemployment, he blamed the crisis on economic liberalism. In Jan. 2002 he devaluated the peso by 29% and floated the peso the following month. In April 2002 he appointed Roberto Lavagna, the country's ambassador to the European Union, as minister of economy, the sixth within 12 months. A major challenge for Duhalde and Lavagna was to persuade the IMF to resume its lending programme, which was cut off in Dec. 2001. Reforms included spending cuts and the abolition of an economic subversion law. In May 2002 Duhalde threatened to resign to encourage support for changes. In July 2002 Duhalde announced that he would bring forward the 2003 election by 6 months to March. Following a clash between protesters and the police in which two people were shot dead, pressure grew for his resignation. He did not stand for the presidency in April 2003.

Later Life

Duhalde contested the 2011 presidential elections, finishing third behind Ricardo Alfonsín and winner Cristina Fernández de Kirchner.

Dulles, John Foster (United States of America)

Introduction

John Foster Dulles was president Dwight D. Eisenhower's secretary of state from 1953 until 1959 when he resigned just a month before his death at the age of 71. He is remembered as a staunch opponent of communism whose opinions did much to shape US foreign policy during the Cold War.

Early Life

Born in Washington, D.C. on 25 Feb. 1888, Dulles was a grandson of John Watson Foster, secretary of state under President Benjamin Harrison. He graduated from Princeton University in 1908. After studying at the Sorbonne in Paris and George Washington University Law School he was admitted to the bar in 1911.

Dulles was counsel to the U.S. delegation to the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 and built a reputation in the inter-war years as an authority on international law. In 1939 his book *War, Peace and Change* was published. Six years later, Dulles was appointed adviser to the US delegation at the San Francisco conference of the United Nations and for the following 4 years served as a delegate to the UN's general assembly.

In 1949, Dulles was given a seat in the senate in New York vacated by Robert Wagner but narrowly lost in his bid for re-election the following year. The following year his book *War or Peace* was published and in 1951 president Harry S. Truman gave him responsibility for concluding a peace treaty with Japan, signed on 8 Sept. 1951.

Career Peak

Dulles was appointed secretary of state by president Eisenhower in 1953. He advocated a hard-line approach against communist regimes in the Soviet Union and China, favouring the development of nuclear weapons so that, in the event of an attack, the United States could reply with 'massive retaliation'. Dulles also argued that the United States should be prepared to go to 'the brink' of war to achieve its objectives—a statement fiercely criticized by liberals.

Dulles was instrumental in establishing the European Defense Community and also instigated the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and the Baghdad Pact (1955), all of which were designed to contain Soviet and Chinese influence in Europe and Asia. On his secretary of state's advice, Eisenhower supported the South Vietnamese regime of Ngô Đình Diệm. The United States also offered financial and military assistance for Middle Eastern states, for example by supplying troops to Lebanon in 1958.

In 1958 Dulles was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He resigned from office in April and died in Bethesda, Maryland, on 24 May 1959.

Duncan Smith, Iain (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Iain Duncan Smith was elected leader of the Conservative Party in Sept. 2001, succeeding William Hague. Inheriting a party deeply divided and depressed by a second successive punishing election defeat, his support came chiefly from the Euro-sceptic right of the party. Considered to lack the charisma needed to galvanize the party, Duncan Smith was harassed by calls for another leader for much of his second year. Modest successes in local and regional elections in May 2003 failed to bolster his leadership. He was defeated in a parliamentary party vote in Oct. 2003. In May 2010 he became work and pensions secretary in the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government.

Early Life

George Iain Duncan Smith was born on 9 April 1954 in Edinburgh. The son of a former fighter pilot, he was educated at HMS Conway (a school for children of military personnel) in Wales, Dunchurch College of Management, the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and a university in Perugia, Italy. As a member of the armed forces he served in Northern Ireland and Zimbabwe and in 1981, an admirer of Margaret Thatcher, he became a member of the Conservative Party. Around this time he also moved into corporate management in GEC-Marconi and, later, publishing. He is married to Betsy, with whom he has four children.

He stood unsuccessfully as Conservative candidate for Bradford West in the 1987 election. At the general election of 1992 he won the safe seat of Chingford (later Chingford and Woodford following boundary changes). A member of various select and backbench committees, he soon gained a reputation for right-wing opinions. He voted against the 1992 Maastricht Treaty that redefined the functions and influence of the EU and was prominent in debates on immigration.

In 1997 he was appointed shadow secretary of state for social security by William Hague and 2 years later took over the defence portfolio. Aside from his Euro-sceptic stance, Duncan Smith's views on domestic politics consolidated his position on the right. An advocate of corporal and capital punishment, he has also supported proposed cuts to child benefit and opposed the lowering of the homosexual age of consent and the banning of hunting with dogs.

Following the Conservatives' second heavy defeat in a general election, Hague resigned. In the subsequent battle for the leadership, Duncan Smith was an outsider until Michael Portillo was unexpectedly knocked out in the third round of voting. In the run-off with the former chancellor Kenneth Clarke, Duncan Smith gained over 60% of the 260,000 votes cast.

Career Peak

As leader of the opposition, Duncan Smith tried to shift his party's focus away from the European debate towards domestic issues, neglected during the Hague tenure. However, in May 2003, Duncan Smith called on the government for a referendum on joining the single European currency. This was followed in June with an attack on the 'European super-state', again creating tensions within his party.

Hopes that his election would end divisive behaviour within the party lasted barely a year. The replacement of David Davis, while on holiday, as party chairman in July 2002 gave the Conservative Party its first female chairman, Theresa May, but angered Davis' supporters. The first major signs of dissent came in Dec. when ex-minister Michael Heseltine claimed that many Tory voters wanted to lose Duncan Smith. He was joined by Michael Portillo in Feb. 2003, who condemned the sacking of the party's chief executive, Mark MacGregor, and the policy director, Rick Nye—two key modernisers.

Despite gains in local council and Welsh Assembly elections in May 2003 resignations and attacks continued to undermine Duncan Smith's leadership. Trade spokesman Crispin Blunt resigned on the eve of the local elections, stating that the Conservatives would not win the general election under its current leader. MacGregor's replacement, Barry Legg, lasted just 3 months as chief executive.

Duncan Smith's image was ridiculed by the media. Describing himself as the 'quiet man' in the 2002 party conference, he responded to critics the following year by insisting that he was 'turning up the volume'. His 2003 conference speech aggressively attacked the government—'corrupt, mendacious, fraudulent, shameful, lying'—and those within the party looking to oust him—'get on board or get out of the way for we have got work to do.' Allegations concerning the employment of his wife as his diary secretary further undermined him but Duncan Smith refused to resign. However, a vote of no confidence in his leadership was carried on 29 Oct., forcing his resignation. Michael Howard, the former minister and shadow chancellor, was unanimously selected leader by the parliamentary party.

Later Life

After the Conservatives came to power in May 2010 Duncan Smith was appointed work and pensions secretary in David Cameron's first cabinet. He retained the work and pensions portfolio following the Conservatives' victory at the May 2015 general election.

Duncan Smith resigned as secretary of state for work and pensions in March 2016, opposing the chancellor's proposed cuts to disability benefits.

Durão Barroso, José Manuel (Portugal)

Introduction

The leader of the right-wing Partido Social Democrata (Social Democrats, PSD), José Manuel Durão Barroso was elected prime minister in March 2002, replacing the former Partido Socialista (Socialist Party, PSP) leader António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres.

Early Life

Born on 23 March 1956, Durão Barroso studied law at the Universidade de Lisboa. He gained a master's in political science from the Université de Genève before taking European studies. He lectured at universities in Geneva and the USA, as well as working for the department of international relations at Universidade Lusíada, Lisbon. He wrote for several science journals and founded a political science magazine.

In 1980 Durão Barroso joined the PSD. In 1985, 1995 and 1999 he was elected PSD deputy for Lisbon; in 1987 and 1991 for Viseu. He was president of the foreign office commission between 1995–96, then the interior ministry's deputy secretary before becoming foreign secretary. Between 1992–95 Durão Barroso was foreign minister under the PSD prime minister, Aníbal Cavaço Silva. On an international level, Durão Barroso led a delegation to Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sept. 1996, and was a UN peace officer in Tanzania in Oct. 1997. He was vice president of the European People's Party in 1999.

In 1999 he was elected party leader, replacing Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. In the same year Durão Barroso stood for election against Guterres. Violent clashes during Timor-Leste's transition to independence from Indonesia in Aug. 1999 took the focus away from domestic politics and the election. Guterres' successful handling of the precarious situation helped his election campaign. The PSD attempted a coalition with the right-wing Partido Popular (PP) but the alliance was shortlived and both parties suffered from the fall out. Durão Barroso came second with 32.3% of votes to Guterres' 44.1%.

Two years later, with increasing criticism of the government's heavy public spending, the PSD recorded gains in local elections taking the key cities of Lisbon, Oporto and Coimbra. Guterres resigned and elections were brought forward from 2004 to March 2002. The PSD claimed a narrow victory with 40% of votes to 38% and 102 out of 230 seats, and Durão Barroso was appointed prime minister. To gain an assembly majority the party renewed its coalition with the PP fuelling concerns over the party's influence on government policy. The party has strong nationalist and anti-immigration policies and rejects further delegation of power to the EU.

Career Peak

On election Durão Barroso set about reviving the economy with strong economic measures. A reduction in public spending affected local authorities' budgets and civil service recruitment, while plans were made to streamline or dissolve numerous state bodies. He also planned to increase privatization, including the health service, and introduce labour reforms. Other proposals, such as a minimum annual pension scheme of €200, a 10% corporate tax reduction and a lowering of the top rate of income tax, were put on hold. In Nov. 2002 public sector workers held a 24 h strike, the first in 10 years, to protest at the austerity measures and proposed labour reforms. In response, Durão Barroso reaffirmed his determination to press ahead with his policies. To cut Portugal's deficit to 2.7%, the Barroso government imposed a wage freeze on employees earning more than €1,000, affecting half of Portugal's workforce.

In Jan. 2003 Durão Barroso was one of eight European leaders to issue a combined declaration of support for the United States in its efforts to disarm Iraq, while making it clear that Portugal would not take part in military action.

Following the agreement of the 25 EU ministers in June 2004 on the new European Union constitution, Portugal announced that it would hold a referendum on the issue. After dropping earlier reservations concerning the European Commission's next president, Spain and France joined the other members in June 2004 to invite Durão Barroso to succeed the incumbent president, Romano Prodi. Following his appointment, Barroso resigned as prime minister of Portugal and was replaced by Pedro Santana Lopes.

Later Life

Durão Barroso presided over the European Commission for almost 10 years, in which he oversaw the accession of Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia to the Union. His main challenges were to secure Ireland's signing of the Treaty of Lisbon (which made amendments to the EU constitution resulting in a more powerful European Parliament and European Council) and to guide the commission through an economic crisis. Durão Barroso was succeeded as European Commission president in Nov. 2014 by Luxembourg's former prime minister Jean-Claude Juncker. In July 2016 he was appointed non-executive chairman of Goldman Sachs International.

Dutra, Eurico Gaspar (Brazil)

Introduction

Eurico Gaspar Dutra was president of Brazil from 1945–50. His attempts to reverse the anti-democratic measures of President Vargas were hindered by a volatile economy.

Early Life

Born in 1885 in Cuiaba, Eurico Dutra's military career lasted from 1910 until 1932. Having opposed numerous attempted coups, he opposed the government of Getúlio Vargas that came to power in 1930. However, when Vargas himself was a victim of an attempted coup 2 years later, Dutra came to his defence. He was prominent in the subsequent reform of the Brazilian economy. In 1945 when Vargas attempted to block scheduled elections, Dutra led a Social Democrat-backed coup.

Career Peak

Dutra won popular support for a revival of the democratic institutions that had suffered under Vargas. He reversed Brazil's international isolation, seeking closer ties with the US and breaking off diplomatic relations with the USSR in 1947 while playing a prominent role in the Organization of American States. However, unable to cope with economic problems, he was replaced by Vargas after the 1951 presidential election. Dutra died on 11 June 1974.

Duvalier, François 'Papa Doc' (Haiti)

Introduction

François Duvalier, better known as Papa Doc, was Haiti's dictator between 1957 and 1971, an extraordinarily long term in Haiti's variable political climate. Espousing black nationalism and voodoo practices, he modelled himself as a spiritual, as well as political, leader. Supported by the Tonton Macoutes (*The Bogeymen*), a private militia, his reign was characterized by oppression, corruption and the violent removal of his opponents.

Early Life

François Duvalier was born in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, on 14 April 1907 to Duval Duvalier, a teacher and journalist, and Uritia Abraham, who worked in a bakery. Raised as a Roman Catholic, Duvalier graduated in medicine from the University of Haiti and worked as a physician in a hospital. In 1939 he married Simone Ovide Faine, with whom he had four children. By 1943 he was heavily involved in a US-backed project to fight yaws (an aggressive skin disease) and 3 years later he was appointed Director General of the National Health Service by President Estimé. In 1948 he became Underminister of Labour and then Minister of Public Health and Labour, 1949–50.

Following Estimé's overthrow in 1950, Duvalier worked for the American Sanitary Mission and was prominent in the resistance to the military dictator, Paul E. Magloire. In 1954 Duvalier went underground and concentrated full-time on his resistance activities. Magloire stood down from power

in the same year. In Dec. 1956. In Sept. of the following year, having campaigned on reform and black nationalist issues, Duvalier was elected President with a large majority.

Career Peak

Assisted by his close ally, Clément Barbot, Duvalier set about reducing army influence and replacing them with the Tonton Macoutes, a volunteer force devoted to Duvalier which facilitated his reign of terror among the population. Countless political opponents were hounded into exile or murdered, with their bodies often put on public display.

In addition, Duvalier undertook to create an image of himself as a demigod. Graffiti campaigns, thought to have been instigated by him, proclaimed that 'Duvalier is a god' early on in his reign. He dressed himself in a black top hat and coat in the style of a feared voodoo spirit, Baron Samedi. The Tonton Macoutes in turn wore blue denim and red neckties in the style of the voodoo spirit of agriculture and Duvalier appointed voodoo elders into various prominent positions. For a religious and superstitious populace, attracted by Duvalier's black nationalist policies anyway, it was a very powerful image.

By means of the Tonton Macoutes, Duvalier challenged the authority of the Catholic Church (who excommunicated him for his abuse of clergymen), the military powers and the influential mulatto business elite. The 1956 elections allowed him one unrenounceable 6 year term, but he influenced the elections of 1961 so that he could stay on longer and in 1964 he proclaimed himself lifelong president. In 1963 Barbot, Duvalier's former right hand man, led an unsuccessful insurrection that resulted in his murder. By this stage, Duvalier had alienated virtually every government in the world, losing financial aid from the US and overseeing the worsening of relations with the Dominican Republic, Haiti's only land neighbour. During his reign the country's economy, already one of the weakest in the Americas, continued its decline and educational standards remained low so that illiteracy stood at around 90%.

Despite a number of insurrections and international isolation, Duvalier managed to retain power through his private army and the force of his personality. It is estimated that between 20,000–50,000 Haitians died and up to a fifth of the country went into exile. However, his long reign led to an element of national stability that saw the emergence of a black middle class, and he retained support from large swathes of the black population throughout. He died in Port-au-Prince on 21 April 1971, having decreed that his son, Jean-Claude (known as Baby Doc) would succeed him for life.

Duvalier, Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' (Haiti)

Introduction

Jean-Claude Duvalier, known as Baby Doc, was Haiti's president from 1971 until 1986. Having been nominated for the post by his father, François (Papa Doc), he voiced support for mild social and political reforms following Papa Doc's despotic reign. However, there was little discernible change in the life of the country and, having been made president for life, Baby Doc went into exile in 1986 amid widespread social disaffection.

Early Life

Baby Doc was born on 3 July 1951 in Port-au-Prince, the only son of future president François Duvalier and Simone Ovide. François became president in 1957 but Baby Doc spent most of his childhood out of the public glare. However, he was the victim of an attempted kidnap in 1963. He began studying law in Port-au-Prince but failed to complete the course. Papa Doc died in April 1971, having arranged for his teenage son to succeed him.

Career Peak

Baby Doc inherited a country corrupt and internationally isolated. He set about improving relations with the US and the Dominican Republic, in a bid to secure foreign aid and thus kickstart the stagnant economy. He voiced support for an economic revolution, removed some of his father's cabinet

stalwarts from power, freed some political prisoners and invited other political exiles back to the country, and relaxed media censorship laws.

In reality there was little action to back his words. Few exiles chose to return to Haiti and opposition to the president continued to be stamped out. Baby Doc's reliance on the Duvalierists who had swept his father to power made it virtually impossible to implement the required reforms, since it was the Duvalierist's authority that would be curbed. By the 1980s Baby Doc was taking an increasingly hard line against political rivals, continuing to exert authority through the secret police (Tonton Macoutes) established by his father. The arrest of several critical journalists ensured that the national media kept largely to the presidential line.

In 1980 Baby Doc married Michele Bennet, with whom he had one son and one daughter. Bennet, like Baby Doc's mother before her, became a major presence in the country's political life, but her bourgeois background alienated traditional Duvalierists. In addition, the manifest lack of social and economic reform and an ambiguous attitude in foreign policy eroded international support for the Baby Doc regime. With social tensions rising, Duvalier was forced from office on 7 Feb. 1986. He fled to France with his family and a fortune estimated at over US\$100m.

Later Life

President at the age of 19, Baby Doc ran into financial difficulties after several years and in 1992 he parted from his wife. In 2000 he unsuccessfully bid for the presidency from his position in exile. In Jan. 2011 Baby Doc made an unexpected return to Haiti after 24 years in exile. Two days later he was taken into custody by Haitian authorities and charged with corruption and embezzlement during his 15 year rule. He was subsequently released but was subject to recall by the court.

Baby Doc died in Port-au-Prince on 4 Oct. 2014 following a heart attack. He had spent the last years of his life in Haiti living in relative obscurity, after charges brought against him in 2011 failed to gain support.

Dzurinda, Mikuláš (Slovakia)

Introduction

Mikuláš Dzurinda was appointed prime minister in 1998 as leader of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK). Two years later he founded the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ) and won a second term of office in 2002. He was credited with establishing good relations with NATO and the EU and for improving Slovakia's economic and political structure. He left office in 2006 following his party's defeat at general elections.

Early Life

Mikuláš Dzurinda was born on 4 Feb. 1955 in Spišský Štvrtok, a village in the east of Slovakia. He graduated from the University of Transport and Communication in Žilina in 1979 and went on to gain a Candidate of Sciences post-graduate degree in 1988. He worked as an economic analyst for the transport research institute and in the Bratislava division of Czechoslovak Railways before founding the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH).

The party was officially constituted in 1990 and Dzurinda became deputy minister of transportation and posts after the Czechoslovak elections of 1991. In 1992 he entered the Slovak national council, sitting on the committee for budget and finance. In 1993, after the establishment of the Slovak Republic, Dzurinda was appointed chairman of the KDH and in 1994 he became Slovak minister of transportation, posts and public works. Dzurinda returned to the opposition benches after the 1994 election. In 1997 he became spokesman for the SDK (comprising the KDH, the Democratic Party, the Democratic Union, the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia and the Green Party of Slovakia). The following year he was appointed its chairman. He led them to victory at that year's elections and was sworn in as prime minister on 30 Oct. 1998.

Career Peak

In Jan. 2000 Dzurinda founded the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ), made up of the KDH, the Party of Hungarian Coalition (SMK) and the Alliance of the New Citizen. As leader of the coalition, he was elected prime minister again in Oct. 2002.

In Sept. 2000 Slovakia gained entry into the OECD. In Feb. 2001 Dzurinda approved changes to the constitution to facilitate Slovakia's entry into NATO and the EU. He de-centralized power while increasing the authority of the state audit office. There was greater recognition of minority rights, building on a law introduced in July 1999 to improve the status of minority languages. In Jan. 2002 eight regional parliaments were created in keeping with EU membership requirements. Accession talks were completed at the Copenhagen summit in Dec. 2002.

In May 2003 a referendum gave backing to accession and in May 2004 Slovakia was one of ten new countries to join the EU. Parliament ratified the EU constitution the following year. Slovakia was invited to join NATO in Nov. 2002 and admitted in March 2004. Dzurinda also worked hard to encourage foreign investment. During his first term the US steel industry pledged to invest around US\$1bn. and Korea's Hyundai company were also significant investors. In 2003 Slovakia recorded a 4.5% growth rate, with growth predicted to continue steadily.

Domestically, Dzurinda overhauled the pensions and benefits system. There were cuts in benefits for those not actively seeking employment and healthcare costs rose. The tax system was simplified with the introduction of a 19% flat rate. However, while Dzurinda's economic overhaul of Slovakia was applauded by the international community, he faced some hostility at home. The average hourly wage remained low and there was little job security. In Feb. 2004 there were riots in eastern Slovakia in protest at benefits cuts. In 2005 several deputies quit in protest at Dzurinda's leadership and in Sept. 2005 the opposition boycotted parliament in an attempt to force early elections.

At general elections held in June 2006 Dzurinda's SDKÚ came second, winning 31 seats against 50 for Direction–Social Democracy (SMER). While retaining his seat in parliament, Dzurinda was replaced as prime minister on 4 July 2006 by Robert Fico, leader of SMER.

Later Life

Dzurinda served as foreign minister from July 2010–April 2012 under prime minister Iveta Radičová. Then in Dec. 2013 he was appointed chairman of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies—the think tank of the European People's Party.

Ecevit, Bülent (Turkey)

Introduction

Bülent Ecevit served as Turkey's prime minister in 1974, 1977, 1978–79 and 1999–2002. He came to power for a fourth time following the collapse of Mesut Yılmaz's centre-right government. In order to secure his election he formed an uneasy alliance between his own Democratic Left Party (DLP) the centre-right Motherland Party and the far-right Nationalist Action Party. Towards the end of his tenure Turkey's increasing economic difficulties coupled with Ecevit's failing health led the opposition to demand early elections which brought the end to his premiership.

Early Life

The son of a professor of medicine and an artist, Ecevit was born on 28 May 1925 in İstanbul. He received a BA from Robert College, İstanbul and then read literature at the University of Ankara before studying languages and the history of art at London University. He then became a journalist, working for the Turkish press attaché in London. He began his political career in 1957 as a Republican People's Party (CHP) member for Ankara. As labour minister, Ecevit legalized strikes. He was elected secretary general of the CHP in 1966. During this time Ecevit also wrote poetry and translated a play by T.S. Eliot into Turkish. Throughout the 1960s he advocated 'democratic socialism' which he considered the best way to safeguard Turkey from communism. He also argued strongly against the intervention of the military in domestic politics, a stance that brought him into conflict with party leader İsmet İnönü. Ecevit became party chairman in 1972 and was elected prime minister for the first time in Jan. 1974.

Career Peak

When Ecevit came to power his most immediate problem was the diplomatic situation in Cyprus. Following the Greek overthrow of the Cypriot government, Ecevit, a committed patriot, ordered Turkish troops onto the island. The result was the division of Cyprus. This proved a divisive issue in domestic politics, and culminated in Ecevit's resignation following the loss of a vote of confidence in Sept. 1974.

He returned to power for under a month in 1977 and again in 1978 but economic difficulties ended his third tenure in Oct. the following year. Subsequently Ecevit suffered persecution for his left wing beliefs. Despite numerous prison sentences he managed to organize the clandestine Democratic Left Party (DLP, an offshoot of the banned CHP) through his wife Rahsan. His return from the political wilderness came in 1991 when he was elected to parliament.

Ecevit succeeded the beleaguered Mesut Yilmaz on a temporary basis in Jan. 1999, but elections in April that year confirmed his authority. He remained committed to a secular state and was vocal in his opposition to Islamic extremism. He was equally determined to maintain a military presence in Cyprus and in the Kurdish dominated southeast of the country. His policy towards Europe appeared less certain; he rejected preconditions for Turkish entry into the EU, such as the improvement of the country's human rights record and a resolution of the Kurdish and Cypriot problems. In Oct. 2002 Turkey was omitted from ten countries nominated to join the EU in 2004 as it was considered not in line with the Copenhagen Criteria.

Prompted by the prime minister's failing health, the government was on the brink of collapse in July 2002 as many key ministers resigned. Opposition parties called for the prime minister's resignation.

Ecevit attempted to halt the crisis by bringing forward elections from 2004 to Nov. 2002. The elections saw the defeat of Ecevit's coalition government by the new Justice and Development Party. His own DSP party took just 1.2% of votes. Ecevit tendered his resignation to President Sezer, and was replaced as prime minister by Abdullah Gül.

Having retired from active politics in 2004, Ecevit died on 18 May 2006 following a cerebral haemorrhage.

Echeverría Álvarez, Luis (Mexico)

Introduction

Representing the dominant Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI), Echeverría Álvarez was president of Mexico from 1970 to 1976. His presidency abandoned the cautious fiscal policies of his predecessor Gustavo Díaz Ordaz in favour of a free-spending populist presidency. The result was that the external debt sextupled, the value of the Mexican currency was halved and real incomes fell by half.

Early Life

Echeverría was born in Mexico City in 1922. He trained as a lawyer and held a number of mid-level positions in the PRI and the government before being appointed interior minister in 1964. His career was decisively influenced by the massacre of student protesters in the Tlatelolco district of Mexico City in 1968. Although Echeverría has always denied responsibility for the massacre he was widely blamed for the deaths. Echeverría was elected president on 1 Dec. 1970, succeeding his fellow PRI colleague Gustavo Díaz Ordaz.

Career Peak

During his presidency, Echeverría responded to the unrest resulting from the 1968 student protests and the Tlatelolco massacre with a policy of 'democratic opening' designed to assimilate into the PRI regime the democratic forces unleashed by the events of 1968. He released the imprisoned leaders of the 1968 protests, increased the budget of the national university and cultivated intellectuals—notably the novelist Carlos Fuentes who was appointed as ambassador to France. Echeverría's rhetoric was populist—he spoke constantly in favour of peasants and workers and publicly took on big business. In accordance with PRI tradition, however, Echeverría combined increased democracy with selective repression of dissident groups. While he did much to cultivate the student movement, dissident students were violently

repressed, most notably in another massacre in Mexico City on Corpus Christi Thursday, 10 June 1971. In July 1976 he engineered the takeover of the outspoken newspaper, *Excélsior*. Echeverría adopted an equally populist economic policy designed to reduce the extreme levels of economic inequality in Mexico. He embraced the fashionable approaches of the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), which favoured state intervention in economic affairs, high tariff barriers and a closed economy. The result was a government spending spree. When the minister of the treasury, Hugo Margáin, told the president that Mexico's internal and external debts were at their limit and that spending had to be reined in, Echeverría forced his resignation and appointed him ambassador to Great Britain. The president replaced Margáin with his old friend José López Portillo and declared that from then on the Mexican economy would be run from his official residence, Los Pinos. The result was an economic crisis which would haunt his predecessor. The Mexican peso fell from 12.5 per US\$ to 25, inflation rose from 13.7% to 27.2% and the external debt soared. Echeverría's successor, José López Portillo took over the presidency in 1976.

Later Life

After leaving office, Echeverría was appointed as Mexico's ambassador to UNESCO and subsequently to Australia.

Eden, Anthony (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Anthony Eden was the Conservative British prime minister from 1955 to 1957. He had previously served as foreign secretary, gaining an international reputation as a diplomat and skilled negotiator. However, his tenure as prime minister was dominated by the Suez Crisis and, in tandem with his ill health, led to his early downfall.

Early Life

Robert Anthony Eden was born in Bishop Auckland in the northeast of England on 12 June 1897 into an aristocratic family. He studied at Eton and then took Oriental Languages at Christ Church, Oxford. Twice rejected from Sandhurst on account of his poor vision, he served with the King's Royal Rifle Corps during World War I, achieving the rank of Major. In 1923 he entered the House of Commons as the member for Warwick and Leamington, the same year in which he married Beatrice Helen Beckett, with whom he had two sons.

Within 3 years he was appointed parliamentary private secretary at the foreign office by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. Under Ramsey MacDonald he became under secretary of state for foreign affairs in 1931, Lord Privy Seal with special responsibility for administrative duties in 1934 and the first minister of League of Nations affairs a year later. In Dec. 1935, with Stanley Baldwin again in power, he was made foreign secretary. Honing his skills as a negotiator, Eden hoped to bring his abilities to bear in his dealings with the Fascist powers. However, it was becoming apparent that appeasement was failing and when Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain opened up talks with his Italian counterpart Benito Mussolini in 1938, Eden resigned. Churchill would later comment on the resignation that 'there seemed one strong young figure standing up against...dismal tides of drift and surrender. Now he was gone'.

Eden re-entered Chamberlain's cabinet at the outbreak of the war as secretary of state for the dominions. When Churchill took office, he promoted him to secretary of state for war, in which capacity Eden instituted the Home Guard. In 1942 he was made leader of the Commons and Churchill groomed him as his natural successor. Labour took office following the general election of 1945 with Eden the deputy leader of the opposition, but when Churchill and the Conservatives returned to power in 1951, Eden resumed his post at the foreign office and also became deputy prime minister. It was during these years under Churchill that he would secure his reputation as a major international figure.

Eden was instrumental in diffusing the rising tensions developing in the Cold War, and in 1954 he negotiated with the Soviets for an interim peace in

Vietnam. He negotiated a conclusion to the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute, mediated during the Indochina War and between Italy and Yugoslavia in a dispute over Trieste, helped establish the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and assisted with Germany's entry into NATO. He was made a Knight of the Garter for his efforts but it was also during these years that his health started to fail. In 1953 he had his gall bladder removed but bile duct problems followed later in the year.

Career Peak

Churchill resigned the premiership on 5 April 1955 and Eden took over the following day. He remained influential in the foreign office, sometimes receiving criticism for the 'hands on' control he exerted. His efforts at easing Cold War tensions continued and he met Nikita Khrushchev shortly after entering No. 10. By the end of July 1956, though, the Suez Crisis was in the making.

Britain had already suffered from the economic fallout of the Anglo-Iranian dispute when the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser announced on 26 July that the Suez Canal would be nationalized. The canal was operated by a French and English run company, and nationalization was Nasser's response to the withdrawal of British and American funding for the Aswan High Dam. It was also thought that Nasser might use the state control of the canal to block oil supplies to western Europe. Britain and France decided to take action, alongside Egypt's long time enemy, Israel. Israeli forces invaded Egypt on 29 Oct. and British and French forces began occupation of the canal zone a week later, ostensibly as a peacekeeping force on behalf of the UN. The action met with Soviet condemnation and the US and UN made clear their disapproval. President Eisenhower spoke of the episode in the same breath as the Soviet's crushing of the Hungarian uprising that year, saying that 'we cannot subscribe to one law... for those opposing us, another for those allied with us'. Sterling was weak at the time and when Britain was threatened with the withdrawal of an International Monetary Fund loan, there was no choice but to terminate the operation. French and British troops left Egypt on 22 Dec. with the Israelis following in March 1957.

The incident severely damaged Britain's international standing and, with the return of his bile duct problem as well as a fever, Eden resigned as Prime Minister in Jan. 1957, leaving the Commons 2 days later.

Later Life

In 1961 Eden was made 1st Earl of Avon, Viscount Eden of Royal Leamington Spa and he released three autobiographical volumes during the 1960s. He fell ill while in America in early 1977 and died on 14 Jan. in Alvediston, Wiltshire in the southwest of England. His second wife Clarissa Churchill survived him.

Eisenhower, Dwight D. (United States of America)

Introduction

Dwight David Eisenhower, the 34th President of the United States was elected President in 1953 and again in 1957. He achieved military distinction as supreme allied commander of the invasion of Europe in 1944. As President, Eisenhower struggled to implement his policies against opposition from a Democrat controlled Congress.

Early Life

Born on 14 Oct. 1890 in Denison, Texas, Eisenhower's parents were members of a fundamentalist Christian group known as the River Brethren. After graduating from High School in 1909 Eisenhower entered the US Naval Academy at West Point, which he attended from 1911. A talented American football player, Eisenhower's sporting ambitions were curtailed by injury. After graduation from West Point in 1915 Eisenhower was made ND Lieutenant of Infantry. On 1 July 1916 he married Mamie Geneva Doud, with whom he would have two children, one of which died in infancy.

During World War I, Eisenhower earned a Distinguished Service Medal. In 1933 he was appointed assistant to chief of staff General Douglas MacArthur, and spent 4 years in the Philippines working on the islands'

defences. In 1940 Eisenhower was made a lieutenant colonel and in 1941 he was promoted to brigadier general and his chief of staff George Marshall gave him responsibility for the United States' War Plans division in the Far East. On 25 June 1942 Eisenhower was made commander of all the United States forces in Europe and head of the Operation Division a year later.

Eisenhower led the Allied invasion of North Africa in Nov. 1942. In July 1943, he led the Allies into Sicily, proclaiming the capture of Palermo as 'the first page in the story of the liberation of the European continent'. On 8 Sept. he announced that Italy had unconditionally surrendered. On 24 Dec. 1943 President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Eisenhower as supreme allied commander of the invasion of Western Europe, with Briton General Montgomery as his field commander.

On 6 June 1944 allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies on the northern coast of France. Operation Overlord was the largest ever-combined land, sea and air military operation. By July German forces had been driven from Normandy and on 25 Aug. Allied forces retook Paris. The Germans attempted to hit back with an offensive in the Ardennes in Dec., but Eisenhower marshalled his troops and the Nazi counter-attack was over by the early part of 1945. The Germans eventually surrendered on 8 May 1945. Eisenhower remained in Europe for several months as head of the occupational forces until returning to America to become chief of staff.

After presiding over the demobilization of the American army Eisenhower was briefly the president of Columbia University before he was appointed supreme commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1950. As a presidential candidate he was a popular choice of both Democrats and Republicans. In Jan. 1952 he threw his hat into the political ring, announcing that he would be prepared to run as a Republican. He won the Presidential nomination in July and resigned from the Army. One of his first acts was to select Senator Richard M. Nixon as his running mate.

Career Peak

In an election campaign that utilised the fast-developing medium of television, Eisenhower defeated Democratic opponent Adlai E. Stevenson by a majority of 6.45 m. votes. On 20 Jan. 1953 he was inaugurated as President.

One of his first acts on assuming control of the White House was to deal with the Korean war that he had inherited from Truman. A ceasefire followed soon after Eisenhower's inauguration. Domestically, Eisenhower's aim was to balance the federal budget. His other chief task was to try and limit the damage created by Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigations into undercover communism. In Aug. 1954, Eisenhower outlawed the Communist Party while distancing himself from McCarthy whose excesses earned him a congressional censure.

For the first 2 years of Eisenhower's Presidency, Republicans marginally controlled both Houses of Congress, but power shifted to the Democrats in 1954, forcing Eisenhower into a delicate balancing act as he sought to implement legislation. Mild civil rights proposals were defeated but Eisenhower did succeed in balancing the nation's budget in his first term.

In Sept. 1956 the assumption that Eisenhower would run for re-election was put in doubt after he suffered a heart attack. He recovered slowly but was sufficiently in command to intervene in the Suez crisis of 1956, by refusing to support the invasion of Egypt by British, French and Israeli forces.

On 6 Nov. Eisenhower defeated Adlai E. Stevenson for the second successive election, this time by more than 9 m. votes and 457 electoral votes to 73. Both at home and abroad, Eisenhower faced a difficult second term in office. Troublesome relationships with Congress continued and the Democrats increased their majorities in the Senate and Congress in 1958. Eisenhower's attempts to thaw the Cold War met with frustration. Anti-American feeling was particularly strong in Cuba, where Communist Fidel Castro had seized power. Just as a Big Four summit in Geneva in 1955 had ended in stalemate, so Eisenhower's attempt in 1960 to agree an accord with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev was thwarted when the shooting down of an American U-2 plane over the USSR caused Khrushchev to boycott the meeting.

Eisenhower handed over the Republican presidential candidacy to his vice-president Richard Nixon—who would ultimately lose the 1960 election by a slim margin to John F. Kennedy.

Later Life

In retirement, Eisenhower was consulted by his successors Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1965, he suffered a major heart attack, and his health continued to deteriorate thereafter. After another heart attack in 1968 Eisenhower died in hospital in Washington, D.C. on 28 March 1969.

Elbegdorj, Tsakhiagiin (Mongolia)

Introduction

Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj took office on 18 June 2009, the first president not to have been a member of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). Campaigning on a platform of change and anti-corruption that appealed to urban voters, he won the election with just over 51% of the vote on 24 May 2009, beating MPRP candidate and incumbent president Nambaryn Enkhbayar. He was re-elected in June 2013.

Early Life

Elbegdorj was born on 30 March 1963 in the district of Zereg. In 1988 he graduated from the Military Political Institute in Ukraine (then part of the USSR) and went on to attain a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University in the USA.

Elbegdorj was active in the fight against communism and in 1989 helped establish a recognized pro-democracy movement. The following year he founded Mongolia's first independent newspaper, *Democracy*. A few months later he was elected to government and was a key figure in drafting a new constitution, adopted in Jan. 1992. In 1996, as leader of the Democratic Party (DP), Elbegdorj led the Democratic Union Coalition to victory in parliamentary elections, paving the way for the country's first peaceful power transition.

Elbegdorj was elected prime minister in April 1998 but a banking scandal forced his resignation shortly afterwards. After the 2004 elections he was again appointed to the premiership, heading a fragile MPRP-DP coalition. During his tenure, he announced measures to boost tourism, reorganized domestic political structures, loosened control of the news media and oversaw the replacement of Russian by English as Mongolia's second language. In Jan. 2006 he was again forced to resign when the MPRP withdrew from the coalition, sparking public demonstrations in Ulaanbaatar.

At elections in May 2009 Elbegdorj won by only a narrow margin over the incumbent president. Nevertheless, the MPRP accepted the result, producing a peaceful outcome after fears of a repeat of the violence that followed the DP's claims of fraud at the 2008 parliamentary polling.

Career Peak

On taking office Elbegdorj faced the challenges of working with a parliament dominated at the time by the MPRP and tackling high levels of corruption and unemployment. He also aimed to spread the profits of Mongolia's mineral wealth more widely. On the foreign stage, he was expected to cultivate Western ties to counterbalance the influence of neighbouring Russia and China.

Following parliamentary elections in June 2012, Elbegdorj's DP was returned as the largest party but without an overall majority. This heralded the formation in Aug. of a DP-led government including the Justice Coalition. Elbegdorj secured his own re-election in June 2013, having again campaigned on an anti-corruption and liberalizing agenda. However, following the Mongolian People's Party's landslide victory over the DP in parliamentary elections in June 2016, Elbegdorj swore in Jargaltulgyn Erdenebat as prime minister at the head of a new MPP government.

Since the constitution does not permit three successive terms, Elbegdorj could not run for the presidential elections of June 2017. On 10 July he was succeeded by Khaltmaagiin Battulga (also of the Democratic Party).

Elchibey, Albufaz (Azerbaijan)

Introduction

Albufaz Elchibey became Azerbaijan's president in 1992. His tenure lasted only a year and was dominated by the war with Armenian forces over Nagorno-Karabakh. He went into exile in 1993.

Early Life

Albufaz Elchibey was born on 14 June 1938 in the village of Kalaki in Nakhichevan. He studied Arabic at the Baku State University and was later a professor there. He also worked as a translator in Egypt. A nationalist dissident, he was imprisoned in 1975 for anti-Soviet activities and banned from teaching. In 1989 he co-founded the Azerbaijan Popular Front Party (APF), serving as chairman until 2000.

Career Peak

Elchibey was elected president of Azerbaijan in June 1992, but served only 1 year of his 5 year term. He abolished the rouble in favour of the manat and replaced the Cyrillic alphabet with the Latin one. He supported calls for a unification of Turkic countries of which Azerbaijan is an ethnic member. His tenure was blighted by a painful phase of economic transition and by the war with Armenia over the break-away region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Heavy losses of troops and land and the creation of over 1 m. refugees ensured a steep decline in Elchibey's popularity. In June 1993, fearing a military coup, he fled Baku and went into exile. He died of prostate cancer in Ankara on 22 Aug. 2000.

English, Bill (New Zealand)

Introduction

Bill English took office as prime minister on 12 Dec. 2016 after winning the National Party's leadership contest unopposed. The election was triggered when John Key unexpectedly announced his resignation the previous week.

Early Life

Born on 30 Dec. 1961 in Lumsden, Simon William English graduated in economics from the University of Otago before reading English at Victoria University of Wellington. He joined the National Party in 1980 and was an analyst for the Treasury before returning to work for his family's farm in Dipton.

In 1990 he became the member of parliament for Wallace (now Clutha-Southland), a seat he held until 2014 when he became a list MP. He was elevated to the Cabinet in 1996 as minister for crown health enterprises and associate minister of education. He subsequently oversaw the health and education portfolios before becoming finance minister in 1999. However, he was in the post for only a few months before the National Party lost the general election that year.

English became leader of the National Party in 2001 but the party then suffered its worst-ever election defeat the following year, receiving just over 20% of votes. In Oct. 2003 he was replaced as leader by Don Brash. Following Brash's resignation in Nov. 2006, English became deputy leader under John Key. When the National Party won the general election in 2008, English was appointed deputy prime minister, minister of finance and minister of infrastructure. On 5 Dec. 2016 Key resigned as prime minister and National Party leader. He endorsed English as his successor, and English subsequently won the party leadership unopposed—a result that saw him automatically take over as premier.

Career Peak

A devout Roman Catholic known for his social conservatism, English entered office with a track record of opposing abortion, civil unions and gay marriage, euthanasia and the decriminalization of prostitution. He inherited a healthy economy and a budget surplus, but faces challenges including overseeing recovery from the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake, addressing the housing crisis and keeping the financial markets stable. In Oct. 2017, shortly after leading the National Party in obtaining a majority of seats at the parliamentary elections, he was replaced as premier by Jacinda Ardern, leader of the Labour Party, who formed a coalition with New Zealand First and the Greens.

Enkhbayar, Nambaryn (Mongolia)

Introduction

Nambaryn Enkhbayar, the candidate of the ruling MPRP, won presidential elections in May 2005, having been prime minister from 2000–04. He promised to modernize the country and tackle poverty and unemployment.

Early Life

Enkhbayar was born on 1 June 1958 in Ulan Bator. Having graduated from the Gorky Higher Institute of Literature in Moscow in 1980, he returned to Mongolia, working as a literary translator at the Mongolian Writer's Union and then as head of its foreign relations department. He also studied European literature at Leeds University in the UK in 1986. Enkhbayar's career in government began on the development committee for culture and art in 1990 as Mongolia embraced democratic reforms, legalized political parties and approved the transition to a market economy. Elected as an MPRP parliamentary representative in 1992, he served as minister of culture until 1996.

When the MPRP was ousted in the elections of June 1996, Enkhbayar replaced Budragchaagiyn Dash-Yondon as leader of the MPRP. He brought in sweeping party reforms, citing Tony Blair's modernization of the UK Labour Party as his inspiration. The MPRP stormed back to power on 2 July 2000, winning 72 out of 76 parliamentary seats, and Enkhbayar was appointed prime minister.

Career Peak

Enkhbayar launched initiatives such as the Millennium Road, a trans-Mongolian highway linking Russia and China, but progress on economic reforms was slow. When the MPRP's majority was slashed in the June 2004 elections, Enkhbayar ceded the premiership to Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj. He then became parliamentary speaker and stood as the MPRP candidate in the 2005 presidential election. Having been proclaimed the victor, he was sworn in on 24 June. He vowed to unite the country after a year of instability and public protests and pledged to reduce unemployment and inflation and tackle corruption. However, following the MPRP's disputed victory in the June 2008 parliamentary elections, he declared a four-day state of emergency in response to rioting in the capital which left at least five people dead and hundreds injured.

At presidential elections on 24 May 2009 Enkhbayar lost to Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj of the Democratic Party.

Later Life

In Aug. 2012 Enkhbayar was jailed for 4 years after having been convicted of corruption. He denied the charges, claiming that they were politically motivated. He was released in Aug. 2013 following a decree by then president Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj.

Enkhbold, Miyegombo (Mongolia)

Introduction

Miyegombo Enkhbold succeeded Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj as prime minister of Mongolia in Jan. 2006, ending two weeks of political crisis. A former mayor of the capital, Ulan Bator, he was also chairman of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). In Nov. 2007 Enkhbold lost his position as prime minister to Sanjaagiin Bayar.

Early Life

Miyegombo Enkhbold was born on 19 July 1964 in Ulan Bator. Graduating from the Mongolia State University with a degree in economics in 1987, he was employed as an economist in the capital's executive administration and in 1989 joined the staff of the ministry of communal economy and services.

In 1990 Mongolia embraced democratic reforms, legalizing political parties and approving the transition to a market economy. Enkhbold joined the ruling MPRP while it was being remoulded into a centre-left party. Having led the premises and services department of Ulan Bator's executive administration during 1991, Enkhbold was appointed deputy governor of the capital's Chingeltei district, a post he held for 4 years. In 1996 he attended a course in state administration and management with the Japanese government's international co-operation agency. The following year he became chairman of the MPRP's committee in Ulan Bator and a member of the party's *Little Hural* (the successor to the MPRP Central Committee from 1992).

Enkhbold became Ulan Bator's mayor in Jan. 1999 and was reappointed in Oct. 2000. He was elected a member of the MPRP's leadership council in March 2001. As mayor, Enkhbold oversaw the introduction of controversial land privatization laws in the capital, which came into force in 2003. In Aug. 2005, Enkhbold was elected to represent Ulan Bator's constituency #65 in the *Great Hural* (parliament) and became chairman of the MPRP.

Mongolia was gripped by crisis in Jan. 2006 when the MPRP withdrew from the governing coalition with the Democratic Party. Enkhbold blamed the Democratic Party prime minister, Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, who had overseen rising inflation and a slowdown in economic growth, although members of the Democratic Party claimed the walk-out was because alleged corruption by the MPRP was about to be discussed by parliament. The crisis triggered mass anti-corruption demonstrations, with protesters attempting to storm the MPRP's headquarters in Ulan Bator. Enkhbold's nomination to succeed Elbegdorj was approved by the president, Nambaryn Enkhbayar, and on 25 Jan. 2006 he won 85% support from parliament and duly became prime minister.

Career Peak

Enkhbold formed a 'government of national unity', including several minor parties, which was approved by parliament on 27 Jan. 2006. The MPRP retained ten out of 17 cabinet seats and Enkhbold promised to focus on speeding up economic development and tackling poverty. In Oct. 2006 he survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence following allegations of government corruption and misconduct.

In Oct. 2007 Enkhbold was pressed to resign by party peers frustrated by a weak government and a general loss of confidence in the MPRP. He lost his position as chairman to former secretary general Sanjaagiin Bayar, who promised to reform the once-communist ruling MPRP and to eradicate corruption. The MPRP delegates also voted for the creation of a new government by Bayar and passed a resolution that the prime minister and the party chairman be the same person. Enkhbold submitted his resignation to parliament on 5 Nov. 2007 and left office when Bayar was elected on 22 Nov.

Life

Enkhbold served as deputy prime minister in the Bayar government from 2007–09.

Erdenebat, Jargaltulgyn (Mongolia)

Introduction

Jargaltulgyn Erdenebat, a former finance minister, was sworn in as prime minister in July 2016.

Early Life

Erdenebat was born on 17 June 1973 in the Mandal district of Selenge province, in northern Mongolia. He graduated from the Institute of Trade and Industry in 1995 before starting work as an accountant. He held several managerial roles in local government and was governor of Selenge from 2008–12. As a member of the Mongolian People's Party, he became a member of parliament at the 2012 election. From 2014–15 he served as minister of finance, in which post he oversaw the expansion of the country's mining operations.

He contested the 2016 general election on a platform of fiscal discipline and economic stabilization, against a backdrop of declining economic

indicators. Direct foreign investment in Mongolia had fallen as a result of declining commodity prices for copper and coal, spiralling national debt and a weakening currency.

Career Peak

Erdenebat was sworn in as prime minister on 7 July after victory in the 2016 elections. He was expected to strengthen economic ties with key diplomatic allies. In the month that he took office, he met with Chinese premier Li Keqiang to discuss a strategic partnership and increased investment from Chinese firms. However, a 4 day visit to Mongolia by the Dalai Lama angered Beijing, resulting in the postponement of bilateral meetings in Nov.

Erdenebat visited Japan in Oct. 2016, where Prime Minister Shinzo Abe indicated Japanese support for development of the Mongolian economy and also discussed potential regional security threats from North Korea. Erdenebat was replaced as prime minister by Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh, the then vice prime minister, after parliament voted to remove him from office in Sept. 2017.

Adenauer's idealistic vision of a united Europe with Germany playing an integral part did not always rest easily with Erhard's cool economic pragmatism, and relations between the two became increasingly strained. Adenauer made attempts to halt Erhard's rise to power but, after significant losses by the CDU in the 1961 elections followed by a troubled few years of government, Erhard succeeded the ailing Adenauer. Erhard led a CDU-Christian Social Union coalition to convincing victory at general elections in 1965.

Career Peak

Erhard's period in office was blighted by difficult foreign relations and a large trade deficit. He also had difficulty reconciling several factions in government, particularly those who wished to move closer to the USA with opponents who saw the future with France. When a recession took hold in 1966 Erhard was forced to raise taxes, after which a number of his key supporters left the cabinet. His government lost the state election in Hesse in Nov. 1966 and on 1 Dec. he resigned as Chancellor.

Later Life

A year later Erhard was given the honorary role of Chairman of the CDU. He died in Bonn on 5 May 1967.

Erhard, Ludwig (Germany)

Introduction

Ludwig Erhard was West Germany's Chancellor between 1963–66 but is better remembered as Minister of Finance from 1949–63, when he masterminded Germany's 'economic miracle'. While Chancellor Adenauer concentrated on foreign affairs, Erhard was free to implement his 'social market' agenda. Freed from bureaucratic controls, the German economy was energized and industrial output spiralled.

Early Life

Erhard was born on 4 Feb. 1897 in Fürth, Germany. At 16 he left school to take up an apprenticeship. He went on to study economics and sociology at Nuremberg, qualifying in 1923 and gaining a doctorate from Frankfurt-am-Main in 1925. He worked for an economics research institute until removed from his post in 1942. He then set up his own institute and, as Germany's defeat became ever more likely, turned his mind to how Germany could rebuild itself in the aftermath.

Unscathed by Nazi activity, Erhard's career advanced rapidly after the allied victory. From 1945–46 he was Bavaria's Economic Minister. The following year he joined the Special Money and Credit Department in Frankfurt-am-Main and in 1948–49 was Director of the Bizonal Economic Council. In June 1948 he announced the immediate introduction of the deutschmark in place of the Reichsmark, a first step towards a strong stable currency. More controversially, he proposed an end to wage and price controls, against the advice of many Allied and German economists.

Adenauer persuaded Erhard to join his fledgling Christian Democratic Union (CDU), and in Sept. 1949 he became Minister of Finance. His reforms were already beginning to have an effect. Rationing had ended and commercial deregulation was well underway. It was Alfred Müller-Armack, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Economics, 1958–63, who termed Erhard's policies 'social market economics'. Production was left to the private sector and wages and prices were determined by market mechanisms, while the government was responsible for social equality and a reasonable distribution of wealth. In practical terms, the government undertook extensive programmes in farming, housing and social benefits.

Germany's economy benefited from grants obtained through the Marshall Plan, a US-inspired scheme to provide dollar aid for the rebuilding of war-torn Europe. Furthermore, West Germany had received well over 10 m. refugees in the aftermath of war and, while this influx put a strain on the social structure, it presented a plentiful and inexpensive supply of labour. The Korean War and its effects throughout the 1950s opened a wealth of new markets for West Germany. Within 2 years of Erhard's appointment, industrial production had increased three fold and by the end of the 1950s the country was one of the world's great economic powerhouses.

Erlander, Tage (Sweden)

Introduction

Tage Erlander served as Sweden's prime minister and party leader of the Social Democratic Party from 1946–69. After 23 years in office he was the longest serving prime minister in the western world. He was the chief architect of Sweden's welfare state, introducing higher old-age benefits, rent subsidies, and child allowances. He also extended compulsory education to 9 years.

Early Life

Erlander was born on 13 June 1901, the son of a teacher. He attended the University of Lund, graduating in political science and economics in 1928. Erlander was politically active throughout his student years. He began his career as an editor for the encyclopaedia *Svensk Uppslagsbok* from 1928 to 1938. In 1930 he joined the Social Democratic Labour Party and was elected to the Lund City Council. In 1932 he entered parliament as Social Democratic representative for the Malmö-Lund area. Erlander held several ministerial positions prior to 1946 and became an expert on education and social welfare. He served on key commissions of inquiry, including one on unemployment at the time of the recession. He was appointed Minister without Portfolio in 1944 and Minister for Education in 1945.

Career Peak

Following Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson's death in 1946, Erlander was elected leader of the Social Democratic Party and prime minister. Erlander's domestic policy called for extensions of the welfare state and the public sector, financed by taxation and underpinned by co-operation with both sides of industry. He coined the expression 'the strong society' arguing that as people's living standards improve, their demands on the society increase. In 1955 he introduced a national health service, and in 1959, a state pension scheme. During the cold war Erlander was sympathetic to the west, but preserved formal Swedish neutrality. In 1949 Denmark and Norway joined NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), while Sweden kept firmly to its non-alliance policy. Erlander supported the United Nation's financial aid to the developing countries. In 1960 Sweden joined EFTA (European Free Trade Area), but stayed out of EEC (European Economic Community).

Later Life

After his retirement, Erlander wrote his memoirs. He died in 21 June 1985.

Eroğlu, Derviş (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Cyprus)

Introduction

Three times TRNC prime minister between 1985 and 2009, Eroğlu became president in 2010. Known for his hard line nationalist approach, his presidency cast doubts over the prospects for progress towards reunification.

Early Life

Derviş Eroğlu was born in Famagusta (also known as Gazimagusa), Cyprus in 1938. Having graduated in medicine from the University of İstanbul in 1963, he returned to Famagusta to practise. He later went back to Turkey to specialise in urology at Ankara's Numune Hospital, once again returning to Cyprus to work as a urology specialist from 1972 until 1976.

Eroğlu entered politics after the creation in 1975 of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (renamed the TRNC in 1983). From 1976–77 he served as the minister for education, culture, youth and sports in the assembly of the Republic of Northern Cyprus. He became head of the right wing nationalist National Unity Party (UBP) in Famagusta in 1977 and was elected leader of the party in 1983.

Eroğlu served his first term as prime minister from 1985–93 under President Rauf Denktaş (founder of the UBP). He returned to the post in Aug. 1996, heading several different coalitions until 2004. Intending to give way to 'fresh blood', Eroğlu resigned as leader of the UBP in 2005 but nonetheless became prime minister again in May 2009.

In presidential elections in April 2010 Eroğlu narrowly defeated the pro-settlement leader of the Turkish-Cypriots, Mehmet Ali Talat, with just over 50% of the vote. In contrast to Talat's pro-European approach, Eroğlu campaigned on a nationalist platform, favouring a two state solution. He was sworn in for a 5-year term on 23 April 2010.

Career Peak

Eroğlu began his tenure stating that he would not walk away from peace talks, although some have questioned his desire to achieve a settlement. Negotiations with Demetris Christofias, the Republic of Cyprus president, were slow, prompting United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon to set a deadline of Oct. 2011 for reaching a comprehensive settlement. However, a series of summits ended without agreement on several key issues, with Ban Ki-moon promising to broker new talks in 2012.

In Feb. 2014 Eroğlu signed a bill that decriminalized same-sex relations in the TRNC—the last territory in Europe where homosexuality was still outlawed. Arrests for gay sex had continued to take place as recently as 2011.

Eroğlu was defeated by Mustafa Akıncı at the April 2015 elections.

Eshkol, Levi (Israel)

Introduction

Levi Eshkol, Zionist and Labour politician, was prime minister from 1963–69. The high point of his premiership was the Israeli victory in the Six Day War with the Arab states in June 1967. He died in office from a heart attack on 26 Feb. 1969.

Early Life

Born in the Ukraine in 1895, Eshkol went to Palestine when he was 18. During the First World War he joined the Jewish Legion of the British Army. He was later among the founders of the Histadrut (General Federation of Jewish Labour), involved in the promotion of co-operative agriculture. He was director-general of the ministry of defence in 1950, minister of agriculture and development in 1951 and minister of finance from 1952–63. He was

also treasurer of the Jewish Agency, responsible for raising development funds and overseeing the absorption of Jewish immigrants.

Career Peak

When Labour premier David Ben-Gurion retired from politics in June 1963, Eshkol succeeded him as prime minister and minister of defence. In 1964 he made the first state visit of an Israeli prime minister to the United States, laying the foundation of the close relationship that endures to this day. He also established diplomatic relations between Israel and the then Federal Republic of (West) Germany. In domestic politics he brought together rival factions to form the Labour Party, and set up a government of national unity, including opposition leader Menachem Begin, to secure victory in the Six Day War in 1967.

Essid, Habib (Tunisia)

Introduction

Habib Essid was nominated as prime minister on 5 Jan. 2015 and charged with forming a new government. An agricultural economist by profession, he had been a leading security official in the administration of deposed President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Early Life

Habib Essid was born on 1 June 1949 in Sousse in the French Protectorate of Tunisia. He studied economics at the University of Tunis and graduated with a master's degree in agronomy from the University of Minnesota, USA in 1974. He became an irrigation specialist within Tunisia's ministry of agriculture, working in the Gafsa region for much of the 1980s.

In 1989 Essid was appointed chief of agricultural development for the northern city of Bizerte. He held senior positions in the government under President Ben Ali at the ministry of agriculture and, from 1997, the ministry of the interior. From 2001 he was secretary of state to the minister of agriculture, initially with responsibility for fisheries and subsequently for water resources. He also headed the Pipeline across the Sahara (TRAPSA) project from 2003–04. Between 2004 and 2010 he was director of the Madrid-based International Olive Oil Council.

Following the revolution that toppled Ben Ali in Jan. 2011 and sparked the Arab Spring, Essid was appointed interior minister in the interim government. After the Constituent Assembly elections on 23 Oct. 2011 he was named security adviser to Hamed Jebali, the interim prime minister and leader of the moderate Islamist Ennahda movement. When Beji Caid Essebsi was elected president on 21 Dec. 2014, he appointed Essid as premier.

Career Peak

Essid was ostensibly chosen as prime minister for his considerable experience in economic affairs and security, as well as his reputation for independence and competence. However, his critics have pointed to his close ties to the autocratic Ben Ali administration, especially during his time in the interior ministry.

Having taken office, Essid attracted controversy by appointing a cabinet dominated by members of Nidaa Tounes (Call of Tunisia), a secular party founded by President Essebsi. He subsequently agreed to include members of other parties, including Ennahda and the leftist Popular Front, and on 5 Feb. 2015 his new cabinet won parliamentary approval.

Security was a major concern throughout 2015. In the wake of three major terror attacks by Islamist extremists in March, June and Nov.—on the country's leading museum, a tourist beach resort and the presidential guard respectively—Essid carried out a cabinet reshuffle in Jan. 2016 in an effort to improve government effectiveness. He replaced the interior and foreign ministers among a series of changes and also abolished a number of posts. Also in Jan. the government imposed a night-time curfew as violent protests against rising unemployment spread across the country.

In July 2016 Essid lost a parliamentary vote of no confidence by 118 votes to three. Youssef Chahed took over as prime minister in Aug.

Estrada, Joseph (Philippines)

Introduction

Joseph ('Erap' or 'Buddy') Estrada, a former film star, was the 13th president of the Philippines between 1998 and 2001. He was forced from power amid popular discontent, having been accused of corruption.

Early Life

Joseph Estrada was born Joseph Ejercito in Tondo, a ghetto area of Manila, on 19 April 1937. Estrada was educated at the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila University and the Mapua Institute of Technology. In the third year at Mapua Institute he decided on a career in the movies. Unhappy with his decision his parents forbade him to use the family name and forced him to adopt 'Estrada' (Spanish for 'street').

During his movie career Estrada played the lead role in over 100 films and had success as the producer of 70 more. Estrada's stock character was a Robin Hood-style champion of the poor, a role that was to add poignancy to his later career. In 1981 Estrada was elected to the Filipino Academy for Movie Arts and Sciences (FAMAS) hall of fame.

Career Peak

In 1968, buoyed by his popularity as a movie star, Estrada ran for the mayoralty of San Juan, winning by a narrow margin. In 1987 he was elected to the Philippine senate where he was a leading opponent of US military bases in the Philippines. In 1992 he ran for vice-president and won by a landslide. In this role he headed the newly created presidential anti-crime commission.

Estrada won the 1998 presidential elections convincingly, on a populist platform without the backing of President Fidel Ramos. He was the first president of the Philippines to be elected without endorsement from the USA. Excluded from Manila's political elite he was seen as a champion of the poor.

Estrada resigned in Jan. 2001 after members of his cabinet and military officials withdrew support. This was after an impeachment trial had collapsed and thousands of citizens had taken to the streets to protest. Estrada was accused of receiving US\$8.9 m. in a gambling pay-off scheme and over US\$2.8 m. from tobacco tax kickbacks. Accused of 'economic plunder'. a crime that commands the death penalty and allows no bail, Estrada was succeeded by his vice-president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Later Life

In Sept. 2007 Estrada was found guilty of plunder and given a life sentence although he was freed after he received a presidential pardon. He ran for president again in 2010 but came second behind Benigno 'Noynoy' Aquino III. Then in May 2013 he was elected mayor of Manila, taking office the following month.

Eyadéma, Gnassingbé (Togo)

Introduction

Gnassingbé Eyadéma was until his death Africa's longest serving leader, having seized power in a coup in 1967. He allowed opposition parties to operate from the early-1990s but his regime had been accused of corruption and civil rights abuses. Relations with other African states had been strained over his alleged support for rebel forces in Angola.

Early Life

Eyadéma was born on 26 Dec. 1937 in Pya, in the French-controlled part of Togoland (now called Togo). Given the first name Etienne, he joined the French army in 1953 and served in Indochina, Dahomey, Niger and Algeria over the next 9 years.

In Jan. 1963 he took part in the coup that saw President Sylvanus Olympio killed and replaced by Nicolas Grunitzky. The Ewe tribe unsuccessfully attempted to depose Grunitzky in late 1966 and in the unrest that followed, the military, under the command of Eyadéma, seized control of the government in Jan. 1967. Eyadéma became president and minister of defence.

Career Peak

Eyadéma established the Togolese People's Assembly (RPT) in 1969, developing a one-party state and winning election to the presidency in 1979 and 1985. Despite maintaining close relations with France, the country's former colonial power, Eyadéma promoted Togo's African identity during the 1970s, changing his own name from Etienne to Gnassingbé.

Aiming to stabilize the national economy, he oversaw the nationalization of the phosphate industry in the mid-1970s but by the 1980s the economy was again struggling, amid allegations of state corruption and negligence. Amid rising popular discontent, in 1991 Eyadéma permitted an interim government to take control of national affairs in the build-up to new elections. With the pro-democracy movement gaining momentum, Eyadéma accepted a new democratic constitution in 1992, paving the way for the release of some political prisoners and the legalization of political opposition.

Eyadéma won the multi-party elections of 1993 and 1998, although the legitimacy of both votes was questioned. The EU suspended aid after the 1993 polls because of suspected vote rigging and in 2000 the UN and Organization of African Unity (now called the African Union) began an investigation into the suppression and murder of political opponents during the 1998 elections. The investigation commenced 2 months after Eyadéma had assumed the presidency of the OAU.

In the same year a UN report accused him and Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso of assisting Angola's Unita rebel group in trading diamonds for weapons and fuel. Relations became strained with Angola and its allies, including Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Domestically, Eyadéma repeatedly suspended parliamentary elections scheduled for April 2000. Elections held in Oct. 2002 were boycotted by the main opposition parties. In Dec. 2002 the RPT-dominated national assembly amended the constitution to allow Eyadéma to stand for re-election in 2004.

Eyadéma died on 5 Feb. 2005 and was replaced hours later by his son Faure.

Eyeghe Ndong, Jean (Gabon)

Introduction

Jean Eyeghe Ndong was appointed prime minister in Jan. 2006. The French-educated civil servant and politician was a member of the ruling Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) and an ally of the then president, Omar Bongo, who ruled the country between 1967 and 2009. Following Bongo's death, Ndong resigned in July 2009 to run in the presidential election scheduled for Aug.

Early Life

Jean Eyeghe Ndong was born on 12 Feb. 1946 in Libreville, Gabon, then part of the federation of French Equatorial Africa. A nephew of Leon M'ba, Gabon's first post-independence president, he was educated at l'École Mont-Fort, Libreville, followed by the Collège Saint-Gabriel de Mouila and the Collège Moderne d'Oyem. He studied for a diploma at the School of Social Sciences in Paris in the early 1960s and subsequently obtained a doctorate in political science from the University of Paris X-Nanterre.

Entering Gabon's public administration in 1980 as a civil servant, Ndong worked as director of administrative services and human resources in Libreville's city hall. Four years later he was promoted to director of pensions at the national office for social security, a post he occupied until he was made director of the national office of social insurance in 1990. That year saw widespread protests against the regime of President Bongo and subsequent

constitutional amendments that restored the multi-party political system. Elections for a new National Assembly took place in Oct. 1990.

Following his election to the National Assembly in 1996 as a PDG representative, Ndong entered the government as secretary of state for finances, responsible for privatization. He was also elected to be a consultant to the municipal council of Libreville. President Bongo, who won a further 7 year term in Nov. 2005, appointed Ndong to replace Jean-François Ntoutoume-Emane as prime minister on 20 Jan. 2006.

Career Peak

On coming to power, Ndong stated that the government would work to promote economic development, social justice, public security, public health and education. 'It will be an open government, and it will work hard and earnestly to gain the people's trust.' In July 2009 Ali Bongo, the late president's son, was selected as the official candidate for the PDG in presidential elections scheduled for Aug. prompting Ndong to step down to run as an independent candidate against him.

Eyskens, Gaston (Belgium)

Introduction

Gaston Eyskens was elected Belgian prime minister three times (1949–50, 1958–61, 1968–73) and presided over some of the most momentous occasions in his country's history, including the ceding of independence to Congo, and the abdication crisis of Léopold III.

Early Life

Eyskens was born in Lier on 1 April 1905. His first appointment of interest was a professorship of economics at the Catholic University of Leuven in 1931, but his political career did not begin until 1939 when he was elected as a Catholic (now Christian Socialist) Party member for the Leuven district.

Career Peak

Having established himself in parliament, Eyskens rose to the position of Minister of Finance, an office he held from 1945–9 under the governments of Van Acker, Spaak and Harmel. He then became the leader of the Christian Socialist-Liberal coalition government, and served until the following year when the controversy ignited by plans to allow the exiled King Léopold III to return to Belgium. A poll in 1950 revealed widespread Catholic and Fleming support for the king's return, however, large proportions of Walloons, Liberals and Socialists opposed the idea. Léopold eventually renounced his sovereignty in favour of his son Baudouin in 1951. The crisis surrounding the so-called 'Royal Question' culminated in the withdrawal from the cabinet of several anti-Léopold Liberal ministers, and also in Eyskens' resignation.

Eyskens returned to head the government in 1958 for two consecutive, but incomplete, terms. Whilst in office he managed to resolve a long-standing dispute by enacting the Schools Pact which granted equal financial aid to public and parochial schools. Pressure was growing on the government to grant the Congo independence, since Belgium could no longer afford to maintain the colony, either politically or economically. Eyskens was instrumental in persuading parliament to relinquish the Congo. Having gained its independence the Congo was plunged into civil war, and the ensuing blood-bath coupled with Belgium's domestic economic difficulties led to the collapse of Eyskens' government. After a brief term as minister of finance, Eyskens embarked on his third and final tenure as prime minister. He was largely successful in concluding the revision of the constitution, however growing tensions between the Flemish and French language communities meant that Eyskens was unable to insert an article concerning regionalization into the document, with the result that in Nov. 1972 he again stepped down from power.

Later Life

Following his retirement from politics, Eyskens became the chairman of the Kredietbank NV in Brussels, and was made a viscount by King Baudouin. He died on 3 Jan. 1988.

Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (Saudi Arabia)

Introduction

King Fahd succeeded to the throne on 13 June 1982 on the death of his half-brother, Khalid. A son of Abdulaziz Al-Saud, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, he was the country's fifth king. Like his predecessors, he maintained absolute executive and legislative power, but broadened the process of political consultation and decision-making. He also encouraged the diversification of the economy away from reliance on oil, and oversaw the growth of the private sector's contribution to gross domestic product to more than a third. In international relations, he adopted a moderate stance on regional problems and allied the Kingdom closely with the western industrialised nations, particularly the United States.

Early Life

King Fahd was born in 1923. After his formal education in Riyadh he began his diplomatic career, initially as a member of the Saudi delegation to the signing in San Francisco in 1945 of the United Nations Charter. In 1953, during his father's reign, he was appointed as the first minister of education and is credited with helping to develop a nationwide school system. While continuing to represent the Kingdom in international diplomacy, he held the posts of interior minister from 1962–75 and, from 1967, second deputy prime minister. His first official visit to the United States in 1974 strengthened bilateral ties (at a tense time of rising oil prices) and resulted in the creation of a joint commission on economic co-operation.

In 1975, as Khalid was proclaimed King, Fahd was invested as Crown Prince and first deputy prime minister. In this role he backed the modernization of the country's infrastructure under the second and third 5 year development plans (1975–79 and 1980–84). In international affairs his increasingly active role was reflected in his eight-point peace plan to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Proposed in 1981, it was accepted by Arab states (with some reservation and amendment) but rejected ultimately by Israel.

Career Peak

On Khalid's death in June 1982, Fahd assumed the crown. He continued the 5 year cycle of development programmes to expand the private sector and restructure the economy in favour of non-oil industrial sectors and social welfare. Politically, the King made significant changes within the confines of an absolute monarchy. In 1992 he introduced a new basic law defining the systems of central and municipal government. He also set up a Consultative Council (Majlis Al-Shura) of royal appointees in 1993, which has since been expanded to 90 members in 1997 and 120 in May 2001. As the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques of Makkah and Madinah, the holiest of Islamic sites, Fahd continued the policy of his predecessors to extend facilities for the 2m. Muslim pilgrims from around the world who visit them each year.

King Fahd was a participant in successful diplomatic efforts to end the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 and in the 1989 Taif reconciliation accord bringing the 14 year Lebanese civil war to a close. His pro-western stance and co-operation in the 1990–91 Gulf crisis were crucial to the deployment and successful military operations of the US-led multinational force raised against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait. He was later involved in international efforts to resolve crises in Bosnia, Afghanistan and Somalia, and supported the Middle East peace process launched in 1991.

After Fahd suffered a stroke in 1995, Crown Prince Abdullah Ibn Abdulaziz Al-Saud, his half-brother, assumed day-to-day administrative control. King Fahd died on 1 Aug. 2005.

Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (Saudi Arabia)

Introduction

King Faisal assumed the throne on 2 Nov. 1964, having a few months earlier been named as regent. He effectively deposed his brother, Saud, who had ruled since the death of their father in 1953. Faisal's reign oversaw the beginnings of the Kingdom's dramatic economic restructuring based on oil revenues. It also witnessed the further deterioration of the Arab-Israeli dispute and the emergence of the 'oil weapon' in international diplomacy.

Early Life

Faisal was born in Riyadh in 1906, the son of the dynastic founder Abdulaziz Al-Saud. Influential in his father's military conquest of the Hejaz region in the mid-1920s, he became viceroy of the province in 1925. Upon the formal establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Faisal was appointed foreign minister in 1932. In 1953, when his brother Saud became king, he was declared Crown Prince and continued as foreign minister. He later served as prime minister from 1958–60 and from 1962 onwards. As an advocate of modernization and, to some extent, westernization, Faisal came into conflict with the more conservative Saud.

Career Peak

In Nov. 1964 Saud was forced to abdicate in Faisal's favour. As King and prime minister, Faisal instituted a programme of economic modernization, using the Kingdom's increasing oil production revenues. In 1970 he initiated the first of the 5 year economic development programmes. Over that same period, financial support was given to other Arab states in their conflict with Israel. The Oct. 1973 Arab-Israeli war heralded an oil crisis in which Arab producers, including Saudi Arabia, cut supplies to the United States and other western countries leading to a fourfold increase in oil prices. However, Faisal subsequently adopted a more conciliatory stance than more radical OPEC members and the close Saudi economic relationship with the US was preserved (and reinforced with a co-operation agreement in 1974). In March 1975 Faisal was assassinated by a nephew, who was reportedly mentally unstable, and his half-brother Khalid became king.

Falcam, Leo (Micronesia)

Introduction

Leo Falcam became president of the Federated States of Micronesia in July 1999. He aimed to revitalize the economy, protect Micronesian culture and develop international relations. He oversaw the renegotiation of the Compact of Free Association with the USA, which expired in 2001.

Early Life

Leo A. Falcam was born on 20 Nov. 1935 in Pohnpei State in the Federated States of Micronesia, then under Japanese jurisdiction. He graduated in sociology from the University of Hawaii in 1962. Returning home, he taught for a short while before joining the government of the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI, established in 1947). In 1964 he was appointed assistant district administrator for Ponape District.

In 1965 Falcam studied public administration and international relations at the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. The following year he rejoined the TTPI government, working for the high commissioner. In 1972 he was made the first native district administrator of the Ponape District. In 1975 he led the Pohnpei delegation at the convention to establish a Micronesian constitution. The following year he was put in charge of the Micronesia-US liaison office in Washington, which evolved into Micronesia's embassy.

Following the official establishment of the Federated States in May 1979, Falcam was named governor of Pohnpei State. In 1983 he chaired the State's

constitutional convention. The following year he became postmaster general, holding the post until he was voted Pohnpei's senator in 1987. He also held senior positions with the Micronesian bank, the Pohnpei agriculture and trade school board of trustees and the PATS Peace foundation.

In May 1997 Falcam was elected vice president by congress. He won the presidency in May 1999.

Career Peak

In his inauguration speech Falcam outlined plans to kick-start the economy (which suffered from high levels of unemployment), protect Micronesian cultural values and establish closer international ties. Tourism was emphasized as a key economic sector, although the cost of developing infrastructure hampered the industry. Major reforms to the public sector were introduced.

The Micronesian economy received around US\$100 m. a year between 1986 and 2001 from the US as part of the Compact of Free Association, which allowed US military bases in the region. The treaty was subject to re-negotiation but there was concern at the lack of accountability in Micronesia's expenditure programmes. Falcam's administration reached a compromise with Palau and the Marshall Islands over joint management of commercial fish stocks. In Jan. 2001 he was appointed chairman of the standing committee for the Pacific Islands leaders conference.

At elections in March 2003 Falcam lost his seat for the state of Pohnpei Micronesia to Resio Moses. Falcam remained in office until 11 May 2003 when Joseph Urusemal was elected president.

Faulkner, Brian (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Brian Faulkner, an Ulster Unionist, was prime minister of Northern Ireland from 1971–72. His tenure was marked by an increase in sectarian violence. He was responsible for the introduction of the controversial policy of internment (arrest without trial), an attempt to destroy the Irish Republican Army (IRA) which impacted almost exclusively on Roman Catholics. He and his government resigned, heralding the end of Northern Ireland's own parliament and the beginning of direct rule from Westminster.

Early Life

Arthur Brian Deane Faulkner was born on 18 Feb. 1921 in County Down and went on to study at Queen's University, Belfast. After several years as a businessman he entered the Northern Ireland parliament (Stormont) as the Unionist member for East Down. By 1956 he was chief whip and three years later he was appointed minister of home affairs. In 1963 he moved to the ministry of commerce, encouraging several multi-national companies to invest in the region.

In early 1969 Faulkner resigned in protest at the concessions and conciliatory gestures made by Prime Minister Terence O'Neill in response to the burgeoning Roman Catholic civil rights movement. Faulkner was widely expected to challenge for the premiership but O'Neill was instead replaced by James Chichester-Clarke, under whom Faulkner served as minister for development. Chichester-Clarke was unable to stem the growing tide of sectarian violence and in March 1971 Faulkner, by now espousing a more moderate line, succeeded him.

Career Peak

Once in office, Faulkner found that his moderate stance had lost him the support of hard-line Unionists while Nationalists remained cautious. Violence continued to increase and in Aug. 1971 he oversaw the introduction of internment. Several hundred people were rounded up, almost all of them Catholics, most of whom were freed without charge. The policy failed to identify a significant number of IRA members, caused widespread resentment among the Catholic population and ensured a groundswell in support for the IRA.

In Jan. 1972, on a day that came to be known as Bloody Sunday, a march was held in Londonderry (now Derry) against internment. The demonstration was illegal and British troops opened fire on the crowd, killing thirteen people

and injuring many more. In late March, amid widespread anger at the events of Bloody Sunday, Faulkner met with British prime minister Edward Heath in London. Faulkner refused a power-sharing scheme and obstructed the transfer of security matters to London. Heath responded by dissolving Stormont on 24 March, forcing Faulkner and his government to resign, and imposing direct rule.

Though politically weakened, Faulkner took an active role in the 1973 Sunningdale talks that led to the creation of a power-sharing Northern Irish Assembly and a cross-border Council of Ireland. In Jan. 1974 he headed the power-sharing executive. However, the new assembly provoked resentment from many Unionists and in May 1974 the Protestant Ulster Workers' Council called a general strike that paralysed the region for a fortnight. Faulkner resigned, the assembly soon collapsed and direct rule was re-imposed.

Later Life

Faulkner founded the Protestant Unionist Party in Sept. 1974, leading it until Aug. 1976. In the same year he was created Baron Faulkner of Downpatrick. He died the following year in a riding accident.

Faymann, Werner (Austria)

Introduction

A career politician, Werner Faymann became leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) in June 2008. He led the party to narrow victories at the 2008 and 2013 general elections, serving as chancellor at the head of coalition governments on both occasions.

Early Life

Werner Faymann was born on 4 May 1960 in Vienna. He attended a grammar school in Vienna and studied law at the University of Vienna before joining the youth branch of the Vienna SPÖ. There he led campaigns and protests, becoming the group's chairman in 1985. From 1985–88 he also worked as a consultant at the Zentralsparkasse (now Bank of Austria). In 1985 he was elected to the Vienna state parliament and from 1988–94 led the board for tenants' rights. He was appointed councillor for housing and urban development in Vienna in 1995, serving until 2007 when Chancellor Gusenbauer appointed him federal minister for transport, technology and development.

In June 2008, with the 'grand coalition' between the SPÖ and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) under strain, the SPÖ separated the role of chancellor from that of party leader. Faymann was chosen to head the party. Faymann and Gusenbauer then published an open letter that reversed earlier SPÖ policy by promising to put all amendments to EU treaties affecting the national interest to a referendum. The ÖVP consequently abandoned the coalition, triggering a general election.

Faymann fought the election on a platform of social investment and populist scepticism about the EU. On 28 Sept. 2008 the SPÖ won the most seats, although with a reduced share of the vote (just under 30%). Refusing to consider a coalition with the right-wing Alliance for the Future of Austria or the anti-immigration Freedom Party, he entered into an agreement in Nov. with the ÖVP under its new leader Josef Pröll. On 2 Dec. 2008 Faymann was sworn in as chancellor.

Career Peak

Faymann initially faced challenges from the global economic crisis and in early 2009 introduced tax cuts to boost the economy. He has advocated EU aid to support struggling European economies, in part to safeguard large loans that Austria has made to Eastern European countries. In June 2013 his government withdrew its military participation in the United Nations monitoring force in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Following the Sept. 2013 parliamentary elections, the SPÖ and ÖVP won sufficient support to form another coalition under Faymann's premiership, but both parties lost ground in the poll to right-wing and eurosceptic parties. In Aug. 2014 Michael Spindelegger resigned as vice chancellor and finance minister, citing disagreements within his ÖVP party over tax reform. He was replaced the following month by Reinhold Mitterlehner as vice chancellor and Hans Jörg Schelling as finance minister.

In June 2014 the government signed a controversial deal with Russia to complete the Austrian section of a gas pipeline for transporting Russian gas to Europe, despite the opposition of some EU member states and the European Commission in the wake of Russian intervention in Ukraine. However, the project was abandoned in Dec. 2014 as the EU imposed economic sanctions against Russia.

In Feb. 2015 the government approved a controversial legislative reform banning foreign funding for mosques and imams, partly aimed at tackling Islamist radicalism. Later in the year Faymann called for a unified response to Europe's deepening migrant crisis, prompted particularly by the civil war in Syria, and for an EU-wide quota to manage the huge flow of refugees and to prevent further transit deaths.

Faymann resigned in May 2016 after the SPÖ failed to progress a candidate to the second round run-off at presidential elections held in April.

Fernández de Kirchner, Cristina (Argentina)

Introduction

Cristina Fernández de Kirchner was sworn in as president on 10 Dec. 2007, representing the ruling Front for Victory party (FV). She succeeded her husband, Néstor Kirchner, and became the first elected female president of Argentina, though not the first female president. She was re-elected for a second term in Oct. 2011.

Early Life

Cristina Kirchner, also called Fernández, was born in 1953 in the La Plata region of Buenos Aires. Her father was a businessman and unionist of Spanish heritage. Her mother was a civil servant in the ministry for the economy and member of the Peronists of German descent. Fernández was educated at secondary level in Buenos Aires and at the Colegio Nuestra Señora de la Misericordia, a private college run by nuns.

During the 1970s she studied at La Plata National University, reading psychology before converting to law. In 1974 she met Néstor Kirchner, a law student, and they married after 6 months. Both were members of the Tendencia Revolucionaria faction of the Peronist Justicialista Party (PJ). In 1975, following Juan Perón's death, the Kirchners moved to Rio Gallegos, the capital of Santa Cruz. They set up a law practice and distanced themselves from politics while the military junta that had ended the Peronist government in 1976 with a coup d'état held power until 1983. Whether Fernández completed her law degree remains disputed.

Her political career began shortly after her husband's. In 1985 she became a member of the PJ and was elected provincial representative of Santa Cruz in 1989, 1993 and 1995. Her husband became mayor of Rio Gallegos in 1987 and governor of Santa Cruz in 1991. In 1995 Fernández resigned from provincial politics to represent Santa Cruz in the Senate, where she built her national profile. In 1997 and 2001 she was elected to represent Santa Cruz in the Chamber of Deputies. In 2003 she helped her husband win the presidential election and became first lady. Two years later she secured the senatorship for Buenos Aires, representing the FV. In 2007, despite good poll ratings, Néstor Kirchner decided not to run for re-election as president and Fernández was elected in his place.

Career Peak

Fernández pledged to further her husband's economic policies. However, in the early stages of her tenure she faced budget restrictions and other challenges, including an energy shortage, rising inflation, large public debt and dependency on GM soya exports. She also faced continuing accusations from the IMF that the national statistics institute manipulated official inflation figures. In July 2008, in a politically damaging defeat, Fernández cancelled tax increases on agricultural exports that had provoked months of protests by farmers. This was followed by another controversial government plan to nationalize private pension funds, ostensibly to protect pensioners' assets during the erupting global financial crisis, which was approved by parliament in Nov. As the economy deteriorated rapidly from late 2008 and her

popularity slumped, Fernández brought forward partial congressional elections from Oct. 2009 to June. However, her party supporters still lost their absolute majorities in both parliamentary houses in the polling and her husband failed to gain election to the Chamber of Deputies.

In Oct. 2009 the government indicated its willingness to negotiate with holders of US\$20bn. of bonds (on which Argentina had defaulted in 2001) in a debt restructuring initiative aimed at restoring the country's access to international credit. In April 2010 the government announced the terms of its offer to creditors, and by June about 90% of defaulted bonds had been exchanged. Earlier, in Jan. 2010, Fernández had secured the removal of the governor of the Central Bank, Martín Redrado, for opposing her proposal to use the Bank's hard-currency reserves to repay debt. In Nov. that year she announced that the Paris Club of creditor countries had agreed to negotiate Argentina's debt default repayment of about US\$7.5bn. without any intervention from the IMF (whose policies were rejected by both Fernández and her predecessor). In May 2012 the government announced that it would nationalize a majority stake in the energy firm YFP, the former state oil company owned by Spain's Repsol. The move incurred trading retaliation by the Spanish government and a referral to the World Trade Organization by the European Union. The dispute was finally settled in Nov. 2013 when the government agreed to pay US\$5bn. in compensation to Repsol.

Regarding social policy, in July 2010 Argentina became the first Latin American country to legalize same-sex marriage and give same-sex couples inheritance and adoption rights.

Internationally, Fernández has sought to raise Argentina's profile and has represented Argentina at the G20 forum of wealthy nations. Rancour with the UK over the disputed territory of the Falkland Islands has continued. In March 2013 the Falklands government held a referendum on the islands' political status in a bid to reaffirm UK sovereignty; 99.8% of votes cast were in favour of retaining the current status.

In Oct. 2010 Fernández was widowed as Néstor Kirchner died suddenly of a heart attack, depriving her not only of her husband but her principal political adviser.

Reflecting a revival in her popularity in the wake of stronger economic growth (but also rising inflation), Fernández won a second presidential term in elections in Oct. 2011 with 54% of the vote. However, in mid-term parliamentary elections in Oct. 2013 her party lost substantial support despite maintaining a narrow majority, diminishing her chances of revising the constitution and seeking re-election in 2015 for a third term. She was temporarily incapacitated from Aug. to Nov. 2013 by a head injury requiring cranial surgery.

In July 2014 Argentina entered into its second international debt default in 13 years after negotiations with US hedge fund investors suing for full repayment of bonds from the previous default broke down. In Sept. the National Congress approved controversial legislation to restructure the country's debt and circumvent an earlier US court ruling that Argentina could not pay other creditors until it settled with the hedge funds. In response, the US judge ruled that Argentina was in contempt of court.

Precluded from standing for re-election in 2015 for a third term without a constitutional change, Fernández entered the final year of her presidency in Oct. 2014. In Feb. 2015 she was formally accused by a prosecutor of trying to cover up the alleged involvement of Iranian officials in the bombing of a Jewish centre in Buenos Aires in 1994 that killed 85 people in the country's worst-ever terrorist attack.

The winner of the 2015 presidential elections, Mauricio Macri of the Republican Proposal party, took over from Fernández on 10 Dec. 2015.

Fernández, Leonel (Dominican Republic)

Introduction

Dr Leonel Fernández first became president in 1996 and won further 4 year terms in 2004 and 2008. He won plaudits for easing the country's economic crisis, but poverty, unemployment and corruption persist.

Early Life

Leonel Antonio Fernández Reyna was born on 26 Dec. 1953 in Santo Domingo, the capital city. In 1962 his family moved to New York, where he attended school before returning to Santo Domingo in 1971. He enrolled at the Independent University of Santo Domingo (UASD) to study law. In 1973 Fernández joined the leftist Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), the movement founded by his professor and mentor, the former president, Juan Bosch. Following his graduation with a doctorate in 1978, Fernández worked as a political journalist. He subsequently lectured at the UASD and the Latin American Faculty of Social Science in Santo Domingo. Elected to the PLD's central committee in 1985, he rose through the party's administrative ranks and stood as Bosch's running mate at the 1994 presidential election (won by Joaquín Balaguer). Balaguer was barred from running in the May 1996 elections and Fernández defeated José Francisco Peña Gómez in a run-off a month later.

Career Peak

Sworn in as president on 16 Aug. 1996, Fernández brought in sweeping economic and judicial reforms. However, despite increased foreign investment, economic growth and infrastructural improvements, he was displaced as president by Hipólito Mejía of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) in Aug. 2000 amid discontent over power cuts in the previously privatized electricity industry. Mejía presided over a deepening economic crisis and spiralling crime and unemployment. Fernández was re-elected president on 16 May 2004 and introduced austerity measures and succeeded in stabilizing inflation and the currency. However, attempts to tackle poverty and corruption and to resolve the energy crisis were less successful. A free trade agreement with the USA and the countries of Central America was ratified by the government in 2005. In parliamentary elections in May 2006 and in May 2010 the PLD and its allies secured a majority of congressional seats, while in May 2008 Fernández was again re-elected to the presidency.

In the 2012 presidential elections Leonel Fernández was constitutionally barred from seeking a third term. The elections were won by Danilo Medina (PLD) in a close vote (51% to 47%), with his opponent Hipólito Mejía accusing the ruling PLD of buying votes and other irregularities.

Fico, Robert (Slovakia)

Introduction

Robert Fico became prime minister for a second time after his Direction–Social Democracy (Smer–SD) party achieved outright victory in legislative elections held in March 2012 and he retained the premiership following further parliamentary polling in March 2016. He sought to lead Slovakia into closer fiscal co-operation with the European Union. He resigned as prime minister in March 2018 and was succeeded by Peter Pellegrini.

Early Life

Robert Fico was born in Topol'čany, Czechoslovakia on 15 Sept. 1964. After studying law at Comenius University in Bratislava, he obtained a PhD in criminal law from the Slovak Academy of Sciences. On finishing military service in 1986 he worked for the law institute of the ministry of justice until 1995, holding the post of deputy director from 1992.

Career Peak

In 2013 Fico declared his candidacy for the presidential election scheduled for March 2014. Although he received the highest share of the vote in the first round, he was defeated in the run-off by Andrej Kiska.

Later in 2014 Fico implied that there were political reasons for reductions in Russian gas supplies to Slovakia amid broader EU-Russian tensions over the separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine.

In response to the escalating refugee influx into the EU in 2015, Fico expressed his strong opposition to proposed mandatory quotas for distributing asylum-seekers across member countries. In Nov. that year he pointed to Muslim migrants into Slovakia as a potential threat to national security and said that he was prepared to build border fences to protect Slovak citizens.

Smer-SD (as Smer is now known) won the parliamentary election of March 2016 but lost its overall majority. Fico was able to secure a further term as prime minister by forming a coalition with the Slovak National Party and two smaller parties, but opposition parties have continued to highlight corruption allegations surrounding senior government ministers.

In July 2016 Slovakia assumed the six-month presidency of the European Union. Earlier in the year Fico had undergone heart surgery. Fico resigned as prime minister in March 2018 with Peter Pellegrini, also of Smer-SD, succeeding him.

Figueiredo, João Baptista de Oliveira (Brazil)

Introduction

João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo was president of Brazil from 1979 to 1985, the last of five military officers to preside over the country's government following the 1964 coup. Figueiredo liberalized Brazil's military regime and slowly democratized the nation.

Early Life

Born on 15 Jan. 1918 in Rio de Janeiro, Figueiredo entered military school at age 10 and spent part of his youth in Argentina where his father had been exiled after an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1932. After the 1964 coup Figueiredo was promoted to colonel in charge of the national intelligence service bureau in Rio de Janeiro.

During the presidency of Gen. Emilio Médici, who took office in 1969, Figueiredo was appointed head of the military staff. In 1974, he became head of the intelligence service under Ernesto Geisel. He was then chosen by Geisel to assume the presidency in March 1979.

Career Peak

Figueiredo continued Geisel's policy of relaxing the military's hold on power and looked to move Brazil towards full democracy. Confronted with hyperinflation, he restored collective-bargaining rights, devalued the currency, and imposed a freeze on interest rates. However, conditions for the majority of the population failed to improve.

Having granted an amnesty to political dissidents, loosened controls on the media and allowed new parties to enter the political scene, he was met with hostility by right-wingers while attempts to ban the newly-established Workers' Party in the early 1980s led to widespread public discontent. By 1982, with the economy spiralling out of control and the country unable to meet its foreign debts, a series of bombings widely attributed to the right-wing military cemented popular opposition to the government.

In 1984 congress narrowly rejected a constitutional amendment providing for the direct election of the president. Figueiredo had opposed the amendment but the slender margin of victory indicated his weakening grip on power. In Jan. 1985 the electoral college approved the opposition candidate for the presidency and in the April, Figueiredo relinquished office, telling journalists to 'Forget me,' as he left.

Later Life

Figueiredo died on 29 Dec. 1999.

Fillon, François (France)

Introduction

François Fillon was appointed prime minister on 17 May 2007 by the recently-elected centre-right president, Nicolas Sarkozy. A former ally of Jacques Chirac, Fillon backed Sarkozy as the UMP presidential candidate

and was a leading architect of his election campaign. Fillon held office for nearly 5 years, in the process becoming France's longest-serving prime minister since Georges Pompidou in the 1960s.

Early Life

François Fillon was born on 4 March 1954 in Le Mans, Sarthe. He took an MA in public law at the Université du Maine in Le Mans in 1976, before further study at the Université de Paris V: René Descartes. He subsequently received a DEA in political science from the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques in Paris. From 1977 he was a parliamentary assistant to Joël le Theule, the deputy for Sarthe, continuing when Theule became minister of transport in 1978, then minister of defence in 1980.

Fillon's parliamentary career began in June 1981 when he was elected deputy of the 4th district of Sarthe, representing the conservative-Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR). He was also elected to serve on the council of Sable-sur-Sarthe, becoming town mayor in 1983, a position he would hold for 18 years. Fillon was appointed minister of higher education and research in 1993, serving under the RPR prime minister Édouard Balladur until 1995. Fillon then became minister for information technology and the post office. He regained his National Assembly seat at the 1997 elections, although Chirac's ruling centre-right grouping lost its parliamentary majority to a coalition of Socialists, Communists and Greens against a backdrop of rising unemployment and public discontent. That year Fillon was elected national secretary of the RPR and in 1998 he became president of the regional council of Pays de la Loire.

In the aftermath of Chirac's landslide re-election as president in April 2002, Fillon co-founded the UMP to fight in the forthcoming legislative elections. Formed from the merger of the RPR, Liberal Democracy (DL) and the Union for French Democracy (UDF), it won control of the government in the elections of June 2002. Fillon was named minister of social affairs in the administration of Jean-Pierre Raffarin, introducing controversial reforms to the 35 h working week and to the pensions system.

As minister for education and research from 2004–05, Fillon's proposals for sweeping reforms to the national curriculum met with mass student protests. Nevertheless, the 'Fillon law' was adopted in April 2005. He was not given a ministerial position in Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin's administration, formed in May 2005, and pledged his loyalty to Nicolas Sarkozy in the subsequent presidential election. Later in 2005 he was elected senator for the Sarthe département.

Fillon won plaudits for his management of Sarkozy's slick election campaign, which saw Sarkozy consistently polling ahead of rival Socialist candidate Ségolène Royal. Sarkozy emerged as president in the run-off on 6 May 2007 and on 17 May 2007 he appointed Fillon as prime minister.

Career Peak

Fillon took control of a slimmed-down government of 15 ministers, half its previous number. At the legislative elections of June 2007 the UMP won a majority, claiming 314 of 577 seats, down from 359. Fillon was expected to play a leading role in President Sarkozy's programme of employment and welfare reform, although these plans attracted a hostile response from public sector workers during the government's first months in office (and again in the autumn of 2010). In late 2008 Fillon threatened to nationalize banks unless they responded positively to the global credit crisis and lent more to French companies. Fillon won a parliamentary vote of confidence in March 2009, sparked by a debate over plans to rejoin NATO's military command, and retained the premiership in a cabinet reshuffle in June. He survived a further reshuffle in March 2010 following poor results for the UMP in regional elections and another in Nov. 2010 in the wake of social discontent over the government's pension reforms.

Fillon and his cabinet resigned in May 2012 following Sarkozy's loss in the presidential elections to Socialist François Hollande.

Later Life

In Nov. 2012 Fillon engaged in a bitter leadership battle with Jean-François Copé over the helm of the UMP by challenging the outcome of the contested party election that saw him lose to Copé. The disputed election has brought the UMP to the verge of splitting. The divisions within the UMP were further fuelled in May 2013 when Fillon announced that he would run in the 2017 presidential election. In Nov. 2016 he won the nomination to be the candidate for the Republicans (the successor of the UMP), defeating fellow former prime minister Alain Juppé in the second round of the party's primary. However, he was eliminated in the first round in April 2017 coming third behind Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen.

Finnbogadóttir, Vigdís (Iceland)

Introduction

Vigdís Finnbogadóttir took office as president, a traditionally non-political position with primarily ceremonial duties, on 1 Aug. 1980, becoming the first woman in the world to be elected head of state in a parliamentary democracy. A popular incumbent, she was subsequently re-elected for a further three terms in 1984, 1988 and 1992 before standing down on 31 July 1996.

Early Life

Finnbogadóttir was born in Reykjavík on 15 April 1930, the daughter of a civil engineer and a senior nurse. After leaving Reykjavík College in 1949, she attended the University of Grenoble and the Sorbonne in France, the University of Uppsala in Sweden and Copenhagen University in Denmark, studying French language and literature, drama and theatre history. She then graduated in English, French and education at the University of Iceland.

Having worked in experimental theatre and the performing arts, she served from 1972–80 as director of the Reykjavík Theatre Company. She also presented cultural programming on Icelandic state television and was a member of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Affairs in the Nordic Countries from 1976–80.

Although Finnbogadóttir had no previous formal involvement in politics, she was well regarded by leftist and feminist opinion in Iceland because of her prominent opposition in the 1960s and 1970s to the US military presence in the country and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization base at Keflavík. A divorced single mother, she was persuaded in 1980 to run for the state presidency with the support of the influential Icelandic women's movement.

Career Peak

Following a closely-contested election on 29 June 1980, Finnbogadóttir secured 33.6% of the votes cast to narrowly defeat three other male candidates. Despite her largely symbolic position, she took a leading role in promoting Iceland as a cultural ambassador, travelling extensively on the world stage, and was an active environmental campaigner. Reflecting her enhanced national standing, she was re-elected three times (twice unopposed) in 1984, 1988 and 1992.

After leaving office in 1996, she became founding chair of the Council of Women World Leaders at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in the USA. Then in 1998 she was designated United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Goodwill Ambassador and appointed president of the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology.

Fischer, Heinz (Austria)

Introduction

Following his electoral victory on 25 April 2004 at the age of 65, Dr Heinz Fischer took office as Austria's first socialist federal president for 18 years on 8 July 2004. He was committed to maintaining the country's neutral foreign policy and the welfare state. Critics labelled him a *Berufspolitiker* ('professional politician', who tended to avoid controversy and conflict).

Early Life

Heinz Fischer was born into a political family in Graz on 9 Oct. 1938. His father was state secretary in the ministry of trade from 1954–56. Fischer attended the Humanistisches Gymnasium in Vienna and went on to study law and political science at the University of Vienna, attaining a PhD in 1961. He entered politics 2 years later, becoming secretary to the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) in the Austrian parliament, a position he held until 1975. Despite being elected as a member of parliament in 1971, Fischer continued his

academic career. He was appointed associate professor of political science at the University of Innsbruck in 1978 and was made a full professor in 1994.

Fischer served as federal minister of science and research from 1983–86, under a coalition government headed by Fred Sinowatz of the SPÖ. In 1986 the SPÖ joined the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) in a 'grand coalition' that retained control of the government through the 1990s. Fischer was elected president of the National Council in Nov. 1990, holding the office for 12 years until Dec. 2002. He also served as a member of the national security council and the foreign affairs council.

He was elected federal president on 25 April 2004 as the SPÖ candidate, polling 52.4% of the vote to defeat Benita Ferrero-Waldner, foreign minister in the ruling ÖVP-led conservative coalition.

Career Peak

On 8 July 2004 Fischer was sworn in for a 6 year term. Although a largely ceremonial post, the president is commander-in-chief of the military and has the constitutional power to reject nominations for cabinet ministers and to remove them from office. In his opening address, Fischer recalled how many Austrians had grown up 'sensitive to war and peace' and aware that 'peace and the politics to promote peace... must have a central role in our political efforts'. The consolidation of the basic values of democracy is another of his priorities: '...Consensus is very important to me. But consensus means to build bridges. Bridges between solid shores'.

Following the collapse of the governing coalition in July 2008, early parliamentary elections were held in Sept. Fischer subsequently asked SPÖ leader Werner Faymann, as head of the largest party, to form a new government. Faymann renewed the coalition with the ÖVP, excluding the resurgent far-right parties that had made gains in the elections, and his government took office in Dec. Fischer stressed that a stable and competent administration was in the national interest to deal with serious challenges confronting Austria, including the global financial crisis. In April 2010 Fischer was re-elected for a further 6 year presidential term, taking almost 80% of the vote.

He has written numerous books and publications on law and political science. He is also co-editor of the Austrian *Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* (*Journal of Political Science*) and *Journal für Rechtspolitik* (*Journal of Law Policy*).

Fischer was not eligible to stand for re-election in April 2016 having served two terms. He left office after 12 years as president on 8 July 2016, with a council of three acting presidents taking over until the election of a new head of state.

Fischer, Jan (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Jan Fischer took over as prime minister on 8 May 2009. His appointment followed the collapse of Mirek Topolánek's government in March 2009. Fischer, the head of the Czech Statistical Office (ČSÚ), was approved for the role by the three centre-right governing coalition parties and the senior opposition, the Social Democrats.

Early Life

Fischer was born in Prague in Jan. 1951 into a family of professional mathematicians. Following his parents into statistical analysis, Fischer specialized in statistics and econometrics during his undergraduate study at Prague's University of Economics. He completed postgraduate studies in economic statistics at the same university in 1985. Fischer was a member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia from 1980–89. He has said that he became a member of the party only to ensure that he would not be obstructed in his career.

Having begun work at Czechoslovakia's central statistical office upon graduation, Fischer was appointed vice-president of the institution in 1990, a post he retained when the ČSÚ was created following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993. He was made head of the ČSÚ in April 2003 and was often required to attend cabinet meetings. As rival parliamentary parties sought a politically neutral figure with a good understanding of the political agenda to succeed Topolánek, Fischer was chosen as interim prime minister.

Career Peak

On assuming office Fischer said that he had no political ambitions. He aimed to focus on completing the Czech Republic's EU Presidency, leading the government until elections in May 2010, and then returning to his post at the statistical office. He duly resigned on 28 June 2010 and was succeeded by Petr Nečas of the Civic Democratic Party.

Later Life

Following the resignation of his government Fischer became the vice-president of the London-based European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In July 2013 he returned to politics, taking up the post of finance minister and deputy prime minister in the caretaker administration of Jiří Rusnok.

Fitzgerald, Garret (Ireland)

Introduction

Garret Fitzgerald was twice Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*), from 1981–82 and 1982–87, heading Fine Gael–Labour Party coalitions. He attempted, with limited success, to introduce several liberalizing reforms but his tenure is best remembered for the 1985 Anglo–Irish Agreement. An accord between the British and Irish governments, it allowed for Ireland to have more involvement in the affairs of the North and was regarded as a key stage in the peace process.

Early Life

FitzGerald was born in Dublin on 9 Feb. 1926. Although his mother was a Protestant from Ulster, his family were nationalists who had participated in the 1916 Easter Rising. His father had been minister of external affairs and defence during the era of the Irish Free State. FitzGerald was educated at University College, Dublin and King's Inns, Dublin. He then held a number of jobs in planning, journalism and lecturing.

In 1965 he entered Seanad Éireann (the Irish Senate). Election to the Dáil followed 4 years later as member for Dublin South East. In 1973, under the administration of Liam Cosgrave, FitzGerald was appointed foreign minister. In this capacity he was instrumental in formulating the Sunningdale Agreement, signed in Dec. 1973, which provided for limited power-sharing via a Council of Ireland. The deal, however, fell apart the following year after intense unionist opposition. He also did much to strengthen Ireland's standing within the European Community. FitzGerald remained foreign minister until 1977 when, as leader of Fine Gael, he set about modernizing and restructuring the party.

Career Peak

Prime Minister from June 1981, he admitted that the sectarianization of Irish society posed great problems for Northern Irish Protestants. FitzGerald's administration collapsed in Feb. 1982 when he lost support over new VAT charges. Charles Haughey replaced him as Prime Minister.

Haughey's tenure as Prime Minister was troubled and short-lived. FitzGerald returned as Prime Minister in Dec. 1982 to undertake a 'constitutional crusade' to improve relations between Catholics and Protestants through legislative reform. Up against sectarian intransigence, he was also defeated in attempts to liberalize laws on abortion (1983) and divorce (1986).

In May 1983 FitzGerald established the New Ireland Forum which advocated 'a united Ireland in the form of a sovereign independent state', although it proposed confederation or joint authority as alternatives. Though Margaret Thatcher's UK government rejected the findings out of hand, it provided a basis for the 1985 Anglo-Irish (Hillsborough) Agreement and gave impetus to the peace process. FitzGerald led Fine Gael to election defeat in 1987 and subsequently resigned as party leader.

Later Life

After publishing his biography in 1991 FitzGerald retired from the political scene. He has continued to write on Irish politics, for publications in Ireland and Britain, is a director of RTE (the Irish broadcaster) and is Chancellor of

the National University of Ireland. In 1999 in the course of the Moriarty Tribunal (set up to investigate irregular payments to various Irish political figures) it emerged that FitzGerald had debts of £200,000 written off by two private banks after his retirement from politics. He strenuously denied any wrong-doing. He died aged 85 on 19 May 2011.

Flores Facussé, Carlos Roberto (Honduras)

Introduction

Carlos Roberto Flores Facussé was president of Honduras from 1998–2001. Representing the Partido Liberal de Honduras (PLH), he succeeded PLH president Carlos Roberto Reina. Disaster relief following Hurricane Mitch in 1998 dominated Flores' presidency while border conflict with Nicaragua was narrowly avoided. Falling coffee prices and high crime rates contributed to the PLH's defeat in the 2001 election.

Early Life

Flores was born on 10 March 1950 in the capital Tegucigalpa. He gained a degree in industrial engineering from Louisiana University before studying international economics. On his return to Honduras he worked in business and public finance, both for the national bank and the social security institute before running a media group. He became politically active with the PLH at the end of the 1970s. Regional leader between 1980–81, from 1982–94 he was deputy for the Francisco Morazán region. Between 1994–98 Flores was Reina's minister of the presidency.

In 1998 Flores stood for his second presidential elections, having campaigned unsuccessfully in 1990. Of four other candidates his main rival was Alba Nora Gúnera de Melgar, leader of the opposition Partido Nacional (PNH) and widow of the former military dictator Juan Alberto Melgar Castro. Flores won with 52.8% of votes.

Career Peak

On election Flores set out an economic strategy to reduce inflation and the deficit in public finances in accordance with IMF guidelines. But priorities were changed when Hurricane Mitch struck in Oct. 1998. Thousands were killed, many more displaced and whole villages wiped out. The banana harvest was destroyed, as was much of the country's infrastructure. Emergency relief was granted but much of it took 2 years or more to materialize. The government began a National Reconstruction and Transformation Plan to rebuild the country's infrastructure and economy helped by a 3 year moratorium on the country's foreign debt repayments. As the economy began to recover, a fire at the Cajón hydro-electricity plant which supplied 60% of the country's electricity caused more misery. In 2001 Flores was forced to call a national emergency as severe droughts destroyed crops, threatening widespread famine. Falling coffee prices and reduced trade with its main partner, the US, hampered recovery. The subsequent rise in crime, especially by *maras*, or street gangs, affected Flores' popularity.

With Honduras' history of military dictatorships, Flores was keen to reduce the military's civil power. In 1998 congress approved a plan to appoint a civilian defence minister. The military hierarchy attempted to block the reform. In July 1999 Flores sacked 26 military leaders amid rumours of an attempted coup.

On the international front, a long term border dispute with Nicaragua flared up in late Dec. 1999 when Honduras ratified a 1986 treaty agreed with Colombia which granted both countries rights over a maritime area claimed by Nicaragua. As relations between Honduras and Nicaragua deteriorated, Nicaraguan president Arnoldo Alemán hiked a 35% tax on Honduran goods, banned Honduras trawlers from the area and began a court challenge. The situation threatened to turn violent as both countries began mobilizing troops on the border. In March 2000 Foreign Minister Roberto Flores Bermúdez met his Nicaraguan counterpart in Miami and agreed to the creation of a military exclusion zone to resolve the crisis.

In 1999 relations with the US were strained when Foreign Minister Fernando Martínez criticized deaths caused by US air strikes on Iraq.

Claiming that his deputy had released the statement without his knowledge, he was nonetheless forced to resign. Honduras hosted a meeting of Central American leaders in 1999 and signed a free trade agreement with Mexico in 2000.

As presidents are ineligible to stand for a second term, for the 2001 election Congress President Rafael Pineda was chosen as the PLH candidate to challenge the opposition PNH candidate Ricardo Maduro. With 53% of votes, Maduro replaced Flores as president in Nov. 2001.

Flores Pérez, Francisco Guillermo (El Salvador)

Introduction

Francisco Guillermo Flores Pérez was president of El Salvador from 1999–2004, representing the right-wing Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (Arena). Elected in 1999, he succeeded Armando Calderón Sol to become the third consecutive Arena president. Flores pledged to tackle poverty with market-led economic reforms, although privatization schemes were met with protests. Investigating war crimes from the country's 12 year civil war remained high in public concerns. Flores struggled to lead a recovery programme after two earthquakes in 2001 caused widespread destruction.

Early Life

Flores was born on 17 Oct. 1959 in Santa Ana, western El Salvador. He studied philosophy and economics in his homeland before taking a degree in political science in Boston's Amherst College. He studied at Harvard and Oxford before becoming a professor of philosophy. He joined Arena and in 1989 was elected vice minister of planning in President Alfredo Cristiani's cabinet. This was during the civil war which broke out in 1980 between the right wing government and a coalition of left-wing revolutionary groups, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). In 1992 international mediation brought an end to the conflict. As vice minister of the presidency Flores oversaw the enactment of the peace agreement. In 1994 he was a deputy in the assembly and Calderón's presidential information secretary before becoming assembly president in 1997.

The following year he was chosen as party candidate for the 1999 elections, party leaders believing his moderate stance would capture the votes of wavering Partido Demócrata Cristiano supporters alienated by the hardline radicals within Arena. Flores' main opponent was Facundo Guardado, a former FMLN commander, who represented the now legal political group. The strengthening FMLN had ended Arena's assembly majority in the 1997 parliamentary elections and Hector Silva had won the mayorship of the capital San Salvador. Flores took the presidency with 51.4% of votes to Guardado's 29%. A 35% turnout reflected the voters' disillusionment with politicians.

Career Peak

On election Flores outlined plans to improve health, education and housing to combat the country's endemic poverty. He promised to create jobs, encourage small and medium businesses, reduce the country's budget deficit and offer tax incentives to encourage foreign investors. Flores pledged to tackle crime with tighter laws, increased sentences and a strengthened police force. War crimes were a key issue. The murder in 1980 of Archbishop Romero, which had provoked the armed insurrection, was particularly poignant as the killers remained protected by an amnesty granted by Cristiani in 1993. There was outrage in 1998 when the convicted killers of three US nuns were released as part of a government policy to ease prison overcrowding. Despite calls to investigate war crimes perpetrated by Arena government forces, Flores distanced himself from his party's involvement, calling for the country to move on. Nonetheless, he ordered an inquiry into the murder in 1989 of six Jesuit priests by government troops. In Oct. 2000 the attorney general led a move to investigate the responsibility of high ranked officials, including Cristiani. The Arena party president.

After signing a free market agreement with Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala, El Salvador nonetheless experienced an economic slowdown, caused

by low coffee prices. Attempting to revitalize the economy, in Nov. 2000 Flores introduced dollarization, which came into effect in Jan. 2001. He fixed the exchange rate at 8.75 *colones* to the US dollar and made it the only currency for economic and commercial transactions.

Flores' privatization of the telecommunications industry caused widespread protests a month before the March 2000 parliamentary election. As a result the opposition built on its earlier success by winning 8 of 14 regional capitals. Silva was re-elected mayor of San Salvador.

In Jan. and Feb. 2001 El Salvador was devastated by two earthquakes, killing 1,200, displacing 1 m. and causing massive infrastructural damage. Flores called on the international community to reconsider El Salvador's foreign debt, claiming that repayments were cancelling out disaster funds.

Barred by the constitution from re-election, Flores was succeeded by Antonio Saca, also of the Arena party, in 2004.

Flores died of a brain haemorrhage on 30 Jan. 2016.

Fogh Rasmussen, Anders (Denmark)

Introduction

Anders Fogh Rasmussen became Denmark's prime minister in Nov. 2001. His Liberal Party (Venstre or V) had the largest representation in parliament, but to form a government he had to forge a coalition with the Conservatives. Although espousing a centre-right line, his government was supported by the far-right Danish People's Party. Following the 2005 and 2007 general elections, he became the first Liberal leader to win a second, and then a third, consecutive term of office. On 4 April 2009 it was announced that Fogh Rasmussen would take over as Secretary General of NATO on 1 Aug. His successor, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, took office the next day.

Early Life

Fogh Rasmussen was born on 26 Jan. 1953 in Ginnerup, Jutland. He joined the Young Liberals (Venstres Ungdom) in 1970 and stood unsuccessfully as the Liberal parliamentary candidate for Viborg in Jan. 1973. The following year he was elected chairman of the Young Liberals, a post he held for 2 years. In 1978 Fogh Rasmussen graduated with a master's degree in economics from Aarhus University. In the same year he joined the Folketing as a replacement member for Viborg County.

From 1981–86 Fogh Rasmussen was vice chairman of the Folketing's housing committee, and in 1985 was appointed the Liberal Party's deputy chairman. After re-election at the 1987 general election, he became taxation minister, adding the role of finance minister in 1990. However, he was forced to resign 2 years later after a government commission concluded he had provided misleading information to parliament, although he denied the allegations.

In April 1998 he was elected Liberal chairman, having been its spokesman since 1992. Following the attacks on the USA in Sept. 2001, the incumbent Social Democrat prime minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, called a snap election when his popularity ratings were high. The election campaign was fought largely on the issue of immigration, with Fogh Rasmussen gaining popular support for his proposed hard line. Having defeated the Social Democrats, he took office on 27 Nov. 2001.

Career Peak

Forming a minority coalition with the Conservatives, Fogh Rasmussen's key pledges for his first term in office were health reforms, better care provisions for the elderly, an increase in maternity leave, stiffer sentences for criminals and a ceiling on taxes. He also promised a tightening up of immigration laws. There were concerns, however, among Denmark's European neighbours about the parliamentary backing for (and potential influence on) his government from the far-right Danish People's Party (which had doubled its parliamentary representation in 2001). In foreign policy, Fogh Rasmussen was supportive of the US-led military campaign in Iraq in 2003. In Feb. 2005 he was re-elected as prime minister, again in coalition with the Conservatives with the parliamentary support of the Danish People's Party. He remained a strong advocate of the European Union (which, under Denmark's presidency from July–Dec. 2002, concluded negotiations for the accession to membership of ten new candidate countries).

In early 2006 the republication in western European newspapers of cartoon caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, which first appeared in Denmark in Sept. 2005, sparked mass protests and unofficial boycotts of Danish exports across the Muslim world. While arguing that the issue was one of freedom of expression, Fogh Rasmussen's government sought, in the damaging aftermath of the affair, more effective engagement with Islamic opinion through conferences and other events to encourage understanding.

In Nov. 2007 Fogh Rasmussen won a third term as Liberal Party premier following early parliamentary elections and resumed his governing coalition with the Conservatives. He resigned shortly after his appointment as NATO Secretary General was announced on 4 April 2009. As deputy of the largest party in government Lars Løkke Rasmussen succeeded him.

Later Life

Rasmussen took over NATO Secretary General at a difficult time for the Alliance, with it suffering record casualties in the ongoing Afghanistan conflict to which he committed 7,000 new troops in Dec. 2009. The biggest challenge of his term as Secretary General was the 2011 Libyan civil war, with NATO forces intervening to end Muammar Gaddafi's rule over the country. Whilst head of NATO, Rasmussen promoted increased spending on defence by member states, stating that 'freedom does not come for free'.

His term as Secretary General had been scheduled to end in July 2013. However, it was extended twice until the end of Sept. 2014 so that he could prepare for and oversee the NATO summit to be held that month in the United Kingdom. Former prime minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg took over as Secretary General on 1 Oct. 2014.

Ford, Gerald R. (United States of America)

Introduction

Gerald Rudolph Ford was the 38th President of the United States, and the first ever man to become vice-president and president without being elected, having succeeded Spiro T. Agnew and Richard M. Nixon after their resignations. Ford's tenure as president lasted from 1974–77. He is best remembered for granting his predecessor Nixon a 'full, free and absolute pardon' as well as for helping heal the wounds caused in America by the Watergate scandal.

Early Life

Born Leslie King Jr. on 14 July 1913 in Omaha, Nebraska, Ford later took the name of his stepfather after his mother divorced and remarried. After relocating to Grand Rapids, Michigan, Ford graduated from High School in 1931 and went to study economics and political science at the University of Michigan where he excelled on the football field. He then went to Yale where he worked as a football and boxing coach while studying for a law degree. He was admitted to the Michigan bar in 1941.

During World War II, Ford joined the navy and served in the South Pacific. When he was discharged he had reached the rank of lieutenant commander. After the war Ford returned to practicing law and, in 1948, married Elizabeth Bloomer, with whom he would have four children. The same year he entered the political arena, running successfully for Congress in the 5th district of Michigan. In 1963 he was elected chairman of the House Republican Conference and he served on the Warren Commission that investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

In 1965 he challenged the re-election of Republican Minority Leader Charles A. Halleck, defeating him by 73 votes to 67. On Oct. 10 1973 vice-president Spiro Agnew resigned after facing an income tax evasion charge and Nixon nominated Ford as his new vice-president, knowing that his affable reputation would carry the Democratic vote in Congress. Ford was sworn in as vice-president on 6 Dec. 1973.

Career Peak

The deepening Watergate scandal soon made it inevitable that Nixon would face criminal charges and, after he resigned from office, Ford was sworn in as president by Chief Justice Warren Burger on Aug. 9 1974. Seeking to

re-establish public confidence in the presidency Ford nominated Nelson Rockefeller as his vice-president, and gradually replaced members of Nixon's cabinet. On 8 Sept. 1974 the new president controversially granted his predecessor a 'full, free and absolute pardon for all offences against the United States' committed whilst in office. Their decision was not well received by Congress or the general public, although Ford defended his action, arguing that it was necessary to end the national preoccupation with Watergate.

Ford inherited a high inflation economy which he attempted to slow down by reducing spending. The onset of a severe recession in 1974–75 and rising unemployment led Ford to push for \$16bn. in tax cuts and to initiate the WIN programme ('Whip Inflation Now'.. By the end of 1976 Ford had vetoed more than 50 congressional initiatives to increase spending.

Ford oversaw the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. After south Vietnamese forces withdrew from northern territories, American citizens were evacuated from the area and 100,000 Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the United States. Cambodia fell in April and Ford ordered the Marines into action after the new Cambodian government seized an American cargo vessel. 41 US lives were lost but the 39-member crew were saved. The end of American involvement in southeast Asia helped soothe relations with the Soviet Union.

In Sept. 1975 Ford survived two assassination attempts. By 1976 the recession had eased and unemployment had fallen. These factors helped Ford to win the Republican presidential nomination, albeit narrowly. After defeating Ronald Reagan he picked Senator Robert Dole of Kansas as his running mate. Democratic opponent Jimmy Carter led in the presidential race, benefitting from Ford's perceived ineptitude, dissatisfaction with the pardon he had granted Nixon and the slowing of the country's economic recovery. Ford failed to overhaul his opponent's early lead and was defeated in the Nov. 1976 election by a margin of 1.7 m. votes and 297 electoral college votes to 240.

Later Life

Ford was offered but refused a route back into politics in 1980 when Republican presidential candidate Ronald Reagan asked him to be his running mate. Instead he served as a director on the board of various companies.

On 13 Nov. 2006 Ford achieved the age of 93 years and 121 days, thus surpassing Ronald Reagan to become the longest-lived US president. He died at his home in Rancho Mirage, California on 26 Dec. 2006.

Foster, Arlene (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Arlene Foster is the first woman to have been both leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and first minister of Northern Ireland. She took over from Peter Robinson in these roles and worked alongside the deputy first minister, Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness.

Early Life

Arlene Isabel Foster was born on 3 July 1970 in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. She studied law at Queen's University, Belfast, where she joined the Queen's Unionist Association (part of the Ulster Unionist Party/UUP).

Foster remained an active member of the UUP following her graduation in 1993, becoming honorary secretary of the Ulster Unionist Council. In 2003 she was elected to the Northern Irish Assembly. However, she opted to resign from the UUP and joined the DUP in 2004. In 2005 she was selected as the DUP's candidate for the Fermanagh and South Tyrone constituency. She was minister for the environment from May 2007 until June 2008, subsequently becoming the minister of enterprise, trade and investment—a position she held until May 2015, as well as assuming the role of acting first minister on behalf of Peter Robinson in Jan. 2010 for a period of three weeks.

While minister for finance and personnel from May 2015, she once again took over the position of acting first minister in Sept., this time for ten days. On 17 Dec. 2015 she became leader of the DUP and was subsequently elected as Northern Ireland's first minister on 11 Jan. 2016.

Career Peak

In May 2016 the DUP emerged from the Northern Ireland Assembly elections with 38 of 108 seats, making it the largest party. Foster was subsequently re-elected as first minister, with Martin McGuinness reappointed as deputy first minister. During her campaign, Foster pledged to focus on healthcare, job creation, protecting family budgets, education and infrastructure investment. She also vowed to support victims of 'the Troubles'. On 9 Jan. 2017, over disagreements with Foster about the renewable heat incentive scheme, Martin McGuinness resigned from the government, forcing her to leave office in accordance with the power-sharing administration rules.

Fox, Vicente (Mexico)

Introduction

Representing the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN; National Action Party), Vicente Fox Quesada was elected president in July 2000 ending 71 years of hegemonic rule by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI; Institutional Revolutionary Party). He left office in Nov. 2006.

Early Life

Fox was born on 2 July 1942 in Mexico City to an Irish father and a Spanish mother, but grew up in the state of Guanajuato. From a wealthy agricultural family, he studied business at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City and then at Harvard University in the USA. In 1964 he was employed by Coca-Cola, climbing the ranks to become the company's youngest president for Mexico and Central America.

His political career began in 1987 when he was introduced to the PAN by presidential candidate Manuel J. Clouthier. The following year Fox was elected to congress where he concentrated on agricultural policy. Three years later, hoping to represent his home province of Guanajuato, he stood unsuccessfully in the regional elections, losing out to the PRI candidate, Ramón Aguirre, who claimed 51% of votes against Fox's 39%. Fox accused the government of fraud and protested until the government accepted the PAN victory. Ramón Aguirre was forced to stand down and a PAN representative took his place. Fox was elected at his second attempt in 1995.

Although short on political experience, Fox quickly climbed the ranks of the PAN, establishing a support network called 'Amigos de Fox' (Friends of Fox). In preparation for the 2000 presidential elections the Alianza por el Cambio (Alliance for Change) was formed, comprising the PAN and the small Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM; Ecologist Green Party of Mexico). Fox was nominated the coalition's presidential candidate for the 2000 election. His rival was the PRI candidate Francisco Labastida. Fox's manifesto was based on security, justice, ending corruption and promoting economic growth.

Career Peak

Fox won the 2000 presidential elections with 42.5% of votes against Labastida's 36.1%. His victory ended 71 years of continuous rule by the PRI, often maintained by questionable means, although it was the reforms of outgoing PRI president Ernesto Zedillo that created the environment for democratic elections. On election Fox outlined plans to promote a market-led economy, although he stopped short of privatizing the state oil company Pemex (Petróleos Mexicanos) claiming he was simply looking to attract foreign investment. He also pledged to solve the conflict with the rebel Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN; Zapatista Army of Liberation), formed to promote the rights of the indigenous population, especially in the southern Chiapas region. Peace talks under former president Ernesto Zedillo had stalled in 1996. Fox outlined a peace accord that would give the indigenous population more autonomy, and allow recognition of their culture, traditions and language. There were also moves to withdraw the army from the region and release imprisoned Zapatistas. In April 2001 Congress approved legislation granting indigenous communities the right to self-determination. However, despite these measures, the conflict is not yet fully resolved.

Other promised reforms in the policy agenda during Fox's tenure—such as fiscal and energy reform, tackling crime and corruption, and raising educational standards—failed to materialize. This reflected the president's lack of

a congressional majority, the PAN having lost a quarter of its parliamentary seats in the July 2003 legislative elections. Economically, the slowdown in the early period of Fox's term—largely a consequence of economic difficulties suffered by the USA which takes about 90% of Mexican exports—improved in the latter half of his tenure. This was largely as a result of Mexico's standing as a major oil producer and high oil prices on the world market.

On an international level, Fox sought to promote relations with the USA. In Jan. 2001 he outlined plans to create a 'NAFTA Plus', extending the current trade pact with North America to include more Latin American countries. He also pushed for talks with the US on illegal migration from Mexico to the US and made attempts to stimulate trade with Europe.

He was not eligible to stand for re-election in the presidential elections scheduled for July 2006 and officially left office on 30 Nov. 2006.

Fradkov, Mikhail (Russia)

Introduction

Mikhail Fradkov served as prime minister of Russia from March 2004 to Sept. 2007, working through the final years of Vladimir Putin's presidential administration. Fradkov entered into government as part of Russia's first reformist government following the fall of the Soviet Union, and he progressed through the ministerial ranks with a serenity made rare by the turbulent political climate of the 13 years preceding his appointment as prime minister. Fradkov's success under the regimes of both Yeltsin and Putin is attributed to his low-profile style and his perceived independence from warring factions in the Kremlin. His unexpected nomination by Putin to be prime minister, and his subsequent role as Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service, have led to speculation that he may have been involved in the Soviet Union's state security forces prior to his entry into government.

Early Life

Mikhail Yefimovich Fradkov was born on 1 Sept. 1950 in the village of Kurmoch, in the Kuibyshev region of southern Russia. He attended university in Moscow and graduated from the Machine-tool Building Institute in 1972 with a degree in mechanical engineering. From 1973–75 he worked as economic adviser to the Soviet ambassador in India. Some analysts have pointed to the gap between Fradkov's graduation and starting work at the Soviet embassy in New Delhi as evidence that he was recruited by intelligence talent scouts to attend the KGB Institute for Training in a new subject (economics and foreign trade) and to learn languages. In the 1970s the 'Indian sector' was considered important and getting an assignment there upon graduation was highly regarded. This interpretation makes Fradkov a 'hidden silovik'—he never formally worked for state security or intelligence agencies but he was rarely far away from them. After 2 years at the embassy in India, Fradkov returned to Moscow and served in the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations (GKES). He graduated from the foreign trade academy in 1981 and held various positions at GKES until 1991.

Fradkov first joined the Russian government after the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991. He became senior counsellor of the Russian mission at the offices of the United Nations Organization in Geneva, as well as Russia's representative at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In Dec. 1992 he was appointed deputy foreign trade minister in the reformist government headed by Yegor Gaida. Fradkov's career took off in April 1997 when he was appointed minister of foreign economic relations and trade by president Yeltsin, but he was abruptly relieved of the post under a year later when the entire government was sacked. Fradkov responded by moving into the private sector, chairing the board of directors of an insurance company (Ingosstrakh), before becoming its general director in early 1999.

May 1999 saw the formation of a new government under Sergei Stepashin, and Fradkov was appointed as minister of trade. But the Stepashin cabinet was short-lived and was dismissed after less than 3 months by president Yeltsin (sacking Russia's government for the fourth time in 17 months). Vladimir Putin, head of the Federal Security Service (successor of the KGB), was approved as the new prime minister on 16 Aug. 1999 and swiftly reappointed Fradkov as trade minister. Putin's cabinet embarked on a hardline campaign to suppress rebels in Chechnya, which garnered much popular support.

Fradkov lost his job when Vladimir Putin won the presidential election in March 2000. But in a sign that the outgoing minister was not out of favour, he was nominated to Russia's influential security council, a narrowly circumscribed structure of tried and tested loyalists. Fradkov's most prominent post came in March 2001 when he was made head of the tax police. He is said to have helped put together the tax-evasion case against Yukos, an oil company that has been under scrutiny as part of Putin's plans to extract more revenues from the natural-resource firms. The tax police agency was disbanded during a government reshuffle in March 2003 and Fradkov was sent to Brussels to represent Russia in the European Commission.

Career Peak

Having been appointed prime minister in March 2004, Fradkov gave a hint at reforms to come by choosing Alexander Zhukov, an economist who heads parliament's budget committee and was seen as a liberal, as his deputy. However, widespread reforms were not forthcoming, and Fradkov maintained the low public profile which had characterized his political career. His reluctance to oppose the diktats of President Putin led to accusations that Fradkov was little more than a 'yes man' to the increasingly authoritarian head of state. Such allegations were not quelled by the award to Fradkov by Putin of the Order of Service to the Fatherland on his leaving office. Fradkov's premiership coincided with a period of stability and economic growth, but the market gave much of the credit for that to the fiscally prudent policies of Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin.

Later Life

After tendering his resignation to President Putin in Sept. 2007 Fradkov assumed the role of Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service the following month. His appointment in this role has been perceived as an effort to buttress presidential power in the state intelligence services.

Franco, Federico (Paraguay)

Introduction

Federico Franco became president in June 2012 after the impeachment of his predecessor, Fernando Lugo. Franco had been vice-president since 2003.

Early Life

Luis Federico Franco Gómez was born in Asunción on 24 July 1962. The son of a physician active in the Liberal Party, he attended the San Jose Apostolic College before graduating in medicine from the National University of Asunción in 1986.

After postgraduate study in Cuba, he qualified as a surgeon and established a practice in Fernando de la Mora, a suburb of Asunción. A supporter of the centrist Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA) since his student days, Franco was elected to represent them in the municipality of Fernando de la Mora in 1991 and became mayor in 1996.

In 2000 Franco's brother, Julio César, was elected PLRA party vice president. In the general election of April 2003, Franco was narrowly elected governor of the Central department but his brother lost the presidential race to Nicane Duarte Frutos of the Colorado Party. As governor of Central, Paraguay's most populous and prosperous department, Franco reformed its health services.

In Jan. 2008 Franco was elected leader of the PLRA, taking it into a new 12-party coalition, the Patriotic Alliance for Change (APC). The APC leader, Fernando Lugo, won the presidency on a platform of social reform, bringing an end to 61 years of Colorado Party rule. Franco became vice-president but policy differences with Lugo soon emerged, notably over land reform. Franco accused the president of failing to respect the law in his drive to push through measures to give land to poorer farmers.

Amid growing hostility from Congress and the armed forces, Lugo's authority was further undermined by paternity claims made against him by three women in 2009. In mid-2012 there were violent clashes between police and farmers occupying land that they claimed had been taken from them during the Stroessner dictatorship. Seven police and 11 farmers were killed. Parliament launched an impeachment of the president over his handling of the

crisis and a vote on 21 June ended his mandate. In accordance with the constitution, Franco took over as president until Aug. 2013.

Career Peak

Progress on Franco's promised land, tax and energy reforms has been undermined by weak support in Congress and a lack of recognition of his administration by regional neighbours. The governments of Venezuela and Ecuador were particularly critical, arguing that Lugo was not given sufficient time to present the case against his impeachment and that his removal was tantamount to a coup.

Franco did not contest the presidential and parliamentary elections in April 2013. On 15 Aug. 2013 he was succeeded as president by Horacio Cartes.

Franco, Francisco (Spain)

Introduction

A general in the Spanish army Francisco Franco instigated a military revolt against the Republican Government, the catalyst for the Spanish Civil War. Appointed leader of the Falange (Fascist) Party, he proclaimed himself ruler of Spain in 1939. He led the country until his death in 1975.

Early Life

Born in El Ferrol, Galicia on 4 Dec. 1892 to a naval paymaster, Franco's military career began in 1907 when he entered the Toledo Infantry Academy. Joining the army in 1910, he was posted to Morocco in 1912, where he served until 1927. In 1915 he became the youngest captain in the Spanish army. At the end of his time in Morocco he was appointed director of the Zaragoza Military Academy, becoming its Chief of General Staff in 1935, and was appointed Governor of the Canary Islands in 1936.

The years preceding the Civil War were politically turbulent with the government alternating between left and right. In the presidential elections of 1936 the left gained a clear majority and the leader of the Popular Front, Manuel Azaña, was elected president. Joining forces with General José Sarjurjo, on 18 July of that year General Franco launched a military revolt against the Republican Government. After the death of Sarjurjo, Franco became the leader of the uprising and, in 1937, of the Falange Party. This party, founded in 1933 by José António Primo de Rivera, son of the fascist leader who was in power up to 1930, was merged by Franco with other right-wing groups. Together they formed the only legal political party after the civil war, the Movimiento Nacional (National Movement). After 3 years of fighting, during which time Franco was supported by Germany and Italy, Franco claimed victory on 1 April 1939.

Career Peak

Pronouncing himself absolute leader, or *El Caudillo*, Franco became the head of state on 1 Oct. As a one party state, any political opposition to the regime was criminalized. In 1947 Franco reorganized the government reverting Spain to a monarchy, leaving open his choice of successor as head of state.

Franco's assumption of power coincided with the beginning of World War II. While sympathizing with the Axis powers, Franco remained neutral to concentrate on establishing the regime. After the fall of France he attempted to make a deal with Hitler. He would enter the war on the Axis side in return for control over France's North African territories at the end of the conflict. Hitler declined. When the Allies' victory seemed likely, Franco attempted to backtrack and in 1943 reaffirmed Spain as a neutral nation. But, distrusted by the Allies, Spain was excluded from the newly formed UN in 1945 and subsequently from NATO. Within Spain Franco turned ostracism to his advantage, heightening nationalist sentiment to validate his regime. International relations were restored in the early 1950s. With the outset of the Cold War, Spain was transformed from an ally of Nazi Germany to an opponent of Communism. In 1953 relations with the USA were tied with a 10-year military-assistance accord.

Spain was economically crippled by the Civil War. There was also considerable structural damage to the country. The 1940s were years of hardship, extreme food shortages and poverty—especially in rural areas—

worsened by an international trade boycott. The people remained divided between those who had supported Franco and those who had supported the Republic. Opposition was kept alive by the underground Partido Comunista de España (Communist Party). Franco resorted to brutal repression. A siege economy precluded all outside investment and centralized control quashed regional autonomy. The Galician, Catalan and Basque languages and cultures were banned. Education was controlled by the church. Opposition to the Franco regime was strongest in the provinces. The ETA (Euzkadi Ta Azkatsuna; Basque Homeland and Liberty) movement was formed in 1959 and targeted security force members. In Dec. 1973 a car bomb killed Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco who had served as vice premier between 1967–73 and as premier from June 1973.

To stave off economic crises, a Stabilization Plan was implemented in 1959 and the peseta devalued. From 1960 onwards Spain enjoyed an economic revival. Opened up to the global market. Spain saw an increase in international trade, foreign investment and tourism. The number of agricultural workers fell by half between 1960–76 as people sought better living standards in the towns. The migration was concentrated on Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Valencia and Bilbao, spreading the cities' suburbs and shantytowns. Despite Spain's apparent modernization, the Falange party continued to oppose change. The sole move away from absolute control came with the 1966 press law which gave the press greater freedom.

In 1969 Franco nominated Prince Juan Carlos, the grandson of Alfonso XIII, to be his successor. Franco expected the future king to continue all he had set up. Juan Carlos took provisional control 3 weeks before Franco's death on 20 Nov. 1975 and was crowned King the same day. Contrary to the dictator's wishes, the King proceeded to open up the government to democracy with devolution of power to the provinces. Each region has its own president, government and Supreme Court. The Catalan, Basque and Galician languages and cultures are no longer repressed.

Franco's posthumous reputation continues to dwindle. The memorial service for the 25th anniversary of his death attracted only a few thousands supporters.

Franco, Itamar (Brazil)

Introduction

Itamar Franco was president of Brazil from 1992 until 1994. He took over as provisional president when Fernando Collor resigned. He was unsuccessful in his efforts to revive the ailing economy.

Early Life

Born 28 July 1931, Itamar Augusto Cautiero Franco had early contact with politics in his home town of Juiz de Fora in the state of Minas Gerais. He was elected mayor in 1966 and 1972. He was senator for Minas Gerais from 1974–90. A founding member of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, he was appointed vice president in 1990.

Career Peak

Franco became acting president on 2 Oct. 1992 when Collor resigned in the face of impeachment charges. Franco and was sworn in as president on Dec. 29. An opponent of sweeping market reform, he soon clashed with the IMF and an early package of tax reforms were suspended when the Supreme Court questioned their constitutional validity. The hoped-for economic up-turn failed to materialize and inflation leapt towards 3,000%. Franco's apparent aloofness caused friction with other Latin American leaders and relations with the US were also delicate.

In Oct. 1993, when his approval rating had dropped below 15%, he offered his resignation if Congress would schedule early elections. After political manoeuvring among opposition parties, his resignation was declined. His fourth finance minister, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, was responsible for a successful economic plan which introduced a new currency and economic reforms. Buoyed by his popularity, Cardoso stood in the 1994 presidential election when Franco stepped down.

Later Life

After his spell as president Franco served as ambassador to Portugal and Brazil's representative to the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. until 1998. He was governor of his home state of Minas Gerais from 1998–2003. Franco died on 2 July 2011. He was serving as a senator for Minas Gerais at the time of his death.

Franjieh, Suleiman (Lebanon)

Introduction

A Maronite Christian and state president from 1970–76, Franjieh was considered in large part responsible for Lebanon's descent in full-scale civil war in 1975. By that time his autocratic rule and alleged nepotism had alienated Shia and Sunni Muslims and rival Christian groups alike.

Early Life

Franjieh was born on 15 June 1910 in Zgharta in northern Lebanon. Having built a regional power base there, underpinned by clan allegiance and a private Maronite militia, he was elected to the National Assembly as an independent deputy in 1960. He held several ministerial posts in 1960–61, 1968 and 1969–70 before his narrow election by the National Assembly (by one vote on the third ballot) to the presidency in Aug. 1970.

Career Peak

He assumed office on 23 Sept. 1970. Early on in his troubled presidency there were frequent military exchanges between the increasing number of Palestinian guerrillas based in Lebanon (particularly after the PLO's expulsion from Jordan in 1970–71) and Israeli forces. In 1973 serious clashes erupted between the Palestinians and the Lebanese army. Coupled with the Palestinian problem, Christian and Muslim differences became more marked over the constitutional distribution of power. Violent sectarian incidents in April 1975 led to more persistent fighting across most of the country. Despite the PLO's official policy not to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs, many Palestinian fighters joined the predominantly leftist Lebanese Muslim forces against the right-wing Christian militias. Franjieh's administration became increasingly ineffectual as the fighting continued and there were calls for his resignation in the National Assembly by March 1976. A successor was elected by the Assembly in May, but Franjieh refused to resign until the completion of his term of office in Sept. 1976, by which time Syrian forces had intervened to impose an uneasy peace.

Thereafter, Franjieh's pro-Syrian clan continued to wield regional power in the north of the country, provoking frequent intra-Christian friction with the rival Phalangists (who assassinated his son Tony in 1978) and National Liberal Party. In 1988 he announced his candidacy for the presidential elections, but was forced to withdraw in the face of opposition from other Maronite groups. He died in Beirut on 23 July 1992.

Fraser, Malcolm (Australia)

Introduction

Malcolm Fraser was Australia's Liberal Prime Minister from 1975–83; he was one of the longest serving premiers. He came to power following the controversial sacking of the Labor incumbent, Gough Whitlam. He cut public spending in an attempt to reverse the declining economic outlook following Whitlam's tenure, with limited success. He advocated increased Aboriginal rights and supported Australia's continuing role in the ANZUS Pact. He resigned following defeat by a rejuvenated Labor Party in 1983.

Early Life

John Malcolm Fraser was born on 21 May 1930 in Nareen, Victoria into a wealthy family. He graduated from Magdalene College, Oxford with a master's in politics, philosophy and economics. He entered parliament as the member for Wannan in Victoria in 1955, becoming the youngest member of parliament and a favourite of Robert Menzies. A year later he married Tamara Beggs, with whom he would have four children. In Jan. 1966, in the administration of Harold Holt, Fraser became minister for the Army, a post he held until made minister for Education and Science in Feb. 1968. In Nov. 1969 he was appointed defence minister but reverted back to Education and Science in March 1971. Fraser made two unsuccessful challenges for the Liberal leadership against Billy Snedden. He achieved victory at the third attempt on 24 March 1975. In 1975 Gough Whitlam's Labor government was reeling from the Loans Scandal, in which senior ministers were accused of acting unconstitutionally to secure foreign economic assistance. Whitlam's regime had been free spending in its quest to implement social change at a time when the Australian economy was not strong.

Career Peak

In Oct. 1975 when Whitlam put his budget before parliament, Fraser, in an unprecedented move, urged Liberals in the Senate to block it. In the ensuing impasse, Governor-General Sir John Kerr, gave him the option of calling an election and when Whitlam refused he was dismissed. A constitutional furore followed and Fraser took over as caretaker prime minister until elections in Dec. when he led the Liberals to a convincing victory. He formed a coalition with the National Country Party. Fraser's tenure was constrained by the difficult economic situation, exacerbated by Whitlam's high spending and characterized by spiralling inflation. He dramatically reduced government expenditure, provoking criticism for cutting back the advances made by the previous regime in social welfare. Other austerity measures included persuading trade unions not to demand large pay increases, with Fraser assuring the public that 'life is not meant to be easy'. It was a comment that was seized upon by his opponents as an example of his arrogance, especially regarding his own prosperous background. Fraser did much to advance Aboriginal opportunities and passed a far-reaching law concerning Northern Territory land rights. An advocate of multiculturalism, he broadened Australia's immigration policy. In terms of foreign policy, he continued support for the ANZUS Pact, a treaty of mutual security signed by the USA, Australia and New Zealand in 1951. He took a strong stance against South Africa's apartheid regime. Fraser led the Liberals to further election success in 1977 and 1980. However, his privileged upbringing, his air of aloofness (his nickname was 'The Freezer', and the manner of his rise to the premiership in 1975 sat uneasily with large parts of the electorate. His continued success was in part due to the failings of the Labor Party. Fraser called an election in March 1983 hoping to catch Labor, under their new leader Bob Hawke, off guard. The plan backfired and the populist Hawke won the election. Fraser's downfall was later summarized by Hawke himself when he said that Fraser 'won the votes of the electorate but not their hearts.'

Later Life

Fraser resigned the leadership and his parliamentary seat at the end of March 1983. He became a member of the Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons that worked towards the end of apartheid in South Africa. He retained a presence on the political scene and continues to promote racial tolerance. Strongly critical of the Howard government's decision to support the USA in the Iraq War in 2003 and their policy on asylum seekers, he became increasingly disenchanted with the Liberal Party and in Dec. 2009 he resigned from the party saying that it was 'no longer a liberal party but a conservative party'. On 20 March 2015, Fraser passed away aged 84.

Fujimori, Alberto (Peru)

Introduction

Alberto Keinya Fujimori was president of Peru between 1990–2000. Using hardline policies, Fujimori stabilized Peru's critical economy and restricted the influence of left-wing guerrillas. He was forced to resign amid charges of corruption, fraud and embezzlement.

Early Life

The son of Japanese immigrants and agricultural workers, Fujimori was born on 28 July 1938 in Lima. He was educated at the reputable La Molina University—the Agrarian National University—where he took a degree in agronomic engineering. After studying in Strasbourg and taking a master's in maths at the University of Wisconsin, he pursued a career in academic administration at La Molina. He was later hosted a television programme, in which he earned a reputation for political analysis.

Following years of military dictatorship and ineffectual governing, the democratically elected Alan García Pérez (1985–90) had left Peru in economic ruin. Corruption and guerrilla warfare were coupled with a low GNP, hyperinflation and massive foreign debt. In 1989 Fujimori created his Cambio 1990 party (Change 1990) to contest the presidential elections. His main opposition was the writer and politician, Mario Vargas Llosa, who represented the centre-right coalition, Fredemo (Frente Democrático; Democratic Front Movement). Vargas Llosa's proposal to resolve Peru's economic crisis with severe anti-inflation measures was unpopular with lower income groups. In contrast, Fujimori adopted a 'grass-roots' campaign, targeting the poor rural population. He gained support from black and Indian Peruvians when his opponents attempted to discredit his presidential challenge because he was an 'immigrant'.

Career Peak

After winning the 1990 elections Fujimori immediately set about implementing radical economic reforms. Reducing inflation, his aim was to promote a free market economy and encourage investment. Reforms included economic decentralization, transport deregularization, and lowering administrative costs, expenditure and tariffs.

His second objective was to combat the powerful guerrilla movements. The main group was the Maoist terrorist Sendero Luminosa (Shining Path; SL). The other was the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary Movimiento Revolución Tupac Amaru (MRTA). Hardline measures included arming the rural population. In 1992 the leader and founder of the SL, Abimael Guzmán, was arrested. Peru's economy began to stabilize. In the same year, claiming he was being blocked in his efforts to exercise control over dissidents and rebels, Fujimori performed an auto-coup. He dissolved the congress, sacked judges and government officials, and rewrote the constitution. He received vocal opposition of his dictatorial actions from other politicians. Fujimori rejected investment proffered by the USA, as it was dependent on Peru eradicating its coca production. Fujimori believed removing the livelihood of some of the poorest Peruvians would leave them open to the influence of terrorists.

In 1995, Fujimori entered the presidential elections against the Unión Por el Perú candidate, the fifth general-secretary of the UN (1982–91), Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Fujimori won convincingly with 2/3 of votes. In Fujimori's second term, Peru experienced strong economic growth. In Dec. 1996 MRTA rebels broke into a party at the Japanese embassy and took 500 diplomats and businessmen hostage. The crisis continued into 1997 when government troops stormed the building containing. All 14 MRTA members were killed, including its leader, Nestor Cerpa. Fujimori's handling of the crisis increased his popularity.

In 1998 Fujimori announced his candidature for the 2000 presidential elections, despite the fact that the 1993 constitution written by Fujimori precluded a president standing for a third term. Several judges were dismissed by Fujimori when the court upheld his ineligibility. Fujimori's popularity declined as concerns mounted over the power of the military and the secret service and over abuses of human rights.

In 2000 Fujimori won a third consecutive presidential election despite claims of electoral fraud. It was then that his intelligence chief and closest political aide, Vladimiro Montesinos, was proved guilty of corruption. A videotape showed Montesinos bribing an opposition politician. Charges against Montesinos ranged from embezzlement to running death squads. Fujimori failed to abate the scandal or arrest Montesinos, who fled the country. The SIN (secret service) has since been closed down. While on presidential business in Japan in Nov. 2000, Fujimori announced his resignation.

In contrast to his earlier claims that he was born in Lima (and thus eligible to be president), Fujimori was now determined to prove his Japanese nationality. Japan upheld his claims and Fujimori currently resides in Japan where he is safe from prosecution. Although praising his actions at the time, in March 2001 Peruvian authorities charged Fujimori with the murder of the 14 MRTA rebels killed during the hostage crisis. Their bodies

were exhumed to prove claims that they were executed by the military. A collection of 2,700 videos, accumulated over 10 years by Montesinos, has been seized. Many are said to incriminate Peru's leading politicians and professionals.

In Nov. 2000 Valentín Paniagua became the provisional president with Javier Pérez de Cuéllar as interim prime minister. He was succeeded in July 2001 by President Alejandro Toledo of the Perú Posible party.

Following self-imposed exile in Japan, Fujimori was detained in Chile in 2007 before being extradited to Peru to face charges of corruption. That year he was convicted and sentenced to 6 years in prison. In April 2009 he was found guilty of murder and kidnap and sentenced to a further 25 years. Three months later he was convicted on embezzlement charges and received an additional seven-and-a-half years on his sentence.

Later Life

In Dec. 2017 President Kuczynski granted Fujimori a humanitarian pardon on health grounds in a move that led to widespread protests. He was released from a Lima hospital in Jan. 2018.

Fukuda, Yasuo (Japan)

Introduction

Yasuo Fukuda became prime minister in Sept. 2007 following the resignation of Shinzo Abe. An experienced politician who had served as chief cabinet secretary in two administrations, he came with a reputation as a moderate with a strong base in the ruling party. Shifting away from the nationalistic rhetoric of his predecessors, he favoured stronger ties with Japan's Asian neighbours, notably China. At home he slowed the pace of economic reform in response to a hostile political climate. Lacking support in the upper house of parliament, he saw much of his proposed legislation blocked, prompting his resignation in Sept. 2008.

Early Life

Born on 16 July 1936 in Takasaki, Gunma, Yasuo Fukuda was the eldest son of Takeo Fukuda, a Liberal Democratic (LDP) politician who served as prime minister in the 1970s. After attending Asaba High School in Tokyo, Yasuo Fukuda studied economics at Wasada University. He graduated in 1959 and joined Maruzen Petroleum, where he stayed for the next 17 years. He was posted to the USA from 1962–64.

In 1976, when his father became prime minister, Fukuda became secretary to an LDP member of the Diet, and from 1977–78 worked as his father's political secretary. In Feb. 1990 Fukuda was elected to the Diet as LDP representative for Gunma 4th District. He served as director of the committee on foreign affairs from 1992–99 and as parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs between Aug. 1995–Jan. 1996. In Nov. 1995 he was appointed director of the LDP's foreign affairs division and became the party's deputy secretary general the following year.

Fukuda served as chief cabinet secretary and minister of state for gender equality from 2000–04 under the premiership of Yoshiro Mori, then Junichiro Koizumi. In the turbulence surrounding Koizumi's attempts to force through economic reforms—notably privatization of the postal and savings system—Fukuda gained a reputation as a moderate with the ability to build consensus. He emerged as a dove in foreign policy terms, distancing himself from Koizumi's nationalism and advocating closer ties with China. From 2005 he was involved in constitutional reform and continued his rise within the LDP, being elected to the party's general council in 2006. When Koizumi resigned in 2006, Fukuda was considered a potential successor but chose not to stand. Shinzo Abe became the new party leader and prime minister.

After heavy losses for the LDP in the elections of July 2007, Abe resigned and Fukuda stood against right-winger Taro Aso to replace him as party leader. The selection process was widely seen as a return to old-style Japanese politics, in which leaders of the party factions pledge their support in advance of the open vote. Fukuda campaigned on a platform of stabilizing the party and winning back the trust of the electorate which had been shaken by scandals and economic decline. He announced that he would not visit Tokyo's

controversial Yasukuni shrine for the war dead, a statement intended as a conciliatory gesture to Japan's neighbours. Fukuda won the leadership race decisively but the vote in the Diet to elect a prime minister was split. The lower house elected Fukuda while the upper house, under the control of the opposition Democratic Party (Mt), chose Mt leader Ichiro Ozawa. Under Diet rules, the vote of the lower house prevailed and Fukuda took office on 26 Sept. 2007.

Career Peak

In a bid for stability, Fukuda kept many of his predecessor's ministers in the cabinet. However, with the Diet's upper house controlled by the Democrats, he faced difficulties in implementing his policies. In Nov. 2007, after failing in his attempt to extend Japan's naval mission in the Indian Ocean, he held secret talks with Ozawa on forming a coalition. However, plans were abandoned when they proved unpopular with voters. The ensuing stalemate saw the postponement of proposed tax and pension reforms. His choice for governor of the national bank was also overruled and plans for a new medical scheme for the elderly proved particularly unpopular. Internationally, he promoted stronger relations with regional neighbours and in Dec. 2007 made an official visit to China.

On 11 June 2008 the upper house passed a non-binding censure motion against Fukuda, which the lower house countered the following day. On 1 Sept. 2008 Fukuda resigned his office. He said that he hoped the shock move would end Japan's political deadlock.

Funes Cartagena, Carlos Mauricio (El Salvador)

Introduction

Mauricio Funes took office in June 2009 at the head of the left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) administration, ending 20 years of Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) government.

Early Life

Funes was born on 18 Oct. 1959 in San Salvador. Schooled at the Colegio Centroamérica and the private Colegio Externado San José, he went in 1975 to study literature at the city's José Simón Cañas University.

In 1980 civil war broke out between the authoritarian government and leftist organizations, from which the FMLN was created. Mauricio's older brother was killed by police during a student demonstration. In 1986 Mauricio became a reporter for state television news. In 1997 he became head of news at Canal 12. However, after several run-ins—notably over criticism of the government after a 2001 earthquake—he left the station in 2005.

His public popularity paved the way for a move into politics, where he established a relationship with the FMLN. In Sept. 2007 the party chose him as its presidential candidate, a month before Funes' son was murdered in Paris. Funes is the first FMLN leader not to have fought as a guerrilla. At the presidential elections in March 2009 Funes defeated Rodrigo Ávila of ARENA, winning over 50% of the vote.

Career Peak

Amid claims that an FMLN victory would jeopardize US relations and turn the country into a satellite of Venezuela, Funes declared he would maintain a good relationship with Washington and that El Salvador would remain part of the Central American Free Trade Agreement, signed by ARENA in 2006. Meanwhile, he re-established ties with Cuba, cut off since 1961.

He offered ministerial portfolios to supporters from a range of political backgrounds. His primary challenges have been to address the troubled economy and reduce the large deficit (aided by loans from the IMF and development banks) and to cut crime, while maintaining the co-operation of a congress where the FMLN failed to secure an overall majority of seats at the elections in Jan. 2009 and March 2012. In Nov. 2009 he was also faced with the humanitarian consequences of a hurricane that left about 140 people

dead and thousands homeless. In Sept. 2011 the ongoing problem of crime was highlighted as the US government added El Salvador to a blacklist of countries considered major producers of or transit routes for illegal drugs.

Funes left office at the end of his 5 year term on 1 June 2014 and was succeeded by Salvador Sánchez Cerén.

Galtieri, Leopoldo (Argentina)

Introduction

The commander in chief of the Argentine military at the beginning of the military dictatorship (1976–83), Galtieri headed the rightwing military junta between 1981–82. The instigator of the Falklands War in an attempt to deflect attention from economic crisis and popular protest, the disastrous campaign led to his resignation and subsequent imprisonment in 1986. Later pardoned, he was nonetheless arrested in 1998 and 2002 for murders committed during the Guerra Sucia (Dirty War).

Early Life

Born on 15 July 1926 in Casero, Buenos Aires, Galtieri joined the military in 1943. Graduating from the Escuela de las Américas military school, Panama, in 1949, he progressed to become commander in the Argentine army, a position he held when the 1976 coup replaced Isabelita Perón with a military junta led by Jorge Videla. The dictatorship imposed a repressive regime which included censorship, repression of trade unions and the closing of Congress. The junta implemented the 'Process of National Reorganization' now termed the Dirty War during which an estimated 9,000–30,000 people were killed or disappeared. Initially targeting leftwing activists, the repression was extended to journalists, intellectuals and those suspected of leftwing sympathies. When Videla retired in 1981 he was succeeded by Roberto Viola who, in turn, was replaced in Dec. 1981 by Galtieri as de facto president.

Career Peak

When Galtieri assumed the presidency, Argentina was suffering severe economic depression. Rising inflation and large national debt led to public discontent and popular protests. Despite repression, human rights groups protesting about the Desaparecidos ('disappeared') gained strength. Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo, a group of mothers of the Desaparecidos, set up a weekly vigil outside the presidential palace. To divert attention from domestic problems, in 1982 Galtieri ordered the invasion of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), a British territory since 1832 but long claimed by Argentina. Underestimating the reaction of the British government, the army was ill prepared and under equipped. It occupied the islands in April 1982, but within 3 months had been defeated. Galtieri was forced to resign as president in June 1982. His resignation saw an end to the military dictatorship and a return to civilian rule under the presidency of his successor, Reynaldo Bignone.

Later Life

Repeated attempts were made to bring Galtieri to court for his involvement in the Dirty War. In 1984 he was tried for human rights violations, but acquitted. In 1986 he was jailed for 12 years for his incompetence in the Falklands War, but President Carlos Menem pardoned Galtieri 3 years later, and immunities were extended. In renewed attempts to try those involved in the military dictatorship, Galtieri was arrested in 1998 for the murder of three people. In Nov. 2001 a court ruled the military's immunity granted by the Obediencia Debida law (1986) and the Punto Final law (1987) was unconstitutional. In July 2002 Galtieri was arrested in connection with the torture and death of 20 members of the Montanero leftwing group in 1980. The following day he was moved from jail to be put under house arrest. The arrest of 41 other police and military personnel was ordered. Former junta partner Jorge Videla was convicted of abducting the children of prisoners for adoption by military families.

Galtieri died on 12 Jan. 2003 while under house arrest.

Gamsakhurdia, Zviad (Georgia)

Introduction

In 1991 Zviad Gamsakhurdia became Georgia's first elected president after the collapse of the USSR and the declaration of Georgian independence. A renowned nationalist during the Soviet period, his tenure was marked by erratic behaviour and ardent nationalism, often at the expense of ethnic minorities. He lasted less than 9 months in office before being deposed. He led unsuccessful counter-coups and died in suspicious circumstances in 1993.

Early Life

Zviad Konstantinovich Gamsakhurdia was born in Tbilisi on 31 March 1939. His father, Konstantine, was an acclaimed academic and writer who escaped the Stalinist purges. Gamsakhurdia followed his father's interest in literature and the Georgian cause, establishing a nationalist youth organisation at the age of 16. His distribution of anti-communist writings detailing Soviet human rights abuses led to his arrest in 1956. He studied Western languages and literature at the Tbilisi State University, going on to become a lecturer from 1963–1977 and a professor from 1981–90.

In 1973 he formed the Human Rights Initiative Group with Merab Kostava to defend the rights of political prisoners and to promote the Georgian language and culture. He founded the underground press which published Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* and other dissident writing. Arrested in 1977 and exiled until 1979, he was a nominee for the Nobel peace prize in 1978. He was put under house arrest from 1982–83 during his campaign for the release of the dissident nationalist Merab Kostava. Freed from prison in 1987, Kostava joined forces with Gamsakhurdia in a new Georgian independence and human rights movement. They organised mass protests and were arrested again in 1989.

Career Peak

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Gamsakhurdia was among the dissidents who organised multiparty elections in 1990. He became leader of the electoral bloc Mrgvali Magida–Tavisupali Sakartvelo (Round Table–Free Georgia), winning a majority at the elections of Oct. 1990. In Nov. 1990 he was elected chairman of the supreme council of the Republic of Georgia, which appointed him president in March 1991. National elections in the following May confirmed him as Georgia's first democratically elected president.

Gamsakhurdia actively asserted Georgian independence, and refused to support the wish of Mikhail Gorbachev and, later, Boris Yeltsin that Georgia should join the Commonwealth of Independent States. Gamsakhurdia's fervent nationalism was further reflected in a hostile attitude towards non-ethnic Georgians. In Dec. 1991/Jan. 1992, amid allegations of corruption and civil rights abuses, he was forced from office in a bloody coup and went into exile. Eduard Shevardnadze, Gorbachev's former foreign minister, was named his successor. Gamsakhurdia returned to Georgia to lead an unsuccessful rebellion in 1993. He died on 30 Dec. 1993 in disputed circumstances. His wife, Manana Archvadze-Gamsakhurdia refused to yield his body up for an autopsy, and it has been variously alleged that he was murdered, committed suicide or died of cancer.

Gandhi, Indira (India)

Introduction

The daughter of India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi served for three consecutive terms between 1966–77 and then again from 1980 until her assassination in 1984. She is remembered as a determined politician who imposed a State of Emergency (1975–77), to work through unpopular government policies such as compulsory sterilization and the imprisonment of political opponents.

Early Life

Born in Allahabad on 19 Nov. 1917, Indira was an only child. She received her education at Visva-Bharati University, West Bengal, and then Somerville College, Oxford. Her upbringing brought her into the company of the politicians and leaders of her time, including Mahatma Gandhi.

Her first active involvement in politics came in 1938 when she joined the Indian National Congress Party. In 1942, in defiance of her father, she married Feroze Gandhi who died in 1960. In the same year the British imprisoned her for 13 months. When Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India following independence, Indira Gandhi took on the role of confidante and official hostess to her father.

In 1955 she was elected to the Working Committee and Central Election Committee of the Congress Party, becoming the party's President in 1959. Continuing in her role as adviser to her father, she operated as Minister of Defense during the brief Indo-Chinese border war of 1962.

After the death of her father, the role of Prime Minister went to Lal Bahadur Shastri, who appointed Gandhi Minister for Information. With Shastri's death in 1966 rival factions in the Congress party joined to elect Gandhi as leader, assuming that she would be popular but also easily manipulated.

Career Peak

As prime minister Gandhi made it clear that she would follow her own agenda. Tensions within the party continued and a right-wing opposition was mounted under Moraji Desai, a former Finance Minister. Gandhi won a narrow victory in the fourth general election of 1967 when Desai was appointed deputy prime minister. Her socialistic stance won her popular appeal and in 1971 she won a landslide victory against a coalition of conservative parties. There followed the nationalization of banking and the abolition of pensions for former princely rulers.

Gandhi won a further majority in 1972. This was largely due to her success in the 1971 conflict between India and Pakistan over the territory of East Bengal. The Indian military repelled the invading Pakistani army, paving the way for the territory to become a democratic republic, now known as Bangladesh.

Increasing food shortages, parliamentary corruption and inflation led to civil unrest in the early 70's. In June 1975 she was accused of electoral fraud during the 1971 parliamentary elections. Facing a 6 year ban from political activity, Gandhi declared a state of national emergency on 26 June 1975. During the 21 months which followed tens of thousands were imprisoned and many civil rights were suspended. The compulsory sterilization of fathers with two or more children extended to 8 m. cases. Instituted by minister of health Karan Singh, sterilization targets were set for each region. Failure to meet targets was penalised by holding back on financial aid.

Opposition to this coercive policy found voice in Gandhi's defeat in a free election, called by Gandhi herself, in March 1977. Leading the Janata Party, Moraji Desai became Prime Minister.

In spite of being arrested in Nov. 1977 and briefly imprisoned in Dec. 1978 on charges of corruption, Gandhi's support within the Congress Party grew, creating a split which led to the formation of the Congress (I) Party. Problems within the Janata Party led to its dissolution on 22 Aug. 1979. The following year, Indira Gandhi returned to premiership at the head of her new party.

A rising Sikh secessionist movement in Punjab led to civil unrest and ultimately military action. Gandhi ordered the flushing out of terrorists who had established themselves within the Golden Temple at Amritsar. This resulted in some 400 deaths including that of the Sikh leader Jarnain Singh Bhindranwale.

Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31 Oct. 1984 by two Sikh bodyguards, allegedly as an act of vengeance for the attack on their holy shrine. The outpouring of grief provided the impetus for her son, Rajiv to be elected as leader of the Congress (I) in Dec. the same year.

Gandhi, Mohandas 'Mahatma' (India)

Introduction

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, later to be known as Mahatma (Great Soul), was born on 2 Oct. 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat in India. By the time of his

death in 1948 he had become an international figurehead, leader of the Indian independence movement and the most successful exponent of non-violent protest.

Early Life

Born to Karamchand Gandhi, an uneducated but politically able administrator, and his religiously devout wife Putlibai, there was little in Gandhi's origins to suggest what lay ahead. Brought up in the culture of Vaishnavism and Jainism, he was imbued with beliefs in non-violence, mutual tolerance and fasting. He was a shy and largely unimpressive scholar who found himself married by the age of 13 and subsequently went through a phase of mild delinquency. Despite this unpromising start, he passed the entry exams for the University of Bombay and qualified as a barrister. He arrived in London in Sept. 1888 and became a member of the Inner Temple.

The next 3 years was to be a constructive period during which he became exposed to many new ideas and philosophies including socialism and humanitarianism. It was also around then that he became familiar with the Hindu text *Bhagavadgita*. The idea that material possessions are a burden and that work should be carried out without hope of success or fear of failure influenced him greatly.

Without work when he returned to India, Gandhi took a job with a legal firm in Natal, South Africa where he began his political activities. Having experienced various personal indignities inflicted on account of his race, he was driven to action when in June 1894 the Natal Legislative Assembly proposed to abolish Indian suffrage. Gandhi soon instituted the Natal Indian Congress and began to unite and organize disparate elements of the Indian community. In response to a proposed Indian registration scheme in 1906 he encouraged the community to ignore the ordinance. By 1913 large numbers of Indians had been imprisoned, flogged and shot but the South African government was eventually shamed into a compromise.

Career Peak

Gandhi returned to India in 1914. In 1919 the British tried to pass the Rowlatt Bills which provided for imprisonment without trial for anyone suspected of sedition. Gandhi's efforts for peaceful protest were soon overcome by violence, culminating in the Amritsar massacre when soldiers under British command killed almost 400 Indians. Gandhi called off his action but a lack of British remorse after the Amritsar incident allied with anger at the peace agreement struck with Muslim Turkey after World War I brought him swiftly back to the forefront.

1920 saw him restructuring and reforming the previously pedestrian Indian National Congress. He also embarked on a programme of non-violent non-cooperation during which British goods and British-run institutions were boycotted. Thousands of Indians endured subsequent imprisonment but spiralling violence once again disheartened Gandhi and he called the protest off. In 1922 he was himself imprisoned for sedition, serving 2 years of a 6 year sentence. His re-emergence on to the political scene in 1924 found the Congress Party undermined by internal conflict and Muslim-Hindu violence rife in society at large. He embarked on the first of his 14 hunger-strikes in an attempt to inspire non-violence.

Anglo-Indian relations remained strained over the following years and a lack of movement on the British side prompted Gandhi to appear at the 1928 Calcutta Conference to threaten a full-scale call for independence unless India was granted dominion status by the end of 1929. In 1930 he called another campaign of civil disobedience to protest against salt taxes. By the end of the year, he and 100,000 other Indians had been imprisoned.

After being freed in 1930, a truce was reached and he was encouraged by an invitation to the 2nd Round Table Conference to be held in London. However, the conference offered nationalists little hope. Meanwhile, Lord Willingdon had been appointed Viceroy of India. He set about the most aggressive oppression of the nationalist movement yet witnessed. Gandhi was in and out of prison during the next phase of the struggle and it was whilst in jail in Sept. 1932 that he began another hunger-strike. It was in response to new laws further segregating the *untouchables*, effectively the lowliest class in society characterized by their low caste and by certain professions and lifestyles. Gandhi struggled for many years for their emancipation and renamed them Harijans, or the Children of God.

By 1934 Gandhi's disillusionment with the political manoeuvring of the Congress Party led to his resignation. He set out on a scheme to boost rural areas, principally by improving education and encouraging small scale industry. His discontent with British rule continued and he called for immediate British withdrawal from India in 1942. The British response, influenced by

the fluctuating circumstances of World War II, was prompt and harsh and included the imprisonment of the entire Congress Party leadership. Anglo-Indian relations thawed with the arrival of the Labour government in 1945 and in 1947 the Mountbatten Plan (formulated by Louis Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, who was the last Viceroy and first Governor-General of India) was approved. Hindu and Muslim fighting provided a backdrop to the final stages of the constitutional negotiations but nonetheless the plan paved the way for the dominions of India and Pakistan to be created in Aug. 1947. For Gandhi, though, independence had come at a price; the Indian people were disunited.

Later Life

Gandhi had spent his life mediating between opposing forces: Indians and English, conservatives and radicals, rural and urban populations and members of different classes, castes and religions. The final months of his life were spent trying to heal the wounds between Hindus and Muslims. On 30 Jan. 1948 he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu fundamentalist. Gandhi himself once wrote that 'a life of sacrifice is the pinnacle of art, and is full of true joy'.

Gandhi, Rajiv (India)

Introduction

Rajiv Gandhi came to power following the assassination of his mother, Indira Gandhi, the preceding Prime Minister of India. Reluctantly drawn into the political sphere, the changes he made during his tenure did little to alleviate India's growing economic difficulties. The youngest Prime Minister to have ruled India, his initial appeal as a charming and ingenuous young man had changed, by the end of his government, into alienation towards an aloof political figure. Defeated in parliamentary elections in 1989, he set about revising his political agenda for a return to power. During the 1991 election campaign, however, he was killed in a bomb attack by Tamil Separatist sympathisers.

Early Life

The eldest of two sons, Rajiv was born on 20 Aug. 1944. He was educated at Doon School, Dehradun, before studying at Imperial College, London and then Trinity College, Cambridge. He failed to achieve a degree and returned to India to pursue a career as a commercial pilot, joining the Indian Airlines training course in Hyderabad in 1967.

Married in 1968 to Sonia Maino whom he had met at Cambridge, Gandhi had no interest in the political world. His brother, Sanjay, had followed their mother into politics, playing an important role during the State of Emergency (1975–77). Sanjay's death on 23 June 1980 deprived Indira Gandhi of her heir to the Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty and to the Congress Party leadership. More for filial than political reasons, Rajiv left his career as a pilot to pursue politics.

Rajiv Gandhi joined the Congress (I) Party on 11 May 1981. Winning a seat for his late brother's constituency in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, he became a member of the Lok Sabha (House of the People) in Aug. of the same year. Rising within the party, on 3 Feb. 1983, Gandhi was appointed General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC). On 31 Oct. 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards. The following day, Rajiv was sworn in as Congress leader and Prime Minister. In parliamentary elections held in Dec., Indira Gandhi's martyrdom in the eyes of the nation supplied the impetus behind a landslide victory (401 out of 508) for the Congress Party.

Career Peak

In office, Gandhi immediately instituted a number of reforms, seeking to speed up administrative processes in all areas of government. He invested heavily in research and higher education, believing that expenditure in science and technology would lead to the development of successful strategies for dealing with poverty and illiteracy. These schemes were later lambasted as ineffective and out of touch.

On a grass roots level, he established various missions to increase adult literacy levels and primary school education. In line with this he revived the

Panchayati Raj. This scheme, which had lain dormant since the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, provided largely autonomous local government for rural areas, with a third of the seats reserved for women.

Gandhi's foreign policy was essentially one of co-operation and liberalised investment. On a global level, he advocated the total disarmament of nuclear weapons, presenting in 1988 an Action Plan before the UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament.

Problems closer to home proved more complex. Gandhi had arrived in power amidst secessionist unrest in the states of Punjab, Assam and Mizoram. He subsequently signed accords (1985–86) with leaders from each state to arrest insurgency with varying degrees of success (the Punjab accord resulted in the extremist assassination of Harachan Singh Longowal with whom Gandhi had signed the accord).

In spite of signing the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Agreement in 1987 to resolve the Tamil-Sinhalese ethnic crisis, the deployment of Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) in 1987 led to armed conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Between 1987–89 the struggle resulted in the deaths of some 1500 Indian soldiers.

Gandhi took a direct approach to the Indo-Chinese border question, regarding it as integral to resolving tensions. His visit to China in 1988 was the first made by an Indian Prime Minister in over 20 years. A series of high-level talks throughout the 5 day visit produced the Joint Working Group (JWG), to find a resolution to the border dispute.

Corruption undermined electoral confidence in 1987, when Gandhi was accused of involvement in the US\$1.3 bn. Bofors Swedish arms deal which saw millions of dollars paid in kickbacks to Indian government officials.

With the loss of public confidence in the Congress Party and its leader, Gandhi resigned his post as Prime Minister on 2 Dec. 1989.

Later Life

Retaining his role as Congress Leader and becoming the Leader of the Opposition against new Prime Minister, V. P. Singh and his National Front Party, Gandhi was assassinated in Sriperumbudur on 21 May 1991. In 1998, 26 people were convicted of conspiring his death, 3 of whom were sentenced to death. The act was seen as a revenge killing for Gandhi's handling of the Indo-Sri Lankan crisis and the violence which entailed with Tamil Separatist groups.

His wife, Sonia Gandhi, became leader of the Congress Party in March 1998.

García, Alan (Peru)

Introduction

Head of the Peruvian Aprista Party (PAP; formerly known as the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance/APRA), Alan García served two separate terms as Peru's president. His first term in office, from 1985–90, was marked by hyperinflation and a rising national debt as he tried to invigorate the economy through spending. After a period of exile García returned to Peru in 2001 and won the 2006 presidential election, promising to fight poverty whilst pursuing more orthodox economic policies.

Early Life

Born on 23 May 1949 in Lima, García was raised in a family with strong ties to the APRA party. His father, Carlos García Ronceros, served as party secretary and was imprisoned during García's childhood for political militancy. García was educated at the Colegio Nacional José María Eguren in Lima and the Pontificia Universidad Católica, before completing a law degree at the National University of San Marcos in 1971. He pursued further studies in Europe, obtaining a doctorate in political science from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid and a degree in sociology from the University of Paris. In 1978, when civilian government was restored in Peru after a 10 year period of military rule, García returned to build a political career with APRA.

García won the April 1985 presidential election on a platform of alleviating poverty and implementing social justice. After his inauguration on 28 July 1985, he launched ambitious public spending programmes to combat the poverty rate of 41.6%. His government printed money to finance the

policies, resulting in soaring inflation. The unit of currency, the sol, was replaced by the inti in 1985 at a rate of 1,000 intis to 1 sol but inflation continued to rise, reaching a rate of more than 2 m. percent by 1991. García won some initial popularity at home by announcing that only 10% of Peru's export earnings would be devoted to debt repayments and by attempting to nationalize the banks in 1987. However, these policies alienated the IMF and international financial markets and added to the economic turmoil.

Insurgent groups, notably the Shining Path, carried out campaigns of political violence that were put down by government forces. The army was accused of human rights abuses, notably at Accomarco in Aug. 1985 and at Cayara in May 1988. By 1990 the numbers of people living in poverty had risen to 55%, per capita income had fallen to US\$720 and the country had a deficit of US\$900 m. After losing the 1990 election to Alberto Fujimori, García faced allegations of corruption and left Peru under the threat of criminal charges. He lived for the next 8 years in Colombia and France, returning in 2001 after Peru's Supreme Court ruled that any charges dating from his time in office had lapsed under the Statute of Limitations.

He fought the 2001 presidential election for APRA, losing narrowly to Alejandro Toledo of the Peru Possible party. From 2001–05 he was leader of the opposition. In the 2006 presidential election García fought a vigorous campaign, claiming that he had learned from past mistakes and would build international trade partnerships. He also exploited unease over the close connections between his main opponent, Ollanta Humala of the left-wing Union for Peru party, and Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. In the second round of voting on 4 June 2006 Humala conceded and García was voted in as president for the second time.

Career Peak

García signalled his willingness to work within prevailing economic orthodoxies by appointing a banker, Luis Carranza, as economic and finance minister, and renewing an aid package with the IMF. He accepted a free trade agreement with the USA and in Nov. 2006 signed 12 commercial agreements with Brazil. Also in late 2006 he allocated 968 m. nuevos soles (US\$300 m.) to aid the poor. At the same time, he provoked protests from trade unions by announcing salary cuts for many state employees.

In April 2007 Congress agreed to give his government powers to legislate by decree in pursuit of its popular tough line against drug trafficking and organized crime. However, the failure of his economic policies to spread the benefits of growth more widely provoked violent demonstrations in July. In a speech marking the end of his first year in office, García asked Peruvians to show patience, promising that increased investment would reduce poverty before the end of his term. In 2008, despite an improvement in the economy and a high rate of growth, his popularity declined. By Oct., when he was obliged to replace members of the cabinet over a corruption scandal involving bribes for oil-exploration contracts, his approval rating among voters had fallen to only 20%.

His government was also criticized by environmental and human rights campaigners over plans to open up more Amazon forest territory to foreign energy companies. In June 2009 land ownership laws to this effect provoked violent demonstrations by indigenous groups in the area. Although the controversial decrees were subsequently repealed, this episode—along with a sharp decline in the economy in 2009–10 in the wake of the global downturn—contributed to a further steep fall in García's popularity. This was, however, of limited political significance since he was ineligible under the constitution to stand for a second consecutive term in the presidential elections on 10 April 2011 and was scheduled to leave office on 28 July. He was succeeded by Ollanta Moisés Humala Tasso.

In late 2009 relations with Chile were strained by Chilean military activity near the two countries' disputed border and by accusations against a Peruvian officer of spying for the Chilean military.

Garibashvili, Irakli (Georgia)

Introduction

Irakli Garibashvili took office as the prime minister on 20 Nov. 2013. A protégé of his predecessor, billionaire businessman Bidzina Ivanishvili, Garibashvili was the world's youngest elected leader at the time of his appointment.

Early Life

Born on 28 June 1982 in Tbilisi, Garibashvili earned a master's in international relations from Tbilisi State University in 2005. A year earlier he had begun working with Ivanishvili in several of the billionaire's organizations. Standing for the Georgian Dream–Democratic Georgia coalition (Georgian Dream having been launched by Ivanishvili in 2011), Garibashvili was elected to parliament in Oct. 2012 and was appointed interior minister in Ivanishvili's first cabinet. Ivanishvili stepped down after the Oct. 2013 presidential election, which saw a landslide victory for his party's candidate, Giorgi Margvelashvili. Ivanishvili's nomination of Garibashvili as his successor as premier was ratified by parliament in Nov. Garibashvili was also selected as Georgian Dream's leader.

Career Peak

Garibashvili rejected allegations that he was a pawn through which Ivanishvili would continue to exercise power. His first cabinet's composition was interpreted as a conciliatory gesture towards Russia, particularly with respect to the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, his desire for better relations with Moscow sat uneasily with his aim of greater integration with the European Union. Although Georgia signed a trade partnership agreement with the EU in June 2014, Garibashvili dismissed the pro-Western defence minister Irakli Alasania in Nov. that year, which prompted a political crisis within the ruling coalition. In May 2015, following a series of ministerial resignations, Garibashvili nominated a new government. Most key posts were unchanged, although Tinatin Khidasheli, a pro-Western deputy, became the country's first female defence minister. Further changes in Aug.–Sept. saw the appointment of new interior and foreign ministers.

In March 2015 the government denounced an alliance and integration treaty between Russia and South Ossetia as a move by Moscow to annex Georgian territory.

Garibashvili resigned as prime minister in Dec. 2015 after polls suggested a steep decline in popularity for the coalition government and his Georgian Dream party. He was succeeded in the post by incumbent foreign affairs minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili.

Gašparovič, Ivan (Slovakia)

Introduction

Shortly before Slovakia became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004, a respected lawyer, Ivan Gašparovič, was elected as the country's president. Instrumental in drawing up Slovakia's constitution prior to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, he was also a close ally of the controversial nationalist former prime minister, Vladimír Mečiar, the man he beat in the second round of the presidential election. He was re-elected in April 2009.

Early Life

Ivan Gašparovič was born in Poltár, near Lučenec in southern Slovakia on 27 March 1941. His father, Vladimír Gašparovič, had migrated to the region from Rijeka, Croatia at the end of the First World War. The family moved to Bratislava, where Vladimír worked as a teacher in a secondary school. Having studied at the Law Faculty of the Komenský University in Bratislava from 1959–64, Ivan Gašparovič worked in the district prosecutor's office of Bratislava's Martin district (1965–66), and then became a prosecutor at the municipal prosecutor's office. In early 1968 he joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and actively supported the reforms of Alexander Dubček, the party's Slovak first secretary. Under Dubček, in what became known as the Prague Spring, democratization went further than in any other Communist state—press censorship was reduced and Slovakia was granted political autonomy. However, opposition grew swiftly in the USSR and in other Warsaw Pact states which invaded Czechoslovakia on the night of 20 Aug. 1968. The following year Dubček was replaced by Gustáv Husák, who spearheaded a 'normalization' policy that turned Czechoslovakia into one of Central Europe's most repressive states.

Gašparovič left the Communist Party after the events of 1968 and began work as a teacher at the law faculty at the Komenský University. He remained

there until 1990 when he became the vice chancellor in Feb. of that year, 2 months after the ‘Velvet Revolution’ had swept aside the Communists. Václav Havel, the playwright and former dissident who was elected federal president in Dec. 1989, nominated Gašparovič as prosecutor-general of Czechoslovakia. He moved to Prague and took up the post in July 1990, as the new government began to tackle the legacy of communism—a moribund economy, high unemployment and widespread social discontent. Under the 1968 constitution Czechoslovakia was a federal republic—each republic had a council and an assembly, but the federal government dealt with defence and foreign affairs. Arguments over the nature of the federation broke out and in 1991 Vladimír Mečiar formed the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). Gašparovič returned to Bratislava to teach at the Komenský University and joined the HZDS in 1992. Mečiar led the party to victory in the June 1992 elections, and Gašparovič became an HZDS member of the Slovak parliament. In late 1992 he was one of the authors of the constitution of Slovakia, which came into effect on 1 Jan. 1993 when the republic formally declared its independence.

Gašparovič was speaker of the Slovak parliament until Oct. 1998 and a close ally of Prime Minister Mečiar, whose controversial policies in the mid-1990s included stripping away the rights of the country’s large Hungarian community and clamping down on the media. Slovakia became increasingly isolated from Western Europe until Mečiar’s nationalist government was defeated in Sept. 1998 by an alliance of liberals, centrists, left-wingers and ethnic Hungarians. Mikuláš Dzurinda became prime minister and steered Slovakia through various reforms required for EU and NATO membership. From Oct. 1998–July 2002, when the HZDS was in opposition, Gašparovič was a member of the parliamentary committee for the supervision of the SIS (the Slovak equivalent of the US Central Intelligence Agency).

In July 2002 Gašparovič and others left the HZDS after being struck off the list of candidates for the parliamentary elections in Sept. The HZDS went on to poll only 3.3% of the vote, not enough to win any seats. Gašparovič returned to Komenský University, but also established a new political party called the Movement for Democracy (HZD). In April 2004 he ran for president against Mečiar, who was attempting to make a comeback after losing the 2002 legislative elections. Although Mečiar won more votes in the first round, he failed to win a majority. In the second round, Gašparovič secured nearly 60% of the vote with the support of the eliminated candidates.

Career Peak

Ivan Gašparovič succeeded Rudolf Schuster as president of the Slovak Republic on 15 June 2004 and began a 5 year term of office. Following elections to the National Council in June 2006, Gašparovič asked Robert Fico, the leader of the social democratic Direction Party, to form a new coalition government in place of Mikuláš Dzurinda’s SDKÚ-led administration. Gašparovič secured a second term as president in April 2009, winning 55.5% of the vote in a second round run-off. Following further parliamentary elections in June 2010, the Direction Party remained the largest single party but Fico was unable to form a new coalition cabinet. Gašparovič instead turned to Iveta Radičová of the SDKÚ–DS, who took over as prime minister at the head of a four-party centre-right government in July.

In March 2010 Gašparovič vetoed a controversial nationalist law intended to instil patriotism by compulsory weekly national anthem-playing in state schools.

In Oct. 2011 the government was defeated in a parliamentary confidence vote but reappointed in a caretaker capacity. At elections in March 2012 the Direction–Social Democracy party won a majority and its leader, Robert Fico, became prime minister again.

Gašparovič was ineligible to stand again for the presidential elections in March 2014 and was succeeded by Andrej Kiska in June.

Gauck, Joachim (Germany)

Introduction

Joachim Gauck was elected president on 18 March 2012. His appointment alongside Chancellor Angela Merkel meant that the two most senior positions in government were held by East Germans for the first time since reunification. Gauck is best known as a pro-democracy activist who has

exposed crimes committed by the secret police (the Stasi) in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR).

Early Life

Gauck was born on 24 Jan. 1940 in the town of Rostock. In 1951 his father was arrested by Soviet forces on charges of espionage and served 3 years in a Soviet prison, an event that moulded Joachim’s political beliefs.

Gauck refused to join the communist Free German Youth movement and was denied the opportunity of becoming a journalist. Instead, he studied theology and became a Lutheran pastor, a position which brought him into conflict with the ruling communist regime and to the attention of the Stasi.

In 1989 Gauck became spokesman for the New Forum, a pro-democratic opposition movement, taking part in the series of peaceful demonstrations that led the way to the regime’s collapse. After the dissolution of the GDR in Oct. 1990, the new federal government appointed him as a special representative to research the Stasi archives. In this role, which he held until 2000, he investigated crimes perpetrated by the secret police in the period of communist rule.

Gauck ran for the presidency in 2010 backed by the opposition Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Greens. He was narrowly defeated by the governing coalition candidate, Christian Wulff, after three parliamentary ballots. When Wulff resigned in Feb. 2012 in the wake of a corruption scandal, Gauck was again put forward by the SPD and Greens and this time gained the support of Merkel’s coalition. He faced one opponent, ‘Nazi hunter’ Beate Klarsfeld, who was proposed by the Left Party. In a vote by the Federal Assembly on 18 March, Gauck took 991 votes against 126 for Klarsfeld, with 108 abstentions.

Career Peak

A charismatic and popular figure, Gauck’s election was seen by some commentators as threatening the authority of Chancellor Merkel, who had opposed his initial candidacy in 2010. He has controversially called for a more vigorous German approach to, and involvement in, international diplomacy.

In June 2016 Gauck announced that he would not seek a second mandate. In Feb. 2017 Frank-Walter Steinmeier was elected to succeed him. Gauck left office on 18 March 2017.

Gayoom, Maumoon Abdul (Maldives)

Introduction

In power as president of the Maldives from 1978–2008, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom was Asia’s longest-serving leader. Gayoom had succeeded Ibrahim Nasir, who served from 1954 and was the premier when the Maldives became independent in 1965. He was re-elected by referendum for a sixth consecutive 5 year term in office in Oct. 2003 but lost out to Mohamed Nasheed in the presidential election of Oct. 2008. During Gayoom’s tenure he developed industry, especially the main sectors of fishing and tourism, attracted investment and improved healthcare. But strict censorship and the suppression of opposition led to international concern.

Early Life

Gayoom was born on 29 Dec. 1937 in Malé where he received his early schooling. After studying in Sri Lanka and Cairo, Egypt, he completed a degree in Islamic studies at the Al-Azhar University, Cairo. He subsequently taught in Nigeria and Malé. He began working for the government in 1972 when he was employed in the shipping department. 2 years later he was appointed under-secretary in the prime minister’s office before serving a year in Colombo as deputy ambassador to Sri Lanka. After representing the Maldives in the UN from 1976–77, he was made transport minister under Nasir’s presidency. When Nasir resigned in 1978, Gayoom was chosen as president, a parliamentary decision ratified by a referendum in which 92.9% supported the appointment.

Career Peak

Gayoom invested in the nascent tourist industry which overtook fishing as the country's chief revenue earner (despite tourism being strictly controlled in an attempt to protect the Maldives' environment and to preserve its culture). As an archipelago of low-lying islands, the Maldives is threatened by the rising sea level caused by global warming. In 1989 Gayoom hosted an international environment conference.

The country's relative stability during Gayoom's rule was one factor in the attraction of foreign investment. He also invested in the country's health care and aimed to reduce the economic disparity between people living in the capital and those on the outer islands. However, Gayoom led an oligarchic government which maintained strict control, most notably through media censorship and intolerance of any criticism of the government. He survived attempted coups in 1980, 1983 and most notably in 1988 when help from Indian troops was needed to suppress a rising supported by Sri Lankan mercenaries.

On the international front, Gayoom tried to improve relations with India. He was a founder member of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) in 1985. In 1996 a Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, under presidential control, was established to provide advice on matters related to Islam. In 1980 Gayoom established a Citizens' Majlis (Parliament) and, after 17 years of deliberation, it produced guidelines for a new constitution which became operational in Jan. 1998. It extended ministers' executive powers and increased the size of the Majlis. It also allowed self-nomination for presidency while stipulating that the candidate be a male Sunni Muslim over 35.

In Oct. 2003 Gayoom was re-elected for a sixth term with 90% of the vote in a referendum. In June 2005 the Majlis voted unanimously to introduce multiparty politics, and several opposition figures imprisoned for alleged criminal activities were subsequently pardoned and released. A national referendum in Aug. 2007 supported a proposal for a presidential rather than parliamentary system of government in a vote seen as an endorsement of Gayoom despite opposition claims of rigging. The following month 12 tourists were injured in Malé in the country's first bomb incident.

Oct. 2008 saw the Maldives' first free multi-party presidential election. Gayoom, standing for the Dhivehi Rayyithunge Party, was defeated by Ibrahim Nasir of the Maldivian Democratic Party. Nasir was sworn into office in early Nov. Gayoom remained the leader of his party.

Gbagbo, Laurent (Côte d'Ivoire)

Introduction

Laurent Gbagbo took over the presidency in Oct. 2000, succeeding Robert Guéï who had been forced into exile after claiming victory in a disputed presidential election. Gbagbo subsequently oversaw a long period of political and economic instability and fighting between the rebel, largely Muslim, north of the country and the government-controlled and mainly Christian south before a more enduring power-sharing agreement was concluded in March 2007. Following delayed presidential elections held in Oct.–Nov. 2010, Gbagbo refused to concede defeat to opposition leader Alassane Ouattara despite mounting international pressure. Following a short period of conflict, Gbagbo was arrested in April 2011. In Nov. he was extradited to the International Criminal Court to face charges of crimes against humanity.

Early Life

Gbagbo was born on 31 May 1945 in Gagnoa in the mid-west of the country. He graduated in history and was jailed in the early 1970s for subversive teaching. Increasingly involved in trade union politics, he was a critic of the regime of Félix Houphouët-Boigny who had been in power since 1960.

In the 1980s Gbagbo went into exile in France, from where he established the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) and developed a nationalist agenda. Gbagbo returned to the country in 1988 and 2 years later Houphouët-Boigny agreed to multi-party elections. In 1993 Houphouët-Boigny was succeeded by Henri Konan Bédié, who remained in power until 1999, when he was deposed by Gen. Robert Guéï in a military coup.

Guéï announced new presidential elections in which he excluded anyone unable to prove 'pure' Ivorian heritage from running. This removed 15 candidates, including Ouattara of the Rally of the Republicans (RDR), which had widespread support in the Muslim north. Guéï claimed victory although Gbagbo was widely believed to have polled most votes. Popular protests forced Guéï to resign and Gbagbo assumed the presidency on 26 Oct. 2000.

Career Peak

Ouattara immediately urged Gbagbo to call new elections, but Gbagbo refused. Fighting broke out between Ouattara's Muslim supporters in the north and Gbagbo's Christian supporters in the south. In parliamentary elections held at the end of 2000, the FPI emerged as the largest party, although only one third of those eligible voted. In Jan. 2001 Gbagbo survived an attempted coup.

As well as increasing ethnic friction, he was confronted by an economy suffering from a decline in the global cocoa market (Côte d'Ivoire being the world's largest producer of cocoa). Also, his broad nationalist position led him to announce a ban on foreign ownership of property, causing unease among the country's immigrants making up around 30% of the population.

Gbagbo's human rights record received widespread criticism. Leading opposition politicians were arrested on disputed charges, and from 2001 the US embassy and Amnesty International voiced concerns over arbitrary detention and mistreatment. Alleged use of child slave labour further tarnished Gbagbo's regime. Côte d'Ivoire consequently suffered cuts in international aid, with the UN refusing to resume assistance until a domestic reconciliation process was in place.

In Sept. 2002 fighting erupted in Abidjan when 700 troops, believed to be loyal to Guéï, mutinied. Guéï was killed by government forces. ECOWAS agreed to broker negotiations between the government and the rebel factions and a short-lived ceasefire was signed in Oct. In Jan. 2003 the French authorities brokered another ceasefire and a power-sharing agreement to end the civil war (despite violent anti-French protests in Abidjan by pro-government supporters). Under the agreement Gbagbo would remain president, with a prime minister approved by consensus serving until elections scheduled for 2005. However, little progress was made in disarming militia forces or implementing political reform before a serious resurgence of conflict in Nov. 2004.

Following an attack by government forces across the ceasefire line against the rebels and on French peacekeeping troops, the French military retaliated by destroying the Ivorian air force, provoking more rioting by pro-government supporters in Abidjan. Further attempts at reconciliation, brokered by South Africa, resulted in a new agreement in April 2005 to revitalize power sharing, but it remained fragile and elections scheduled firstly for late 2005 and then for Oct. 2006 were postponed. In Nov. 2006 the UN Security Council extended Gbagbo's presidential mandate.

In March 2007 Gbagbo agreed a further power-sharing deal in an attempt to unify the country, under which the FN rebel leader, Guillaume Soro, became prime minister in a new administration. Nevertheless, the threat of further violence remained (Soro survived a rocket attack on his plane in June 2007) and presidential elections were postponed several times owing to security concerns and to problems over who is qualified to vote and the validity of identity cards. In Oct. 2008 the UN extended its arms embargo and sanctions on Côte d'Ivoire's diamond trade, but agreed to review the embargo once presidential elections had been held.

The elections were eventually staged over two rounds in Oct. and Nov. 2010 but only led to renewed turmoil. Gbagbo refused to cede power to Ouattara, the other main candidate, after the latter won the run-off with 54.1% of the vote according to the Election Commission. Instead, Gbagbo was declared the winner by the Constitutional Council which had rejected some results as fraudulent. Ouattara's victory was nevertheless endorsed by the United Nations, USA, European Union, African Union and ECOWAS.

After several months of conflict, Gbagbo was placed under house arrest by Ouattara's forces on 11 April 2011.

Later Life

In Oct. 2011 the International Criminal Court formally issued an arrest warrant for Gbagbo on four charges against humanity, including murder and rape, in the period 16 Dec. 2010–12 April 2011. He was subsequently transferred to the Netherlands and on 5 Dec. 2011 Gbagbo became the first present or former head of state to appear at the ICC in The Hague. The court was expected to announce in June 2012 whether the case will proceed to trial. However, the hearing was postponed indefinitely in Aug. 2012 following concerns over Gbagbo's health.

In Nov. 2012 the ICC stated that Gbagbo was fit to stand trial. He has denied responsibility for the violence. The trial is set to begin in Nov. 2015.

Gemayel, Amin (Lebanon)

Introduction

Amin Gemayel became state president on 23 Sept. 1982. His younger brother Bashir, the leader of the Christian Maronite Phalangist militia, had been elected unopposed by the National Assembly the previous month but was assassinated on 14 Sept. Although more moderate than his brother, and generally more acceptable to the Muslim population, Amin Gemayel proved no more successful than his predecessors in securing agreement between Lebanon's warring groups.

Early Life

He was born in Bikfaya, northeast of Beirut, on 22 Jan. 1942, the son of Pierre Gemayel who founded the Phalangist Party. He trained as a lawyer. More active in the political rather than the military sphere, he oversaw the Phalangist Party's business interests while his brother led the party militia. He also co-founded a right-wing French language newspaper, *Le Réveil*. Gemayel was elected to the National Assembly in 1970 and later fought in the 1975–76 civil war.

Career Peak

Following his brother's death in a bomb explosion, Gemayel was elected president by the Assembly. He received initial expressions of support from Sunni and Shia Muslim leaders, having maintained contacts with them in the period after the civil war, and from Arab leaders, notably the president of Syria. However, although Gemayel showed himself to be conciliatory towards the other religious groups, he was unable to assert any real authority over a country largely under Syrian and Israeli occupation, divided by sectarian and factional rivalries and terrorism, and in accelerating economic decline. Constitutionally, no progress was made in revising the 1943 power-sharing agreement to balance the Christian ascendancy with the Muslim numerical preponderance. Gemayel's 6 year-term of office ended on 23 Sept. 1988, with the National Assembly deadlocked over the election of a successor. His final act as president was the appointment of an interim military government headed by a Maronite Christian general, Michel Aoun. This was rejected by Lebanese Muslims and the Syrians. The country was essentially divided between a Christian government based in east Beirut and a Muslim administration in west Beirut, in turn leading to two further years of conflict. Having left office, Gemayel spent the next 12 years in France before returning to Lebanon in July 2000.

Gentiloni, Paolo (Italy)

Introduction

Paolo Gentiloni became prime minister on 12 Dec. 2016, following the resignation of Matteo Renzi (who had in turn succeeded Enrico Letta in Feb. 2014). A former journalist, Gentiloni entered national politics in 2001 and served in several subsequent centre-left coalitions. However, following elections in March 2018 that resulted in a hung parliament and advances by anti-establishment populist parties, Gentiloni assumed a caretaker role as premier.

Early Life

Paolo Gentiloni was born in Rome on 22 Nov. 1954. After graduating in political science from the Sapienza University of Rome, he worked in journalism, including as editor of an Italian environmental magazine. In 1993 he became a spokesman for the Federation of Greens.

Gentiloni entered parliament at the 2001 general election, representing the centre-left 'The Daisy' list. Then, as a founding member of Democracy is

Freedom—The Daisy in 2002, he served as the party's communications spokesman for the next 5 years. Re-elected in 2006, he was part of the Olive Tree coalition led by Romano Prodi. He served as minister for communications for 2 years and was a founding committee member of the Democratic Party (PD), which was formed in 2007 from the merger of the Democrats of the Left and The Daisy.

Gentiloni retained his seat in the 2008 election and served in opposition to a centre-right coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi. Again re-elected in 2013, he was part of the 'Italy, Common Good' centre-left coalition. The new premier and leader of the PD, Matteo Renzi, appointed Gentiloni minister of foreign affairs in Oct. 2014.

Shortly after Renzi resigned in Dec. 2016, Gentiloni was asked by President Sergio Mattarella to form a new government and was sworn in as prime minister.

Career Peak

Gentiloni's challenges included stabilizing the banking sector against the backdrop of Italy's huge public debt level and countering illegal immigration from North Africa across the Mediterranean Sea. However, he also faced a growing electoral threat from populist movements that heralded the downfall of his government following the March 2018 legislative elections. After a 3 month political deadlock that followed the elections, the League and the Five Star Movement managed to form a coalition government under Giuseppe Conte. On 1 June 2018 Conte was confirmed by President Sergio Mattarella and replaced Gentiloni as prime minister.

Gheorghiu-Dej, Gheorghe (Romania)

Introduction

Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej led Romania, under various titles, from 1952–65. With Soviet backing, he was instrumental in removing the monarchy and establishing the communist People's Republic of Romania. Initially an ardent Stalinist, his relationship with the USSR deteriorated after Nikita Khrushchev came to power. Gheorghiu-Dej then pursued a more independent line and sought warmer relations with the West.

Early Life

Gheorghiu-Dej was born Gheorghe Gheorghiu on 8 Nov. 1901 in Bârlad, Romania. He became politically active after World War I, joining the outlawed Romanian Communist Party in 1930 while working on the tramways. He was involved in the 1933 Grivita rail strike and as a result was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. He took the name Dej as this was the location of his jail. In 1936, though still in prison, he was elected to the party's Central Committee. He escaped in Aug. 1944, participated in the uprising that saw Romania join the Allies against Germany and became General Secretary of the Communist Party, which changed its name to the Romanian Workers' Party in 1948.

Assisted by the occupying Soviet forces, the communists dominated government and Gheorghiu-Dej held a succession of finance posts between 1946–52. He assisted in the establishment of the securitate, the widely feared secret police force. Leading a purge of political rivals in 1952, he became Prime Minister the same year. He resigned the premiership 3 years later but in 1961 became President of the Council of State.

Career Peak

During his early years Gheorghiu-Dej followed Stalinist doctrine and embarked on major programmes of industrialization and agricultural collectivization. He exerted almost complete control over education and culture and made Russian the country's second language. When Khrushchev came to power and positioned himself against Stalinist excesses, Gheorghiu-Dej was put on the defensive. Relations with the Soviet Union declined further when Moscow proposed that Romania should slow its industrial growth and serve as a feeder state, providing resources to other Eastern Bloc states.

Khrushchev, believing he could rely on Gheorghiu-Dej's support, withdrew Soviet troops from Romania in 1958. From the early-1960s onwards, Gheorghiu-Dej asserted greater independence. In the face of Eastern Bloc

opposition he hastened Romania's industrial growth and promoted the consumer goods sector. He lifted some restrictions on freedom of expression, released several thousand political prisoners and improved welfare provisions. Gheorghiu-Dej sought closer ties and increased trade with non-communist countries and pursued friendship with China, despite growing Soviet–Chinese conflict. Gheorghiu-Dej died of lung cancer in Bucharest on 19 March 1965 and was succeeded by Nicolae Ceaușescu.

Ghimpu, Mihai (Moldova)

Introduction

Mihai Ghimpu was appointed acting president in Sept. 2009 by the newly-installed pro-Western coalition government. A leading figure in the former Soviet Republic's independence movement, he once supported unification with Romania.

Early Life

Mihai Ghimpu was born in Colonița, Chișinău county, in the Moldavian SSR on 19 Nov. 1951. He attended secondary school in Chișinău, followed by military service in the Soviet army. He graduated in law in 1978 from Moldova State University and became a legal adviser to various state enterprises. In the era of *glasnost* ('openness') Ghimpu became a leading figure in the democratic movement. He co-founded the Popular Front of Moldova (FPM) in May 1989 with a manifesto calling for independence and for Moldovan (with a Romanized script) to be the official language.

In 1990 Ghimpu won a seat for the FPM in Moldova's Supreme Soviet. With 27% of elected members the party broke the Communist monopoly. Independence followed on 27 Aug. 1991. The FPM subsequently suffered from internal disputes and support for a proposed union with Romania dwindled. Ghimpu switched allegiance to the Congress of Intellectuals ahead of Moldova's first multiparty elections in Feb. 1994, winning a seat in parliament. However, he failed to be returned at the 1998 election, when he stood for the Party of Reform.

Ghimpu subsequently rebranded the Party of Reform as the Liberal Party (PL) and became its chairman. In 2007 he was elected to the Chișinău city council, where his nephew was mayor. He played a key role in opposing the ruling Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) in the run-up to the April 2009 parliamentary election and was re-elected to parliament, where the Communists held a narrow majority. Accusations of electoral fraud led to clashes between demonstrators and police in Chișinău, leaving three dead and 300 injured. In a re-run election on 29 July 2009 a four-party pro-Western coalition (including the PL) won 53 of the 101 available seats. Ghimpu was elected speaker in Aug. 2009 and, following the resignation of the PCRM-backed President Voronin on 11 Sept., he was appointed as his acting successor.

Career Peak

Ghimpu's caretaker tenure stretched into 2010 following the governing coalition's failure to secure the three-fifths majority required to elect a successor to Voronin. In Oct. 2009 Ghimpu said that EU accession was a long-term goal but that his priority was to rescue the ailing economy. He blamed mismanagement and corruption by the Communist Party for the deficit of €500 m. A 'substantial assistance package' was promised by the European Commission once an agreement had been signed with the IMF.

Ghimpu called for new parliamentary elections in Nov. 2010 but when no party won sufficient support to elect a new president, he left office.

Gierek, Edward (Poland)

Introduction

Edward Gierek was First Secretary of the Polish Communist Party between 1970 and 1980. He replaced Władysław Gomułka following workers'

protests, promising to enforce economic reforms and reverse declining standards of living. He attempted to adjust Soviet party line to suit the conditions of Poland and capitalized on improving East–West relations by securing international investments and loans. However, a fluctuating world economy allied with mismanagement of the Polish economy led to price rises in 1980. Strikes and demonstrations forced recognition of the Solidarity trade union movement and ultimately Gierek's demise.

Early Life

Gierek was born on 6 Jan. 1913 in Porabka, near Katowice, in what was then Austria-Hungary. His father was killed in a mining accident when Edward was 4 years old, and he and his mother subsequently moved to France. When he was 18 he became active in the French Communist Party. 6 years later he moved to Belgium, joining the Communist Party and serving in the Belgian Resistance during World War II. In 1946 he chaired the National Council of Poles in Belgium and in 1948 he returned to his homeland, taking a prominent role in the Upper Silesian branch of the Polish Communist Party.

In 1952 he was elected to parliament and 2 years later was given responsibility for heavy industry. He was appointed to the Politburo in 1956 and in the following year he became First Secretary of the party in the Katowice area, a post he held for 13 years. In late 1970 national first secretary Gomułka announced price rises and a wave of popular protests swept the country. Gierek, promoting himself as the most likely economic saviour, took control of the party when Gomułka fell from power.

Career Peak

He set out to reform the economy principally by looking to the West for financial support. This policy brought short term rewards but could not overcome the problems of a failing infrastructure, economic mismanagement of successive governments, and a faltering world economy following the Middle Eastern oil crises. Much of the capital inflow was spent in artificially boosting the consumer sector. Meanwhile Poland was accumulating vast foreign debts. Price rises similar to those that had toppled Gomułka became inevitable.

In 1976 there were protests and riots in a number of cities, notably Ursus and Radom where the authorities used strong arm tactics to maintain control. Some price increases were reversed and Gierek retained his hold on power, but Poland's economic problems did not improve. By 1980 another set of price rises was decreed and again there was civil unrest.

Following the events of 1976 a Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) was set up. Their demands were encompassed in a Charter of Workers' Rights. At the centre of the 1980 protests were the Gdansk shipyards, where Lech Wałęsa led a mass strike and co-ordinated similar actions across the country. The government was forced into talks and made far-reaching concessions including the recognition of free unions with the right to strike as well as a relaxation of laws on religion and political expression. The workers' movement was formally established as Solidarity in Sept. 1980.

Gierek's health declined during the period of turmoil and he suffered a heart attack. He resigned as First Secretary and was replaced by Stanisław Kania who in turn was replaced by Wojciech Jaruzelski.

Later Life

Jaruzelski's administration revealed the corruption of Gierek's regime and Gierek was subsequently removed from the Party before being interned for 12 months at the end of 1981. Gierek died on 29 July 2001.

Gillard, Julia (Australia)

Introduction

Julia Gillard became prime minister in June 2010 when she successfully challenged incumbent Kevin Rudd for the leadership of the ruling Australian Labor Party. Considered a left-of-centre consensus politician, she has chiefly focused on domestic issues. After Labor's weakened showing at elections in Aug. 2010, she agreed an alliance with Green and independent MPs to give herself a working majority of one seat.

Early Life

Julia Gillard was born in Barry, Wales on 29 Sept. 1961 and moved to Adelaide, Australia with her family in 1965. Educated at Mitcham Demonstration School and Unley High School, she went to Adelaide University in 1981 to study arts and law. While there she campaigned with the Labor Party against federal education budget cuts. She became vice president of the Australian Union of Students (AUS) in 1982, necessitating a move to Melbourne University where the AUS was based. In 1984 she was voted AUS president.

After graduating in 1986 she worked as a solicitor in Melbourne, specializing in industrial and employment law, and became a partner at the firm Slater & Gordon in 1990. From 1996–98 she was chief of staff to John Brumby, opposition leader in the state of Victoria. She was adopted as a parliamentary Labor candidate at her second attempt, successfully contesting the seat of Lalor at the 1998 election. From 1998–2001 she served on several committees, including the House of Representatives standing committee on employment, education and workplace relations.

Following Labor's defeat at the 2001 election, Gillard was appointed shadow minister for population and immigration, where she argued for a controlled and planned approach to immigration. In 2003 she was given the additional portfolio for reconciliation and indigenous affairs. From 2003–06 she was shadow minister for health, attracting notice for her combative challenges to her government opposite number, Tony Abbott. In Dec. 2006 she supported Kevin Rudd's bid for the Labor leadership, announcing herself as a candidate for the deputy leadership. Following Rudd's defeat of incumbent Kim Beazley, Gillard was elected unopposed as his deputy. She was named shadow minister for employment, industrial relations and social inclusion.

In Dec. 2007, following Labor's election victory, Gillard became deputy prime minister. She was given a wide-ranging portfolio, as minister for education, employment and workplace relations and social inclusion. She launched a programme of reforms including a \$A16 bn. investment in schools infrastructure and measures to gauge academic performance in national tests. The Howard government's controversial industrial relations legislation was replaced by a collective bargaining framework, overseen by a single government body.

In the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, when Prime Minister Rudd's popularity suffered, Gillard was viewed as a credible alternative leader of the Labor Party. Although she shared responsibility for some of the government's more unpopular moves, including delaying expenditure on schools and postponing the introduction of a long-promised emissions trading programme, she maintained her personal appeal. In June 2010, having won the backing of the Australian Workers' Union and many factions within her party, she challenged Rudd for the leadership. He stood aside without a vote and on 24 June 2010 Gillard was sworn in as Australia's first female prime minister.

Career Peak

Gillard declared her intention to manage Australia's natural resources boom so that revenues could be invested for future growth. She opened negotiations with the mining industry over a proposed profits tax which, despite industry resistance, was approved by parliament in March 2012. She also promised a planned approach to solving the shortage of skilled labour, introducing tax reforms to encourage retired and part-time workers into fuller participation. She also signalled her intention to seek sustainable and controlled immigration rather than the 'big Australia' vision of her predecessor. Her controversial proposal to process the rising numbers of asylum seekers through Malaysia was rejected in parliament in Oct. 2011 but in Sept. 2012 the government instead adopted an independent panel recommendation to re-establish holding centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Other pressing challenges have included the environment, in particular rebuilding after the Queensland floods of early 2011, and devising controversial legislation on pricing carbon emissions, which completed its parliamentary passage in Nov. 2011 and came into force in July 2012. Gillard also promised to deliver a \$A36 bn. national broadband system and to take over from individual states the majority of funding responsibility for public hospitals. In Feb. 2012 Rudd resigned as foreign minister and challenged Gillard's leadership. The prime minister won the backing of her Labor party colleagues in the leadership ballot, by 71 votes to 31. In April 2012 Gillard announced that the withdrawal of most Australian troops from Afghanistan would be completed in 2013. In early 2013 the aim was still to achieve this by the end of the year.

In June 2013 Gillard was defeated by Kevin Rudd in the Labor party leadership ballot. Rudd won the vote by 57 votes to 45, after which Gillard immediately resigned as prime minister. Keeping with her pledge given before the leadership vote, Gillard announced she would retire from politics.

Giscard d'Estaing, Valéry (France)

Introduction

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was finance minister under presidents de Gaulle and Pompidou before becoming the third president of the Fifth Republic from 1974–81. He founded the right-wing political group, *Républicains Indépendants* (RI), in 1966. He implemented various progressive social policies, but his presidency was ineffectual against the rising tide of unemployment and gathering strength of left-wing parties.

Early Life

The son of a leading economist, Giscard d'Estaing was born on 2 Feb. 1926 in Koblenz, Germany. He studied at the *Ecole Polytechnique*, breaking his degree to serve in the French army between 1944–45. After studying at the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* in Paris, Giscard d'Estaing entered the civil service in 1952 to work in the finance ministry. He was elected deputy of the Puy-de-Dôme department in 1956. A member of the conservative *Centre National des Indépendants et Paysans* (CNIP), he was one of the group that supported de Gaulle's move for an independent Algeria. Between 1959–62 he was secretary of state for finance. He was appointed finance minister by de Gaulle in 1962.

The promotion was not a success. In trying to move France away from American influence, he incurred mounting criticism from the business sector. He was dismissed in 1967 when he formed his own party, the RI. He regained his position as finance minister under Pompidou, when he devalued the franc as the foundation of a period of economic stability. When Pompidou died in 1974, Giscard d'Estaing fought for the presidency as the RI candidate. His rival, the Gaullist Jacques Chaban-Delmas, made little impact and the voters were not yet ready for a shift to the left as promised by François Mitterrand. Giscard d'Estaing became president in May 1974.

Career Peak

Giscard d'Estaing enacted various social reforms. Abortion was legalised, contraception was made easier to obtain and the vote was lowered to 18. Censorship in broadcasting and films was relaxed. Giscard d'Estaing was outward looking in his approach to international issues. In 1976 he began the G7 meetings of the seven leading industrial nations. He was more successful than Pompidou in his relations with Germany, working closely with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on EC issues. Together they set up the European Monetary System in 1979. But Giscard d'Estaing's administration marked the end of France's *trente glorieuses*—a 30-year period of economic stability after World War II. Hardline economic measures proved unpopular.

Meanwhile, mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac set about reviving the Gaullist party 'Rassemblement du Peuple Français'. In 1976 he formed the *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR). In response, Giscard d'Estaing formed a centre-right coalition on 1 Feb. 1978, *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (UDF). Battling against unfavourable economic trends, Giscard d'Estaing faced growing opposition from both the socialists led by Mitterrand and the RPR led by Chirac. In the 1981 presidential election, Giscard d'Estaing was defeated by François Mitterrand.

Later Life

Giscard d'Estaing was president of the UDF until 1996. He was a member of the European Parliament from 1989–93. In 2002 he was appointed by EC president Romano Prodi to head a special convention on the future of the EU. Draft proposals were published in May 2003, which strongly influenced the content of the European Constitution signed and approved by the European heads of state at Rome in 2004. Despite the rejection of the constitution by French and Dutch voters d'Estaing continued to lobby for greater European integration.

Gligorov, Kiro (Macedonia)

Introduction

Kiro Gligorov became president of the Republic of Macedonia following free elections after the collapse of Yugoslavia. From the end of World War II until the mid-1970s he held various finance posts in the Yugoslav administration when he was an advocate of free market principles. During the late 1970s and much of the 1980s he was in the political wilderness but gained popular support in Macedonia during the Yugoslav crisis of 1989–90 for his pro-democracy views. He survived an attempt on his life in 1995.

Early Life

Gligorov was born on 3 May 1917 in Shtip, now in the Republic of Macedonia. He attended Belgrade University and was active in student politics until his graduation in 1938. He then worked as a banker until World War II, during which time he devoted himself to various anti-fascist and pro-national liberation groups. Macedonia was briefly declared a republic in 1944 but was subsequently integrated into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Gligorov became a Macedonian representative in the Yugoslav parliament and held a number of positions within government over the following years. He was Assistant General Secretary to the Government between 1945–47, Assistant Minister of Finance between 1952–53, Deputy Director of the Federal Institute for Economic Planning between 1953–55, Secretary of the Federal Executive Council for Economic Issues between 1955–62, Federal Secretary of Finance between 1962–67 and Vice President of the Federal Executive Council from 1967 to 1969. Although his hopes for a free market were never realized under Tito, he was a prominent member of the Institute for International Politics and Economy and the Institute for Social Sciences.

During the 1970s Gligorov served as a member of the Yugoslav presidency and as President of the Yugoslav Parliament. His political career subsequently went into decline and he was largely absent from the political scene in the 1980s. However, he was in the government of Ante Marković in the late 1980s when he once again promoted his belief in free market principles. When the Yugoslavian crisis of 1989–90 erupted he called for multi-party elections.

Career Peak

In the election of Jan. 1991 he was elected president of the Republic of Macedonia. In a referendum to decide on independence from Yugoslavia on 8 Sept. 1991 about 75% of voters supported the proposal.

A new constitution was promulgated on 17 Nov. 1991 allowing Macedonia to leave the Yugoslav Federation peacefully. Gligorov succeeded in steering clear of the war between the Serbs and Croats while negotiating the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops from the country in early 1992. Macedonia was accepted into the United Nations on 13 April 1993 and UN troops entered the country shortly afterwards to monitor its troublesome border near Kosovo.

Relations with neighbouring Greece deteriorated when the Greek government opposed the use of the name Macedonia, arguing that it was offensive to the inhabitants of the Macedonia area within Greece. When the Republic of Macedonia established diplomatic ties with a number of EU countries in late 1993 and with the USA in early 1994, Greece responded by imposing an economic embargo. Macedonia agreed to revise its flag design and to talks over its name with the result that the embargo was lifted in Nov. 1995.

Meanwhile, following an election in Oct. 1994, Gligorov secured another term as President. This was despite sour relations with Greece, general unrest and a weak economy stretched to breaking point by an influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the wars between former Yugoslav states. He also had to oversee controversial reforms that allowed for better representation for Macedonia's substantial Albanian minority. On 3 Oct. 1995 unknown assailants tried to assassinate Gligorov. A car bomb killed his chauffeur but Gligorov survived. Stojan Andov stood in for him as president until Jan. 1996.

Macedonia's economy suffered further setbacks when the UN declared sanctions against Serbia, thus weakening Macedonia's principal trade partner. As the Kosovo conflict escalated in 1999, the country received another huge wave of Albanian refugees, creating yet more economic, political and social

problems. Parliamentary elections held in 1998 returned a coalition of right-wing parties and at the presidential elections of Nov. 1999 Gligorov lost to nationalist Boris Trajkovski.

Later Life

Gligorov withdrew from politics in 1999 but remained active during his retirement, publishing a number of books and establishing the Gligorov Foundation—a think tank concerned with the development of multi-ethnic societies. In 2005 he became the first recipient of the Order of the Republic of Macedonia.

Gligorov died peacefully on 1 Jan. 2012. In accordance with his request he was not given a state funeral.

Godmanis, Ivars (Latvia)

Introduction

Ivars Godmanis was elected prime minister by the 100-member parliament in Dec. 2007, claiming 54 votes. This followed the resignation of incumbent Aigars Kalvitis in response to opposition to his attempted dismissal of the head of the anti-corruption bureau. Godmanis, who had earlier served as Latvia's first post-Soviet premier, became head of the country's 14th government in 16 years.

Early Life

Ivars Godmanis was born in Riga on 27 Nov. 1957. After graduating from the University of Latvia in 1974, he joined the university's Institute of Solid-State Physics as a junior scientific assistant and rose to the post of senior lecturer by the time he left in 1988.

In that year Godmanis joined the Latvian Popular Front, becoming deputy chairman. After independence in 1990 he served as prime minister for a 3 year term that focused on economic transition. However, in the crisis that followed the freeing-up of prices he was forced out of office. For the next 5 years he worked in the private sector before returning as minister of finance from 1998–99. He then rejoined the private sector and in 2004 became a member of the Latvian Way Party. After elections in Nov. 2006, Godmanis joined the coalition government as minister of the interior. Following the resignation of Kalvitis, he was appointed prime minister by President Zatlers on 14 Dec. 2007.

Career Peak

Godmanis initially pledged to cut inflation, raise living standards to European levels within 10 years, and prepare for the introduction of the euro. However, Latvia's economy and national currency were undermined during 2008 by the global financial downturn, and by the end of the year his government was negotiating a rescue package with the International Monetary Fund and the Nordic countries. Meanwhile, Latvia's relations with Russia were aggravated in Jan. 2008 as each country expelled a diplomat for conduct 'incompatible with status' and in May the Latvian parliament approved the EU's Lisbon Treaty on institutional and administrative reform which had been signed in Dec. 2007.

In Feb. 2009 anti-government protests in Riga over the government's economic policy left 40 injured and resulted in over 100 arrests. Godmanis subsequently announced his resignation on losing the backing of the government's two main coalition partners. Valdis Dombrovskis was named his successor.

Goh Chok Tong (Singapore)

Introduction

Goh Chok Tong became prime minister of Singapore in Nov. 1990. Heading the People's Action Party, he succeeded Singapore's first prime minister, Lee

Kuan Yew. He remained in office until Aug. 2004 when he was succeeded by Lee Kuan Yew's elder son, Lee Hsien Loong.

Early Life

Goh Chok Tong was born in Singapore on 20 May 1941. He was educated at the Raffles Institution in Singapore and studied economics at the University of Singapore from 1961–64. He continued his studies at Williams College in the USA. He is married to Tan Choo Leng, with whom he has two children.

Goh Chok Tong was an administrative officer in the Singapore Administrative Service and entered parliament in 1976. Between 1969 and 1977 he worked for the Neptune Orient Lines, ending as managing director. He was appointed senior minister of state for finance in 1977. Between 1979 and 1990 he variously held the portfolios for trade and industry, health and defence, and in 1985 he was first deputy prime minister. A member of the People's Action Party central executive committee since 1979, he became secretary general in 1992.

Career Peak

Improving Singapore's economic success in the international arena has been his major objective. Despite a slowdown during the 1998 Asian crisis, Singapore has consolidated its position as one of the region's leading economies. Goh Chok Tong often cites China as an example for Singapore, with its low industrial and land costs. He has signed numerous trade agreements with foreign partners, although relations with the US were strained in the mid-1990s when he refused to apologise after a US citizen had been sentenced to a caning.

Goh Chok Tong retained tight control of the media. It is illegal to own a satellite dish, television and press censorship is widespread and internet access is restricted. He announced his resignation on 10 Aug. 2004, and was succeeded by Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. He stepped down from the cabinet in May 2011, becoming senior adviser to the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

Golding, Bruce (Jamaica)

Introduction

Bruce Golding was sworn in as prime minister on 11 Sept. 2007 after the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) won polling earlier that month. Winning 33 of 60 parliamentary seats, the JLP came back to government after 18 years in opposition. After 4 years in power he resigned as head of the JLP and prime minister.

Early Life

Bruce Golding was born on 5 Dec. 1947. He graduated from the University of the West Indies in 1969 with a degree in economics and was elected to the central executive of the JLP immediately afterwards. In 1970 he co-founded Young Jamaica, the party's youth affiliate, before winning a seat in the 1972 general election.

In 1974 Golding was elected general secretary of the JLP but lost his constituency seat in 1976. A year later he was appointed to the senate and, when the JLP returned to power in 1980, was appointed minister of construction. In 1983 he won another seat and was elected JLP chairman in 1984. Following his party's failure at the 1989 polls, Golding became shadow minister of finance and chairman of the public accounts committee.

In the early 1990s Golding's attempts to change to the country's political practices met with resistance and he left the JLP to establish the National Democratic Movement (NDM) in 1995. However, he resigned from the NDM in 2001 and returned to the JLP in Sept. 2002 where he once again sat in the senate. He was given the post of shadow minister of foreign affairs and foreign trade. In Nov. 2003 Golding was elected unopposed as party chairman and in Feb. 2005 became its leader. In April 2005 he won the seat of West Kingston in a by-election and became leader of the opposition. He led the JLP to electoral victory in Sept. 2007, becoming the first JLP prime minister since 1989.

Career Peak

Golding promised to prioritize the tackling of crime, poverty and unemployment. He abolished tuition fees in secondary schools and established an independent body to investigate police corruption. However, his tenure was marred by allegations of inappropriate use of executive power, and crime remained a serious problem. Jamaica's murder rate is one of the highest in the world, in response to which parliament voted to retain the death penalty and Golding pledged to resume executions. In June 2010 security forces captured Christopher 'Dudus' Coke, a suspected drug trafficker, and extradited him to the USA, but only after violent resistance by Coke supporters in Kingston in which around 80 people died. In response to opposition criticism, in Oct. Golding announced the establishment of a commission of enquiry into the government's handling of the episode.

On 25 Sept. 2011 Golding made clear his intention not to seek re-election as leader of the JLP in Nov. 2011 and step down as prime minister once a new leader had been elected. Although this was rejected by the JLP's central executive, Golding's decision remained. He was succeeded by the minister of education Andrew Holness on 23 Oct. 2011.

Gomułka, Władysław (Poland)

Introduction

Władysław Gomułka was first secretary of the Polish Communist Party between 1956 and 1970. He became a member of the Politburo after World War II but was expelled from the party following a rift with Joseph Stalin. As discontent with Stalinism spread throughout Poland in 1956, he was re-instated and made First Secretary in the hope that he might appease a population that saw him as an enemy of Stalin and a liberal reformer. However, he failed to carry out the expected reforms and resigned his post following popular protests.

Early Life

Gomułka was born on 6 Feb. 1905 in Białbrzegi, near Krosno (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and now part of Poland). His father, an oil-worker, was a fervent socialist. Gomułka left school at 12 to be employed as a locksmith's apprentice and joined a socialist youth organization by 1921. Five years later he was a member of the underground Polish Communist Party and was soon arrested. It was to be the first of many arrests and in 1932 he began a 2 year stint in jail following a strike of textile workers he had helped organize in his capacity as National Secretary of the Chemical Workers' Union.

Following his release in 1934 Gomułka went to Moscow to study at the International Lenin School. In 1936 he began a 7 year prison sentence back in Poland but was released at the outbreak of World War II. He was prominent in the Polish Resistance Movement throughout the war and in 1942 he joined the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR), becoming Secretary General in Nov. 1943. In the aftermath of World War II an interim government was established in Lublin, in which Gomułka served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Territories Recovered from Germany.

He was also active in the merger of the PPR with the Polish Socialist Party to form a united communist party, and to this end he sought the elimination of the Polish Peasant Party which he saw as a potential obstacle. An independently minded politician, Gomułka entered into conflict with Stalin by opposing agricultural collectivization and by speaking out against the formation of Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) in 1947. As a result he was removed as Secretary General of the PPR in Sept. 1948 and, following the formation of the Polish United Workers Party in that Dec., his decline continued. Removed from the party altogether in late 1949, he was ultimately put under house arrest in July 1951.

He was released in 1954 and 2 years later, as part of Krushchev's campaign to repair some of the damage of Stalin's reign which had ended 2 years earlier, Gomułka was officially rehabilitated. With social unrest on the increase as food prices spiralled, Gomułka, the opponent of Stalinism, gained the stature of a folk hero. Events reached crisis point when a strike at a Poznań steel plant developed into riots during which the heavy-handed response of the authorities led to the death of 53 people. Gomułka, who had been allowed

to re-join the party in Aug. 1956 and had been voted in as Secretary General of the Central Committee in Oct., was subsequently drafted into the Council of State (effectively a joint presidency).

Career Peak

Gomułka did cut the power of the secret police, halted agricultural collectivization and brought an end to attacks on the Catholic Church. In this he rectified some of the worse elements of Stalin's reign. However, his appointment to high office did not herald an end to the suppression of freedom of expression nor did he radically change economic policy. By the end of the decade there was little evident improvement in Poland's quality of living and his popular appeal faltered throughout the 1960s. Student riots sprang up around the country in March 1968 but Gomułka managed to retain his post as Secretary General.

In 1969 and 1970 he instigated a number of reformist policies. A treaty improving relations between Poland and West Germany was signed and some of the country's economic problems were confronted. It was too little too late, however, and a rise in food prices in Dec. 1970 led to workers' protests in numerous cities. On 20 Dec. 1970 he resigned as First Secretary and was replaced by Eduard Gierek. Though ostensibly a member of the Council of State until 1971 and Parliament until 1972, in practical terms it was the end of his politically active life.

Later Life

Gomułka died in Warsaw on 1 Sept. 1982.

González Macchi, Luis Angel (Paraguay)

Introduction

Angel González Macchi was president of Paraguay from 1999 until 2003, representing the Colorado party, which has dominated the country's politics for more than half a century. Unelected, González was appointed president to follow Raul Cubas Grau who was forced to resign when he was linked to the assassination of Vice President Luis Maria Argaña. González struggled to combat a worsening economic situation, high inflation and unemployment, coup attempts and public discontent. He survived many calls for his resignation.

Early Life

González was born on 13 Dec. 1947 in the capital Asunción. The son of a doctor, he studied law at the Universidad Nacional de Asunción before gaining a scholarship in 1970 to study in Madrid. A member of the ruling rightwing Asociación Nacional Republicana, or the Partido Colorado, he was president of the congress under Cubas' leadership. The latter's short term was ineffectual. When he refused to force his ally General Lino Oviedo to return to prison and see out a 10 year sentence incurred in 1996 for leading a failed coup, impeachment charges were brought. In 1999 Argaña was assassinated, allegedly under the command of Oviedo who feared Argaña was attempting to push out the president. Angry public demonstrators congregated outside the presidential palace to demand Cubas' resignation. Four protestors were shot by snipers. Both Cubas and Oviedo fled the country seeking immunity in Argentina and Brazil.

In the ensuing chaos the government formed an all-party coalition, attempting to create a united front to restore stability to a democracy only 11 years old. It represented an alternative to the half century rule by the Colorado party, including 34 years of dictatorship. In the absence of a vice president, González was chosen to lead the coalition and took up the presidency.

Career Peak

González's main challenges were to reignite the stagnant economy and give the people confidence in the government. Immediately González fell into dispute with his neighbouring MERCOSUR countries. There were calls for

the arrest of Cubas and Oviedo and both Argentina and Brazil refused to extradite them. Several of their allies implicated in the assassination were arrested. Further disputes arose internally and in Feb. 2000 the opposition Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA) pulled out of the coalition. It claimed the dominant Colorado party was refusing to share power and blocking reforms, especially privatization schemes that were needed to boost the economy. This prompted the resignation of several ministers. González's standing was further threatened by continuing support for the exiled Oviedo, especially from the large rural poor who believe that Oviedo would solve their economic problems. Policies proposed by González provoked popular protest supported by the trade unions. In May 2000 the precarious democracy was further tested when rebels took over radio stations and attacked the presidential palace with tanks. The coup was contained and González announced a 30 day state of emergency in which 70 suspected Oviedo sympathisers were arrested.

In Aug. 2000 a close run vice presidential election was won by PLRA candidate Julio Cesar Franco who beat the Colorado candidate and former vice president's son Felix Argaña. Optimism was soon dampened by Franco's inability to achieve change and González's continued inability to reverse economic decline. A 4% fiscal deficit, high unemployment and a continued depreciation in GDP were not aided by stalled privatization. A loan by Taiwan in 1999 failed to ignite recovery. Intemecine disputes led to more resignations.

In Aug. 2001 further pressure on González to resign followed claims that the president had been involved in bank fraud. He was further embarrassed when he was discovered driving a stolen car. While looking for an IMF loan in exchange for higher taxes and the long promised privatization, protesters gathered at the presidential palace in early Sept. 2001 calling once more for him to stand down, scenes which were repeated 12 months later. He narrowly escaped impeachment in Feb. 2003 by surviving a Senate vote to prosecute him for allegedly misspending 115.6 bn. guaraní (\$17 m.) of government money. With voting 22 to 18 against him, the motion failed to attain the two thirds majority needed to oust him from power.

González did not stand for the presidency at the elections of 2003.

González Márquez, Felipe (Spain)

Introduction

Felipe González Márquez was prime minister of Spain from 1982–96, representing the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party; PSOE). He continued the Post-Franco transition towards democracy and opened Spain up internationally; Spain joined the EC (now the EU) in 1986.

Early Life

González was born in Seville on 5 Mar. 1942. The son of a strongly republican agricultural worker, he was the only child of six to attend higher education. He studied civil engineering at Seville University before changing to study law. His political career began during his student years. After activity in the Socialist Youth Movement, he joined the then-outlawed PSOE in 1964. He continued his studies in Leuven where he was influenced by Belgium's former prime minister, the Socialist Paul-Henri Spaak. In 1968 he set up a law firm in Seville. After climbing the ranks of the PSOE during the 1960s and early 70s, González became its secretary general in Oct. 1974 at the Suresnes Congress. González had moved away from the traditional leadership of the PSOE party. With his friend and colleague Alfonso Guerra, who became editor of *El Socialista*, he offered a new vision for the future, which proved popular.

Career Peak

When opposition parties were legalized in 1977, González was elected a deputy for Madrid. The elections of 1977 made the PSOE the leading opposition party. In 1982 the PSOE won an absolute majority and González became prime minister. He consolidated the democratic transition begun by Suárez. He dismantled much of the bureaucracy of the Franco regime and decentralized the government. To open up industrial relations and to encourage free trade, Spain joined NATO and the EC (EU), both in 1986. In the

elections of 1986 the PSOE once again gained an absolute majority. Over the next few years Spain enjoyed strong economic growth. In 1989 Spain entered the European Monetary Union.

Conversely, the 1990s were years of recession and internal party struggles. The PSOE won the elections of 1989, but with a smaller majority. Economic growth fell and unemployment rose. Public spending increased, as did welfare costs. The subsequent years saw in-party squabbling over the succession to head the party. Despite decentralization, Basque terrorism reached record heights.

By the 1993 elections employment had reached over 20%, the highest of any country in the EU. Failing to gain an absolute majority, González formed an alliance with a coalition of Catalan politicians, including Jordi Pujol's Catalan Nationalists.

More problems were ahead. In 1994 the government was hit by a wave of scandals. It was revealed that between 1983–7 the government had ordered death squads to assassinate Basque terrorists residing in France. Similar acts during Franco's reign had brought international condemnation. The Catalanian politicians severed their alliance with the government. In the elections of 1996 the PSOE was defeated by the right-wing Partido Popular and González conceded the premiership to José María Aznar López.

Later Life

González has since worked for the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), leading the mission to Yugoslavia to persuade Milosevic to accept the 1996 local election results.

Gonzi, Lawrence (Malta)

Introduction

Appointed Malta's prime minister on 23 March 2004, Lawrence Gonzi oversaw the nation's accession to the EU six weeks later. Leading the right-of-centre Nationalist Party (NP), he advocated seizing the opportunities for trade and investment afforded by Malta's EU membership, including adoption of the single European currency. He was re-elected in 2008 but his government fell in Dec. 2012.

Early Life

Lawrence Gonzi was born on 1 July 1953 in Valletta, Malta. He attended St Joseph's school, St Aloysius College and The Archbishop's Seminary, and went on to study law at the University of Malta, graduating in 1975, the year after Malta became a fully independent republic (having achieved independence from Great Britain in 1964). Gonzi took up employment as a junior solicitor in a private firm and later worked as a company lawyer with the Mizzi Organization. From 1976 he was engaged in the voluntary sector, working with people with disabilities and mental health problems. He was also the general president of the Malta Catholic Action Movement between 1976 and 1986.

Gonzi entered politics in 1986, contesting the 1987 general election as a candidate for the Nationalist Party. Duly elected, he served in the government of the new Nationalist prime minister, Edward Fenech Adami. Gonzi was elected speaker of the House of Representatives on 10 Oct. 1988. The NP took up a pro-Western stance and argued for integration into the European Community. It also embarked on a programme to stimulate business, increase tourism and reduce the role of the government in the economy. The party held on to power in the 1992 general election, but lost the Oct. 1996 poll to a rejuvenated MLP, led by Alfred Sant.

Gonzi retained his parliamentary seat in the 1996 election and, a month later, was appointed opposition party whip, secretary to the parliamentary group and shadow minister for social policy. The following year he was elected secretary general of the Nationalist Party, subsequently playing a central role in achieving an NP electoral victory after just 22 months of the Labour administration. Gonzi was appointed minister for social policy and leader of the House of Representatives. The appointment of Prof. Guido de Marco as president of the republic on 2 May 1999 prompted Gonzi to contest the election for the deputy leadership of the NP. He was successful, and shortly afterwards was made deputy to Prime Minister Adami.

During his years at the social policy ministry, Gonzi is remembered for reforms to the industrial relations legislation, his zero-tolerance policy towards benefit fraud and for overseeing the restructuring of Malta's shipyards. In March 2003 Malta's population voted in favour of EU membership in a referendum, and the following month the NP was returned to power in a general election. Adami stepped down as NP leader in March 2004, and in the subsequent leadership contest, Gonzi emerged victorious. On 23 March 2004 he took office as prime minister (and minister of finance) of Malta.

Career Peak

In his first media briefing in April 2004, Prime Minister Gonzi announced his government's intention to adopt the euro 'when it is advantageous to Malta'. He also proposed to boost tourism (the nation's most important source of income), create favourable conditions for investment, restructure the public finances and improve Malta's competitiveness in the international market. In Nov. 2005 Gonzi hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). In Dec. 2007 his government signed the Lisbon treaty on streamlining the operation of the European Union and from 1 Jan. 2008 Malta adopted the single currency.

The NP won a third successive term by narrowly winning the popular vote in parliamentary elections in March 2008, with Gonzi being sworn in for a second prime ministerial term (but relinquishing the finance portfolio) on 11 March. In an address to the nation he said that his government would concentrate particularly on sustainable development, with an emphasis on the environment.

In April 2009 the Maltese government refused to accept 140 illegal African migrants aboard a cargo ship that had rescued them in rough waters near the island of Lampedusa, claiming that they were Italy's responsibility.

Entering the final year of his second term and in the wake of internal rifts within his Nationalist Party, Gonzi narrowly survived a parliamentary vote of confidence in June 2012. However, in Dec. his government was defeated on a budget vote and fell.

In Dec. 2012 Gonzi's government collapsed over negotiations on the following year's budget. In March 2013 the NP faced a crushing defeat at the general elections and Gonzi resigned from the party leadership.

Gorbachev, Mikhail (Russia)

Introduction

Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev was leader of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from 1985–91. A reformer, he oversaw the democratization and modernization of the Soviet Union via his policies of *glasnost* ('openness') and *perestroika* ('restructuring'). His leadership led to the fall of communism throughout Eastern Europe and to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Early Life

Gorbachev was born in Privolye in the Stavropol region of Russia on 2 March 1931. He became a member of the Young Communist League when he was 15 and worked as a machine operator before undertaking studies at Moscow State University. It was here in 1952 that he joined the Communist Party and 3 years later he earned a law degree. In 1956 he married Raisa Titorenko, whom he had met at the university.

In the coming years he held a number of party positions in Stavropol and in 1962 he began a 5 year correspondence course at the Stavropol Agricultural Institute. By 1970 he had been appointed 1st Secretary of the Stavropol Kraikom (the regional party committee) and a year later, at the 24th Party Congress, he was elected to the central committee of the Soviet Union. He progressed quickly within the party ranks during the 1970s and was a favourite of the influential Mikhail Suslov and Yuri Andropov.

Gorbachev was called to Moscow in 1978 and made secretary for agriculture. By Jan. 1979 he was officially 28th in the party hierarchy, by the end of the year he was a candidate member of the Politburo and by 1980 he had become a full member. Andropov was the party's general secretary between 1982 and 1984, with Gorbachev in close support. By the time Andropov's successor, Konstantin Chernenko, died in March 1985 it was little surprise that the upstart Gorbachev replaced him.

Career Peak

After initial economic and institutional reforms had failed to kickstart the Soviet economy, Gorbachev embarked on his policy of *glasnost*. As early as 1984 Gorbachev had spoken of *glasnost* as “a compulsory condition of socialist democracy and a norm for public life.” Now it brought greatly extended cultural freedoms, including freedom of the press, and led to official rejection of Stalinist-style totalitarianism. *Glasnost* went hand in hand with *perestroika* and set in motion an overhaul of the political system, with electoral processes made more democratic and some free-market principles introduced into the economy.

Such reforms were bound to meet with hard-line opposition and Gorbachev set about changing communist party mechanisms in response. Between autumn 1988 and spring 1989, a new 2-house parliament (the Soviet Congress of People’s Deputies) was established. It voted in a new Supreme Soviet that had more practical powers than previously and Gorbachev was installed at its head.

On the international scene great changes were afoot and Gorbachev was at the forefront. From the beginning of his leadership he had sought closer economic and political ties with both the East and West. He reduced military spending, embarked on mutual policies of nuclear disarmament with the US and withdrew troops from Afghanistan in 1989. Throughout 1989 and 1990 Gorbachev gave vocal support to the reforms sweeping through the Eastern bloc and as one communist regime after another began to fall he refused to intervene. As new governments came to power throughout the region he gave permission for the phased withdrawal of Soviet forces and in 1990 he agreed to the unification of the 2 Germanies. In that same year he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

During the same period there was increased unrest among the Soviet republics. Gorbachev left the military on alert while plans were made for the republics to withdraw peacefully and legally from the USSR. Political and constitutional reforms continued apace and in March 1991 Gorbachev was elected President of the USSR. He was the first and only man to hold the post. A short while later the law was changed so that opposition parties were permitted within the state. Over the coming months Gorbachev’s refusal to sanction further economic reforms and his reluctance to move towards a privatization programme left the economy struggling. This in conjunction with the powerful enemies he had made through his reforms provided the circumstances for an attempted hard-line coup in Aug. 1991. Gorbachev was put under house arrest for 3 days and though the coup was ended, largely owing to Russian President Yeltsin’s intervention, Gorbachev’s leadership was existing on borrowed time. In quick succession Gorbachev resigned his party membership, dismantled the central committee and took KGB and military control away from the communists. On Christmas Day in 1991 he resigned as Soviet President and the Soviet Union itself was replaced by the Yeltsin-led Commonwealth of Independent States.

Later Life

Gorbachev has retained a presence on the international stage since his fall from power. His *Gorbachev Foundation* is an international institute specializing in socio-economic and political studies and he has also established *Green Cross International*, a non-governmental environmental organization. He has remained politically active with the *Civic Forum* movement and he ran for the Russian Presidency in 1996. Though he finished a distant 7th, Gorbachev’s role in the cataclysmic years of the late 1980s and early 1990s has ensured his international standing.

Gottwald, Klement (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Klement Gottwald was the Communist President of Czechoslovakia from 1948 until his death in 1953, having previously held the positions of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. A hard-liner and staunch Stalinist, his rule was punctuated by purges of his enemies. His death preceded a short period of liberalization in Czechoslovakia but his rule ensured that his country remained a Soviet satellite state.

Early Life

Gottwald was born in Dedice, Moravia (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and now located in the Czech Republic) on 23 Nov. 1896. He went to Vienna as a 12 year old to work as an apprentice to a carpenter before leaving to serve on the Eastern Front during World War I. Having deserted to Russia he returned to the recently established state of Czechoslovakia and was instrumental in setting up the Czechoslovakian Communist Party (KSC) 3 years later.

After a period of editing the party newspaper he was elected to the KSC Central Committee in 1925. From 1928 onwards he served on the executive committee of Comintern and in 1929 he became Secretary General of the KSC, immediately setting about putting the party at the disposal of Stalin. When in 1938 Germany began its occupation of Czechoslovakian territory, Gottwald fled to Moscow, once again editing a communist publication and retaining contact with the underground in his homeland. In late 1943 he met with Czechoslovakia’s exiled President Edvard Beneš and returned to Prague in the aftermath of World War II to act as Deputy Prime Minister in Beneš’s government.

Career Peak

In 1946 Gottwald was made Chairman of the KSC and, following general elections in which the Communists won 38% of the vote, he was installed as head of a coalition government. A falling out with Stalin occurred in 1947 after Gottwald accepted US aid via the Marshall Plan. By 1948 the KSC was not in an electorally strong position. Gottwald tried to force Beneš to accept a Communist-dominated parliament but Beneš, refusing to cave into the demands, instead resigned the presidency on 7 June 1948. A week later Gottwald took his place.

He embarked on the systematic Stalinization of the economy and society at large, until the Communist party came to dominate all elements of the country’s life. From 1950 onwards he began purges of his enemies, the most notable of which was in Dec. 1952 when the Interior Minister, Rudolf Slansky, and 11 of his supporters were executed. In total around 180 executions, preceded by party show trials, were carried out during Gottwald’s tenure. On 9 March 1953 Gottwald visited Moscow to attend the funeral of his mentor Stalin. Afflicted by the inclement weather, Gottwald developed pneumonia and died back in Prague on 14 March.

Gouled Aptidon, Hassan (Djibouti)

Introduction

Hassan Gouled Aptidon was Djibouti’s first president, ruling the country from independence in 1977 until 1999. He was credited with reconciling rival clans to achieve regional stability.

Early Life

Hassan Gouled Aptidon was born on 15 Oct. 1916 to a family of Issa nomads in Garissa, in the Lughaya district of French Somaliland (now Djibouti). At the age of 14 he left home and worked as a street trader. He went on to serve in the French national assembly and the French senate, before returning home to become minister of education, a post he held from 1963–67. He served as prime minister from May–June 1977.

Gouled was a leading figurehead in the independence movement. After a split with France was rejected in a referendum in 1967, the result was reversed in a further referendum 10 years later and the independent Republic of Djibouti was inaugurated on 27 June 1977, with Gouled as president.

Career Peak

In 1981 Gouled made the Issa-dominated People’s Rally for Progress (RPP) the country’s only legal political party. He was elected to the presidency without opposition in June 1981 and returned again unopposed in elections in 1987. His authoritarian rule fuelled resentment among Djibouti’s Afar community and in 1991 the country descended into civil war between the government and the Afar rebel group, the Front for the Restoration of Unity

and Democracy (FRUD). Gouled negotiated a cease-fire. Multiparty elections, albeit with only four parties, were introduced in 1992.

He also served as a mediator between warring neighbours in the Horn of Africa and was instrumental in founding the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) in 1985. As chairman of IGADD, he helped renew diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Somalia.

In 1997 Gouled was elected for a fifth presidential term but in April 1999 ill health compelled him to step down. In elections that month, his nephew, Ismail Omar Guelleh, won 74% of the vote and was sworn in as his uncle's successor in May.

Gouled died in the capital city of Djibouti on 21 Nov. 2006.

Gowon, Yakubu (Nigeria)

Introduction

Yakubu Gowon became the leader of the Federal Military Government following a countercoup in June 1966. He played an important role in the ending of the Biafra civil war.

Early Life

Gowon was born on 19 Oct. 1934, the son of a missionary from a small Northern Region tribe, the Angas. After his schooling in Nigeria, he enrolled in the Nigerian Army and was sent to the Regular Officers' Special Training School in Ghana. He then received training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in England between 1955–6. He served in the Congo twice and in 1963 he was appointed adjutant-general of the Nigerian army. Gowon did not play a major part in the countercoup of 1966 but was chosen as a compromise candidate to lead the government.

Career Peak

Promises of a return to civilian rule failed to come to fruition and in 1967 Gowon declared a state of emergency, restructuring Nigeria's four regions into 12 states. The Eastern Region responded by declaring independence as the state of Biafra. 3 years of civil war followed, after which Gowon pursued an enlightened policy of 'no victor, no vanquished'. Despite a growing international reputation, his government was tainted by corruption and economic mismanagement. He was overthrown in a bloodless military coup in July 1975 while attending a meeting in Uganda.

Later Life

Following his overthrow, Gowon went into exile in Great Britain.

Grímsson, Ólafur Ragnar (Iceland)

Introduction

Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson was leader of the People's Alliance until becoming president in 1996. Observers feared his background would politicize the presidency, which is traditionally a non-partisan, ceremonial post, but he enjoyed broad popular support and retained the office in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012.

Early Life

Grímsson was born on 14 May 1943 in Ísafjörður. He studied economics and political science at Manchester University in the UK, graduating with a doctorate in 1970. He took up a lecturing post at the University of Iceland and was appointed professor in 1973. From 1966 until 1973 he was on the board of the youth wing of the Progressive Party and between 1971 and 1973 he sat on the party's executive board.

He moved to the People's Alliance and was elected to the *Alþingi* (Parliament) in 1978 as a member for Reykjavík. From 1980 until 1983,

when he failed to win re-election to parliament, Grímsson led the People's Alliance in the *Alþingi*. During 1987–96 he was party chairman and between 1988–91 served as the minister of finance. Between 1984–90 he held senior posts with Parliamentarians for Global Action, an international organization with a membership of 1,800 throughout the world. Grímsson also held positions in the Council of Europe during the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1995 he led the People's Alliance to a poor showing at the polls, in which they secured less than 15% of the vote. Shortly afterwards Grímsson announced his candidacy for the presidency at the following year's elections. In June 1996 he was elected with 41% of the vote, defeating three other candidates.

Career Peak

The presidency is a largely ceremonial office and Grímsson's election prompted some observers to fear he would politicize the position. His relationship with the then prime minister, Davíð Oddsson, had been poor ever since the two had clashed as leaders of rival parties. Nevertheless, Grímsson was reappointed as president for a second term (without an election as there were no opposing candidates) and then re-elected by popular vote on 26 June 2004 with nearly 86% of the poll. During his presidency Grímsson has used his international profile to vigorously promote Iceland and its industrial potential, particularly in emerging sectors such as information technology. His reappointment in Aug. 2008 was unopposed.

In Dec. 2009 the *Alþingi* narrowly passed legislation to reimburse the UK and the Netherlands governments for bailing out British and Dutch depositors in Icesave, an Internet operation owned by the failed Icelandic bank Landsbanki. Grímsson, however, refused to sign the law and in a national referendum in March 2010 a majority rejected the measure and settlement negotiations continued. In Dec. 2010 new reimbursement legislation was proposed, including better repayment terms for Iceland, and was passed by the *Alþingi* in Feb. 2011. However, Grímsson again refused to sign the measure, leading to a further referendum and another voter rejection in April that year. In June 2012 he was elected for a record fifth presidential term.

In April 2016 Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, who had been elected in 2013, was ensnared in revelations by investigative journalists about the secret offshore financial holdings of prominent international figures. Having unsuccessfully sought Grímsson's dissolution of the *Alþingi*, Gunnlaugsson resigned as premier and was replaced by Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson, also of the Progressive Party.

Having announced that he would not run for a sixth term in office, Grímsson was replaced by the winner of the June 2016 presidential election Guðni Jóhannesson.

Grindeanu, Sorin (Romania)

Introduction

Sorin Grindeanu of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) was sworn in as prime minister on 4 Jan. 2017, at the head of a coalition with the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats.

Early Life

Grindeanu was born on 5 Dec. 1973 in Caransebeş and graduated from the mathematics and computer science faculty at the University of Timișoara West in 1997. He then undertook further studies in Germany, Portugal and the UK.

In Nov. 1996 he became a member of the PSD. He held several positions at the University of Timișoara West between 1998 and 2001, while also holding senior roles in the PSD youth organization in Timiș. From 2001–04 he was the director of the Timiș County youth and sports department and from 2005–08 he had senior management posts in two private companies.

Having sat on Timișoara's local council since 2004, in June 2008 Grindeanu became the city's deputy mayor and remained in office until Jan. 2013. After entering parliament in 2012, he was elected deputy secretary general of the PSD in 2013 and served as minister of communications and the information society from 2014–15. In June 2016 he was elected president of the Timiș County Council.

At the general election of Dec. 2016 the PSD won the most seats and initially nominated Sevil Shhaideh to be prime minister, but she was rejected by President Klaus Iohannis. Grindeanu was subsequently proposed as an alternative candidate by PSD leader Liviu Dragnea on 28 Dec., and Iohannis confirmed the selection two days later.

Career Peak

Grindeanu took office on the back of an electoral victory secured on promised increases in spending on healthcare, wages and pensions. In Feb. 2017 there were widespread protests—the largest since the fall of communism—when the government proposed decriminalizing most forms of official corruption. Grindeanu responded by attempting to reassure both the domestic and international community that his government took anti-corruption measures seriously.

On 15 June 2017 after the PSD withdrew its support of Grindeanu on grounds of disagreement on foreign policy matters, the ministers of his cabinet resigned. Grindeanu, however, refused to step down and remained in office until 21 June when the Parliament officially removed him with the vote of a motion of no-confidence. A week later he was replaced by Mihai Tudose.

Gromyko, Andrei Andreyevich (Russia)

Introduction

Soviet foreign minister from 1957–85, Andrei Gromyko served under the successive leaderships of Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev before being made president of the Supreme Soviet. During his long tenure he was involved in many of the key events of Soviet history. A powerful negotiator and leading Soviet diplomat, he helped calm the Cuban Missile Crisis, implemented the policy of détente with the West and was significant in setting up the SALT treaties.

Early Life

Gromyko was born on 18 July 1909 in Starye Gromyki, Belarus (then part of the Tsarist Russian Empire). After studying agriculture at the Institute of Economics in Minsk, during which time he joined the Communist Party, he continued to work at the Institute from 1936–39. He began his diplomatic career in 1939 joining the Soviet Embassy in Washington, DC. In 1943 he became the Soviet ambassador to the US, attending the Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam conferences at the end of World War II.

In 1946 he was made deputy foreign minister and deputy of the Supreme Soviet. At the same time he became a UN representative, going on to use his power of veto 25 times. From 1952–53 he had a short spell as ambassador to Britain before being made Soviet foreign minister in 1957.

Career Peak

Over the next three decades Gromyko was involved in all aspects of Soviet diplomacy, representing the governments of Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, Konstantin Chernenko and Mikhail Gorbachev. Under Khrushchev he was a key negotiator in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, offering assurance to US president Kennedy of the defensive nature of the Soviet missiles and securing Khrushchev's agreement to remove nuclear missiles in exchange for America's non-aggression towards Cuba. As part of Brezhnev's government he joined the Politburo in 1973. During the 1970s he pursued the policy of détente, facilitating a rapprochement with the West. This included a non-aggression pact with West Germany and the meeting between Brezhnev and Richard Nixon which resulted in the SALT I treaty that curbed the development of certain nuclear projects. Although US–Russian relations soured towards the end of the decade with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the failure of either side to ratify SALT II.

Gromyko retained his position throughout the short tenures of Andropov and Chernenko and was made first deputy chairman of the council of ministers in 1983. When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, Gromyko was appointed to the largely ceremonial role of chairman of the presidium. He was replaced as foreign minister by Eduard Shevardnadze, later the president of Georgia.

Later Life

Gromyko was part of a dying breed of Soviet politicians. During his 3 years as chairman Gorbachev was implementing his policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* paving the way for the break up of the Soviet Union. 3 years later Gromyko was a victim of Gorbachev's regime overhaul and ousted along with many old members. He was forced to tender his resignation and his Politburo seat. Gorbachev replaced him as chairman. The following year Gromyko was expelled from the Central Committee. He died on 2 July 1989 in Moscow.

Gross, Stanislav (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Completing a meteoric rise through the ranks of his party, Stanislav Gross was appointed Czech prime minister on 26 July 2004. The former railway technician and train driver became, at the age of 34, the youngest prime minister in Europe. Once described as the 'crown prince' of the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), Gross was expected to use his slick negotiating skills to rebuild the splintered leading coalition and pursue economic reforms to encourage businesses and cut unemployment. However, he was soon beset by allegations of financial impropriety and resigned his position in April 2005.

Early Life

Stanislav Gross was born in a working-class district of Prague on 30 Oct. 1969. After primary school, he attended a vocational secondary school that combined basic schooling with an apprenticeship as a train driver and mechanic at Prague's Vršovice railway depot. He then did 2 years' military service in the province of Olomouc, before joining the social democrats in 1989, the year of the collapse of the Communist party and the 'velvet revolution' that culminated in the election as president of the playwright and former dissident, Václav Havel. In 1990 Gross became leader of the ČSSD's youth wing, gaining a seat on the party executive in 1992. At this time, reforms to the Czechoslovak economy were leading to hardship, particularly in the east of the country. A strong separatist movement in Slovakia led eventually to the formal split of the Czech and Slovak republics into independent states on 1 Jan. 1993. Later in 1993, Gross joined the Czech Republic's new parliament in Prague. Václav Klaus headed the right-of-centre coalition government. Gross began a law degree at Prague's Charles University in 1993, combining study with his work as a MP, although questions over the veracity of the degree (awarded in 1999) rumble on.

Gross moved quickly through the party ranks, becoming chief whip in 1995 and deputy chairman of the parliament in 1998, the year in which Václav Havel was re-elected president. Miloš Zeman led the ČSSD to its first victory in the ensuing legislative elections, promising to prevent a repeat of the 1997 economic downturn and vowing to slow privatization and restore state control. On 4 April 2000 Gross was appointed minister of the interior, where he became known for his hard-line approach to law and order, organizing crackdowns on traffic violators and brothel owners. Gross reportedly employed many police officials who were graduates of the pre-1989 communist police schools. At the ČSSD party congress in 2001 Gross was elected vice-chairman. He was appointed deputy to prime minister Vladimír Špidla on 15 July 2002, following ČSSD's victory in the national elections with 30% of the vote. Špidla headed a three-party coalition that included the centrist Christian Democratic Union–Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU–ČSL) and the right-of-centre Freedom Union, but splits soon emerged, both in the coalition and within the ČSSD. Gross and other ČSSD 'pragmatists' became frustrated with what they saw as the slow pace of public finance reforms. Following a disastrous showing for ČSSD in the Czech Republic's first European Parliament elections, the coalition collapsed and Špidla resigned on 26 June 2004.

Career Peak

President Václav Klaus swiftly appointed Gross prime minister and charged him with forming a government. Living up to his reputation as a skilled negotiator, Gross succeeded in rebuilding the three-way coalition to recover its parliamentary majority. He appeared to have reconciled the Freedom

Union's desire for deeper and faster reforms to public spending and the welfare state with the more centrist and socially-oriented priorities of the KDU-ČSL and the leftist elements of his own party. Gross appeared regularly in the Czech and international media, but little detail about his vision for the country emerged, other than a promise that the government would be 'energetic' and would aim to boost economic growth, cut unemployment and tackle the budget deficit.

In 2005 Gross was the subject of allegations about his personal finances, particularly concerning the financing of an apartment he owned in Prague. In March 2005 the Christian Democrats left the ruling coalition, leaving Gross as head of a minority government. He survived a vote of no confidence after the Communists abstained but the scandal rolled on and he resigned on 25 April 2005.

Guebuza, Armando (Mozambique)

Introduction

Armando Guebuza, a veteran of Mozambique's fight for independence and one of the nation's wealthiest businessmen, was chosen as the ruling party's candidate for the 2004 presidential elections. Having won a large majority, he took office in Feb. 2005 and was re-elected for a second term in Oct. 2009, remaining in office until Jan. 2015.

Early Life

Armando Emilio Guebuza was born on 20 Jan. 1943 in Murrupula, in the northern province of Nampula. Politically active from an early age, he was elected in 1963 as president of the Mozambican Centre of African Students, a group created by Eduardo Mondlane, then the leader of Mozambique's fight for independence from Portugal. Later that year Guebuza joined the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and in 1965 was elected to the organization's central and executive committees. Having undergone military training in Tanzania, Guebuza was involved in guerrilla fighting against the Portuguese administration in northern Mozambique. Following Mondlane's assassination in 1969, FRELIMO was led by Uria Simango and then Samora Machel. Under Machel it grew to include over 7,000 guerrillas and by the early 1970s had control over much of northern and central Mozambique. Guebuza became a general and was also an inspector of the schools run by FRELIMO.

When Marcello Caetano was overthrown in a military coup in Portugal on 25 April 1974, independence was assured for Mozambique. Following the signing of the Lusaka Agreements later in 1974, Guebuza was appointed to the transitional government that led the country to full independence in June 1975. He then served as minister of the interior in the single-party Marxist government led by President Machel. Guebuza was responsible for implementing the notorious '20-24' decree, which gave Portuguese settlers 24 h to leave the country, carrying a maximum of 20 kg of luggage. He went on to serve as vice minister of defence in 1980, against a backdrop of warfare with the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), which was backed by the apartheid government in South Africa. While Guebuza was again minister of the interior (1983-85) he was heavily identified with the forcible resettlement of unemployed residents of Maputo and Beira to work-camps in the isolated northern province of Niassa.

Joaquim Chissano became president in 1986, following Machel's death in an aircraft crash, and Guebuza was appointed minister of transport. In 1990 he headed the FRELIMO government's delegation to negotiations with RENAMO, leading to the signing of the Rome Peace Agreement in Oct. 1992. Having formally renounced Marxism in 1989, the government set about developing a market-oriented economy with Guebuza spearheading many of the reforms. He developed business interests in many sectors, including brewing, investment banking and shipping. In the country's first multi-party elections in 1994, won by FRELIMO, Guebuza was elected head of its parliamentary group. He retained that position in the elections of 1999, when Joaquim Chissano again led FRELIMO to victory.

Chissano announced that he would stand down at the 2004 elections. During FRELIMO's national congress in 2002, Guebuza was elected the party's secretary-general and presidential candidate. His uncompromising nationalist stance and promise to continue the economic reforms of his

predecessor won him a large majority in the presidential polling in Dec. 2004 (with 63.7% of the vote), although RENAMO alleged electoral fraud. In parliamentary elections at the same time FRELIMO retained its majority in the National Assembly.

Career Peak

Guebuza was sworn in as president on 2 Feb. 2005, pledging to fight poverty, tackle corruption and seek further foreign investment to build infrastructure. In mid-2005 a trade and investment agreement was signed with the USA, whose officials cited Mozambique as 'a positive model because of its impressive track record on democracy, political stability, economic growth, openness to foreign direct investment and expanding exports'. In July 2006 the World Bank cancelled most of the country's debt under a scheme backed by the major industrialized nations.

Guebuza and FRELIMO increased their respective vote shares in the presidential and parliamentary elections in Oct. 2009, although RENAMO again disputed the results. In Sept. 2010 there were riots in Maputo and other cities over food price rises and several people were killed as police fired on protesters.

In Sept. 2012 Guebuza was re-elected as head of FRELIMO. In a surprise cabinet reshuffle a month later, he dismissed Aires Ali as prime minister after only 9 months in the post and replaced him with Alberto Vaquina, previously a provincial governor.

Renewed military and political friction between the government and RENAMO through 2013 led to the latter's announcement in Oct. that it was abandoning the 1992 peace accord, prompting fears of a return to civil war.

Guebuza was succeeded as president by the winner of the Oct. 2014 elections, Felipe Nyusi (also of FRELIMO). Since the constitution does not permit three successive terms, Guebuza did not contest the election.

Guevara, Ernesto 'Che' (Cuba)

Introduction

Argentine-born Ernesto Guevara, commonly known as El Che or Che, was a key figure in the success of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and subsequently a member of the government of Fidel Castro. His exploits in Cuba and engagement with revolutionary guerrilla movements across South America and Africa contributed to his status as a counter-cultural icon.

Early Life

Ernesto Guevara, the eldest of five children, was born on 14 June 1928 in Rosario, Argentina, to a middle-class family of Spanish and Irish descent. Exposed to politically-leftist thought from an early age by his father (who was an ardent supporter of the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War), the young Guevara developed an interest in Marxism. This was reinforced by his experiences travelling in South America as a student doctor, where he witnessed the extreme poverty faced by much of the population.

Convinced that armed struggle represented the only solution to the region's problems, he joined Cuba's revolutionary 26th of July Movement after meeting the organization's leader, Fidel Castro, while in Mexico in 1955.

Career Peak

Guevara played a key role in Castro's war against the Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista, both as a military leader and political ideologist, galvanizing Cuba's population against the US-backed regime. Following over 2 years of guerrilla warfare against the Cuban army and police, Batista was overthrown in Jan. 1959. Castro was elected prime minister the next month. Guevara was subsequently appointed president of the National Bank of Cuba and also served as minister of industries from 1961-65, during which time he championed nationalization, planned extensive land redistribution reforms and ran a nationwide literacy campaign. He also advocated allegiance to the Soviet Union—a move that caused the USA to freeze diplomatic relations with Cuba, which were only fully re-established in 2015. Cuba was also subjected to a longstanding US trade embargo that crippled its economy.

By 1964 Guevara had established himself on the world stage, travelling internationally as an ambassador for Cuba. His status as a revolutionary statesman was sealed with a speech to the United Nations in 1964, in which he criticized the apartheid structure in South Africa and the USA's treatment of its own black population. In 1965 Guevara resigned from his positions in the Cuban government and left the country to spread the revolutionary message to other parts of the developing world.

Later Life

Guevara travelled initially to the Congo, where he spent several months training rebel forces in guerrilla warfare and Marxist ideology. However, after becoming disillusioned with the rebel leadership, he secretly entered Bolivia in Nov. 1966 in order to lead a rebellion against President René Barrientos. Like Batista, Barrientos was supported by the USA and had risen to power following a CIA-backed coup in 1964. Guevara was, however, captured by the Bolivian army in Oct. 1967 and executed by firing squad shortly after.

His remains were discovered in 1997 and returned to Cuba where he was laid to rest in a purpose-built mausoleum in Santa Clara. Although Guevara's legacy continues to divide opinion, he is the enduring symbol of the quintessential revolutionary.

Gül, Abdullah (Turkey)

Introduction

Abdullah Gül was elected president on 28 Aug. 2007. His background in Islamist politics and membership of political parties banned under the country's secular constitution stoked widespread concern when he was nominated as a presidential candidate. A former prime minister and close ally of the incumbent premier, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Gül has taken a moderate line since 2001, advocating a pro-Western agenda and eventual EU membership.

Early Life

Abdullah Gül was born on 29 Oct. 1950 in Kayseri. He graduated in economics from İstanbul University in 1971 and began an academic career. From 1980–83 he taught economics at the Sakarya School of Engineering and Architecture. As a devout Muslim, and having received a PhD in 1983, he joined the Islamic Development Bank (in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia) as an economist.

Returning to Turkey in 1991, Gül entered politics. Campaigning for the Islamist Welfare Party, he was elected representative for Kayseri. He rose through the party ranks to become state minister and speaker for the government of Necmettin Erbakan in 1996. He was initially critical of Turkey's overtures towards the West and opposed EU membership. His ambitions were curtailed in 1997 by a military-backed campaign to oust the government. The following year a ban was imposed on the Welfare Party which was said to threaten the secular constitution. Gül joined the Virtue Party, contesting its leadership in 2000, but this party was also banned in June 2001.

In Aug. 2001 Gül joined Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's newly formed Justice and Development Party (AKP), which presented itself as pro-Western and democratic. In the 2002 parliamentary elections Erdoğan was barred from standing because he had a criminal conviction for reading an Islamic poem at a political rally. Nevertheless, the AKP attracted voters dissatisfied with the ruling government and won an outright victory to replace the three-party coalition. Two weeks after the election the party nominated Gül for the premiership.

Career Peak

As prime minister, Gül wanted to prove that Turkey could operate as both a Muslim and democratic state, and was committed to steering Turkey towards EU membership. He announced plans to reform the laws on the freedom of expression and human rights, supported further privatization and sought to achieve a modernized and efficient public administration.

In Dec. 2002 President Ahmet Necdet Sezer agreed to constitutional changes that would allow Erdoğan to stand for a parliamentary seat and thus become eligible for the premiership. Erdoğan returned to parliament in

a by-election in March 2003 and was appointed prime minister. Gül became foreign minister, working to achieve an EU accession date, although this was thwarted by the continued impasse over the status of Cyprus.

Prime Minister Erdoğan announced in April 2007 that Gül would be the AKP candidate in the 2007 presidential election. This sparked Turkey's most serious political crisis in a decade, with mass protests in the big cities in support of secularism. The military also warned that it would defend secularism. The AKP was forced to call early elections for 22 July, which it won decisively. Gül was re-nominated as the AKP candidate and on 28 Aug. he was elected president in the third round of voting. The chief of the general staff absented himself from the swearing-in ceremony.

In his inauguration speech, Gül sought to dispel secularist fears of an AKP Islamist agenda. However, parliament's vote to remove the ban on women wearing headscarves at universities in Feb. 2008 was seized on by secularists as evidence that Gül was attempting to introduce Islamic rule. In June the Constitutional Court rejected the move in a ruling that was viewed as a setback for the AKP government.

In July 2009 Gül approved controversial government legislation allowing civilian courts to prosecute military personnel for offences against the state. Then in Aug. 2011, after Turkey's top military leadership had resigned en masse in a dispute over promotions, he moved quickly to appoint replacements and assert civilian control over the powerful and traditionally secular armed forces.

Gül continued to court controversy towards the twilight years of his mandate by supporting a number of laws that opposition groups regarded as unconstitutional. Increased restrictions on freedom of speech and the press led also to a spate of demonstrations and civil unrest around the country that eventually courted international attention during the Taksim Gezi Park sit-in of May–June 2013.

Gül's 7 year term as president came to an end on 28 Aug. 2014 when he was succeeded by prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan—the first directly appointed president in Turkey's history.

Gunnlaugsson, Sigmundur Davíð (Iceland)

Introduction

Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson was sworn in as prime minister on 23 May 2013. Chairman of the liberal Progressive Party, he was 38 when elected to power, making him one of the world's youngest heads of government.

Early Life

Gunnlaugsson was born in Reykjavík on 12 March 1975. His father was a prominent businessman and chairman of Icelandair, the country's main airline. Gunnlaugsson graduated in business and economics from the University of Iceland before reading international relations and public administration at Copenhagen University. He earned his doctorate in economics and political science from the University of Oxford in England.

From 2000–07 he worked as a journalist at RUV, the Icelandic national broadcaster. He was elected to the *Alþingi* for the Reykjavík North constituency in April 2009, having become chairman of the Progressive Party earlier in the year. He was appointed to the parliamentary foreign affairs committee and in 2010 joined the EU–Iceland joint parliamentary committee.

His popular standing was boosted by the European Free Trade Association's ruling in Jan. 2013 that Iceland did not break European law by refusing to compensate foreign depositors after the collapse of the privately-owned Icelandic bank, Landsbanki, in 2008. The Progressive Party had opposed a negotiated settlement with the UK and the Netherlands in favour of taking the matter to court. Its stance was resoundingly supported in a national referendum. EFTA's decision saved the government hundreds of millions of euros.

In the general election of 27 April 2013 the Progressive Party gained 24.4% of the vote against 26.7% for the Independence Party, but both won 19 seats. Gunnlaugsson had campaigned on a promise to force foreign creditors of Iceland's collapsed banks to return a portion of the profits accruing from the credit, which would then be used to write down household mortgages.

In compliance with the preference of President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson and following the Progressive Party's impressive gains in the general election—they had only won nine seats at the 2009 elections compared to 16 for the Independence Party—Gunnlaugsson was asked to form a government. He became prime minister of a centre-right coalition with the Independence Party leader, Bjarni Benediktsson, becoming minister of finance and economic affairs.

Career Peak

Eurosceptic in outlook, Gunnlaugsson's coalition government decided in Sept. 2013 to suspend indefinitely Iceland's negotiations, which had begun in 2010, to become a member of the European Union. Then in Feb. 2014 the government said that it would withdraw its membership application altogether, without holding a referendum on the issue. In March 2015 the government confirmed that it no longer regarded Iceland as an EU candidate country despite the protests of opposition parties. In June 2015 parliament approved measures to gradually dismantle the capital controls in place since the financial crisis in 2008.

Gunnlaugsson resigned as prime minister on 7 April following the release of the 'Panama Papers'—a set of leaked documents from Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca detailing client information for over 200,000 offshore companies—revealing that Gunnlaugsson's family had sheltered money in overseas accounts. Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson, also of the Progressive Party, took over as prime minister.

Gusenbauer, Alfred (Austria)

Introduction

Alfred Gusenbauer became Austrian chancellor on 11 Jan. 2007. He was leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and led an SPÖ–ÖVP (Austrian People's Party) coalition. The coalition collapsed in July 2008, a month after Gusenbauer was replaced as party leader. The SPÖ won the general election and another SPÖ–ÖVP coalition was formed, under the chancellorship of new SPÖ leader Werner Faymann.

Early Life

Alfred Gusenbauer was born on 8 Feb. 1960 in St Pölten, capital of the northern state of Lower Austria. After high school he studied science, philosophy and jurisprudence at the University of Vienna. In 1987 he obtained a doctorate in political science. Gusenbauer was politically active during university and joined the SPÖ's Young Socialists in support of the disarmament movement. From 1984–90 he was the group's federal leader, also serving as vice-president of Socialist Youth International from 1985–89. In 1989 he became Socialist International leader.

Gusenbauer was a senior research fellow in the economic policy department of the Lower Austria chamber of labour from 1990–99. In 1991 he was elected SPÖ chairman in Ybbs an der Donau and became Lower Austria's representative in the federal council (Bundesrat). In the same year he was a member of the Austrian delegation to the parliamentary meeting of the Council of Europe and from 1995–98 he served as chairman of the Council's social committee. He was chairman of the Bundesrat committee for development co-operation from 1996–99.

In 2000 the SPÖ elected Gusenbauer as its secretary-general. Under his leadership the SPÖ improved its vote in the 2002 elections but lost to Wolfgang Schüssel's ÖVP. In 2006 Gusenbauer and the SPÖ suffered public discredit for its links to the BAWAG scandal, in which directors of an Austrian bank owned by an SPÖ-linked trade union were accused of corruption, embezzlement and illicit speculation. In the run-up to the 2006 elections polls put the ÖVP ahead but the SPÖ emerged victorious, though unable to form a workable government. Gusenbauer thus negotiated an SPÖ–ÖVP 'grand coalition'.

Career Peak

Under the terms of the coalition, Gusenbauer was forced to abandon several high profile pre-election pledges including the scrapping of university tuition fees and the cancellation of a €2 bn. contract for 18 Eurofighter jets. Gusenbauer's term began amid student demonstrations and some dissent from within his own party.

Key government plans included lowering the voting age from 18 to 16 and extending future parliamentary tenures from 4 to 5 years. Gusenbauer pledged to increase spending by up to €1 bn. per year to 2010 on welfare, infrastructure, research and education, while aiming to reverse the budget deficit. He reiterated Austrian support for the European integration of the former Yugoslav countries but was sceptical towards Turkey's bid for full EU membership.

With the SPÖ beset by infighting over Gusenbauer's ability to lead the party, a leadership contest was held in June 2008. Gusenbauer was replaced as party leader by Werner Faymann. A month later the ÖVP resigned from the governing coalition, forcing Gusenbauer to call a snap election for Sept. The SPÖ emerged as the largest party but with weakened support. A new SPÖ–ÖVP took office in Dec. 2008, with Faymann as chancellor.

Gusmão, Xanana (Timor-Leste)

Introduction

Independent Timor-Leste's first president, Xanana Gusmão, having led the independence movement for over two decades, came to power in a landslide victory at elections in April 2002. He stood down in May 2007 but was subsequently appointed prime minister in Aug. that year.

Early Life

Xanana Gusmão was born José Alexandre Gusmão on 20 June 1946 in Laleia, Manatuto. After studying at a Jesuit seminary in Soibada and then at Dare, he became a civil servant.

He joined FRETILIN in 1974, becoming its leader in 1978. In 1981 he was elected commander-in-chief of its military wing and worked to integrate the various groups fighting for independence.

In Nov. 1992 he was captured by the Indonesian army and sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of subversion but remained the figurehead of the independence movement. Following an appeal from then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Gusmão was released after the referendum of Sept. 1999 in which an overwhelming majority of Timorese voted for independence.

Timor-Leste gained independence on 20 May 2002 and Gusmão was inaugurated as president, having won a landslide victory in elections the previous month.

Career Peak

Gusmão appealed for reconciliation and an end of violence against those who opposed independence. The authority of the state and its institutions, however, remained fragile. In April 2006, 600 striking soldiers who had been sacked by Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri demonstrated in Dili. The protests turned into wider factional violence across the country and the government called in foreign troops led by Australia in May to restore law and order. At the same time, relations between president and prime minister broke down. In June Alkatiri stood down and was replaced by José Ramos-Horta. A UN peacekeeping mission was then set up in Aug. 2006.

Gusmão did not contest presidential elections held in April–May 2007, announcing his intention to run instead for prime minister as the leader of a new National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), having become disillusioned with FRETILIN. His close ally José Ramos-Horta succeeded him as president. Despite FRETILIN winning the largest number of seats in parliamentary elections in June 2007, Gusmão formed a coalition government and was sworn in as prime minister on 8 Aug. 2007.

Like then President Ramos-Horta, Gusmão was also targeted by rebel soldiers in Feb. 2008 in a separate attack, but was unhurt. He described the incident as a coup attempt and imposed a state of emergency.

In Oct. 2009 Gusmão's government survived an opposition vote of confidence in parliament over its controversial release of a pro-Indonesian militia leader accused of war crimes against Timorese citizens in 1999.

Acknowledging public concern over allegations of corruption against senior officials, in Feb. 2010 the government appointed the country's first anti-corruption commissioner.

In parliamentary elections in July 2012, the CNRT became the largest party with 30 seats, ahead of FRETILIN with 25.

In 2014 Timorese relations with Australia became increasingly fractious over spying allegations and a commercial dispute.

In Jan. 2014 Gusmão confirmed his intention to retire as premier in Sept. that year. However, he subsequently retracted his decision and was expected to remain in post until elections in 2017 when his term limit would have been reached but resigned as prime minister in Feb. 2015, with Rui Maria de Araújo taking over the premiership on 16 Feb. However, Gusmão remained in the government as minister of planning and strategic investment.

Guterres, António (Portugal)

Introduction

António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres was Portuguese prime minister between 1999–2002, representing the Partido Socialista (Socialist Party, PSP). On the centre-left, he was the first European leader to embrace ‘new Socialism’ at the end of the 1990s, an example followed by Tony Blair among others. A pro-European, Guterres led Portugal into the single currency in 1999. But heavy public spending with little evident reward cost the PSP heavily in local elections in Dec. 1999. Guterres resigned the premiership and his leadership of the PSP.

Early Life

Guterres was born on 30 April 1949 in Santos o Velho, Lisbon. Between 1966–72 he studied electronic engineering at the capital’s Instituto Superior Técnico. A Catholic activist in the Juventude Universitária Católica (1968–72), Guterres took to politics during the revolution of 1974, when he joined the PSP. A participant in the post-revolution provisional governments, Guterres was elected to the Assembly in 1976 where he served in the ministry of economics and finance until 1979. A member of the Committee on European Integration, which negotiated Portugal’s entry into the EU in 1986, he returned to domestic politics the following year, working to strengthen the PSP in opposition by adapting centrist policies. In 1992 he succeeded President Jorge Sampaio as leader of the PSP.

Career Peak

In the 1995 elections Guterres was elected prime minister with 43.9% of votes, ending 10 years of rule by the centre-right Partido Social Democrata (Social Democrats, PSD). Winning with a centrist manifesto, Guterres pledged to concentrate on social welfare, education and crime. He also planned a strict budgetary policy to prepare Portugal for the single currency. In his first term investment increased and public services and transport were improved. Unemployment fell to 5%. Portugal was accepted into the single currency in 1999.

In Oct. 1999 Guterres was re-elected prime minister with 44.1% of votes. The PSP’s parliamentary seats increased from 112 to 115 but the party strength fell short of an absolute majority. Left-wing parties, including the Communists, also increased their representation. Following a 7 year term as vice president of the Socialist International, Guterres was elected chairman in Nov. of the same year, succeeding the former French prime minister, Pierre Mauroy. For his second term, Guterres maintained a tight budgetary policy, concentrating on health care, welfare, taxes and justice.

On an international level, the transition of Portugal’s former colony Timor-Leste to self-government was hindered by attacks from Indonesian militia. A mass influx of refugees was coupled with anti-Indonesia demonstrations in Portugal. Guterres pledged a €264 m. aid package.

2000 was economically successful with a GDP increase of 3.5%. Unemployment was low as were interest rates, although inflation remained a worry. In 2000 a 10% increase in oil prices and concerns over rising crime levels led to public discontent. In Sept. the interior minister Fernando Gomes was sacked. Taking advantage of the government’s weakness, the opposition mounted an unsuccessful no-confidence vote. Guterres refused early elections.

In the first half of 2000, Portugal took over the EU presidency. Guterres promoted the idea of labour mobility within the EU by setting minimum

levels of academic competence in maths, foreign languages and technology. Plans for tax harmonization were discussed at a summit at Oporto in June. In 2001 Guterres called for more power for the European Commission and the European parliament.

Increased public spending caused economic problems. Opposition politicians criticized the €400 m. invested in the hosting of the Euro 2004 football tournament. In Dec. 2001 the PSD’s success at the expense of the PSP led Guterres to resign as prime minister and to call early elections. In 2002 the PSD leader José Manuel Durão Barroso replaced him as prime minister.

Later Life

Guterres initially continued in his role as president of Socialist International but in June 2005 became the new High Commissioner for Refugees at the United Nations. In Oct. 2016 he was elected as Secretary-General of the United Nations, to take office at the beginning of 2017.

Gutiérrez, Lucío (Ecuador)

Introduction

A former army colonel and leader of a short lived coup in 2000, Lucío Edwin Gutiérrez Borbúa was elected president in Nov. 2002 on a leftwing populist agenda. Although politically inexperienced, his promises to tackle widespread poverty and corruption found favour with Ecuador’s poor majority.

Early Life

Gutiérrez was born on 23 March 1957 in Quito. He spent his early years in Tena, Napo province, before joining the army at the age of 15. After graduating in 1977 from the Colegio Militar Eloy Alfaro (military college) in Quito, he studied civil engineering at the Escuela Politécnica del Ejército and later business administration. He rose to the rank of colonel.

Unknown to the public, Gutiérrez came onto the political scene in Jan. 2000 during popular protests against the government of President Jamil Mahuad. On 21 Jan. 2000 Gutiérrez joined forces with the Quechua leader Antonio Vargas Huatatoaca to depose the president in a bloodless coup and form a junta government. Despite popular support for Vargas, and Gutiérrez’s non-participation in the junta, international bodies were unhappy with the new government’s military connection. Pressure from the UN, the OAS and neighbouring countries, forced Vargas to hand over power to a civilian leader just 5 h later. Mahuad’s vice president Gustavo Noboa was chosen to see out the president’s term.

Gutiérrez was subsequently imprisoned for 6 months for his role in the coup and dismissed from the army. On his release he began campaigning for presidential elections. He founded the Sociedad Patriótica 21 de Enero (21 Jan. Patriotic Society) which found support with the indigenous party, Pachacutik, and other leftwing groups. In his campaign he highlighted the institutionalized political corruption of established politics and his distance from traditional parties. As well as tackling corruption he pledged security, peace and employment.

In the first round of presidential elections in Oct. 2002, he gained 20.4% of votes, more than any other of the 11 candidates. His success caused some nervousness in the international financial community. During his second round of campaigning, he spent 3 days visiting investors and bankers in the US, promising to honour Ecuador’s debt repayments and keep the recent dollarization. Initially campaigning in military fatigues he soon adopted civilian clothes. In a second round run-off with the businessman Alvaro Noboa (no relation), Ecuador’s richest man, Gutiérrez took 54.3% of votes. But his supporters’ standing in congress remained small, with the traditional parties holding the majority of seats.

Career Peak

Gutiérrez’s election promises included tackling corruption, encouraging foreign investment and the growth of the tourism, agriculture and mining industries. He also aimed to balance budgets without lowering wages or imposing taxes while promising improved health care and cheaper housing

for the poor. He sought to negotiate a standby loan with the IMF to ease the country's economic problems. In a drive to rid the political system of corruption, he proposed a reduction in the members of parliament and a reform of political appointments.

Gutiérrez introduced a programme of unpopular austerity measures as the country struggled to meet its financial commitments. An attempt by several leading parties to impeach him failed in Nov. 2004 and Gutiérrez responded by restructuring the Supreme Court in his favour. He was reliant on the support of the Roldosista Party, led by exiled ex-President Abdala Bucaram, to do this and, when corruption charges were subsequently dropped against Bucaram, there was widespread unease at the deal. When Gutiérrez proposed using violence to end the resulting popular protests, he was removed from power by a vote of Congress. Gutiérrez claimed the vote was unconstitutional.

Later Life

In April 2005 Gutiérrez was controversially permitted to leave the country and go into exile in Brazil.

Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev (Nepal)

Introduction

King Gyanendra, as he was formerly known, was the last head of the 239-year-old monarchy that reigned in Nepal before the establishment of a federal republic in 2008. Gyanendra came to the throne in June 2001 when his elder brother King Birendra was murdered by his heir, the Crown Prince Dipendra, who then committed suicide. Gyanendra advocated the continuation of the constitutional monarchy established in 1990 but in Feb. 2005, faced with the continuing Maoist insurgency, he dismissed Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's government (for a second time) and assumed direct control. However, in 2006 popular resistance to his direct rule forced him to relinquish powers to parliament. In Sept. 2007 Maoist representatives, demanding the abolition of the monarchy, temporarily withdrew from the coalition interim government. Parliament then voted in Dec. to replace the monarchy with a federal democratic republic following Constituent Assembly elections in April 2008. The victory of the Maoists in the Constituent Assembly elections sealed Gyanendra's fate, and he was stripped of his title.

Early Life

Gyanendra was born on 7 July 1947 in Kathmandu to King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah and Crown Princess Indra Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah. He studied in Darjeeling in India, graduating in 1966, and 3 years later completed his studies at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan University. In addition to his business interests, he was involved in high-profile conservation work with the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation and the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wide Fund for Nature).

On 1 June 2001 Crown Prince Dipendra shot dead King Birendra, Queen Aishwarya and several other family members before turning the gun on himself. Dipendra was declared king, but died from his wounds three days later and Gyanendra succeeded him.

Career Peak

Early in Gyanendra's reign there was public unrest when an official report blamed Dipendra for the royal massacre, claiming that he was under the influence of alcohol and narcotics. However, Dipendra's sister, Ketaki, who was present at the massacre, confirmed the report's findings.

Birendra had ruled as absolute monarch until 1990, when he granted a multi-party democratic constitution. The ensuing years saw frequent changes of government and political instability. A month after Gyanendra came to the throne, Sher Bahadur Deuba became prime minister, amid growing violence by anti-monarchist Maoist rebels. Parliament was suspended in May 2002 in preparation for elections scheduled for Nov. 2002. However, in early Oct. 2002 Deuba, backed by the leading parliamentary parties, asked for the elections to be suspended and proposed an interim all-party government.

On 4 Oct. 2002 Gyanendra responded by dismissing Deuba and his cabinet. He appointed Lokendra Bahadur Chand of the monarchist RPP as prime minister, although opposition figures declared the move illegal. The King assumed the executive powers surrendered by the monarchy in 1990, postponed elections and announced that he would form a non-elected interim government. In a public broadcast he reaffirmed his commitment to the constitutional monarchy, but his actions were widely condemned.

In Jan. 2003 government forces and Maoist rebels agreed a ceasefire but this was short-lived. In May 2003 Chand resigned following pressure from opposition parties, which continued to refute the legitimacy of his appointment. When his replacement, Surya Bahadur Thapa, also resigned in May 2004, Sher Bahadur Deuba was reappointed the following month as prime minister. Meanwhile, the Maoist insurgency continued, with the rebels gaining control over much of the countryside.

In Feb. 2005 Gyanendra again dismissed Deuba and his government, taking power directly himself and imposing a state of emergency. Although he promised to restore multi-party democracy within 3 years, and the emergency was subsequently lifted in April 2005, his actions were criticized abroad, particularly by neighbouring India. In Sept. 2005 the Maoist rebels announced a unilateral ceasefire, but this was called off in early Jan. 2006 as explosions rocked the towns of Butwal, Pokhara and Bhairahawa. In April 2006, after prolonged strikes and demonstrations against his regime, Gyanendra announced the reinstatement of parliament and restoration of democracy.

An interim coalition government under Prime Minister Koirala subsequently began peace talks with the Maoist rebels as parliament voted to curtail the King's powers, including his command of the military. In Nov. 2006 the government and Maoists signed a peace deal and power-sharing agreement to end the 10 year civil war, and in Dec. a temporary constitution was agreed.

In April 2007 an interim government was formed that included Maoist ministers for the first time. However, in Sept. the Maoists withdrew, demanding the abolition of the monarchy ahead of elections to a new Constituent Assembly scheduled for Nov. The peace process was thrown into turmoil and the elections were postponed. However, to break the deadlock, Parliament voted into Dec. to abolish the monarchy and establish a republic after elections rearranged for April 2008. These elections resulted in victory for the Maoists who became the largest grouping in the new Assembly charged with writing a new constitution. The abolition of the monarchy was confirmed in the first session of the Assembly on 28 May 2008 with the foundation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. Gyanendra was provided with 2 weeks to vacate the Narayanhiti palace in Kathmandu, though he was not sent into exile abroad. Gyanendra's treatment by the new government was tempered by the high status the institution of the monarchy retains in Nepal, despite the deposed king's personal unpopularity.

Later Life

Despite the repossession of Narayanhiti palace and the crown jewels by the state, Gyanendra Shah (as he is now officially known) is rumoured to retain a substantial personal fortune, accumulated from his extensive tobacco, tea, hotel and property businesses. He resides in the relatively modest Nagarjung palace in northwestern Kathmandu.

Gyurcsány, Ferenc (Hungary)

Introduction

Multi-millionaire businessman Ferenc Gyurcsány became Hungary's prime minister on 29 Sept. 2004 after just 2 years in mainstream politics. His promotion came when his mentor and fellow Socialist Péter Medgyessy unexpectedly resigned. In the autumn of 2006 his premiership was undermined by violent anti-government protests in Budapest over revelations that he had misled voters at the April elections about the poor state of the public finances. His tarnished reputation declined further through 2008 as the global financial crisis highlighted the continuing poor performance and increasing vulnerability of the country's economy. He announced his intention to stand down as prime minister in March 2009 and left office in April.

Early Life

Gyurcsány was born in the town of Pápa in western Hungary on 4th June 1961. He entered the Janus Pannonius University in Pécs in 1980 and graduated with a teaching qualification in 1984. He remained at the university and studied economics for the next 6 years. During this time he was an active member of the Association of Young Communists (KISZ), becoming the president of its university wing in 1988. The forced resignation of Hungary's long-serving communist leader, János Kádár, in March 1988 led to the formation of a raft of opposition groups and political parties including the Hungarian Democratic Youth Association (DEMISZ), which Gyurcsány joined. He became its vice-president in 1989. Prime Minister Miklós Németh's decision to open Hungary's western border with Austria in Sept. 1989 precipitated the fall of the Iron Curtain and ushered in a new era. Gyurcsány graduated in economics in 1990 and worked as a financial consultant, establishing various companies and becoming Chief Executive Officer of ALTUS Investment and Assets Management Inc. in 1992, a post he held for the next 10 years.

Rumoured to be one of the wealthiest men in Hungary, Gyurcsány entered politics in 2002 as strategic adviser to the prime minister, Péter Medgyessy. Gyurcsány was promoted the following year to be the minister for sport and youth development. He was nominated as president of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP) for the northwestern county of Győr-Moson-Sopron in Jan. 2004. Opinion polls suggested that public support for the MSzP was dwindling and, in Aug. 2004, tensions flared between the Socialists and their coalition partners, the Free Democrats, over a cabinet reshuffle. Medgyessy resigned and, a week later, Gyurcsány was nominated to succeed his mentor by members of the MSzP. He was formally approved as Hungary's prime minister on 29 Sept. 2004.

Career Peak

Gyurcsány pledged to boost Hungary's economic growth, cut the spiralling budget deficit and steer the country on a course for euro zone membership in 2010. Although hailing from the social democratic wing of the MSzP and advocating pro-market policies (not least the controversial privatization of the health service), Gyurcsány said that his party should be responsive to the poor in society. However, his critics from the political right frequently questioned the precise origin of his wealth and dubbed him a 'salon socialist'. He gained a further term in office when the Socialists won the elections of April 2006, thereby becoming the first Hungarian party to retain power at an election since the fall of socialism in 1989.

In Sept. 2006 a leaked tape revealed that Gyurcsány had lied about the state of the public finances in the run-up to the April parliamentary elections, sparking riots in the capital. He resisted demands that he should resign and further violent protests ensued in Oct. that overshadowed the 50th anniversary commemorations of the 1956 anti-Soviet uprising in Hungary. In Feb. 2007 a commission of enquiry report into the disturbances was critical of the government and the police.

In March 2008 the government was defeated in an opposition-sponsored referendum calling for the abolition of fees for health care and higher education that had been introduced as an austerity measure to reduce the country's budget deficit. The following month Gyurcsány had to reshuffle his cabinet in response to the withdrawal of the Free Democrats from the ruling coalition. The public finances continued to deteriorate in 2008 under the impact of the global credit crisis, and in Oct. the International Monetary Fund, EU and World Bank put together a US\$25bn. loan rescue package for Hungary.

After Gyurcsány announced his resignation in March 2009, Gordon Bajnai was the only candidate to receive cross-party support. He took office after a constructive vote of no-confidence on 14 April.

Haarde, Geir (Iceland)

Introduction

Stepping down as prime minister in June 2006 following poor municipal election results, Halldór Ásgrímsson nominated Geir Haarde as his successor. An economist and former finance minister, Haarde has been the leader

of the centre-right Independence Party (SSF) since 2005. He retained the premiership following parliamentary elections in May 2007, but his second term was largely overshadowed by economic contraction and a banking collapse. Following mass protests throughout late 2008 and early 2009 and the breakdown of talks with his coalition partner, the Social Democrats, Haarde announced the resignation of the government on 26 Jan. 2009.

Early Life

Geir Hilmar Haarde was born in Reykjavik on 8 April 1951. He attended university in the USA, initially as a Wien scholar at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, graduating in economics. He subsequently received masters degrees from Johns Hopkins University (1975) and the University of Minnesota (1977) before returning to Reykjavik to work as an economist in the central bank's international department. He also lectured in economics at the University of Iceland from 1979–83.

In 1983 he began working as an adviser to the finance minister, a position he held until the parliamentary elections of 1987, when he entered the Alþingi (Parliament) as a representative of the centre-right SSF. For years the country's largest party, the SSF had become embroiled in divisive leadership struggles in the mid-1980s and received only 27% of votes cast in the 1987 election.

Haarde became a member of the Nordic Council in 1991, the year in which the SSF, reunited under Davíð Oddsson, claimed almost 40% of the popular vote in parliamentary elections. Haarde served as a member of the foreign affairs committee (1991–98) and joined the executive committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (1994–98). From April 1998 to Sept. 2005 he served as minister of finance in an SSF–Progressive Party (PP) coalition, led by Oddsson. The government's free-market reforms stimulated strong economic growth, underpinned by the fisheries sector and aluminium production.

Appointed foreign minister in Sept. 2005, Haarde served under Halldór Ásgrímsson (of the PP), who had replaced Oddsson as prime minister a year earlier. Haarde was elected chairman of the SSF in an uncontested election following Oddsson's departure. When Ásgrímsson resigned the premiership in the wake of his party's poor showing in Reykjavik's municipal elections on 27 May 2006 he nominated Haarde as his successor as prime minister.

Career Peak

Haarde was inaugurated on 15 June 2006. He pledged to continue diversifying the economy away from its dependence on fisheries and welcomed the opening of a controversial aluminium smelter at Reyðarfjörður. He also promised to tackle the overheating economy and bring inflation down to around 2.5%. Haarde confirmed Iceland's contribution to international peace-keeping forces in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. In Oct. 2006 the government lifted Iceland's longstanding moratorium on commercial whaling. Following legislative elections in May 2007, in which the SSF remained the largest party, the Progressive Party (FSF) withdrew from the ruling coalition and was replaced by the Social Democratic Alliance, giving Haarde a more secure governing majority.

However, by 2008 Iceland's economy was in serious difficulties owing to the huge amount of foreign debt incurred by its banks. This led in Oct. to a banking meltdown, described by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the largest collapse in banking history relative to the size of an economy. As the currency tumbled, Haarde's government took control of all three of the country's major banks in an effort to stabilize the financial system and in Nov. applied for emergency loan support from the IMF, which agreed a US\$2.1bn. 2 year standby programme. Nordic countries also agreed to provide an extra US\$2.5bn. The IMF meanwhile forecast that Iceland's economy would contract by about 10% in 2009.

Following demonstrations demanding that the government resign in the wake of the economic collapse, Haarde called a general election for 25 April, two years early. Nevertheless just days later, following the breakdown of relations with the Social Democrats, Haarde announced the resignation of his government. He was replaced by Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir of the Social Democrats, who became Iceland's first female prime minister.

Later Life

Haarde was appointed Iceland's ambassador to the United States in Feb. 2015.

Habré, Hissène (Chad)

Introduction

Hissène Habré served as president from 1982–90 after a brief period as prime minister from Aug. 1978–March 1979. His time in office was defined by violence and human rights abuses, and in May 2016 he was convicted of crimes against humanity by a court in Senegal and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Early Life

Born in 1942 in Faya-Largeau, northern Chad, into a family of shepherds, Habré secured a post in the French colonial administration and later won a scholarship to study at the prestigious Sciences-Po in Paris (an international research university).

On his return to Chad, Habré joined opposition forces and led a rebellion against the prevailing government from the desert region of Tibesti. He was named prime minister in Aug. 1978 in a power-sharing government established in a bid to bring about peace. However, the administration quickly broke down and Habré left office in March 1979.

Career Peak

After seizing power in a coup in 1982, Habré created a one-party regime in which power rested with his National Union for Independence and Revolution (UNIR). He also established a secret police force that propped up his rule while generating widespread fear. Despite accusations that his regime authorized the use of torture, extrajudicial killings and ethnic cleansing, Habré won Western (especially French and US) support. This was in part because he was regarded as a counterweight to the Libyan leader Col. Gaddafi, who led several interventions in Chad's civil conflict in the 1970s and 1980s.

Habré remained in power until 1990 when his purge of domestic opponents prompted his former chief of state, Idriss Déby, to break away and lead his own rebellion against the regime. After France withdrew its support of Habré's increasingly oppressive rule, Déby seized power and Habré fled to Senegal in Dec. 1990.

Later Life

Habré then lived in Senegal for 22 years despite numerous attempts to extradite him. In 2012, with intervention from the UN and the African Union, he was put on trial in Senegal. In 30 May 2016 he was convicted of rape, sexual slavery, ordering the killing of 40,000 people and the torture of some 200,000 more. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and ordered to pay compensation to each of his victims or their surviving relatives.

Habumuremyi, Pierre Damien (Rwanda)

Introduction

Pierre Damien Habumuremyi was sworn in as prime minister in Oct. 2011, succeeding Bernard Makuza. Makuza had served for 11 years, the longest serving head of government in Rwanda's post-genocide era, and was credited with bringing a degree of stability to the country. A technocrat, Habumuremyi was previously the minister of education.

Early Life

Habumuremyi was born in 1961 in Ruhondo, in Musanze District. He graduated in sociology from Lubumbashi University in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, before gaining postgraduate qualifications in education and political science.

He served from 2000–08 on the National Electoral Commission, including 5 years as executive secretary. In 2008 he was elected to represent the country at the East African Community Legislative Assembly.

In 2011 Habumuremyi was appointed Rwanda's minister of education, serving 5 months before being appointed prime minister. His promotion to the premiership surprised many commentators, given his relatively low profile and lack of government experience.

Career Peak

Habumuremyi pledged to rejuvenate the economy and develop its information and communications base. He also promised to fight corruption and has refuted suggestions that he is a puppet of the president. In Nov. 2013 he announced priority development targets to be addressed by the government in the 2013–14 fiscal year, notably the doubling of electricity generation and the expansion of water supply infrastructure.

Habumuremyi's term as prime minister unexpectedly ended on 24 July 2014 when he was replaced by Anastase Murekezi, who had been nominated by President Paul Kagame.

Habyarimana, Juvénal (Rwanda)

Introduction

Juvénal Habyarimana became president of Rwanda in 1973 when he overthrew President Grégoire Kayibanda and the ruling Parmehutu Party. His tenure initially saw a move away from exclusively Hutu rule towards greater inclusion of the Tutsi minority in government and the professions. However, this rapprochement was short-lived and tensions between Tutsis and Hutus heightened during his period in office. On 6 April 1994 he was assassinated, precipitating civil war and genocide.

Early Life

Juvénal Habyarimana was born on 8 March 1937 in Gasiza, Gisenyi Province in what was then Ruanda-Urundi. A member of the Hutu majority ethnic group and raised a Roman Catholic, he studied mathematics at St Paul's College in Bukavu and medicine at the University of Lovanium in former Leopoldville, both in the former Belgian Congo. In 1960 he returned to Rwanda to train for the National Guard at the Officer's School in Kigali. He was chief of staff from 1963 to 1965 and as minister of defence and police chief of staff from 1965 to 1973. In April 1973 he was promoted to major-general.

Career Peak

On 5 July 1973 Habyarimana led a coup that ousted President Grégoire Kayibanda and the ruling Parmehutu Party. In 1975 he created the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National Pour le Développement and established himself as sole ruler of a single-party state. Policies included quotas for Tutsis for jobs with universities and government services.

In 1978 a new constitution provided for a return to civilian rule and Habyarimana was elected president. He was re-elected in 1983 and again in 1988. In July 1990 he accepted some political reforms and in 1991 constitutional changes allowed for multi-party government. In Oct. 1990 a rebellion by the Tutsi-led Fronte Patriotique Rwandais (Rwandan Patriotic Front; RPF) exacerbated simmering ethnic tensions, with hundreds of Tutsi civilians killed by extremist Hutu militia, the Interahamwe.

On 4 Aug. 1993 Habyarimana signed a power-sharing agreement with the RPF in Arusha, Tanzania, arousing extremist opposition from within his own administration. In Jan. 1994 he was named president of a power-sharing transitional government based on the Arusha Accords.

On 6 April 1994 Habyarimana was returning from peace talks in his private jet with President Cyprien Ntaryamira, the Hutu leader of Burundi, when his plane was shot down over the grounds of the presidential palace. Responsibility for the attack was disputed, with Paul Kagame of the RPF (and later to become national president) held responsible by a French investigation concluded in 2006. Others, however, have pointed to the involvement of Hutu extremists. Following Habyarimana's death, the country descended into civil war, with the ensuing genocide claiming the lives of between 800,000 and 1 m. Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Hague, William (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

William Hague was leader of the Conservative party from 1997–2001. He took over from John Major following the party's defeat to Tony Blair's Labour party at the 1997 general election but resigned after overseeing a comparable loss 4 years later. Renowned as an orator and parliamentarian, he was nonetheless dogged by public relations mishaps and his anti-European stance led to allegations of xenophobia from the left of his own party. He returned to frontline politics in 2006 as shadow foreign secretary under the new Conservative leader, David Cameron and in May 2010 became foreign secretary in the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government.

Early Life

William Jefferson Hague was born on 26 March 1961 in Richmond, Yorkshire. He first came to public attention when he addressed the Conservative party conference in 1977. He went on to study politics, philosophy and economics at Magdalen College, Oxford University and became president of the Oxford Union and the university Conservative association. He then studied for an MBA at the INSEAD Business School in France and worked for Shell UK and McKinsey and Co.

Hague unsuccessfully stood for the Wentworth seat at the elections of 1987 but entered parliament 2 years later following a byelection in Richmond. He joined the cabinet in 1995 as the secretary of state for Wales. Following Labour's victory at the 1997 elections, John Major resigned as leader of the party and was succeeded by Hague, who defeated Kenneth Clarke after three rounds of voting.

Career Peak

While leader of the opposition, Hague also became chairman of the International Democratic Union, an organization of which he remains deputy chairman. Hague won many plaudits for his consistent performances against Blair at prime minister's question time. However, he lost popular credibility after a series of publicity stunts misfired, including being pictured wearing a baseball cap and claiming to have drunk 'fourteen pints a day' in his youth. The Conservatives remained split over Europe and Hague's personal European scepticism drew criticism from influential Conservatives such as Michael Heseltine. When Hague oversaw only a single seat gain at the 2001 general elections, his resignation soon followed.

Later Life

While remaining an MP, Hague explored other business interests and became a regular face in the media. He also wrote a well-received biography of Pitt the Younger (to whom Margaret Thatcher had compared him in 1977). Hague's favoured successor, Iain Duncan Smith, took on the party leadership but oversaw the parties continuing stagnation and was succeeded by Michael Howard in 2003. After a third unsuccessful election, Howard gave way to David Cameron, who appointed Hague as shadow foreign secretary. Consequently, following the Conservatives' return to power in May 2010 he was made foreign secretary in Cameron's first cabinet. Shortly after his appointment, Hague outlined a foreign policy in which the UK would obtain 'greater reach and influence' in an increasingly fast-paced and 'networked' world.

The Arab Spring protests throughout the Middle East in 2011 presented Hague with his earliest and, arguably, most significant diplomatic challenge as foreign secretary. Whilst maintaining a critical stance towards the autocratic administrations of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and Bashar al-Assad of Syria, he called for a peaceful resolution to the violent uprisings around the region. Nonetheless, Hague backed airstrikes co-ordinated by NATO against the Libyan regime and clarified the UK's recognition of the rebel Libyan council as the country's 'sole governmental authority' in July 2011. This trend in UK foreign policy would continue in Feb. 2012 when Hague announced his government's recognition of the Syrian National Council as the legitimate representative of Syria.

In July 2014 Hague's time as foreign secretary ended following the most extensive cabinet reshuffle of David Cameron's premiership. He remained

within the cabinet, however, becoming leader of the House of Commons in the same month. Hague subsequently announced his intention to leave parliamentary politics following the general election in May 2015. He vacated the seat he held for 26 years as representative for Richmond, North Yorks in March 2015 and stood down as leader of the House of Commons and first secretary of state in May.

In Sept. 2015 Hague was appointed chairman of the security think tank, the Royal United Services Institute.

Haile Selassie I (Ethiopia)

Introduction

Haile Selassie was emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 until 1974, though exiled when Ethiopia fell under Italian rule between 1935 and 1941. An autocrat, he nonetheless did much to modernise Ethiopia's political and social infrastructures and raise the country's international standing. He was widely respected as a statesman, particularly for his conduct following the Italian invasion. However, as economic conditions deteriorated in the 1960s and 70s and reforms were slow in coming, opposition intensified. He was deposed by the military in 1974 and murdered the following year. Haile Selassie is a Rastafarian divine.

Early Life

Haile Selassie was born Tafari Makonnen near Harer in Ethiopia on 23 July 1892. The son of a chief adviser to Emperor Menelik II, he was made a provincial governor at the age of 14. In 1911 he married the emperor's granddaughter, Wayzaro Menen and became Ras (Prince) Tafari. On Menelik's death in 1913, his grandson Lij Yasu succeeded him but became unpopular with the ruling Christian elite when he embraced Islam. He was deposed in 1916 and when Menelik's daughter, Zauditu, became empress Tafari was named regent.

Career Peak

Tafari helped ensure Ethiopia's entry into the League of Nations in 1923, and oversaw the end of slavery. Educated and forward-thinking officials were moved into positions of authority. In 1928 Tafari became king of Ethiopia. Two years later Zauditu died in mysterious circumstances and Tafari was crowned emperor, adopting the name Haile Selassie (Might of the Trinity).

In 1931 he introduced a bicameral parliament while at the same time extending his own power. Heavy investment in the country's transport, communication and education systems was supported by revenues from the booming coffee trade.

In 1935, when Italy invaded Ethiopia, Haile Selassie led his troops into battle. Lacking equipment and organization they were soon defeated and the emperor forced into exile in Europe. He gained great respect for his eloquent appeal for help from the League of Nations in 1936 but failed to secure practical support. Only after Italy's entry into World War II in 1940 did Britain provide aid. Haile Selassie regained his throne in 1941.

He continued to implement social and institutional reforms, taking power away from regional elites. He also encouraged closer relations with the US as support from Britain diminished. In 1952 he secured the federation of Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1955 a new constitution introduced universal suffrage but also reaffirmed Haile Selassie's autocratic power. Young radicals became increasingly disillusioned and there were revolts in Eritrea. In 1960 the imperial bodyguard led by Haile Selassie's son attempted a coup.

Despite its failure this stimulated discontent within the country. However, Haile Selassie's international stock continued to rise and in 1963 he played a major role in establishing the Organization of African Unity. He was adopted as a figurehead for the Rastafarian movement that believed he would deliver a black homeland in Africa.

At home inflation was out of control and corruption rife. In the early 1970s famine claimed several hundred thousand lives. In 1974 the military seized control of the government, nationalized Haile Selassie's estates and stripped him of his powers, formally deposing him on 12 Sept.

Later Life

The Provisional Military Administrative Council took Haile Selassie into custody in Sept. 1974 and he died on 26 Aug. 1975, almost certainly murdered. His body was exhumed in 1992 and reburied in Sept. 2000. Shortly before the ceremony the Ethiopian government condemned his reign as one characterized 'by brutality and extreme oppression.'

Hailemariam Desalegn (Ethiopia)

Introduction

Hailemariam Desalegn became prime minister, initially in an acting capacity after Meles Zenawi died of an undisclosed illness, in Aug. 2012. He had previously served as deputy prime minister under Meles and was minister of foreign affairs from 2010–12. He was the first premier from the Ethiopian Apostolic denomination.

Early Life

Hailemariam was born on 19 July 1965 in what is now the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) in the south of Ethiopia. At school, he joined a political youth group attached to the communist military junta of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

In 1988 Hailemariam graduated in civil engineering from Addis Ababa University, before taking up a post as a graduate assistant in the Arba Minch Water Technology Institute. In 1990 he won a scholarship to Tampere University of Technology in Finland to study for a masters' degree in sanitation engineering. Returning to Ethiopia, he worked in various academic and administrative positions for over a decade, during which time he earned a master's in organizational leadership from Azusa Pacific University in California.

Hailemariam served in senior management positions at the Hawassa and Wolayta Soddo Universities, the Addis Ababa Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, the Construction Design Share Company, the Ethiopian Maritime and Transit Service Enterprise, the Privatization and Public Enterprise Supervising Agency, and the Walta Information and Public Relations Center.

From the late 1990s he was increasingly involved in politics, joining Ethiopia's ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). A member of the SNNPR council between 1995 and 2008, he served as its vice-president from 2000–01 and as its president from 2001–06. He is also chairman of the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement and deputy chairman of the executive council of the EPRDF.

From 2006–08 Hailemariam was special adviser (with the rank of minister) to the prime minister on social affairs, civic organizations and partnership. From 2008–10 he was the government's chief whip in the House of People's Representatives. In Sept. 2010 Hailemariam was appointed deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs under the premiership of Meles Zenawi.

Career Peak

After Meles died in Aug. 2012, Hailemariam succeeded him as prime minister, serving in an interim capacity for a month. On 15 Sept. 2012 he was elected chairman of the EPRDF before being sworn in as the fully-mandated prime minister a week later. Increasingly repressive measures against journalists and opposition opinion were adopted by his government ahead of the general election in May 2015, in which the ruling party claimed a landslide victory. Despite impressive economic growth in 2015, there was increasing protest in 2016 against the authoritarianism of the EPRDF, prompting the government in Oct. that year to declare a state of emergency (although it was lifted by parliament in Aug. 2017). Additionally, there have been rising ethnic tensions and violence in 2017, particularly between Oromos and Somalis. In early 2018 anti-government demonstrations spread. Despite his attempts to quell the situation, Hailemariam resigned on 15 Feb. 2018 under pressure from opposition groups. However, he remained in office until Abiy Ahmed succeeded him as prime minister on 2 April 2018 after being elected by the parliament.

Halonen, Tarja (Finland)

Introduction

The first woman president in Finnish history, Tarja Kaarina Halonen served two presidential terms from 2000–12. A member of parliament from 1979 until her election to the presidency, she also served as a minister in three governments from 1987. From 1995–2000 she was the country's foreign minister.

Early Life

Tarja Halonen was born on 24 Dec. 1943. She was educated at the University of Helsinki where she received a degree in law. She was actively involved in student politics and served as the general secretary for the National Union of Finnish Students. From 1970–74 she was a lawyer with the central organization of Finnish Trade Unions. In 1974 she became the parliamentary secretary to prime minister Kalevi Sorsa, holding this position until Sorsa's term ended in 1975. Halonen was then elected to the Helsinki City council in 1977 (remaining a councillor until 1996) and 2 years later was elected a member of the Finnish parliament. She was chairman of the parliamentary social affairs committee (from 1984–87) before being appointed minister of social affairs and health. She went on to hold two further ministerial positions, serving as minister for Nordic co-operation (1989–91) and minister of justice (1990–91), before becoming the minister of foreign affairs in April 1995. In this role she oversaw Finland's assimilation into the European Union. In Jan. 2000 Halonen stood for election as the Social Democratic Party candidate for the presidency, campaigning on a liberal and feminist manifesto. She received 51.6% of the total votes cast in the second round of the presidential elections on 6 Feb. 2000, narrowly defeating the Centre Party's Esko Aho.

Career Peak

On the day of her inauguration, a new national constitution came into effect which reduced presidential powers and expanded and emphasized parliament as the most important body in the Finnish political system. The president was still granted a significant role in foreign policy, a fact which suited Halonen's diplomatic and linguistic skills. She continued her country's pro-European Union policies, although her position on NATO was less certain.

In Nov. 2005 the SDP nominated Halonen for re-election as its presidential candidate. Having failed to secure a majority in the first round of voting, she narrowly defeated the Conservative candidate, Sauli Niinistö, in a run-off in Jan. 2006.

In June 2010 Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen stood down as leader of the Centre Party and was succeeded by Mari Kiviniemi, who was sworn in by Halonen as the new premier.

Ineligible to run in the 2012 presidential elections owing to term limits, Halonen left office on 1 March 2012. She was succeeded by Sauli Niinistö.

Hammar skjöld, Dag (Sweden)

Introduction

Dag Hammarskjöld served as Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1953–61. He worked 31 years in finance, foreign relations, and global international affairs. He raised Sweden's profile within the international community and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961.

Early Life

Dag Hammarskjöld was born on 29 July 1905. His father, Hjalmar Hammarskjöld was Sweden's prime minister during World War I, and also governor of the county of Uppland, member of the Hague Tribunal, and chairman of the Board of the Nobel Foundation. Dag Hammarskjöld studied linguistics, literature, and history at Uppsala University, graduating in 1925. He became a Bachelor of Laws in 1930. His doctoral thesis on

'Konjunkturspridningen' (The Spread of the Business Cycle) was followed by his appointment as assistant professor in political economy at the University of Stockholm. Though not a member of a political party, Hammarskjöld served in several Government posts. From 1936–45 he was undersecretary in the Ministry of Finance and from 1941–48 he was chairman of the Bank of Sweden. Hammarskjöld coined the term 'planned economy'. In 1945, he became adviser to the Cabinet on economic and financial problems. In 1949 he was Secretary-General of the foreign office, and later became deputy foreign minister. Hammarskjöld conducted a policy of international economic co-operation, representing Sweden in negotiations on the postwar reconstruction of Europe. He also led the Executive Committee of the OEEC (Organization for European Economic Co-operation). In 1954 he became a member of the Swedish Academy, the body that awards the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Career Peak

In 1953, Hammarskjöld was elected Secretary-General of the United Nations. In 1954 he negotiated the release of American soldiers captured by the Chinese in the Korean War. In 1955 he organized the international conference in Geneva on peaceful uses of atomic energy, and planned the UN conference (held in 1962) on the application of science and technology for the benefit of developing countries. Throughout his term in office, efforts were made to resolve the problems of Palestine. During the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, Hammarskjöld created the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). In 1958 he set up the UN Observation Group in Lebanon and the UN Office in Jordan, and persuaded the Americans and the British to withdraw their troops from the region. Hammarskjöld was involved in the problems of developing countries, chiefly in Africa. In 1960, during the Congo crisis, he set up and led a UN peace-keeping force. Hammarskjöld's peace mission in Congo ended on 17 Sept. 1961, when he was killed in a plane crash.

Harper, Stephen (Canada)

Introduction

Stephen Harper's victory in federal elections in Jan. 2006 represented a shift to the right after 12 years of Liberal government overshadowed by allegations of corruption. The free-market economist and leader of the Conservative Party cast himself as a moderate, progressive, centre-right politician, intent on tackling corruption, reducing taxes and leading a more efficient government. He retained power following the Conservative victory in further elections in Oct. 2008 and May 2011.

Early Life

Stephen Harper was born on 30 April 1959 in Toronto, Canada. He graduated from Richview Collegiate Institute in 1978 and moved to Edmonton, Alberta, where he worked as a computer programmer in the oil and gas industry. While studying economics at the University of Calgary in the early 1980s, Harper was influenced by the right-wing monetarist ideas espoused by Ronald Reagan in the USA and Margaret Thatcher in the UK. He graduated with a BA in economics in 1985 and began working for a Conservative member of parliament, Jim Hawkes.

Disillusioned with the Progressive Conservatives (PC) and the government of Brian Mulroney, Harper joined the newly established Reform Party of Canada in 1987, led by the economist Preston Manning. As chief policy officer, Harper helped draft the party's manifesto for the elections of 1988. He became legislative assistant to the Reform Party MP, Deborah Gray, after she won a by-election to represent Beaver River, Alberta in March 1989.

At the elections of Oct. 1993 Harper beat Jim Hawkes to win Calgary West for the Reform Party and became the party's spokesman on finance and national unity. In a run-up to a referendum in Oct. 1995 on the status of Quebec, Harper argued to maintain but decentralize the federation. Disagreements with Manning led to Harper's decision in late 1996 not to stand in the next election. He resigned his seat in Jan. 1997 and was appointed vice president of the conservative lobby group, the National Citizens Coalition. He also worked as a regular political commentator for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Harper rejected invitations to run for the PC leadership but returned to politics in March 2002 when he was elected to succeed Stockwell Day as leader of the Canadian Alliance party. He successfully contested a by-election for Calgary Southwest 2 months later and returned to the House of Commons as leader of the opposition. Following protracted negotiations, Harper reached agreement with the PC leader, Peter MacKay, on a merger between the two parties to form the Conservative Party of Canada in Dec. 2003.

Harper won the new party's leadership election in March 2004 and fought the Liberal prime minister, Paul Martin, in the 2004 election. After taking an early poll lead, the Conservatives lost ground with Harper criticized for supporting the US-led war on Iraq in March 2003. The election in June 2004 saw a victory for the Liberals, who took 135 seats against 99 for the Conservatives.

When the Liberals became mired in a corruption scandal in April 2005, Harper argued that the government had 'lost the moral authority to govern'. He introduced a motion of no confidence in Paul Martin's administration on 24 Nov. 2005, which was passed by 171–133. Parliament was dissolved and elections were scheduled for 23 Jan. 2006. Harper's campaign presented him as head of a modernizing centre-right party that would stimulate economic growth by lowering taxes. Having held a comfortable lead in the opinion polls, the Conservatives won the elections with 36% of the vote, though short of a parliamentary majority. Harper was sworn in as prime minister on 6 Feb. 2006.

Career Peak

Harper promised a smaller 'more focused and effective' government. Eager to pursue closer relations with the USA, he announced a settlement in April of Canada's long-running dispute over softwood timber exports to its neighbour. He also promised more respect for provincial autonomy, particularly in relation to French-speaking Quebec. In Nov. 2006 his proposal to recognize Quebec 'as a nation within a united Canada' was approved by the House of Commons. In foreign policy, he maintained the previous administration's position on Afghanistan, but brought Canadian combat involvement in the country to an end in July 2011. In June 2006 police arrested 17 Islamic extremists allegedly plotting to kill the prime minister.

Despite the shadow of global financial turmoil and opposition accusations of economic complacency, Harper sought a more secure mandate for his administration by calling an early general election for Oct. 2008 (although he had previously pushed through legislation fixing the normal life of a parliament at four years). The Conservatives improved their representation in the House of Commons but again failed to achieve a parliamentary majority. In Dec. the opposition parties sought to bring down the minority government over its response to the economic situation, but Harper asked the Governor-General to suspend parliament until Jan. 2009 thereby postponing a no-confidence vote. When parliament resumed in late Jan. the opposition alliance backed down and in Feb. the government secured approval of its 2009 budget, including a 2-year stimulus package for the economy, with conditional Liberal Party support which ensured Harper's political survival. However, in Oct. 2009 the Liberals tabled a no-confidence motion accusing the government of having lost control of the public finances. The motion was defeated by 144 votes to 117 with the help of the New Democratic Party and Bloc Québécois, and in Nov. the Conservatives gained two seats in four parliamentary by-elections, suggesting some improvement in the government's standing with the electorate.

At the end of Dec. 2009 Harper again successfully sought the prorogation of parliament until the beginning of March 2010, a move that attracted criticism from opposition leaders who accused him of seeking to avoid political debate. Nevertheless, at the general election in May 2011 Harper led the Conservatives to a decisive victory to head a majority government for the first time since taking office. A government proposal to reform the Senate from an appointed upper house of parliament to an elected chamber, first set out in 2006, has remained contentious, and a scandal over expenses involving three Conservative senators appointed by the prime minister prompted opposition attacks on his integrity in 2013.

In Dec. 2011 Canada became the first country to formally withdraw from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on climate change, a decision which received widespread international criticism. Relations with Iran deteriorated from late 2011 as Canada supported a tightening of international sanctions over Tehran's nuclear development programme. In Sept. 2012 the Harper government broke off diplomatic relations, claiming Iran was a threat to world security. In Oct. 2013 he announced that an agreement on a long-awaited

free trade deal between Canada and the European Union had been reached in principle. The following month he boycotted the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in response to claims of human rights violations by President Mahinda Rajapaksa's administration in that country against the Tamil minority. In Oct. 2014 Canada joined the US-led air campaign against Islamic State fundamentalists in Iraq, and in the same month suffered two suspected terror attacks in Ottawa and Quebec in which two soldiers were killed.

In June 2014 a Supreme Court landmark ruling granted title over an area of the western province of British Columbia to a First Nations group.

Harper's Conservative Party lost the Oct. 2015 parliamentary elections to the Justin Trudeau-led Liberal Party. Trudeau replaced Harper as prime minister in Nov.

Hatoyama, Yukio (Japan)

Introduction

Yukio Hatoyama became prime minister in Sept. 2009, leading the Democratic Party of Japan into government for the first time. A centre-left politician, Hatoyama moved to strengthen Japan's ties with other Asian countries, while signalling a more independent relationship with the United States. Domestically he favoured redirecting public money from large infrastructure projects into tax cuts, pensions and welfare.

Early Life

Yukio Hatoyama was born on 11 Feb. 1947 in Bunkyo, Tokyo. His grandfather had been prime minister and his father served as foreign minister, while his mother is heir to the founder of the Bridgestone Corporation tyre company. Brought up and educated in Tokyo, Hatoyama graduated from Tokyo University in 1969 with a degree in engineering and continued his studies at Stanford University, USA, where he was awarded a PhD in engineering in 1976. Returning to Japan, he worked at Senshu University, becoming an assistant professor in 1981. In 1983 he left academia to become private secretary to his father, Ichiro Hatoyama, in the House of Representatives.

In 1986 he was elected to the House of Representatives as a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), representing his father's former seat in Hokkaido. In 1990 he became parliamentary vice minister of the Hokkaido Development Agency. In June 1993 he left the LDP and co-founded New Party Sakigake which, as part of a coalition, defeated the LDP in general elections that year. He served as deputy chief cabinet secretary under Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa until the government fell in 1994. In 1996 Hatoyama co-founded the centrist Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) with his brother Kunio Hatoyama and, 2 years later, steered the party into a merger with three other opposition parties, becoming deputy secretary general of the enlarged DPJ in April 1998 and its president in 1999.

In 2002, following confusion arising from rumours that he was planning a merger with Ichiro Ozawa's Liberal Party, Hatoyama resigned from the leadership. The merger duly occurred in 2003. The DPJ campaigned for more open and accountable policy-making and advocated redirecting public money to improve welfare. It performed strongly in elections in 2003 and 2004, while Hatoyama served as shadow minister for internal affairs. In Sept. 2004 he became shadow minister for foreign affairs and secretary general of the DPJ. Having worked closely with Ozawa after the latter took over party leadership in 2006, Hatoyama regained the DPJ presidency in May 2009 when Ozawa resigned over financial scandals.

Hatoyama led the DPJ into the 2009 general election on a reformist platform. The party promised to address deepening economic problems by cutting funding for large infrastructure projects and boosting welfare provision. It advocated changing government procedures to shift policy-making powers from the civil service to ministers. It also argued for a more Asia-focused foreign policy and a re-evaluation of the relationship with the USA. In the general election of Aug. 2009 the DPJ decisively defeated the LDP, winning 308 seats to the LDP's 119, bringing to an end half a century of almost unbroken LDP rule.

Career Peak

Hatoyama took office on 16 Sept. 2009. He made early moves to strengthen Japan's relations with its Asian neighbours, initiating a series of visits. In Nov. 2009 he announced plans to boost the economy by developing a market in environmentally-friendly products and renewable power, and targeted 2020 for establishing a free trade zone in Asia. However, economic conditions hampered his attempts to introduce promised spending reforms. His popularity further suffered from rumours of financial impropriety surrounding his mother's donations to the DPJ.

In May 2010 a political crisis emerged after renegotiations with the USA over the future of its military bases on the island of Okinawa proved fruitless thus breaking one of Hatoyama's key electoral pledges. The SDP pulled out of the coalition government and on 1 June Hatoyama resigned. The deputy prime minister Naoto Kan was elected his successor by the Diet.

Haughey, Charles (Ireland)

Introduction

Charles Haughey was three times Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) of the Republic of Ireland (1979–81, March–Dec. 1982 and 1987–92). As leader of Fianna Fáil, he was a fervent nationalist who voiced his opposition to the 1985 Anglo-Irish Treaty. However, he worked within its confines when in power. His career was underscored by allegations of corruption and dubious activities that led to his eventual resignation and criminal proceedings.

Early Life

Charles James Haughey was born in Castlebar, County Mayo on 16 Sept. 1925 into a Catholic nationalist environment. He took a degree in law and accounting at University College Dublin before marrying the daughter of future Irish Prime Minister, Sean Lemass, in 1991. In 1957 he entered parliament (the Dáil) and 4 years later, under Lemass, he was appointed Minister of Justice. He later served as Minister in the Departments of Finance and Agriculture.

In 1970 he was sacked, along with fellow minister Neil Blaney, from government by Prime Minister Jack Lynch over alleged involvement in Irish Republican Army (IRA) arms shipments. In the criminal prosecution that followed both men were acquitted, but Haughey would be accused of involvement in several incidents of dubious legality throughout his career. Haughey returned to political life having ensured his financial security through a land deal that would later come under investigation. In 1973 he was returned to the Dáil, becoming Minister of Health and Social Welfare. Shortly afterwards he succeeded Jack Lynch as leader of Fianna Fáil.

Career Peak

In 1979 Haughey was elected Prime Minister but his government was faced with a mounting economic crisis. The agricultural sector was under extreme pressure and Ireland's trade deficit was poor. Anglo-Irish relations were at a low ebb and Fianna Fáil was rife with internal disputes, many of which centred on his style of leadership. In June 1981 Haughey lost power to a coalition headed by Garret FitzGerald but in elections held in Feb. 1982 Haughey returned as Prime Minister.

Haughey's second term lasted only until Dec. 1982 and ended ignominiously. Ireland's budget deficit was chronic and Haughey's government was hounded by allegations of phone tapping of journalists. A vote of no confidence led to new elections and FitzGerald formed another Fine Gael-Labour coalition. In Feb. 1983 Haughey only just staved off a no confidence motion from within his own party by 40 votes to 33.

In 1987 Haughey again won the premiership but in elections 2 years later he was forced to form a coalition (the first in his party's history) with the Progressive Democrats, a party which contained several former members of Fine Gael who had become disgruntled with Haughey. He had been a vociferous opponent of the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, negotiated by FitzGerald and Margaret Thatcher, which allowed for the Republic to be consulted on various matters concerning Northern Ireland. However, once in power Haughey took a more pragmatic approach and worked within the terms of the treaty.

Haughey remained in office from 1987 until 1992. His tenure was again blighted by Ireland's weak economic situation and he was forced to implement austerity measures to combat the growing trade deficit. By the early 1990s Ireland had attracted major foreign investment and its economy was far more stable. However, the scandal concerning phone tapping of journalists in the early-1980s re-emerged. Sean Doherty, Minister of Justice at the time of the violations, confirmed that the allegations were true and Haughey had been aware of the practice. Despite his denials, Haughey was forced to resign the premiership and the party leadership in Feb. 1992.

Later Life

Haughey's retirement was dogged by further allegations of impropriety. In 1997 the Dáil established the Moriarty Tribunal, following the McCracken Tribunal that investigated payments to Haughey from supermarket magnate Ben Dunne. Haughey was accused of obstructing the McCracken Tribunal and faced trial proceedings that were later dropped. The Moriarty Tribunal investigated alleged illegal payments to several politicians including Haughey and assessed whether these payments may have affected Haughey's decision-making while in government. Haughey attempted to avoid giving evidence on medical grounds but his appeal was turned down.

Haughey died on 13 June 2006 after a long illness.

Havel, Václav (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Václav Havel served as Czechoslovak President from Dec. 1989 until July 1992, when he became President of the Czech Republic following the dissolution of the Czechoslovak state. He stood down from office in Feb. 2003. He was a poet, playwright and essayist and a leading dissident against Czechoslovakia's communist regime. As a founder of the Civic Forum movement, he was instrumental in the success of the 1989 Velvet Revolution which precipitated the end of the communist government.

Early Life

Havel was born on 5 Oct. 1936 in Prague, the son of a successful businessman. Much of the family's wealth was confiscated by the communist government in the late 1940s. As a result of his background, Havel was excluded from higher education. However, while working in a chemical laboratory he attended evening classes and in 1955 he began a degree in economics at Prague's Czech Technical University.

On completion of his military service, Havel worked in theatre as a stagehand. In 1960 he joined Prague's Theatre on the Balustrade, where he made his name as a writer, gaining an international reputation with *The Garden Party* in 1963. Havel was heavily influenced by Kafka and *absurdism*, and his plays challenged authoritarian society and its detrimental impact on the individual. In 1964 he married Olga Splichalova.

Havel promoted his liberal humanist ideology throughout the 1960s and was a key figure in the Prague Spring, suppressed by Soviet military intervention in 1968. Refusing to moderate his views, Havel suffered a backlash in the ensuing years as Moscow imposed a process of 'normalization'. His plays were banned, his passport confiscated and his activities closely monitored.

In 1975 Havel wrote an open letter to President Husák criticizing the government. Two years later he was a co-founder of Charter 77, a document signed by 250 intellectuals, artists and religious figures urging the government to conform to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He was subsequently placed under house arrest and in 1979 was sentenced to 4 years hard labour. Released in March 1983 he continued his condemnation of the communist regime through his writing.

Havel was again imprisoned for his underground activities in 1989 but, following his release, he became one of the leaders of the Civic Forum, a loose affiliation of liberal and democratic groups. As anti-communist protests spread throughout the Eastern Bloc, Prague became a centre of demonstrations in Nov. 1989.

Career Peak

Following the bloodless Velvet Revolution, the communists agreed to form a coalition with the Civic Forum in Dec. 1989. On 29 Dec. Havel was voted interim president, a job confirmed the following July for 2 years. Although the presidential office was essentially a ceremonial one, with day to day politics in the charge of the prime minister, Havel became one of Europe's most influential leaders.

As a non-partisan advocating liberal humanist ethics, he met with many of the world's leaders. He advocated expansion of NATO and the EU to include former Soviet satellites in a bid to bring stability and security to the region. However, when it became apparent in 1992 that Czechoslovakia was on the brink of splitting into its constituent states, Havel resigned. In July 1993 he was elected president of the Czech Republic. His country joined NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004.

Václav Klaus was elected prime minister and Havel's moralistic approach to government clashed with Klaus' desire to implement freemarket reforms. Havel's wife died in Jan. 1996 and he himself suffered serious ill health during that year. His popularity was dented when he married the former actress Dagmar Veskrnova, 17 years his junior, in Jan. 1997.

Klaus' government was rocked by a series of personal and economic scandals during 1997. Havel made a speech to parliament in Dec. in which he promoted ethical standards in office and implicitly questioned the previously venerated reforms of Klaus. The Klaus regime subsequently collapsed and in 1998 Havel won narrow re-election to the presidency. Although dogged by ill-health and a lack of executive power, Havel remained one of the most respected figures on the international stage. He retired from the presidency on 2 Feb. 2003, although parliament failed to choose his successor until almost a month later.

Later Life

After leaving the presidency Havel returned to writing and published his memoirs in 2007. Havel also became Chair of the International Council of the Human Rights Foundation. He died on 18 Dec. 2011 aged 75, at his country home in Hrádeček.

Hawke, Robert (Australia)

Introduction

Robert James Lee (known as Bob) Hawke was leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and Prime Minister of Australia, 1983–91. After many years as a trade union official, his conciliatory skills, down-to-earth manner and economic success made him a popular prime minister. Despite a generally weak global economy in the mid-1980s, he led the ALP to a record four consecutive election victories.

Early Life

Hawke was born on 9 Dec. 1929 in Bordertown in South Australia to Clement, a Congregational minister, and Ellie Lee, a teacher. Hawke's uncle, Albert, who became premier of Western Australia, was a formative influence on his nephew. Hawke graduated in Law and Economics from the University of Western Australia and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University between 1953–55. During this time he also took the world record, 12 s, for the speediest drinking of a yard of ale. In 1956 he married Hazel Masterson, with whom he had three children. Having joined the ALP in 1947, he was offered a lectureship at Canberra University College in 1958 but instead joined the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) as a research officer. He gained a reputation as an excellent negotiator and became president of the Council in 1969, introducing trade unionism in the travel and retail sectors. On the National Executive of the ALP from 1971, Hawke served as president from 1973–78. In 1979 he was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia and in 1980 he entered the House of Representatives as the member for Wills in Victoria. In Oct. 1980 he became opposition spokesman on industrial relations, employment and youth affairs. Two years later he stood for the leadership against Bill Hayden. He was defeated but made another bid early the next year. Malcolm Fraser, the Liberal prime minister, called a flash election, hoping to catch the ALP in disarray, but Hayden responded by resigning his post and Hawke took the leadership without a contest.

Career Peak

After heavy campaigning, Hawke's force of personality secured a landslide victory at the election of 11 March 1983. With treasurer Paul Keating, his eventual successor, he set about restoring economic prosperity. The Prices and Income Accord was an example of the consensus government favoured by Hawke, and its resulting price and wage restraints and improved industrial relations boosted the economy. The rate of inflation was halved by the end of 1984, and 3.7% annual economic growth was reported between 1983–85. Further economic reforms followed including the deregulation of financial services, the reduction of protectionist tariffs for manufacturing industry and the flotation of the Australian dollar. On the international scene, Hawke pursued closer ties with the US and the non-communist emerging economies of northeast Asia. Aided by Liberal disunity, Hawke was returned as prime minister at the elections of 1984 and 1987. However, his popularity started to wane in the late 1980s. The economy had suffered from the worldwide recession and his close ties with various Australian tycoons prompted criticism. Pensions means testing, health and education taxes and the introduction of a capital gains tax were also unpopular. He was again victorious in the 1990 election but his majority was slashed. Hawke was further weakened by a rift with Keating. A secret deal had been struck 2 years earlier by which Keating was to take over the premiership in 1990, but Hawke subsequently reneged. He defeated Keating in a leadership challenge in June 1991 but at a further ballot in Dec. he was beaten.

Later Life

Hawke resigned and left the political scene early in 1992, though he proved to be a vociferous critic of the Keating regime. His marriage to Hazel ended in divorce on account of his affair with his biographer, Blanche d'Alpuget; they married in 1995. Hawke was a keen supporter of Kim Beazley, who led the Labor Party from 1996–2001. The Hawke Institute at the University of South Australia currently supports work based on Hawke's career and ideology. He was made a life member of the Australian Labor Party in Aug. 2009.

Heath, Edward (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Edward Richard George Heath was the Conservative British prime minister between 1970 and 1974. A pro-European, his domestic policies were more interventionist than had been expected. His party came out ahead in two general elections but was unsuccessful in forming a government after the second.

Early Life

Heath was born on 9 July 1916 in Broadstairs, Kent in the southeast of England. His father was a carpenter and builder, an unusual background for a future Conservative leader in that era. He won an organ scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford where he studied Modern Greats (Politics, Philosophy and Economics). While there he held the positions of President of the University Conservative Association, Chairman of the Federation of University Conservative Associations and President of the Oxford Union, using his position in 1938 to condemn the government's policy of appeasing Germany. In the same year he won a legal scholarship to Grays Inn but joined the Royal Artillery at the outbreak of World War II, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and receiving an MBE (Military Division) in 1945.

After the war he was employed at the Ministry of Civil Aviation, then edited the *Church Times* 1948–49 before joining a merchant bank. He entered the House of Commons in 1950 as the member for Bexley (which would evolve into Old Bexley and Sidcup), the same year in which he and eight other Conservatives published *One Nation—A Conservative Approach to Social Problems*. He held a succession of posts in the Conservative governments of 1951–64, including assistant Chief Whip to the Lord Commissioner of the treasury, joint deputy Chief Whip, deputy Chief Whip, parliamentary secretary to the treasury and government Chief Whip. He was created a member of the Privy Council and took the post of minister of labour in 1959 before

becoming Lord Privy Seal the following year. He was also Conservative spokesman on foreign affairs in the Commons, in view of the fact that the foreign secretary, the Earl of Home, sat in the Lords at that stage. During this period Heath oversaw Britain's application to join the EEC, which was subsequently blocked by France.

In 1964 the Earl of Home, by then Prime Minister Alec Douglas-Home, made Heath secretary of state for industry, trade and regional affairs and president of the board of trade. When the Conservatives lost the general election of Oct. 1964 he became the opposition spokesman on economic affairs and when Douglas-Home resigned in July 1965 he was elected the party's new leader, defeating Reginald Maudling and Enoch Powell. He lost the general election of March 1966 to Harold Wilson's Labour Party but led the Conservatives to power in June 1970.

Career Peak

Heath's tenure was expected to see reduced taxation and public spending, but rising oil and commodity prices made this impossible. High inflation, rising unemployment and an unsatisfactory balance of payments posed major problems throughout his premiership. Government money was used to bail out failing businesses, and price and wage controls were imposed. Heath also attempted to take on the trade unions, putting forward an *Industrial Relations Act* in 1971. There were numerous strikes, the most serious of which was led by the miners, and in 1972 a 3 day working week was introduced as an energy saving measure. In the end, however, Heath was forced to give in to the miners' demands.

Meanwhile Northern Ireland's sectarian troubles continued to worsen, and in 1972 the Heath government imposed direct rule on the province. His greatest personal achievement on the international stage came in 1973 when he successfully negotiated Britain's entry into the EEC. However, it was not a wholly popular move with the nation at large. When Heath called a general election to strengthen his mandate in Feb. 1974, he failed to gain a majority and could not establish a coalition. Wilson did so and Labour won the year's second election in Oct. outright. In the ensuing Conservative party leadership election of 1975, Heath was ousted by Margaret Thatcher.

Later Life

Heath was member of Parliament for Old Bexley and Sidcup until he stood down in 2001 and was Father of the House (i.e. the longest serving member of the Commons) from 1992 until 2001. He has remained an active figure on the international scene, working with Willy Brandt in the 1970s and negotiating hostage releases with Saddam Hussein in the 1990s. Heath had a tempestuous relationship with Thatcher during her period in office and remained vocal on the pro-Europe wing of the party. He was made a Knight of the Garter in 1992. He is a keen sailor, having captained the British Admirals Cup-winning team in 1971. As a devotee of orchestral music, he helped found the European Community Youth Orchestra. He published his autobiography in 1998. He died in Salisbury, Wilts on 17 July 2005.

Hélou, Charles (Lebanon)

Introduction

Hélou's presidency from 1964–70 spanned the Arab-Israeli Six-day war of 1967 and its immediate aftermath. The most significant repercussion for Lebanon was the increased Palestinian encroachment on its territory as a base for guerrilla operations against Israel and the upsetting of the balance between Muslim and Christian Lebanese which led to civil war in 1975.

Early Life

Born on 25 Dec. 1912 and educated at the Christian Jesuit St. Joseph University in Beirut, Hélou began his working life as a lawyer and journalist. He was appointed Lebanese ambassador to the Vatican in 1947, elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1951, and served as minister of justice and health in 1954–55 and of education in early 1964.

Career Peak

In Aug. 1964 H elou was elected by the National Assembly to succeed Fuad Chehab as state president. Volatile regional politics overshadowed his 6 year term of office as he faced irreconcilable demands: from the guerrillas of the Palestinian refugee community in Lebanon; from Arab states and Lebanese Muslims keen to sponsor Palestinian resistance to Israel; from Lebanese Christians fearful for their continued independence and of Israeli military reprisals; from Israelis concerned about the security of their northern border; and from the Shia Muslim community increasingly displaced by instability in south of the country. H elou sought to regulate the activities of Palestinian fighters through the 1969 Cairo agreement with PLO leader Yasser Arafat. However, this was to prove largely ineffective. He left office in Sept. 1970 and died on 7 Jan. 2001.

Hirohito (Japan)

Introduction

Emperor of Japan since 1926, Hirohito was known for his militaristic regime leading to World War II. After the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima in 1945, he surrendered to General Douglas MacArthur. He was son of the crown prince, Yoshihito and as 124th emperor, was the longest reigning emperor in Japanese history.

Early Life

Hirohito was born in 1901. From the age of thirteen he attended a special school to prepare him for responsibilities as heir to the throne. He was the first Japanese emperor to travel extensively. He visited Britain and five European countries shortly after graduating in 1921. Upon his return to Japan, his father fell mentally ill and Hirohito ruled as regent until his father's death in Dec. 1926.

Career Peak

In 1924, Hirohito married Princess Nagako Kuni and 9 years later, Prince Akihito was born.

His approval of military expansion in the 1930's divided the country. Japan eventually entered World War II when Japanese bombers attacked Pearl Harbour. After Japan's surrender to SCAP (Supreme Command Allied Powers), Emperor Hirohito gave up his rights as sovereign ruler. Thereafter, his role was seen as purely symbolic. The Constitution of 1947 states that any interference by the Emperor in matters of state requires the approval of the Cabinet. There was a serious prospect of Hirohito being tried as a war criminal but MacArthur made use of the Emperor's authority to smooth the transition to a democratic Japan.

Later Life

Hirohito died on 7 Jan. 1989. His funeral was attended by more foreign dignitaries than any other funeral in world history.

Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam)

Introduction

Inspired by Lenin, Ho Chi Minh was nationalist leader, president of North Vietnam (1954–69) and founder of the Indo-Chinese Communist Party (1930). A strong opponent of French colonialism, he led the resistance to the French in the first Indochina War out of which the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam emerged. Founder of the Viet Cong guerrilla movement, he died during the Vietnam War.

Early Life

Ho Chi Minh was born on 19 May 1890 in Hoang Tru, central Vietnam. He attended school in Hue during his teenage years, worked as a schoolmaster in Phan Tiet, and went to a technical school in Saigon. In 1911, under the name Ba, he began work as a cook on a French steamer. This took him as far as Boston and New York. After 2 years in London (1915–17) he moved to Paris where he became an active socialist, using the name Nguyen Ai Quoc (Nguyen the Patriot) to organise a group of Vietnamese to protest against French colonial policy. In 1920 Ho Chi Minh participated in the founding of the French Communist Party.

Inspired by Lenin, Ho Chi Minh went to Moscow in 1923. There he participated in the fifth Congress of the Communist International, the world organisation of communist parties. In 1924 he was in Canton, a stronghold of China's communist revolutionaries. It was then that he recruited his first cadres of the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth Association, the predecessor of the Communist Party of Vietnam (VNA). Chiang Kai-shek expelled the communists from Canton in 1927.

After the outbreak of World War II, Ho Chi Minh returned to Vietnam to organise the Vietnamese Independence Movement, the Viet Minh (League for the Independence of Vietnam) and a guerrilla army to resist Japanese colonisation. The Viet Minh liberated large parts of northern Vietnam and after the Japanese surrender to the allies the Viet Minh proclaimed, on 2 Sept. an independent Democratic Republic of Vietnam from Hanoi. In Oct. General Jacques Leclerc landed in Saigon with orders to regain control of Vietnam for the free French Government. A stalemate ensued with the Viet Minh in control of north Vietnam and the French in control of the south. On March 6, Vietnam was made a 'free state' within the French Union.

The agreement was short lived. A clash between French and Vietnamese troops, on 23 Nov. 1946 led to a French naval bombardment of Haiphong, killing nearly 6,000. The first Indochina War raged for 8 years until the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu (1954) where 16,000 French troops surrendered.

Career Peak

The subsequent Geneva Conference divided Vietnam along the 17th parallel. Ho Chi Minh became the first president of the independent republic of North Vietnam. The accord also made provision for elections to be held in 1956 for the reunification of Vietnam. This was not accepted by the Bao Dai government in South Vietnam and by 1959, Ho Chi Minh had begun a campaign of guerrilla insurgency in South Vietnam and established the National Liberation Front or Viet Cong. The same year he ceded his position as the Loa Dong (Workers' Party)'s secretary-general to Le Duan.

In Dec. 1961, South Vietnam's President Diem requested assistance from the USA. President Kennedy sent military advisers to South Vietnam and in July 1965 President Johnson committed up to 125,000 US troops. The Vietnam War outlived Ho Chi Minh, who died on 2 Sept. 1969, Vietnam's National Day.

Hollande, François (France)

Introduction

Fran ois Hollande was elected the 24th president of the French Republic in May 2012. A Socialist Party veteran, his election returned the Left to the  lys e Palace for the first time since his one-time mentor, Fran ois Mitterrand, departed office in 1995. Renowned for his understated manner and dry wit, Hollande led the Socialist Party from 1997–2008 but had never served in a ministerial role. His presidential tenure has focused heavily on economic issues in the wake of negative growth and continuing eurozone instability, which have prompted a sustained slide in his voter approval rating. More recently, however, radical Islamist threats to French domestic security have increasingly dominated the political agenda. Abroad, Hollande ordered French military intervention in the former African colony of Mali in Jan. 2013 in support of its government against Islamist rebels and in the Central African Republic in Dec. that year in response to sectarian violence. He left office in May 2017.

Early Life

François Hollande was born on 12 Aug. 1954 in Rouen, Normandy. The son of a social worker and a doctor, he attended the Paris Institute of Political Studies ('sciences Po'. before continuing his studies at the HEC Paris business school. In 1978 he won a place at the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA), the elite graduate school for those aspiring to high office.

On leaving the ENA in 1980, Hollande joined François Mitterrand's second presidential election campaign. When Mitterrand was sworn in the following year as France's first socialist president under the Fifth Republic, Hollande was appointed an economic adviser. During his time at the Élysée Palace he worked as chief of staff to the foreign minister, Roland Dumas, who would later give influential support to Hollande's run to become the Socialist Party's presidential candidate.

In 1988 Hollande was elected to the National Assembly as the representative for Corrèze, a rural department in south-central France. He served as mayor of the department's capital, Tulle, from 2001 until 2008. Corrèze was regarded as a power base for the then President Jacques Chirac, the nemesis of the French Left, and Hollande's ability to build popularity there was considered a significant achievement.

Chirac's decision to call a snap parliamentary election in 1997 saw Lionel Jospin installed as prime minister, with Hollande selected to succeed him as leader of the Socialist Party. Hollande's long-term partner, Ségolène Royal—with whom he has four children—was appointed minister of schools by Jospin. Despite not being a member of the cabinet, Hollande was a close adviser to the premier at the same time as overseeing a programme of modernization in the Socialist Party comparable to that undertaken by the British Labour Party and the German Social Democrats.

In 2002 Jospin ran for the presidency, only to be defeated in the first round by the far-right candidate, Jean-Marie Le Pen. A committed pro-European, Hollande went on to secure his party's support for a 'yes' vote in the 2005 referendum to ratify the European Constitutional Treaty, although the electorate rejected the treaty. In 2007 Ségolène Royal stood as the Socialist Party's presidential candidate but was defeated by Nicolas Sarkozy. Hollande and Royal announced the end of their relationship soon afterwards. In 2008 Hollande stepped down as secretary-general of the Socialist Party, to be succeeded by Martine Aubry.

In 2011 the Socialist Party held its first ever open primary to select a presidential candidate. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, previously the strong favourite for the nomination, elected not to stand following his arrest in New York on charges of sexual assault. Hollande, who used the primary campaign to declare his intention to be a 'président normal', defeated Martine Aubry in a second round run-off on 16 Oct. 2011.

The contrast of his low-key approach with the belligerence of the presidential incumbent, Nicolas Sarkozy, was a cornerstone of Hollande's election campaign. In the first round of voting on 22 April 2012 Hollande took 28.6% of the vote, and in the second round on 6 May he defeated Sarkozy, taking 51.6% of the vote.

Career Peak

Hollande's electoral victory and his Socialist Party's subsequent success in parliamentary elections in June 2012 were quickly overshadowed by the ongoing debt crisis in the eurozone and growing concern over France's stalled economic growth and high unemployment. International ratings agencies downgraded France's credit status in 2012 and again in Nov. 2013, and the International Monetary Fund was critical of French labour costs and taxation levels. Hollande had meanwhile pledged to renegotiate the terms of the 2011 EU treaty setting strict limits on state deficits, arguing that the euro crisis was symptomatic of a wider 'failure of European governance'. The treaty was nevertheless ratified by the French parliament in Oct. 2012.

On the international stage, in Nov. 2012 France recognized the Syrian National Coalition for Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, representing the disparate anti-government groups seeking to topple the regime of President Bashar al-Assad. In Jan. 2013 Hollande sent French troops and aircraft to Mali to oust militant Islamist insurgents who had taken control of the north of the country during 2012 and threatened regional stability across West Africa. By early Feb. most of the main northern towns had been recaptured by French and Malian forces. Then in Dec. that year he deployed French peacekeeping forces to the Central African Republic to restore order against a background of spiralling sectarian conflict. In mid-2014 France became the first Western ally to join US-led military air strikes in Iraq against Islamic State jihadist insurgents and, from Sept. 2015, extended operations to Syria.

In social affairs, Hollande's government courted considerable domestic opposition over legislation to legalize gay marriage and adoption, which was passed in April 2013. In Jan. 2014 his image suffered further as press revelations surfaced about his marriage.

Following heavy Socialist losses at local elections in March 2014, Jean-Marc Ayrault resigned as premier. Hollande replaced him with Manuel Valls, a centre-left moderate and economic reformist. However, there was another electoral defeat in the European Parliament elections in May that year and in Sept. the Socialists and their allies also lost their parliamentary majority in the Senate. In Nov. Hollande disclosed that he would not seek re-election for a second term if he failed to cut the high rate of unemployment in France.

In Jan. 2015 Hollande faced a national crisis after 17 people were killed by Islamist gunmen in separate attacks in Paris. The majority died during an assault on the offices of the *Charlie Hebdo* satirical magazine, which had previously published cartoons of the prophet Mohammed. Despite the subsequent introduction of a range of new security measures, Islamist jihadists struck again in Nov. in co-ordinated terror attacks across public venues in Paris, killing 130 people and injuring over 300 more. In response, the government announced a state of emergency and stepped up air strikes on Islamic State targets in Syria. In the wake of the Paris attacks and the escalating foreign migrant crisis facing the EU, France's far-right, anti-immigration National Front attracted a significant number of new voters in regional elections in Dec.

Meanwhile, ahead of presidential elections in April and May 2017, Hollande continued to struggle with France's stuttering economy and rising joblessness, which prompted broad national strike action in Jan. 2016.

He did not stand for the presidency in 2017 and was succeeded by Emmanuel Macron on 8 May.

Holyoake, Keith (New Zealand)

Introduction

Keith Jacka Holyoake was born on 11 Feb. 1904 at Pahiatua on North Island. National party prime minister in 1957 and then from 1960–72, Holyoake was famous for his judicious diplomacy and skill at encouraging consensus. He later served as the country's governor-general for 3 years from 1977. At age 12, having left school after his father's death, Holyoake worked on the family farm while his mother continued his education at home. His school nickname, 'Kiwi Keith' which distinguished him from an Australian classmate, nevertheless remained with the statesman for life.

Early Life

Holyoake was active in local farming organizations during the 1930s and 40s and first stood for parliament in 1931. He unsuccessfully contested the Motueka seat for the United Party at the election of that year but won it in a 1932 by-election. The youngest member in the House, he held Motueka until 1938. He married Norma Ingram in 1935 and helped set up the National party in the following year after the United-Reform coalition collapsed. While out of parliament, Holyoake was named vice-president of the Farmers' Union. In 1943, he was re-elected as National member for Pahiatua, and 3 years later became the party's deputy leader. When National under Sidney Holland replaced the wartime Labour administration in 1949, Holyoake was appointed agriculture minister. Holding this post for 7 years, he introduced minimum wool prices and measures to curb New Zealand's rabbit population. 1949 also marked Holyoake's transition to deputy prime minister, a position to which he was the first to be formally appointed.

Career Peak

Holyoake became the country's longest serving prime minister. Sidney Holland's ill health led to his retirement and replacement by his deputy in 1957. Initially Holyoake was elected leader (13 Aug.) while Holland continued as prime minister. Closer to the election, Holland left politics and Holyoake formed his own cabinet (20 Sept.). The reorganized party's campaign was not successful, and Holyoake was voted into opposition for the next 3 years. However, Labour's stringent budgets, coupled with Holyoake's energetic self-promotion, including a 6 week Asian tour in 1960, laid the ground for

National's election victory in Dec. of that year. The party won a majority of 12 seats and went on to be re-elected in 1963, 1966, and 1969. Although maintaining Labour's socialist welfare policies, the Holyoake administration passed some 215 bills in its first term alone, revising legislation such as the liqueur laws and the Crimes Act. Fiscal policy suffered from low export prices in the mid-1960s, leading to high national debt. To secure the currency, Holyoake borrowed US\$62 m. from the IMF in Nov. 1965 and a further \$A50 m. from the Australian government in the following year. Abroad, he actively supported the Commonwealth, sought to improve New Zealand's relations with South-East Asia and Australia, and was a prominent commentator on Britain's entry to the EEC. His decision to send troops to Vietnam, however, was contentious and provoked violence on the campaign trails in the latter half of the 1960s. Protests in 1966 gave way to brawls with police in 1969, when Holyoake too was mobbed. National nonetheless held its majority in an enlarged parliament of 84 seats. Holyoake was knighted in 1970.

Later Life

Holyoake stood down as prime minister on 7 Feb. 1972, and was replaced by his deputy since 1960, lawyer Jack Marshall. National lost the Dec. 1972 election but was returned to power under the leadership of Robert Muldoon 3 years later. Holyoake remained an MP and served as Muldoon's minister of state until 1977, when he retired from parliament to be governor-general. Holyoake was the first politician to hold this post, which he held for 3 years. He died in Dec. 1983.

Honecker, Erich (Germany)

Introduction

Erich Honecker was the Secretary General of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) from 1971–89, and held the post of Chairman of the Council of State from 1976–89. In these dual roles, he was head of both party and government in East Germany. A lifelong communist, he helped develop a closer relationship with West Germany with the country benefiting economically as a result. He was, however, a hard-liner who tried to stamp out criticism and encouraged a Stalinesque cult of the personality. His reluctance to adapt to the democratic reforms sweeping through the Eastern Bloc in the late 1980s led to his downfall in 1989, shortly before the collapse of the East German state.

Early Life

Honecker was born on 25 Aug. 1912 in Neunkirchen in Germany's Saar region. His father was a miner and communist. Honecker joined the Communist Youth Movement when he was in his early teens before joining the Communist party proper when he was 17. In 1930 he went to the International Lenin School in Moscow. A roofer by trade, his political activities soon took precedence and, after Hitler's rise to power in 1933, he was an organizer for the outlawed Communist Youth Movement. He was arrested 2 years later and in 1947 was sentenced to 10 years hard labour. With the arrival of the Red Army at the end of World War II in 1945 he was freed from prison in Brandenburg.

He helped prepare the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany for Communist government and in 1946 he established a new movement, Free German Youth, which he chaired until 1955. 1946 also saw the establishment of the SED, a party created by a merger between the German Communist Party and the Social Democrat Party. He travelled to Moscow in 1956–57 for further training, returning to East Germany the following year when he became a full member of the Politburo. He was given responsibility for security matters, and in this guise was responsible for the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

East Germany's leader during this period was Walter Ulbricht, who had helped propel Honecker's career along since 1945. In 1967 Honecker was officially designated his successor. Their relationship, however, soured and in 1971 Honecker actively conspired with other Politburo members to have Ulbricht removed. Ulbricht resigned as First Secretary of the Party and Honecker was unanimously voted into the post, which was changed to

General Secretary 5 years later. Ulbricht died in 1973 and 3 years later Honecker became Chairman of the Council of State.

Career Peak

Honecker employed the feared Stasi (Secret Police) to retain order and eliminate opposition within the country. However, he did allow for a relaxation in the laws governing artistic expression. More radically, he pursued closer ties with capitalist West Germany. The rewards included extensive West German loans and grants, international recognition of East Germany, increasing world trade and a general upsurge in East Germany's economy. Guided by his Finance Minister Günter Mittag, East Germany enjoyed industrial modernization, improved social benefits and large-scale housing projects.

Détente with the West was not without its disadvantages, however, as the country became over reliant on Western money. As more people travelled to and from East Germany and Western media became more accessible, the lie that life in East Germany was incomparably better than elsewhere was hard to justify. This was even more so after Honecker positioned himself against the democratizing reforms, epitomised by Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* ('openness'), that were sweeping through the Soviet sphere of influence.

In 1989 it was intended to hold celebrations throughout the country to mark the 40th anniversary of the East German state. However, in a climate of growing discontent, the celebrations turned into riots and calls for democratic elections. Honecker's resignation became inevitable when, on 9 Oct. 1989, his order to open fire on protesters in Leipzig was openly disobeyed. He was replaced briefly by Egon Krenz, but within a few weeks the Berlin Wall had fallen and communist rule came to an end.

Later Life

Honecker went first to a Soviet hospital in Berlin and then to Moscow. In Feb. 1990 treason and manslaughter were issued against him in Berlin. He went back to Germany in 1992 but, in consideration of his failing health, proceedings against him were dropped and he was allowed to go to Chile. On 29 May 1994 he died of liver cancer.

Houphouët-Boigny, Félix (Côte d'Ivoire)

Introduction

Félix Houphouët-Boigny served as president from 1960 until his death in 1993. Regarded as the father of the nation, when he died he was the third longest serving world leader, behind Kim Il-sung of North Korea and Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Early Life

Félix Houphouët-Boigny is thought to have been born on 18 Oct. 1905 in the town of Yamoussoukro. The son of a wealthy Baule tribe chief, he became a rural doctor as well as a wealthy planter. A Christian convert, he studied medicine in French Senegal and in 1944 co-founded the African Agricultural Syndicate to protect the interests of African planters against European settlers.

In 1945 he was the first African to be elected a deputy of the French National Assembly in the Côte d'Ivoire elections. In the same year he founded the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), which was affiliated with the French Communist Party.

Career Peak

In 1958 President de Gaulle offered French territories a referendum on whether to join a French federal community or become independent. Houphouët-Boigny campaigned successfully for self-government within the French community. In 1959 he became prime minister and in 1960 president, going on to win five successive 5 year terms.

In 1963 Houphouët-Boigny survived a failed coup, after which many leading figures in Côte d'Ivoire were either detained or put under house arrest. There was also a student protest in 1970, after which universities were

temporarily closed, followed by a pardon. Overall, however, Houphouët-Boigny's tenure was relatively stable compared to the post-independence experience of many of the country's neighbours. He instituted a strong national identity which helped to overcome the divisions among some 60 ethnic groups in the country.

Houphouët-Boigny pursued liberal free enterprise policies, developing the country into a major exporter of cocoa and palm oil and the world's third largest producer of coffee behind Brazil and Colombia. However, the 1973 oil crisis and a dramatic slump in world commodity prices hit the economy hard and external debt spiralled over the next two decades to around US\$20 bn.

On the international stage, Houphouët-Boigny supported the unsuccessful Biafran war of secession from Nigeria, he was open to dialogue with apartheid South Africa and from 1973 he broke off relations with Israel.

Although there was a large measure of state control, Houphouët-Boigny preferred to assuage opposition through largesse rather than repression. However, he was branded a neo-colonialist due to the large number of roles given to French technical experts in government, banking and business. His personality cult fuelled ambitious projects such as the building of the world's largest Catholic cathedral in his home town, to where he achieved his dream of moving the country's capital from Abidjan. Despite criticism of his desire to retain power into old age, particularly from future president Laurent Gbagbo, Houphouët-Boigny won his final 5 year term in 1990, but died in office 3 years later.

Howard, John (Australia)

Introduction

Liberal Party member for Bennelong in northwest Sydney since 1974, John Howard became Australia's 25th prime minister in March 1996. Known as an economic rationalist, Howard is also a staunch monarchist who nevertheless organized the 1999 referendum on establishing a republic. His second and third terms were dominated by foreign policy initiatives, in the Asia-Pacific region and in support of the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Successes in Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands boosted his support domestically but strained relations with several close neighbours, most notably Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. His fourth term of office began in Oct. 2004. Foreign affairs have again featured prominently as he announced further deployments of Australian forces to Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands in 2005 and 2006. Howard left office on 3 Dec. 2007 after being defeated by Kevin Rudd in the previous month's elections.

Early Life

John Winston Howard was born on 26 July 1939 in Earlwood, an industrial suburb of Sydney. After attending schools in the city he went on to graduate from Sydney University with a Bachelor of Laws in 1961. Howard joined the Young Liberal Movement at age 18, and in 1963 he became a member of the party's state executive. Practising as a solicitor in a Sydney firm until his election to parliament as member for Bennelong on 18 May 1974, Howard also served as Liberal vice-president for New South Wales during 1972–74. A year after his election, he was appointed minister for business and consumer affairs by Liberal prime minister Malcolm Fraser. In the months leading up to the 1977 election, Howard was made minister for special trade negotiations and minister assisting the prime minister. He was promoted to treasurer just prior to the Dec. election, at which Liberal victory secured Howard's position. He remained treasurer until Fraser lost to Labor in 1983, at which time he became deputy party leader and shadow treasurer. Howard led the party for 4 years from 5 Sept. 1985, eventually being replaced by his rival, former leader Andrew Peacock. Between 1989–94 he occupied a variety of shadow ministry positions, including industrial relations and industry, technology, and communications. He also served as chair of the Manpower and Labour Market Reform Group, and manager of opposition parliamentary business. Voted back as Liberal leader after Alexander Downer in Jan. 1995, Howard fought the next year's election campaign on the basis of economic reform. He became prime minister on 11 March 1996, ending 13 years of Labor government with a 44 seat Liberal-National coalition majority.

Career Peak

Upon gaining office, Howard pledged to slash government spending by \$A8 bn. between 1996–99. This motivated the sale of numerous state-owned services, most controversially the telecommunications firm Telstra. Howard's bill for the sale of one third of Telstra was passed by the upper house in June 1999. Within the same week a set of bills was passed allowing a 'consumption' tax on goods and services (GST), the proposal of which had crippled Liberal support at the 1993 election. Howard described the success of the GST and Telstra legislation as personal achievements. Other important issues in his first term in office included a dispute over indigenous land rights following a 1996 court ruling against Aboriginal access to sites of cultural tradition owned by non-Aboriginals, and the contentious introduction of a 'work for the dole' scheme in 1998. The scheme became a new outlet for a longstanding disagreement over compulsory union membership between the trade unions and the Howard government. A bitter union dispute was also sparked in April of the same year when a major stevedoring company, acting with government support, replaced its 1,500 workforce with non-union staff overnight.

Howard survived a considerable swing to Labor, losing 11 seats, at the 3 Oct. 1998 election. In Nov. of the following year, he organized a referendum on the amendment of Australia's constitution to become a republic with a parliament-appointed president. This proposal was rejected. Howard's second term was characterized by criticism over immigration and foreign policy, particularly concerning Australia's military contributions to UN peacekeeping in Timor-Leste and NATO action against Serbia. In response to complaints that he was not providing for those displaced in the Serbian conflict, Howard welcomed Kosovar refugees in person at Sydney airport in May 1999. However, in July 2001 the refugee-laden Norwegian cargo ship Tampa was caught in a diplomatic gridlock between Australia, the UN, and Norway. The 'boat people' were eventually diverted to Papua New Guinea, with Howard taking a stern position against asylum seekers, to popular acclaim. His coalition government was re-elected at the 10 Nov. 2001 election with 82 seats. However, when Ansett, the country's second largest airline, stopped flying in Feb. 2002, Howard came under fire for failing to underwrite a last-minute sale. Owned by Air New Zealand but an Australian icon, the carrier had gone into administration in Sept. of the previous year.

In May 2003 Peter Hollingworth, Australia's governor-general, resigned. Hollingworth had been the subject of allegations of a rape in the 1960s (the charges were later dropped) and was censured for his failure to dismiss a paedophile member of the clergy when he was archbishop of Brisbane. Howard, who had recommended Hollingworth's appointment, accepted the resignation but confirmed his right to make future appointments without consultation.

Australian foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region has become more aggressive under Howard's leadership. His interventionist approach was first tested in Timor-Leste in Sept. 1999 and deemed a success by the Australian public. The mission was strengthened by the confirmation of Timor-Leste's independence by the Indonesian parliament on 19 Oct. 1999, the same day a mass grave was unearthed. Australian involvement in the region was highlighted by the terrorist attack on a nightclub in Bali, Indonesia, on 16 Nov. 2002 when 88 Australians were killed. Despite the sympathy of Asian neighbours, Howard was criticized for declaring Australia's willingness to act pre-emptively if under threat. Malaysia's prime minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, accused Howard of arrogance in his approach to regional security, and the Thai government rejected suggestions that external assistance was necessary in controlling domestic terrorist threats.

In July 2003 Australia led a peacekeeping mission to the Solomon Islands at the request of the prime minister, Sir Allan Kemakeza. Although New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Fiji Islands and Tonga also contributed troops, Australia was seen to dominate the mission, causing unease among ex-colonies. Relations with the government of Papua New Guinea, led by Sir Michael Somare since Aug. 2002, became strained in mid-2003 over the issue of Australian involvement in Papua New Guinea's administration. Howard had enjoyed good relations with Somare's predecessor, Sir Mekere Morauta, and had declared him his country's last hope for political and economic revival. Howard insisted that Somare accepted Australian police and professionals for operational rather than observational involvement, threatening the withdrawal of Australia's crucial aid package.

Howard's support for the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 attracted vociferous domestic opposition. The subsequent failure to demonstrate an Iraqi programme for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) provoked accusations of lying to justify the attack. However, opinion polls demonstrated

strong support for Howard and involvement in the war. He was re-elected for a further term when the Liberal Party won the election of 9 Oct. 2004 taking 74 seats and 40.5% of the vote. In Dec. 2004 he became Australia's second longest-serving prime minister after Sir Robert Menzies.

In July 2005 Howard announced that Australian special forces were to be deployed to Afghanistan to deter rebel attacks and support the international coalition. Further deployments followed in 2006. Also in 2006 Australian troops spearheaded peacekeeping initiatives in the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste after unrest in both countries during April–May. However, he ruled out Australian intervention in the Fiji Islands following a bloodless coup there in Dec. 2006.

An outbreak of unprecedented racial violence in Sydney in Dec. 2005 was condemned by Howard, but he denied that Australia was guilty of underlying racism despite widespread public hostility to asylum seekers. In Aug. 2006 he was forced to drop a controversial bill that would have tightened Australia's policy on refugees and asylum seekers in the face of defections within his government's ruling coalition. The proposed legislation would have extended the policy of sending many illegal entrants to be housed and processed in third countries.

Howard's coalition was defeated by Labor in the elections of 24 Nov. 2007. He remained in office until the formal swearing-in of Kevin Rudd's government on 3 Dec. Unlike Howard, Rudd was an ardent critic of the Iraq war.

Later Life

In March 2010 Howard was nominated for the presidency of the International Cricket Council by Australia and New Zealand to assume office in 2012. However, his appointment was opposed by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka who argued that he was not adequately qualified for the role. His autobiography *Lazarus Rising: a Personal and Political Autobiography* was published in Oct. 2010.

Howard, Michael (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Voted in as leader of Britain's Conservative Party in Nov. 2003 at the age of 62, Michael Howard's aim was to prevent a third successive term of office for Tony Blair's Labour. The former barrister served in Margaret Thatcher's cabinet as home secretary and is remembered for his tough, uncompromising approach to crime and disorder. A sharp and combative House of Commons performer, Mr. Howard pledged to fight for a 'British dream' that rewards people's own talents and efforts. He was opposed to Britain joining the single European currency and campaigned for a leaner, more efficient government. He stepped down as Conservative leader in Dec. 2005.

Early Life

Michael Howard was born into a Jewish family in Llanelli, South Wales on 7 July 1941. His father, Bernard, had left Romania in the early 1930s, establishing clothes shops in Llanelli and Carmarthen. Michael Howard attended Llanelli Grammar School, followed by the University of Cambridge, where he studied law. He was a member of the so-called 'Cambridge mafia' that was to play a leading role in the Conservative (Tory) governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

Howard was called to the Bar in 1964 and was appointed a QC in 1982. He also nursed political ambitions, and, after two attempts, was elected the member of Parliament (Conservative Party) for Folkestone and Hythe in 1983, the year of Margaret Thatcher's landslide victory. He progressed rapidly, becoming a junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry 2 years later. In 1987 he moved to the Department of the Environment, first as minister for local government and then as minister for water and planning.

In 1990 Howard entered the cabinet as secretary of state for employment, playing a key role in negotiating the UK's opt-out from the European Union's Social Chapter (of the Maastricht Treaty). His Eurosceptic views echoed those of Margaret Thatcher but other influential Conservative party figures took a much softer line on European integration. This split, combined with

fears over the growing public opposition to policies such as the poll tax, brought about a Conservative Party revolt that led to Thatcher's resignation in Nov. 1990. Her successor, John Major led the Conservatives to an unexpected victory in the 1992 general election and Howard was appointed secretary of state for the environment, in which capacity he is credited with helping to secure the participation of the USA at the Earth Summit in Rio. He was promoted again in May 1993, becoming home secretary and swiftly gaining a reputation for being tough and uncompromising. Howard's bold policies frequently inspired strong reactions among the party faithful and the Labour opposition. His expansion of the prison system came in for strong criticism, as did his plans to remove the right to silence for defendants. His proposed reforms of the police force drew fire from former Conservative Home Secretary Sir Willie Whitelaw, who said they would politicize the police. Official statistics suggested that during Howard's term of office crime fell by 15%. But falling crime figures were not enough to ensure a further term of office for the Conservatives—they lost heavily to Tony Blair's New Labour in the 1997 general election.

Michael Howard held onto his Folkestone and Hythe seat and made a bid for the party leadership that had been vacated by the defeated John Major. He lost out to William Hague but was appointed shadow foreign secretary and won plaudits for his energetic House of Commons debates with his opposite number Robin Cook. When he stepped down from the cabinet in 1999 it was assumed that any longer-term hopes of leadership were over. But following the Conservatives' poor performance at the polls in the June 2001 general election and William Hague's subsequent resignation, Howard rejoined the shadow cabinet as shadow chancellor. Under new party leader Iain Duncan-Smith, Howard boosted the morale of Tory Eurosceptics with a series of stinging critiques of Labour Chancellor Gordon Brown's plans for Britain's eventual passage into the single European currency.

Britain's sustained economic growth under Labour after their sizeable 2001 election victory spelt gloom for the Conservatives in the opinion polls. The Tories supported Labour in its decision to go to war in Iraq in March 2003 and were therefore unable to capitalize on the considerable anti-war sentiment among the public. After a lacklustre performance at the 2003 Conservative party conference, Iain Duncan-Smith failed to win sufficient backing in a confidence vote amongst Tory MPs and was forced to step down.

Career Peak

The experienced Michael Howard was voted party leader unopposed in Nov. 2003, becoming the first Welsh leader of the party. He championed a pared-down, efficient administration, criticizing what he described as Labour's 'wastage' and excessive spending on public services that are 'failing to deliver'. He appointed Oliver Letwin as shadow chancellor and David Davis as shadow home secretary. Howard apologized for the introduction of the poll tax in Scotland in 1989, admitting that it had been a mistake. He stated his intention to pull out of the Common Fisheries Policy, also implemented by Thatcher's government.

The Conservatives fared poorly in the European Parliament elections of June 2004, losing eight seats and taking 27.4% of votes cast (the lowest Tory share in a national election since 1832). The success of the UK Independence Party's (UKIP) Eurosceptic campaign was seen as a factor in the loss of Conservative seats.

After the publication of the Butler Report into weapons intelligence in July 2004, Howard attacked the government's judgement in trusting intelligence on weapons of mass destruction, declaring that he would not have supported the war in Iraq had the intelligence flaws and caveats been made public.

The Conservative Party failed to oust the Labour government in the elections of May 2005 but gained 33 seats, increasing their parliamentary representation to 197 seats. However, they faced some criticism over their election campaign, which focussed heavily on issues of immigration, asylum seekers and travellers. The day after the election Howard announced his plans to stand down as party leader, stating that he was 'too old' to lead the Conservatives into the next election. Despite this announcement Howard remained head of the party for a further 6 months, carrying out an extensive front bench reshuffle that would allow David Cameron to run for leader of the party after his departure. During this time the party contributed to Tony Blair's first parliamentary defeat, when they voted alongside the Liberal Democrats and a large number of Labour rebels against proposals to extend to 90 days the time that terror suspects can be held without charge. In his final Commons meeting in Nov. 2005 Howard called for Blair to join him in retirement. Howard stood down as leader of the Conservative Party in Dec. 2005.

Later Life

Michael Howard stood down as Conservative MP for Folkestone and Hythe at the 2010 general election. He was appointed a Conservative peer in the House of Lords in May 2010.

Hoxha, Enver (Albania)

Introduction

Enver Hoxha was Albania's head of state from 1946–85. A dedicated Stalinist, he revolutionized the essentially feudal Albanian economy by enforcing agricultural collectivization and the nationalization of industry. His rule was dictatorial and he often relied on terror to enforce his policies but while his effect on the economy was significant, poverty remained widespread. On the international stage he looked to Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and China for support but fell out with each in turn. At his death Albania was almost entirely isolated.

Early Life

The son of a textile trader, Hoxha was born on 16 Oct. 1908 in Gjirokaštër, Albania. His family was Muslim, though Hoxha became a determined atheist. He attended a French school in Korçë and then the American Technical School in Tirana. Between 1930 and 1936 he lived in France and Belgium, studying in Montpellier and then working at the Albanian Consulate in Brussels. Between 1936 and 1939 he took a teaching position back in Korçë but was removed from his job, following the Italian invasion of Albania and his refusal to join the Albanian Fascist Party.

Hoxha moved to Tirana to be a tobacconist, using his shop for subterfuge communist activities. In 1941 he received assistance from Yugoslav communists in establishing the Albanian Communist Party (re-named the Party of Labour in 1948), with Hoxha installed as its Secretary General. The following year he was prominent in the setting up of the Army of National Liberation, a resistance movement that fought the occupying fascist forces as well as two rival Albanian resistance movements. In late Nov. 1944, following the liberation of Albania, Hoxha and the Communists (including his close ally Mehmet Shehu) seized power.

Career Peak

Hoxha served as Prime Minister from 1944–54 and was also Foreign Minister from 1946–53. Albania changed its name to the People's Republic of Albania in 1946, the same year in which the USA broke off ties with the regime, an act that stalled Albania's entry into the UN until 1955. Between 1944–48 Hoxha had close ties with Yugoslavia but after 1948, when Tito and Stalin fell out, he became more reliant on the Soviet Union. Profoundly influenced by Stalin and his methods, Hoxha instigated a programme on agricultural collectivization and industrial nationalization. Like Stalin, he encouraged a cult of personality and dealt ruthlessly with any opposition. Purges were common and enemies and potential enemies were routinely removed from their jobs, persecuted, imprisoned and executed. Religious institutions were outlawed, private property confiscated and freedom of expression that went against the official line ruthlessly stamped out.

In 1954 Hoxha passed the premiership to Shehu, a position he would hold until his death in 1981, though Hoxha remained the effective leader of the country. Hoxha's relationship with the Soviet Union deteriorated after the death of Stalin. Hoxha perceived it as a move away from the true ideals of Marxist-Leninism that Khrushchev should refuse to support the worst excesses of the Stalin regime. Removed from the Warsaw Pact and Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) in 1961, Albania turned to China for international support. This relationship also became strained and broke down in 1978 after numerous ideological disputes and Hoxha's disgust at China's closer ties with the USA.

Hoxha opted now for international isolation, claiming that Albania was the world's only true remaining socialist country and that it would develop into the model socialist state. It was true that under Hoxha Albania had become more self-reliant, that basic education had improved and that there was an industrial sector where previously there had been virtually none. However, the price Albania paid for these developments was a wretched standard of living for most people, heavy-handed government and international isolation.

Later Life

The early-1980s witnessed another round of purges as Hoxha endeavoured to ensure his succession. Shehu had opposed the policy of isolation and was accused of being a Yugoslav spy shortly before it was reported that he had committed suicide. A number of Shehu's followers were removed from positions of power the following year and, as Hoxha gradually withdrew from the political life, Ramiz Alia (a favourite of Hoxha) was installed as his replacement. Made nominal head of government in 1982, he duly took over as head of the Party and the State when Hoxha died in Tirana on 11 April 1985, leaving his country financially destitute and politically friendless.

Hrawi, Elias (Lebanon)

Introduction

Elias Hrawi, a Maronite Christian, took office as president on 24 Nov. 1989. He replaced René Mouawad, who had been elected earlier in the month in the wake of the 1989 charter of national reconciliation (known as the Taif Accord) but assassinated on 22 Nov. Hrawi's term of office was extended in 1995 for a further 3 years by a constitutional amendment.

Early Life

Born in 1925 in Zahlé in the Bekaa Valley, Hrawi was a successful agricultural businessman before he was elected to the National Assembly as a Maronite deputy in 1972. He continued to serve as a parliamentary member until 1989 when he unsuccessfully challenged René Mouawad in the presidential election on 5 Nov. Mouawad was assassinated 17 days later, and on the 24 Nov. Hrawi was elected in his place. He was active in the negotiations on the Taif Accord and the amendments shifting considerable constitutional power from the (Maronite) president to the (Sunni Muslim) prime minister, maintaining good relations with Syria, the Maronite leadership and the Muslim community.

Career Peak

Gen. Michel Aoun, the Maronite army commander leading a transitional military government appointed by outgoing president Amin Gemayel in Sept. 1988, refused to recognise Mouawad's or Hrawi's election. Fighting between pro- and anti-Aoun Christian factions broke out and in 1990, at Hrawi's request, Syrian troops attacked Aoun's enclave. Aoun took refuge in the French embassy and later fled to France. In Sept. 1990 Hrawi established the second republic by signing the constitutional amendments negotiated under the Taif Accord. By the end of his presidency in 1998, neither Israeli nor Syrian forces had withdrawn from Lebanon and there were continuing clashes between Israeli troops and Palestinian and Shia Hizbollah guerrillas in the south of the country, particularly in April 1996. Nevertheless, the restoration of relative stability during his term in office allowed for the holding of National Assembly elections for the first time since 1972 and for the implementation of programmes to rebuild the country's shattered economy and infrastructure. Hrawi left office on 24 Nov. 1998. He died aged 79 on 7 July 2006.

Htin Kyaw (Myanmar)

Introduction

On 15 March 2016 parliament elected Htin Kyaw to serve as the first civilian president since 1962. A loyal supporter of long-time opposition figurehead Aung San Suu Kyi, he was expected to act as her proxy as she is constitutionally barred from holding the presidential office because her children are foreign nationals. He resigned in March 2018.

Early Life

Htin Kyaw was born on 20 July 1946 in Kungyangon. His father, Min Thu Wun, was well-known as a poet and National League for Democracy (NLD) politician. Htin Kyaw attended the English Methodist High School where Aung San Suu Kyi was a schoolmate. In 1968 he graduated in economics from the Rangoon Institute of Economics and from 1971–72 attended the Institute of Computer Science in London, England.

In the 1970s and 1980s Htin Kyaw held government positions in the ministries of industry and foreign affairs before resigning in 1992 when the ruling military junta took a more repressive line. In Sept. 2000 he was arrested for attempting to help Aung San Suu Kyi visit the then capital, Mandalay, and was imprisoned for 4 months. During Aung San Suu Kyi's years under house arrest, Htin Kyaw was one of the few people allowed to visit her, and he acted as her driver in her few brief periods of freedom. In 2012 he joined the Daw Khin Kyi Foundation—established by Aung San Suu Kyi and named in honour of her mother—as a senior executive. On 10 March 2016 he was announced as the NDL's presidential nominee, and on 15 March he received 360 of 652 parliamentary votes. He became president on 1 April.

Career Peak

Prior to the general election of Nov. 2015 that saw the NDL sweep to power, Aung San Suu Kyi had commented on the constitutional bar to her assuming the presidency: 'If the NLD wins the elections and we form a government, I am going to be the leader of that government whether or not I am the president.' Having taken office as president in April, Htin Kyaw duly appointed her State Counsellor (effectively making her the *de facto* head of government), as well as minister of the president's office and foreign affairs minister.

However, Htin Kyaw has failed to reconcile Aung San Suu Kyi's traditional support base with the still powerful military, who hold 25% of the parliamentary seats. Also, by the end of 2017 any optimism about the new government among Myanmar's minorities had given way to fear and disenchantment in the wake of a brutal army crackdown on the Rohingya Muslim minority in Rakhine state, which had forced an estimated 1 m. refugees to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh by Oct. and incurred widespread international condemnation of the government's inaction.

Htin Kyaw resigned in March 2018 as a result of ill health.

Hu Jintao (China)

Introduction

Hu Jintao was nominated general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Nov. 2002, formally succeeding Jiang Zemin as head of state in March 2003 and as chairman of the Central Military Commission in Sept. 2004. Although widely perceived as a conservative—having supported the Tiananmen Square massacres in the late 1980s and cracked down on separatism in Tibet—he has continued Jiang's cautious reformist policies. He has maintained the drive for rapid industrial growth and also further developed China's international contacts, undertaking visits as state president to Latin America, Australia, Canada, Central Asia, the UK, USA and, in particular, Africa.

Early Life

Much of Hu's early history is disputed. He is believed to have been born in Dec. 1942 in Jixi, Anhui Province. His mother died when he was six and he was subsequently raised by an aunt. In 1959 he began engineering studies at Qinghua University and graduated in 1964, the same year in which he joined the CCP. He then held a variety of posts at the university and the ministry of water conservancy.

He is reported to have distanced himself from Mao's Cultural Revolution of the mid-1960s and was sentenced to 2 months of 'reform through labour'. Later, he worked on large-scale engineering projects in Gansu province. By the late 1970s Hu was a favourite of Deng Xiaoping, who became China's effective leader. He settled in Beijing in 1980, and within 2 years he was the youngest member of the party's central committee. Having risen through the ranks of the Communist Youth League, in 1985 he was appointed provincial

party secretary for Guizhou. In 1988 he became party secretary in charge of Tibet and authorized the killing of several independence protesters in March 1989. Shortly afterwards he declared martial law and oversaw the introduction of 100,000 troops into the region. Later in the year he was among the first of the provincial party secretaries to express his support for those who took part in the Tiananmen Square massacres.

In 1992 Hu was responsible for organizing Jiang's first party congress as leader, and soon after was designated a member of the Politburo Standing Committee. In 1998 he was named vice-president, from which point on he was Jiang's acknowledged successor. The following year he was prominent in protests at the US and British embassies in Beijing over the accidental bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade during NATO military action against Serbia. He was also named deputy chairman of the Central Military Commission at that time.

Career Peak

At the CCP congress of Nov. 2002, Hu replaced Jiang as party general secretary and then succeeded him as state president in March 2003. Hu expressed his commitment to Jiang's *Theory of Three Representations* (treatise on Chinese political thought), suggesting a continuity of government style.

Hu has nevertheless pursued an active foreign policy, breaking from the Deng model which proscribed taking the lead in diplomatic negotiations. He has sought to resolve the issue of North Korea's nuclear ambitions through the ongoing six-nations talks between North and South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the USA. He has also developed relations with neighbouring India and Pakistan, establishing military links with both countries in Nov. 2003. Earlier, in June 2003, Hu received the visiting Indian prime minister who conceded recognition of Tibet as an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China. As president, Hu has travelled widely, visiting Australia, Africa, Latin America, Canada and Central Asia in pursuit of closer economic and commercial links to supply the resources for China's industrial machine. In Nov. 2006 he hosted a Sino-African summit in Beijing attended by more than 40 African heads of state and government, and in 2007 undertook a tour of eight African countries to boost trade and investment. In July 2008 China and Russia finalized a treaty formally ending a 40-year-old border dispute that had provoked armed clashes during the Cold War.

Human rights, Taiwan, Tibet and trade have remained difficult issues in Sino-US relations. Perennial US accusations of 'backsliding' in human rights have been vigorously denied (although China reacted angrily to the award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to imprisoned activist Liu Xiaobo), and Hu's government has pointed to US foreign policy as aggressive and harmful to the rights of civilians. Former President George W. Bush's less conciliatory attitude towards China over Taiwan led to a more turbulent relationship between the two countries, although Hu made a seemingly successful first presidential visit to the USA in April 2006. In Nov. 2009 US President Obama made his first visit to China, heralding declarations of bilateral co-operation on trade, climate change and other issues. At the CCP congress in Oct. 2007, Hu offered a peace agreement with Taiwan as long as the territory did not explicitly renounce its links with mainland China, and in June 2008 the first formal bilateral talks since 1999 took place. In July 2009 Hu exchanged direct messages with the president of Taiwan, the first such exchange between the national leaders in more than 60 years. Chinese-US tensions resurfaced in 2010 over the US decision to go ahead with arms sales to Taiwan, which prompted China's suspension in Jan. of high-level military exchanges with the USA, and over US claims that China was distorting trade because its currency is undervalued—a claim that China has denied.

In March 2008 the worst ethnic violence in two decades in Tibet against continuing Chinese rule prompted a security crackdown against separatist protesters and widespread international criticism of Hu's government ahead of the summer Olympic Games staged in Beijing in Aug. Further ethnic violence erupted in July 2009 in Urumqi, the capital of China's northwestern Xinjiang province, between indigenous Muslim Uighurs and Han Chinese settlers, which left around 200 people dead and 1700 injured.

In March 2011 the National People's Congress approved substantial additional expenditure on China's internal security apparatus, suggesting official concern over any contagion from the concurrent political disaffection spreading across much of the Arab world and also uncertainty over the potential for further ethnic unrest in the provinces. Disturbances erupted in Inner Mongolia in May 2011 and in Xinjiang in July–Aug., while anti-Chinese agitation continued in Tibet as a new head of the Tibetan

government-in-exile took over in Aug. following the Dalai Lama's decision to relinquish his political role.

Hu's domestic agenda has focused on continuing China's rapid economic development—maintaining annual GDP growth of around 10% in 2010 and 2011, but with high inflation—and alleviating the poverty of the peasant population. An anti-corruption drive included the sacking and even execution of high-ranking state officials. Hu's government also championed increases in agricultural subsidies and the eventual termination of agricultural taxes—a programme interpreted as an attempt to create a larger middle class, committed to the CCP hegemony.

Hu was re-elected for a further term in March 2008. In Oct. 2009 he oversaw celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of the Communist Party's assumption of power, and similarly marked the 90th anniversary of the party's founding in July 2011.

Hu was required to step down in March 2013 and was succeeded by Xi Jinping, who was elected general secretary of the CCP and as such president-designate in Nov. 2012.

Humala Tasso, Ollanta (Peru)

Introduction

Ollanta Humala became president in July 2011. Leader of the Peruvian Nationalist Party, he was elected after two rounds of voting, defeating Keiko Fujimori, daughter of former president Alberto Fujimori. Humala was backed by the Gana Perú coalition and succeeded Alan García. He is left office in July 2016 following elections in April in which he was ineligible to stand.

Early Life

Born in Lima in June 1962, Humala is the son of Isaac Humala who developed the ethno-nationalist ideology called 'ethnocacerism'. Ollanta Humala studied in Lima before joining the military. He trained initially as a paratrooper and amphibious combatant at the School of the Americas in Panama. In 1992, as head of a detachment in Tingo María, he was involved in operations against the rebel group Shining Path, for which he was later accused of human rights abuses. By 2000 he had been promoted to lieutenant-colonel.

Also in 2000, he led an uprising (along with his brother) in a bid to force out President Alberto Fujimori and leading military commanders. Following Fujimori's resignation the interim government pardoned Humala and awarded him the Peru Cross for Military Merit.

From 2000–04 Humala worked for the ministry of defence and in 2001 completed a master's degree in political sciences from the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. He became the military attaché to the Peruvian embassy in Paris in 2003 and studied for a doctorate in international law at the Sorbonne. In 2004 he was posted to South Korea. While there his name was linked to an uprising in Peru against President Alejandro Toledo.

In 2005 Humala founded the Peruvian Nationalist Party (PNP). With support from the Union for Peru (UPP), he ran for the presidency in 2006 but lost support over questions about his past and his left-wing sympathies. From 2006–11 he fought off several legal cases related to previous coups. In 2011, backed by the Gana Perú coalition, he ran for the presidency again, defeating Keiko Fujimori.

Career Peak

In 2006 Humala had defined himself as 'anti-neoliberal' and 'anti-global capitalist' but in 2011 he adopted a more moderate profile. He distanced himself from associations with Venezuela's then president, Hugo Chávez, and stood on a platform of energy self-sufficiency, a more equitable distribution of wealth and increased taxes on mining. On coming to power, he chose a moderate cabinet, quelling worries in business circles and the Lima stock market. He announced social programmes including a non-contributory basic pension for the elderly, a public childcare programme and more scholarships to promote university education. The minimum wage was also increased.

Large-scale mining projects, such as the Conga copper and gold mine, offered potentially lucrative future revenue sources. However, popular

opposition to mining schemes was widespread and protests led in Dec. 2011 to the resignation of Prime Minister Salomon Lerner, his replacement by Óscar Valdés and a major cabinet reshuffle. There were further violent anti-mining clashes in the southern Cusco region in May 2012 and in northern provinces in July, prompting the government to declare temporary states of emergency. Also in July that year, following the resignation of the unpopular Óscar Valdés and his administration in response to the unrest, Humala appointed Juan Jiménez Mayor as prime minister. However, in Sept. 2013, as thousands joined a general strike against the government's economic policies, he reshuffled the cabinet, swearing in César Villanueva Arévalo as the new premier in Oct. However, Villanueva resigned 4 months later following a conflict with the finance minister over an increase to the minimum wage. Housing, construction and sanitation minister René Cornejo was subsequently sworn in as premier, but he too resigned in July 2014, after which labour and employment promotion minister Ana Jara Velásquez was appointed. Having been censured by Congress over a spying scandal, she too was removed from office in April 2015. Her replacement, Pedro Cateriano, who had previously held the defence portfolio, became the seventh prime minister since Ollanta Humala took office as president in 2011.

A free trade agreement with the European Union came into effect in March 2013.

Humala was ineligible to run for a second term at the elections of April 2016 owing to constitutional term limits. Pedro Pablo Kuczynski succeeded him as president 3 months later.

Husák, Gustáv (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Gustáv Husák led the Czechoslovak Communist Party between 1969 and 1987 and was national President from 1975 until 1989. Though associated with the reforms of Alexander Dubček's Prague Spring, Husák quickly declared himself an opponent of liberalization and gained the favour of Moscow. He replaced Dubček as leader and oversaw 20 years of 'normalization'—the reversal of the 1968 reforms and the re-imposition of Soviet orthodoxy. By the late-1980s he was out of tune with the reformist climate and his fall coincided with the collapse of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia.

Early Life

Husák was born on 10 Jan. 1913 in Dúbravka, close to Bratislava in what is now Slovakia. In 1937 he graduated from Comenius University in Bratislava, having become active within the Slovakian Communist Party 4 years earlier. During World War II he was prominent in the Slovakian resistance, but was imprisoned from 1940–43. On his release he joined the party's Central Committee and was instrumental in the failed Slovakian national uprising of 1944.

In 1946 he was a deputy in the National Assembly and in the same year he took the chair of Slovakia's Board of Commissioners. Between 1948 and 1950 he was Gottwald's Minister of Agriculture but he fared badly in Stalin's 1950 purge of the Czechoslovakian Communist hierarchy and was again imprisoned between 1954–60. On his release he worked as a junior government official but by 1963 he had been rehabilitated and re-admitted to the Communist Party. He worked at the Academy of Sciences in Prague between 1963–68 and in April 1968 he was appointed Deputy Prime Minister to Dubček.

Dubček's Prague Spring ushered in a swathe of economic and social reforms and while Husák was at first apparently supportive of change, he began to preach a more conservative line as Muscovite displeasure increased. Becoming head of the Slovakian Communists in Aug. 1968, he demanded a reversal of the reforms already passed, thus endearing himself to the Soviet overlords. Further anti-Soviet protests throughout Czechoslovakia in March 1969 precipitated the fall of Dubček, who was then replaced by his former deputy.

Career Peak

Husák immediately set about purging reformers from the party, a process which carried on into 1970. Half of the Central Committee were removed and

hundreds of thousands of party members who were excluded from or voluntarily left the party also lost their jobs. In Dec. 1970 Husák's government accepted the Soviet version of the events of 1968, which effectively stated that the Soviet invasion had been necessary to snuff out the threat of counter-revolutionaries. He tightened the oppressive censorship laws, made full use of the feared secret police and turned his back on the 1968 economic reforms, relying instead on an unaffordable level of consumerism. Recession resulted and inflation spiralled throughout the 1970s, whilst the nation's cultural life went into steep decline. He also promulgated a new constitution in 1969 that secured Slovakian autonomy.

By the mid-1980s Mikhail Gorbachev had come to power in the Soviet Union and was initiating his policies of *glasnost* ('openness') and *perestroika* ('restructuring'). Husák was not in step with the changing climate sweeping the communist regimes of the Eastern Bloc, and in 1987 he resigned the leadership of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party to be replaced by Miloš Jakeš. By Nov. 1989 the communist governments in Poland, Hungary and East Germany had all fallen. Pro-democracy protests by Czech students and intellectuals began in mid-Nov. and the authorities responded with strong arm tactics which succeeded only in increasing the reform movement's momentum.

The government agreed to negotiations with the hastily organized reform party Civic Forum, led by future-president Václav Havel, and the Communists resigned their posts en masse. Husák gave up the presidency within a month and was replaced by Havel.

Later Life

Husák died on 18 Nov. 1991 in Bratislava.

Hussein al-Tikriti, Saddam (Iraq)

Introduction

Saddam Hussein became president of the Republic, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and secretary-general of the regional (Iraqi) command of the ruling Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba'ath) Party after the resignation of Gen. Ahmad Al Bakr in July 1979. He took over the additional post of prime minister in May 1994. Despite the military reversals of the 1980–88 war with Iran and the 1990–91 Gulf War against an international coalition—both of which undermined his ambitions for Iraqi regional dominance—Hussein retained power as the pivotal figure in a highly centralized and authoritarian regime and was the focus of a pervasive personality cult. In 2002 his rule again became the focus of US foreign policy, with President George W. Bush advocating 'regime change'. US-led forces launched an attack on Iraq in March 2003 and by April 2003 Saddam Hussein had been removed from power. In Dec. 2003 he was captured by US special forces near to his home town of Tikrit. He was convicted of crimes against humanity and executed in Dec. 2006.

Early Life

Saddam Hussein, a Sunni Muslim, was born in Tikrit, north of Baghdad in Salah ad-Din governate, on 28 April 1937. He was educated in the Iraqi capital and in Cairo, Egypt. Encouraged by an uncle (an officer in the Iraqi army and proponent of Arab unity), he gravitated towards politics in his teenage years, becoming a pan-Arab nationalist. In 1956 he joined the Ba'ath Party. After the 1958 overthrow of the monarchy and establishment of the republic, Hussein conspired the following year to assassinate the military leader Gen. Abdul Karim Qassim. However, the plot was foiled and Hussein was wounded. He was forced to flee the country under sentence of death, first to Syria and then to Egypt. Returning to Iraq after Qassim's overthrow in Feb. 1963, he joined the regional (Iraqi) command of the Ba'ath Party. In 1964 he was arrested for allegedly plotting against the new president, Abdul Salam Aref. While serving a prison sentence he became assistant secretary-general of the Ba'ath in Iraq. Upon his release he played a major role in the July 1968 coup which brought Ahmad Al Bakr to power. The following year Hussein was appointed deputy chairman of the ruling RCC.

Hussein set out to strengthen the economy with a state-sponsored industrial modernization programme. Underpinned by the oil price rises of 1973

and 1979, the programme led to a more equitable distribution of wealth, increased access to education and health care, and to the redistribution of land. Success on the economic front spurred Hussein to pursue an ambitious foreign policy aimed at pushing Iraq to the forefront of the Arab world. Egypt's isolation in the region in the wake of the 1978 peace agreement with Israel also gave Iraq an opportunity for a more prominent role in Arab affairs.

Career Peak

Having become the power behind the ailing President Bakr during the 1970s, Hussein took formal control of the government on Bakr's resignation in July 1979. He was subsequently accused by the international community and by Iraqi exiles of ruling by terror—through arbitrary arrests and executions of suspected political opponents and potential rivals, the slaughter of rebellious Kurds in the north of the country by chemical weapons, and repression of Shia Muslims in the south, including the draining of their traditional homeland marshes. He harnessed Iraq's oil wealth to expand his armed forces in an attempt to achieve regional hegemony through military aggression, with ruinous consequences in the Iran–Iraq War and the invasion of Kuwait. Iraq remained subject to United Nations sanctions for refusal to comply with Security Council resolutions on the supervised elimination of suspected weapons of mass destruction. This defiance led to air attacks on Iraqi military and communication installations by US and UK warplanes which continued to patrol 'no-fly zones' over areas of the country in defence of the civilian population. Nevertheless, through family and tribal patronage and control of the military and the security police, Hussein maintained his grip on Iraq and its people.

On 15 Oct. 1995 a referendum was held to determine whether the President should remain in office for a further 7 years. Turnout was said to be 99.47% of the 8.4 m. eligible electors with 99.96% of the votes cast in favour. In a repeat referendum in Oct. 2002 all votes were cast in favour of Hussein. In celebration he announced an amnesty on Iraq's prisoners, pardoning all except murderers whose release would depend on their victims' families.

Following the 11 Sept. 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, President Bush branded Hussein's regime part of an 'axis of evil' supporting terrorism and advocated an end to Hussein's regime. Amid increasing tensions, Hussein made a public broadcast in which he vowed to stand firm against 'evil tyrants and oppressors'. but in Sept. 2002 he agreed to re-admit UN Security Council weapon inspectors. By the beginning of Oct. 2002, the US was pushing for a new UN resolution which would ensure joint military action in response to Iraqi non-compliance.

Led by Hans Blix, inspectors began their assessments in Nov. 2002. Under the terms of the UN resolution, Iraq was compelled to supply a dossier, which ran to 12,000 pages, detailing the country's chemical, biological and nuclear capabilities. The US, UK and Blix received the report with scepticism. In an address to the UN Security Council on 27 Jan. 2003, Blix said he had found no evidence of an illicit weapons programme in Iraq but added that 1,000 tonnes of chemical agents and 8,500 litres of anthrax remained unaccounted for. He criticized Iraq's lack of 'proactive cooperation' in, among other things, providing a full list of Iraqi scientists. Throughout Dec. 2002 and Jan. 2003 the US and the UK expanded their military presence in the region. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein accused the UN's weapons inspecting team of undertaking 'pure intelligence work'.

In Feb. 2003 Iraq began destroying its al-Samoud II weapons in accordance with weapons inspectors' demands. While Hans Blix welcomed the development, the US and UK treated the move with scepticism. With splits evident within the UN security council over the appropriate course of action to take against the Iraqi regime, Bush and his closest ally, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, abandoned attempts to push through a new resolution. Having previously emphasized his right to act independently of the UN, Bush authorized US-led forces to launch an invasion of Iraq in March 2003. By April 2003 American-led troops had secured control of the country.

Later Life

Saddam Hussein's regime effectively removed from power, speculation continued as to his whereabouts. In May 2003 the US government reported that he had authorized the withdrawal of over US\$1 bn. from national reserves at the outbreak of hostilities. In July 2003 his sons, Uday and Qusay, were killed in a gun battle with US troops in Mosul.

Suicide bomb attacks and military ambushes continued to harass occupying troops and international organizations for the rest of 2003. Although

foreign mercenaries were blamed for many of the attacks, the survival of Saddam Hussein indicated that some of the attacks were organized by elements of the old regime. The failure to find the ex-president was a source of embarrassment for US forces until Operation Red Dawn located and captured him alive on 13 Dec. 2003. Hussein was hiding in al-Dawr, near to Tikrit. Film footage of his medical examination was broadcast around the world after DNA tests confirmed his identity.

Hussein and seven co-defendants went on trial before the Iraq Special Tribunal, charged with crimes against humanity. Specific charges related to Hussein's conduct in 1982 against the people of the city of Dujail (including 148 charges of murder and allegations of torture) after an unsuccessful assassination attempt against him. The trial was fraught with problems, including Hussein's questioning of the court's legitimacy, the murder of several lawyers working for the defence and the replacement of the chief judge amid allegations of bias. Hussein was found guilty on 5 Nov. 2006 and sentenced to death by hanging. His final appeal against the sentence failed on 26 Dec. and he was executed on 30 Dec. 2006. Footage of his final moments was shown around the world and there followed an upsurge in violence among parts of his Sunni support. He was buried in Al-Awja, his village of birth, near to Tikrit.

Hussein bin Talal (Jordan)

Introduction

King Hussein bin Talal ruled Jordan from 1953 until his death in 1999. By that time he was the world's longest serving executive head of state. Drawn from the Hashemite dynasty, he is believed by devout Muslims to have been the 42nd generation direct descendent of the Prophet Muhammad. Throughout his reign, in one of the most volatile and dangerous regions of the world, he managed to safeguard both his throne and the stability of his country.

Early Life

Hussein was born in Amman on 14 Nov. 1935 to Prince Talal bin Abdullah and Princess Zein al-Sharaf bint Jamil. At that time the intercommunal struggle between Arabs and Zionists for control of Palestine (then, with Transjordan, under the British Mandate) was approaching a decisive phase that was to lead to the creation of the Jewish state of Israel in May 1948. Following his elementary education in Amman, he studied at Victoria College in Alexandria, Egypt, and Harrow School in England. Later he received his military training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, also in England.

The most traumatic moment of his early life was the assassination in July 1951 of his grandfather, King Abdullah, outside the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The young prince witnessed the event and was fortunate to escape unharmed. The following year (on 11 Aug.), Hussein was proclaimed King and head of state. He replaced his father, who had succeeded briefly before abdicating owing to mental illness. A Regency Council was appointed until Hussein's formal accession on 2 May 1953. Having by then reached the age of 18, he assumed full constitutional powers. The new King was to strengthen and professionalize (with Western help) the Jordanian military establishment, asserting the authority of the crown.

Career Peak

Domestically, King Hussein is credited with developing Jordan's economic and industrial infrastructure, and with helping to raise living standards generally. But it was his political preoccupation with the Palestinian question, and relations with Israel, that defined his long reign. While keenly aware of Arab sensitivities towards Israeli regional domination and the Palestinian cause, he maintained a readiness to compromise and to accommodate his powerful neighbour. However, it was 1994 (in the wake of Israeli-Palestinian accords) before he agreed to a formal peace treaty. Jordan's alignment with the Western powers, meanwhile, often made the King the target of criticism by more radical Arab regimes.

In 1967 the already large, displaced Palestinian population in Jordan further increased following the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War. The Arab defeat resulted in the loss of the West Bank and East Jerusalem to Israel (territories that Jordan had annexed in 1950). After the conflict, Palestinian resistance

guerrillas based in Jordan grew in strength and threatened to destabilise Hussein's regime. In Sept. 1970, the King turned his army on the militant Palestine Liberation Organization. The PLO were expelled the following year.

Over the next two decades he continued to walk a fine diplomatic line—avoiding direct confrontation with Israel, fostering relations with the Palestinians and moderate Arab states, and maintaining links with the Western powers. In 1988 he disclaimed any ambition to restore Jordanian rule in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and endorsed the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. His subsequent neutrality—or perceived support for President Saddam Hussein of Iraq—during the 1990–91 Gulf crisis over Kuwait was less well received by Western and Gulf Arab states.

King Hussein died of cancer on 7 Feb. 1999. His funeral was attended by over 50 heads of state, including close allies, friends and some of his outspoken opponents (particularly the then President of Syria, Hafiz al-Assad). Several Arab countries declared a state of mourning. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Abdullah II, one of 12 children from his four marriages.

Hwang Kyo-ahn (South Korea)

Introduction

Hwang Kyo-ahn was named prime minister by President Park Geun-hye in May 2016. On 9 Dec. 2016 he became acting president after Park stepped aside to face impeachment proceedings. Hwang is a former justice minister who served as a public prosecutor for almost 30 years.

Early Life

Hwang Kyo-ahn was born on 15 April 1957. He graduated in 1981 from the College of Law at Sungkyunkwan University, earning his master's degree in law from the same institution in 2006.

Hwang began his career in 1983 as a public prosecutor in the Cheongju District Prosecutors' Office. He went on to serve in further public prosecution roles until 2011. He specialized in national security law, a focus that drew criticism from opposition and civil rights groups.

In 2011 he went into private practice with the firm Bae Kim & Lee, and also served as chairman of the Election Broadcast Deliberation Committee. In 2013 he was appointed minister of justice and was instrumental the following year in a government motion to outlaw the leftist Unified Progressive Party, which was accused of pro-North Korean views. In May 2015 Hwang was nominated as premier, a largely ceremonial role, by President Park and was sworn in the following month.

Career Peak

Despite having been the longest serving minister in Park's administration, Hwang was dismissed as prime minister in Nov. 2016 as the president sought to restore confidence in her administration in the face of a corruption scandal. Nonetheless, he remained in office as a replacement could not be agreed upon. In Dec. Park was suspended from office to face impeachment proceedings following a parliamentary vote and Hwang duly became acting president as well as prime minister.

After confirmation by the Constitutional Court of Park's impeachment in March 2017, presidential elections held on 9 May were won by Moon Jae-in. He succeeded Hwang as president the following day. On 11 May Yoo II-ho became acting prime minister.

Ilelema, Apisai (Tuvalu)

Introduction

Apisai Ilelema took office in Aug. 2006, succeeding Maatia Toafa. He declared Tuvalu in immediate danger from rising sea levels and requested international assistance with evacuating and resettling residents. His other major priority was to address Tuvalu's economic difficulties. He left office in Sept. 2010.

Early Life

Born in Tuvalu on 19 Aug. 1955, Ielemia attended Hiram Bingham high school in Kiribati. In 1973 he entered the civil service and became island executive officer, based in Funafuti. From 1978–94 he was executive officer for the Tuvalu high commission and from 1994–98 was its first secretary.

From 1985–94 Ielemia was clerk to the Tuvalu parliament. In 1993 he graduated in management and political science from the University of the South Pacific in Suva in the Fiji Islands. In 1994 he became assistant secretary at the ministries of health and education and of foreign affairs and in 1998 was named permanent secretary at the ministry of tourism, trade and commerce.

In 2004 Ielemia became leader of the opposition. When parliamentary elections ousted most of the existing cabinet in Aug. 2006, he was appointed prime minister by a majority of one. He promised to lift restrictions on the media and improve economic administration, and also took responsibility for foreign affairs.

Career Peak

To combat rising sea levels Ielemia has requested help from Australia, New Zealand and the wider international community to evacuate and rehouse islanders. Almost a quarter of the population was evacuated; the largest exile community is in Auckland, New Zealand. In Dec. 2006 Ielemia visited Taiwan and secured increased financial aid and agreement on joint shipping and fishing ventures. He also took some controversial measures to improve the economy, such as restricting MPs' spending allowances. In Jan. 2009 Tuvalu applied for membership of the International Monetary Fund.

Ielemia retained his parliamentary seat in elections in Sept. 2010 but despite expressing a desire to form a coalition in the wake of the elections he did not receive enough nominations to run for office. He was succeeded as prime minister by Maatia Taofa on 29 Sept.

Iliescu, Ion (Romania)

Introduction

Ion Iliescu became Romanian President in Dec. 2000. From 1989 to 1996 he served as the first head of state after the revolution that removed Nicolae Ceaușescu and the communist regime. A former member of the Communist Party Central Committee and ally of Ceaușescu, Iliescu was removed from office in 1971 after criticising Ceaușescu. Iliescu's dissatisfaction with the incumbent regime subsequently increased and when popular discontent exploded in Dec. 1989 he was an obvious choice as leader.

Early Life

Iliescu was born on 3 March 1930 in Oltenita, south of Bucharest. Having joined the Communist Youth Union in 1944 and founded the Union of High School Students in 1948, he was educated at the Bucharest Polytechnic Institute and then at the Energy Institute, Moscow. He joined the Communist Party in 1953 and from 1955 was employed as a researcher at the Bucharest Institute of Energy Studies. In 1956 he founded the Union of Romanian Students' Associations. His wife Elena is an engineer.

As an ally of Ceaușescu Iliescu's stock rose when the latter became the communist's secretary general. In 1967 Iliescu was appointed minister of youth, remaining in the post for 4 years, and in 1968 became a full member of the central committee. Following ideological disputes between the two men, Iliescu lost much of his influence.

Between 1971 and 1979 Iliescu served as a regional party secretary, first in Timișoara and then in Iasi County. From 1979 until 1984 he was chairman of the National Waters Council before taking over as director of the National Publishing House for Technical Literature until 1989. Having been accused of 'intellectual deviation' by Ceaușescu, Iliescu was placed under intensive securitate (secret police) surveillance for several years.

In mid-Dec. 1989, as anti-communist feeling swept the Eastern Bloc, protests against the Ceaușescu regime broke out in Timișoara and quickly spread through Romania. On 22 Dec., with Ceaușescu deposed, Iliescu was asked to front the provisional government, the National Salvation Front Council. Free multi-party elections were held on 20 May 1990 and Iliescu was elected president with 85% of the vote.

Career Peak

Taking office at a time of post-communist euphoria, Iliescu was unable to deliver the radical reforms Romania needed. The economy continued to struggle and remained over-centralized. Despite this Iliescu was re-elected on 11 Oct. 1992, winning 61.5% of the vote. However, discontent with his rule grew. He was unable to rid state institutions of corruption and was criticized for his refusal to dismantle the state security framework.

Iliescu left the National Salvation Front in March 1992 to form the Democratic National Salvation Front. In the second round of presidential elections in Nov. 1996 Iliescu was defeated by the centre-right reformer Emil Constantinescu and his Democratic Convention. After elections in Dec. 2000 Iliescu was returned as president. Confronted with the challenge of kick-starting reform of Romania's social and economic institutions, his job was hindered by galloping inflation. His other priorities included reform of the military followed by NATO and EU membership. In 2002 Romania was given a target date of 2007 for entry into the EU and was one of seven countries invited to join NATO in 2004. Romania duly gained membership of the EU on 1 Jan. 2007. Iliescu stepped down on 20 Dec. 2004 after completing his maximum two terms in office.

Iloilo, Josefa (Fiji)

Introduction

Josefa Iloilo became acting president following the nationalist coup of 2000 and was given the job on a permanent basis in March 2001. He had to contend with a racially-divided, economically and politically unstable environment. He was deposed in a coup in Dec. 2006 when Commodore Frank Bainimarama assumed the presidential powers, but reinstated in Jan. 2007.

Early Life

Iloilo was born in 1920. He was Fiji's vice president when in May 2000 indigenous Fijian George Speight and his supporters took hostage the government of ethnic Indian prime minister, Mahendra Chaudhry. Chaudhry's administration was subsequently dismissed by decree of the Great Council of Chiefs. Speight, a bankrupt businessman, pronounced himself prime minister. The affair was the culmination of years of rising tensions between the ethnic Fijian population and Fiji's financially and politically powerful ethnic Indian minority. Fiji was suspended from the Commonwealth's councils in June 2000. The following month, with Chaudhry and his supporters having been released, Iloilo, father-in-law of Speight's brother, was chosen by the Council of Chiefs to be interim president. Speight was arrested in July 2000 by the military authorities under Commodore J. V. 'Frank' Bainimarama and Laisenia Qarase, an ethnic Fijian, was named interim prime minister.

Career Peak

In March 2001 Iloilo formally dismissed Chaudhry as prime minister. He then replaced Qarase, whose interim administration had been declared illegal by the Supreme Court, with Ratu Tevita Momoedonu, a tribal leader, for 24 h before reappointing Qarase and legitimizing the administration prior to fresh elections. Also in March 2001 the Council of Chiefs confirmed Iloilo as president.

As president, Iloilo was responsible for appointing the prime minister and was head of the armed forces. On taking office he committed himself to re-establishing national unity in the wake of the events of 2000. He sought to boost Fiji's two biggest industries, tourism and sugar production, which both went into decline after the coup attempt.

Elections were held in Aug.–Sept. 2001 in which Speight won a seat and Qarase's newly-formed Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua party won most seats. In contravention of the constitution, Qarase failed to appoint any ethnic Indians from the Fiji Labour Party to his cabinet, and in Dec. 2001 Speight was suspended from parliament for failure to attend.

Iloilo oversaw Fiji's re-entry into the Commonwealth in Dec. 2001, although the domestic political environment remained unstable. In Jan. 2002 a constitutional court demanded the inclusion of Labour members in the cabinet and the following month Speight received a death sentence, later commuted by Iloilo to life imprisonment, for treason. In 2004 Iloilo's vice

president, Ratu Jope Seniloli, was found guilty of treason for his involvement in the Speight coup. Seniloli had been named president by Speight during the 2000 crisis and was elected vice president by indigenous leaders after Speight's arrest. Iloilo was reappointed president for a further 5 year term in March 2006.

On 5 Dec. 2006 Commodore Frank Bainimarama, unhappy after the government's attempt to replace him, led a military coup, deposing both the prime minister and president. He took over the president's powers briefly himself before reinstating Iloilo on 4 Jan. 2007. The following day Iloilo swore in Bainimarama as interim prime minister. Iloilo retired at the age of 88 on 30 July 2009 and Vice President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau became acting president. He died on 6 Feb. 2011.

Ilves, Toomas Hendrik (Estonia)

Introduction

Toomas Hendrik Ilves began his first 5 year largely ceremonial term as president on 9 Oct. 2006, replacing Arnold Rüütel, and was re-elected in Aug. 2011.

Early Life

Ilves was born on 26 Dec. 1953 in Sweden, his parents having fled Estonia during the Soviet occupation in the 1940s. He studied psychology in the USA, first at Columbia University before completing his MA at Pennsylvania University. He then lectured in Vancouver on Estonian literature and linguistics before working as an analyst and researcher for Radio Free Europe.

He returned to Estonia in 1993, 2 years after the country regained independence. In the late 1990s he served as ambassador to the USA, Canada and Mexico. He also had two spells as minister for foreign affairs and was chairman of the North American Institute. From 2004–06 he was a member of the European Parliament, representing the Social Democratic Party.

Career Peak

Ilves' principal duty as president is to represent the country abroad. In Nov. 2006 George W. Bush became the first US president to visit Estonia. Ilves justified the participation of Estonian forces in Afghanistan as a necessary duty of NATO membership, and an increase in the Estonian deployment was approved by parliament in June 2009.

Ilves has sought greater integration of Estonia's large Russian-speaking minority. Relations between Estonia and Russia were tense during the early months of his tenure, particularly over the relocation by the Estonian government of a prominent Soviet war memorial out of the centre of Tallinn. However, in Feb. 2014 Estonia and Russia signed a new treaty ending a long-standing dispute over border formalization.

Ilves was re-elected for a second presidential term by parliament in Aug. 2011. Having served the maximum permitted two terms, he was succeeded by Kersti Kaljulaid in Oct. 2016.

Ingraham, Hubert (The Bahamas)

Introduction

Hubert Ingraham became prime minister for the second time on 4 May 2007, having secured a narrow victory for his Free National Movement (FNM) in the general election. The outgoing Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), led by Perry Christie, contested the result in several districts. Ingraham pledged to make government more accountable. Following the defeat of the FNM at the 2012 elections, Ingraham resigned as the party leader and Perry Christie returned for a second time as prime minister.

Early Life

Hubert Alexander Ingraham was born on 4 Aug. 1947 in Grand Bahama, then part of the British West Indies. He grew up in Cooper's Town on the island of Abaco and was educated in Nassau. After studying law, Ingraham was employed first by the Bahamas Telecommunications Corporation and then Chase Manhattan Bank. He was called to the Bahamas Bar in 1972 and worked in a private law practice.

Ingraham was elected to the national general council in the elections of 1977, representing the then ruling PLP. He served as a member of the standing committee on privilege and public accounts. Re-elected in 1982, he became minister of housing, national insurance and social service.

In 1984 Ingraham was dismissed from the Cabinet after an inquiry into drug-trafficking and alleged government corruption. He was expelled from the PLP in 1985, attributed in his official biography to his anti-corruption stance. Re-elected to parliament in 1987 as an independent, Ingraham joined the conservative FNM and became its leader in 1990. He led the party to an emphatic victory in the general election of Aug. 1992, ending Prime Minister Lynden Pindling's 25-year rule.

Career Peak

In 1993 Ingraham signed an agreement to establish an industrial park at Freeport for international high-tech companies. He led the FNM to victory in the March 1997 general election but was defeated by the PLP in May 2002. Ingraham nonetheless retained his North Abaco seat. During the party's Nov. 2005 convention, he was again elected FNM leader. In the run-up to the May 2007 parliamentary elections, he campaigned on issues of trust, criticizing the PLP for their involvement in a series of scandals. The FNM emerged victorious on 2 May 2007 with 23 of 41 available seats, although the PLP leader, Perry Christie, initially challenged the results. Ingraham pledged to improve the efficiency and transparency of government, to improve education and to tackle crime. In the general election held on 7 May 2012 the PLP won a majority of seats, defeating the FNM, and Christie once again succeeded Ingraham as prime minister. In the wake of the defeat Ingraham announced his resignation as FNM leader.

Jäätteenmäki, Anneli (Finland)

Introduction

Anneli Jäätteenmäki took office on 17 April 2003 as Finland's first female prime minister. A former lawyer and minister, Jäätteenmäki waged a controversial election campaign by criticizing the previous government's foreign policy, an area not traditionally debated in partisan terms in Finland. She resigned on 18 June 2003 stating that she had lost the confidence of her party over allegations of lying to MPs. The brevity of her tenure was a disappointment for feminist politicians, who had celebrated the concurrence of a female head of state and female head of government.

Early Life

Anneli Tuulikki Jäätteenmäki was born in Lapua, Western Finland on 11 Feb. 1955. She graduated from the University of Helsinki in law and practised in Lapua from 1982 until 1987, when she was elected as a member of parliament for the Centre Party. From 1987–94 Jäätteenmäki served on the Finnish Delegation to the Nordic Council. She became minister of justice in May 1994 under Prime Minister Esko Aho until the change of administration in 1995. In 2000 Jäätteenmäki became deputy leader of the Centre Party, and party leader in 2002.

The parliamentary elections on 16 March 2003 were won by Jäätteenmäki's Centre Party, which became the largest party with 55 seats in the 200-member parliament. Jäätteenmäki briefly took on the duties of speaker until her election in parliament as prime minister, in accordance with the constitution of 2000. Previous prime ministers were appointed by the president.

Career Peak

Jääteenmäki's election campaign focused on the previous government's failure to halve unemployment, one of its key targets. She also criticised Paavo Lipponen's attitude towards the war in Iraq in 2003, which the ex-prime minister had not explicitly opposed.

As Finland's first female prime minister, Jääteenmäki promoted female political contribution by appointing women to half of the ministerial positions. 37.5% of the new members of parliament were female. Her government was a coalition of the Centre Party and the Social Democratic Party, which both had eight ministers, and the Swedish People's Party, with two ministers.

Jääteenmäki's first foreign visit as prime minister, in accordance with tradition, was to Sweden. She and her Swedish counterpart, Göran Persson, agreed to increase cooperation between their two countries, especially in European policy. Jääteenmäki also showed a desire to develop relations with Estonia, which benefits from Finnish aid and investment. She emphasized the importance of environmental programmes for the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Finland and the promotion of the Estonian language in Finland.

Her fall from office was caused by what was known as the 'Iraqgate' affair. Jääteenmäki was accused of soliciting confidential documents concerning the policy of Paavo Lipponen, then prime minister, towards the USA before the Iraq war. Her use of this information for electioneering purposes and subsequent allegations of lying to MPs made her position untenable. Jääteenmäki resigned on 18 June 2003, after just 2 months in office, the shortest tenure since 1944. She was succeeded by her defence minister, Matti Vanhanen, who re-appointed her cabinet. She resigned as head of the Centre Party on 24 June.

Later Life

Jääteenmäki entered European politics shortly after her brief stint as prime minister, and has been a member of the European Parliament since July 2004. She was elected a vice president of the European Parliament in May 2015 following her compatriot Olli Rehn's resignation from his post.

Jagan, Cheddi (Guyana)

Introduction

Cheddi Jagan was a key figure in Guyanese politics from 1947 to 1997. He served as chief minister, prime minister, president, and leader of the opposition. The founder of the People's Progressive Party, he was the first democratically elected premier. His socialist beliefs and reforms in the 1950s and 60s attracted much attention because of the perceived threat of communism, but his moderate policies were beneficial to the country. Foreign interference saw his removal from power in 1964, until a political comeback in 1992 put him once again in office. The reforms he implemented were largely successful and led him to be regarded as a dedicated leader and international statesman. He died in office in 1997. Jagan was married to Janet Rosenberg and had two children.

Early Life

Cheddi Berret Jagan was born on 22 March 1918 in Port Mourant, Berbice, British Guiana and was the son of indentured sugar plantation workers who had immigrated from India. He was educated at Queen's College, Georgetown in 1933–35 before going to the USA to complete his further education. He attended Howard University, Washington, D.C. in 1936–38 for pre-med studies, and then Dental School at Northwestern University, Chicago in 1938–42 to achieve his DDS. He married Janet in 1943 and returned to Guyana to set up a dental practice.

Jagan became active in local trade union affairs whilst working as a dentist in Georgetown and established the Political Affairs Commission in 1946 to raise awareness of labour issues and represent their needs.

In 1947 he won the Central Demerara seat as an independent labour candidate in a general election with limited suffrage. Jagan believed in the need to form an organised political party to allow effective opposition to British colonial policy. This led to the formation in 1950 of the People's Progressive Party (PPP) with himself as leader, Forbes Burnham as chairman and Janet Jagan as secretary. The primary aim was to unite the

Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese factions of society against colonial rule and to form a 'just socialist society'.

Pressure forced Britain to introduce a new constitution in 1953, which allowed limited popular elections, a ministerial system and a bicameral elected legislature. The PPP won 18 seats out of 24 and Jagan was made chief minister and minister of agriculture.

Career Peak

Once in office, Jagan began a reformist socio-economic programme, repealing the Undesirable Publications Ordinance, implementing changes in the educational system and in agriculture and drawing up the Labour Relations Bill. Britain deemed these moves as threatening and moved to reassert power. The constitution was suspended on 9 Oct. 1953 after 133 days; troops were sent in and the movement of prominent PPP officials was restricted. In response, the PPP formulated a policy of civil disobedience, encouraging leading officials to resist British rule. Jagan, jailed in 1954 for ignoring restrictions on his movements, was detained for 6 months with hard labour.

In 1955 Jagan led the Indo-Guyanese faction of the PPP when it split along mainly racial lines. Britain, believing that this split would limit PPP power, allowed a general election under a limited constitution in Aug. 1957. The PPP won 9 of the 14 seats and Jagan became chief minister and minister of trade and industry. His attempts to improve agriculture included the Black Bush Polder and Tapakuma land development schemes. The Canadian-owned electricity company was nationalized. At the Constitutional Conference in London in 1960 he called for independence while Britain insisted on self-government with safeguards.

In the general election of Aug. 1961, the PPP won 20 seats out of 35; Jagan was appointed prime minister and minister for development and planning. He continued the drive for independence and a socialist economy. However, the People's National Congress (PNC, the breakaway faction of the PPP), and the UF (United Front) unified to try to remove the PPP from government. Assisted by the CIA, which was worried by a 'communist' government at the height of the Cold War, they mounted strikes, riots and racial disturbances. A large portion of the business district of Georgetown was burnt down in Feb. 1962, and during protests against the Labour Bill PPP supporters were attacked on the streets and government buildings were bombed.

In 1964 Britain instituted a proportional representation voting system, attempting to negate PPP influence and more accurately reflect the ethnic division. In the elections in Dec. 1964, the PPP received the highest proportion of the vote (46%) but Burnham's PNC (41%) joined with the UF (12%) to form a coalition government headed by Burnham. Guyana received independence in 1966. Jagan became leader of the opposition from 1964 and was general secretary of the PPP from 1970.

After Burnham's death in 1985, the reforms introduced under his successor Desmond Hoyte opened the way to internationally recognised free elections in 1992. The PPP/Civic won the elections with 54% of the vote and Jagan was inaugurated as president of Guyana on 9 Oct. 1992. Jagan's tenure was cut short by a heart attack while in office. He died on 6 March 1997.

Jagdeo, Bharrat (Guyana)

Introduction

Bharrat Jagdeo, representing the People's Progressive Party (PPP), took over from President Janet Jagan in 1999, when the latter retired on health grounds, and was re-elected in 2001 and 2006, serving until Dec. 2011. Jagdeo's main challenges were placating civil unrest caused by rivalry between supporters of the PPP and the opposition People's National Congress (PNC) and negotiating settlements of border disputes with Suriname and Venezuela.

Early Life

Jagdeo was born on 23 Jan. 1964. He studied economics before taking a master's degree at the Friendship University in Moscow, Russia. He had joined the PPP's youth group, the Progress Youth Organization, in 1977, becoming a full PPP member 3 years later. In 1990 he worked as an economist in the state planning secretariat. When the PPP came to power in 1992 he was

appointed special adviser to the finance ministry from which he progressed to the post of junior finance minister the following year. He also served on various PPP committees. In 1995 he became finance minister (occasionally acting as prime minister), a position he kept when Janet Jagan came to power in 1997. In April 1999 Jagdeo negotiated with workers from the Guyana Public Service Union who went on strike for a 40% wage increase. The strike eventually ended after 8 weeks of suspended public services.

Career Peak

Favoured by Jagan as her successor, Jagdeo took over the presidency following her resignation in 1999. However, he inherited ongoing political and civil disputes between politicians and followers of the PPP and those of the PNC, despite both being socialist parties. The PNC claimed that the 1997 elections had been fixed and had never accepted Jagan, subsequently refusing to recognize the Jagdeo presidency. During negotiations in 1998 directed by CARICOM, the PPP agreed to shorten the presidential term by 2 years.

In 2001 the two parties and their followers were caught up in more widespread racial tensions that traditionally erupted around elections (the PPP representing the Indo-Guyanese population and the PNC the Afro-Guyanese community). For this reason the elections that year were closely monitored by international observers and a special commission. They passed off without too much trouble, and Jagdeo was elected with 53.1% of the vote against 41.7% for Desmond Hoyte of the PNC. Hoyte accused the PPP of fraud, claiming many voters had disappeared from the electoral role. Jagdeo admitted this, but said that both parties had been affected by the discrepancies. In Aug. 2006 he was again re-elected for a further 5 year term. Polling passed off peacefully despite the earlier murder in April of the agriculture minister.

On the international level, there were border disputes with Venezuela and Suriname. In June 2000 a Surinamese naval ship expelled a Canadian-owned oil rig which had been granted a licence for oil exploration by Guyana but was said to be in waters claimed by Suriname. Talks between Jagdeo and the then Surinamese president under the mediation of then Jamaican prime minister P. J. Patterson failed. At the same time, Jagdeo agreed the construction of a rocket launch site by a US company 40 km from the Venezuelan border. Claiming a large portion of Guyanese land up to the Essequibo River, Venezuela argued that the project could be used for military purposes. The PNC also voiced its opposition to the proposed site. In June 2004 the United Nations set up a tribunal to resolve Guyana's maritime border issues with Suriname, which was settled in Sept. 2007.

In Oct. 2008 Jagdeo signed up to a trade agreement between the European Union and a number of Caribbean countries, having earlier accused the EU of economic bullying in negotiations.

Having completed the second of two constitutionally allowed terms, Jagdeo stepped down in late 2011. His successor, Donald Ramotar, was sworn in on 4 Dec. 2011.

Jamali, Zafarullah Khan (Pakistan)

Introduction

Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali was elected Pakistan's prime minister in Nov. 2002, the first premier from Balochistan. The appointment came after 3 years of military rule under President Pervez Musharraf. Jamali, regarded as a moderate, served in civilian and military regimes from the 1970s. He pursued an active foreign policy, most notably with improving relations with India and Afghanistan. Although he was expected to work in close co-operation with Musharraf, their relationship deteriorated in 2004. Jamali resigned in June 2004, nominating his party president to succeed him.

Early Life

Jamali was born in Rowjhan in the province of Balochistan in 1944, the son of Shah Nawaz Khan Jamali. His family was a key ally of Pakistan's architect, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and was prominent in the Balochistan *Shahi Jirga* (tribal council), encouraging the Jirga to join Pakistan in 1947.

He was educated in Murree and Quetta, in Balochistan, and at Aitchison College, Lahore before gaining a history degree at Government College, Lahore and a history master's at Punjab University, completed in 1965. As well as working in the political arena, Jamali was a selector for the national hockey team.

In the 1970s he joined the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and served in the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He supported Bhutto's suppression of the Balochi revolt in the early 1970s. Following a coup in 1977 he left the PPP and served at the ministry of food under the military rule of Zia ul-Haq, representing Pakistan at the United Nations in 1980 and 1991. In 1985 Pakistan returned to civilian government under the premiership of Muhammad Khan Junejo, with Jamali holding the post of minister of water and power until 1988. In that year he was appointed chief minister for Balochistan but his administration collapsed within a few weeks. Voted into the national assembly in 1993 as a member of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), he reclaimed the Balochistan premiership in 1996 when the government of Benazir Bhutto was dismissed.

In 1997 Jamali was elected senator for Islamabad. In 1999, when Musharraf deposed the PML-N President, Nawaz Sharif, in a bloodless coup, Jamali left the PML-N to join the breakaway Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q). The PML-Q maintained close relations with Musharraf and emerged as the largest party at the parliamentary elections of Oct. 2002, the first since the coup of 1999.

Musharraf amended the Legal Framework Order (LFO) to allow Jamali to stand as prime minister, since his two-term tenure as provincial governor would otherwise have disqualified him. In a parliamentary vote for the premiership on 21 Nov. 2002 Jamali won 172 of a possible 342 votes and relied on the support of several independents and 10 PPP members. Despite only narrowly achieving the absolute majority required, he significantly outpolled the candidates of the PPP and opposition Islamic groupings.

Career Peak

Jamali was sworn in on 23 Nov. 2002, ending 3 years of military rule. His cabinet included PPP defectors and unelected advisors as well as PML-Q members. Jamali affirmed his commitment to continuing the policies of Musharraf, especially co-operation in the war against terrorism. His good relations with the American diplomatic and intelligence community in South Asia reaffirmed Musharraf's foreign agenda.

Armed with only a slim majority, Jamali struggled to maintain his government. In addition, the constitutional changes introduced by Musharraf before the parliamentary elections—and Musharraf's controversial success in a referendum in April 2002 granting him the presidency until 2007—left Jamali accused of being a presidential puppet. As required by the constitution, Jamali's government submitted to a parliamentary vote of confidence, which he won comfortably on 30 Dec. 2002 having gained the support of smaller parties and PPP rebels.

Jamali travelled widely in the region, cementing relations with neighbours before and during the war in Iraq in March 2003. A joint statement with India on 12 March urged a non-military solution, highlighting domestic opinion opposed to an invasion. Economic relations were strengthened by a visit to Iran in Oct. 2003. Dialogue with India followed a ceasefire on Kashmir's Line of Control in Nov. 2003.

Jamali frequently asserted his government's independence from the military, rejecting PPP allegations that President Musharraf's powers to dismiss parliament and the government were unconstitutional.

Negotiations with India opened after an unofficial meeting in Lahore at the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) summit in Jan. 2004. On a visit to Kabul later that month, Jamali promised action against militants on the Afghan-Pakistani border.

Jamali's relationship with Musharraf deteriorated in 2004. Although seen as an ally of the president, Jamali criticized Musharraf for wearing military uniform. His observation that no previous Pakistani government had been allowed to finish its term was received badly in military circles, prompting suggestions that Jamali would be forced from office. He resigned as prime minister on 26 June 2004, nominating as his successor Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the president of the united PML. Hussain was approved by the National Assembly and took office on 30 June. Many Pakistani newspapers criticized the departure of Jamali, describing the proceedings as a democratic sham and suggesting that he had been ousted by the president's circle. Hussain was widely tipped as an interim leader before Shaukut Aziz, the finance minister, could assume the premiership, once he had been elected to parliament.

Jammeh, Yahya (The Gambia)

Introduction

Former army colonel Yahya Jammeh came to power in a military coup in July 1994. Leading the APRC, he was elected to office in 1996 and re-elected in 2001, 2006 and 2011, amid allegations that he maintains his authority through patronage and repression.

Early Life

Yahya A. J. J. Jammeh was born in the Foni Kansala district on 25 May 1965. He joined the army in 1984, rising to captain by 1992, and on 22 July 1994 led a successful coup against Sir Dawda Jawara, the president since 1970.

Career Peak

In 1996 a new constitution was approved by referendum. Jammeh was confirmed as president that year and his Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) secured a parliamentary majority in Jan. 1997. He was re-elected president in Oct. 2001. The 2002 parliamentary elections, in which the APRC won nearly all the seats, were boycotted by the main opposition party. Jammeh's re-election in Sept. 2006 was considered free and fair on the day by observers, but the Commonwealth Secretariat noted 'abuses of incumbency' before the vote.

Alleged coup attempts led to the imposition of death sentences on six military officials and two businessmen in July 2010 and of long prison terms on former army and navy chiefs in May 2011. Jammeh was overwhelmingly re-elected in Nov. 2011 and his APRC again won almost all seats at the March 2012 parliamentary elections, which the opposition once more boycotted.

In Jan. 2013 the government suspended political dialogue with the European Union in response to EU criticism of The Gambia's human rights record, and in Oct. that year the regime announced the country's withdrawal from membership of the Commonwealth.

In Dec. 2014, while Jammeh was out of the country and amid increasing signs of domestic opposition, a group of disaffected soldiers and expatriate Gambians launched a further unsuccessful attempt to overthrow him, prompting a wave of arrests into the following year.

In Dec. 2015 Jammeh declared The Gambia an Islamic republic. In Jan. 2017, however, the term 'Islamic' was removed from the country's official name by his successor, Adama Barrow.

In the 2016 presidential elections Jammeh lost to Adama Barrow, but rejected the results and attempted to cling to power. On 18 Jan. 2017 he forced parliament to extend his term, which was scheduled to end the next day. President-elect Barrow was sworn in at the Gambian embassy in Dakar on 19 Jan., and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) launched a military intervention on the Gambian territory in order to prepare for Barrow's return. In support of the intervention, several ministers resigned, forcing Jammeh to dissolve his cabinet on 20 Jan. On 21 Jan., under the pressure of the ECOWAS troops, Jammeh fled into exile in Equatorial Guinea where he was granted asylum.

Janša, Janez (Slovenia)

Introduction

A key figure in Slovenia's independence movement in the late 1980s, Janez Janša was elected prime minister for a second time on 28 Jan. 2012. He had previously served as premier from Nov. 2004 to Nov. 2008 and was twice defence minister.

Early Life

Janez Janša was born in Ljubljana on 17 Sept. 1958, when Slovenia was a constituent republic of Yugoslavia. In 1982 he graduated in defence studies from the University of Ljubljana. In the same year he was appointed president of a wing of the Alliance of the Socialist Youth of Slovenia.

In 1988 Janša was involved in the publication of a working paper on the constitution written by Slovene novelists, lawyers and sociologists. It was condemned by the Central Committee of the League of Communists and Janša was arrested and detained. He and three journalists were charged with betraying military secrets, with the trial of the 'Ljubljana Four' provoking mass demonstrations that became known as the Slovene Spring. Janša was found guilty and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.

On his release in 1989 Janša became editor of *Demokracija* magazine and co-founded the centre-right Slovene Democratic Alliance (SDZ). In Slovenia's first multi-party elections in April 1990, he was elected to parliament and became minister for defence in a coalition government. He managed the transformation of Slovenia's territorial defence force into the Slovene army which fought the Yugoslav People's Army in the 10-day war that followed Slovenia's declaration of independence on 25 June 1991.

In 1991 the Slovene Democratic Alliance fell apart and Janša joined the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia (SDS—which became the Slovenian Democratic Party in 2003). He was returned to parliament in 1992 and in May 1993 became president of the party. In March 1994 the National Assembly impeached Janša for 'transgression of the civilian sphere by the military' and removed him from office, prompting demonstrations against bureaucratic corruption. He was re-elected to the National Assembly in 1996 and served again as defence minister from June–Oct. 2000 in the short-lived government of Andrej Bajuk.

The SDS gained the largest share of the vote in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2004 and Janša was confirmed as prime minister on 9 Nov. He pursued a programme of privatization and oversaw Slovenia's entry into the eurozone in Jan. 2007. Slovenia assumed the 6-month rotating EU presidency in Jan. 2008. Janša's SDS narrowly lost the general election of Sept. 2008 and he was succeeded as prime minister by Borut Pahor.

Pahor's government fell after a parliamentary vote of no confidence in Sept. 2011. In a snap election on 4 Dec., a new centre-left party named Positive Slovenia gained an unexpected victory, taking 28 seats to the 26 won by the SDS. However, Positive Slovenia's leader, Zoran Janković, failed to build a viable coalition and in Jan. 2012 Janša was appointed as prime minister, having gained the support of four other centre-right parties.

The then president, Danilo Türk, stated that Janša lacked legitimacy given that he had recently been put on trial for bribery relating to a defence deal made by the government in 2006—the 'Patria Case'. However, parliament endorsed Janša's appointment on 28 Jan., with 51 votes in favour and 39 against.

Career Peak

Parliament approved Janša's first cabinet on 10 Feb. 2012, the slimmest since independence with only 12 ministers. He pledged to reduce public spending by 10% in his first year in office as part of sweeping efforts to tackle a budget deficit that had grown substantially under the previous government. His austerity programme met with widespread protests through the year.

The negative public sentiment with the government increased further in Jan. 2013 with the publication of an anti-corruption report that revealed Janša's repeated failure to report his assets. Janša's attempts to discredit the accusations rapidly escalated into a large-scale corruption scandal and the SDS was issued an ultimatum to find a replacement for Janša. The crisis culminated with the fall of Janša's government in Feb., following a vote of no confidence. The opposition leader Alenka Bratušek was tasked with forming a new government.

Later Life

In June 2013 Janša was sentenced to 2 years in prison by a Slovenian court after he and two accomplices were found guilty of soliciting €2 m. worth of bribes from a Finnish defence firm as part of a military supply contract in 2006. The ruling was later upheld in April 2014 by the High Court of Slovenia and his prison term began 2 months later.

Jaruzelski, Wojciech (Poland)

Introduction

Wojciech Witold Jaruzelski was Poland's leader from 1981–90, as premier and first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), president of the Council of State and finally as president. Under intense pressure from his Soviet overlords, he introduced martial law in 1981 and oversaw the suppression of the Solidarity movement. By the late 1980s, hindered by a faltering economy, he was forced into negotiations with Solidarity that led to the collapse of the Polish communist regime.

Early Life

Jaruzelski was born on 6 July 1923 in Kurow, Poland into a middle-class background. When the Red Army invaded the country in 1940 his family were taken prisoner and he was taken to the Soviet Union where he was put in forced labour. During his imprisonment he was converted to communism. In 1944 he signed up with the Polish wing of the Red Army and returned to Poland to fight Germany.

Jaruzelski remained in the military after the war, studying at the Polish Higher Infantry School and graduating from the General Staff Academy. In 1947 he joined the Polish Communists (later to become the PUWP). By 1956 he was Chief of the General Staff and in 1968 he was appointed Minister of Defence. In this role he oversaw the involvement of Polish Troops in the Warsaw Pact invasion of the Czech Republic in the same year. Three years later he became a full member of the Politburo.

In 1976 the precursor to Solidarity, the Workers Defence Committee (KOR), emerged to promote workers rights. Following widespread strikes in 1980, and particularly in the shipyards of Gdańsk, KOR evolved into Solidarity under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa. By the following year its membership exceeded 10 m. people and its power was challenging the authority of the ruling communists. It was in this climate that Jaruzelski became premier on 11 Feb. 1981 and then party first secretary in Oct. 1981.

Career Peak

As defence minister during the nationwide strike of 1970 and 1976, Jaruzelski had resisted using the military to suppress workers groups. However, with Soviet troops gathering around Poland's borders and under intense pressure from Moscow, Jaruzelski declared martial law in Dec. 1981. Several thousand dissidents were rounded up, including Wałęsa and most of the rest of the leadership of the outlawed Solidarity.

By the end of 1982 Solidarity had been removed from Poland's political scene. There are those who believe that he perpetuated Eastern Bloc communism for ten more years, while others hold that martial law was necessary to avoid a Soviet invasion of the country. Wałęsa was freed at the end of 1982 and martial law lifted in 1983, but Jaruzelski was the target of more popular discontent in 1984 following the murder by government agents of the dissident priest, Father Jerzy Popiełuszko.

Poland's economic problems continued throughout the 1980s. Jaruzelski, having become President of the Council of State in 1985, proposed a new range of unpopular economic reforms in 1987. Support for the dormant Solidarity movement swelled again and there were country-wide strikes during 1988. Jaruzelski was forced to embark on negotiations with Wałęsa and the Catholic Church. Agreement was reached in April 1989 and Solidarity was given legal status and freedom to fight the up-coming elections, whilst the previously ceremonial post of Presidency was vested with new legislative powers. In return, Solidarity agreed to compete for only 35% of the seats in the Sejm.

At the July 1989 elections Solidarity won virtually all the seats they contested but because of the 35% rule Jaruzelski was voted in as president. However, the elections signalled the beginning of the end of Poland's communist regime. Solidarity refused to join the communists in a grand coalition and Jaruzelski had to appoint Tadeusz Mazowiecki, an official of Solidarity, to be Poland's first non-communist premier in over 40 years. Jaruzelski resigned his positions in the PUWP and in Nov. 1990 was succeeded as President by Wałęsa.

Later Life

In the mid-1990s charges were brought against Jaruzelski and several other high-ranking communists in connection with the murder of 44 workers during

the 1970 food protests. In 1997 the Polish courts declared Jaruzelski unfit to stand trial. That decision was reversed in Nov. 1999 and Jaruzelski testified his innocence in Oct. 2001. In 2006 he faced further charges relating to abuses committed during his time in office. However, he avoided appearing before a court by citing ill health.

Jaruzelski died at the age of 90 on 25 May 2014.

Jawara, Dawda (The Gambia)

Introduction

Dawda Jawara was the nation's first prime minister from 1962 to 1970 and its first president from 1970 to 1994.

Early Life

Dawda Jawara was born on 16 May 1924 in the village of Baragally Tenda. He won a scholarship to Glasgow University, graduating in 1954 as a veterinary surgeon. As a student, Jawara was elected president of the African student association and became a member of the student labour movement. On his return to Gambia he joined the government veterinary service, working as chief veterinary officer from 1958–60.

In 1959 Jawara joined the Protectorate People's Party (later renamed the People's Progressive Party), becoming leader later that year. In 1960 he was elected to the House of Representatives and was appointed by the British as minister of education. Following the success of the People's Progressive Party at the 1962 election, Jawara was made premier. After Gambia gained independence on 18 Feb. 1965, he served as prime minister until 1970, before assuming the presidency of the republic of Gambia.

Career Peak

Jawara's primary challenge was to modernise a severely underdeveloped country. Gambia was reliant on colonial markets and boasted a single major export crop—groundnuts. Its infrastructure was poor, with decrepit health and education provision. In 1985 Jawara introduced an economic recovery program that saw the budget deficit reduced, foreign exchange supplies increased and debt slashed. Nonetheless, by the 1990s Gambia remained one of Africa's poorest countries.

In Dec. 1980 Jawara cut diplomatic ties with Libya after discovering that Tripoli had been recruiting Gambian men for guerrilla training. The following year Jawara uncovered a coup plot against him while he was travelling abroad and crushed it with the help of Senegalese troops. His reliance on foreign forces, however, severely undermined his authority at home, though his decision to give fair trials to the perpetrators won him international goodwill.

In April 1981, Jawara and President Diouf of Senegal formed the Senegambian Confederation. New transport and communication links quickly grew between the two countries but both leaders lacked domestic support for the alliance. Furthermore, in Gambia there was growing resentment over the use of Senegalese troops to provide protection to Jawara and key public buildings. In Aug. 1989 the confederation disintegrated.

In 1992 Jawara suggested that the country would benefit from a change in leadership, though his decision to stay in office over the short term created tension. On 22 July 1994 troops led by Yahal Jammeh overthrew Jawara in a bloodless coup. Jawara escaped to Senegal.

Jayarathne, Dissanayake Mudiyanalage (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

On 21 April 2010 D. M. Jayarathne was sworn in as prime minister, a largely ceremonial position. He also served as minister for Buddha Sasana and religious affairs. One of the country's longest serving politicians, he headed

various government ministries and was a senior member of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). He left office in Jan. 2015.

Early Life

D. M. Jayaratne was born on 7 June 1931 in the Central Province hill town of Gampola. The fifth child of nine, he was schooled at Doluwa Maha Vidyalaya (Gampola), Zahira College (Kandy) and Mahatma Gandhi College (Kandy). In 1951 he became a teacher at Doluwa Maha Vidyalaya and from 1960–62 he was postmaster of Gampola.

By 1950 he was politically active, working in the grassroots community centre networks where he rose through the ranks, acting as secretary in the Kandy council and then chair of the island-wide network. In 1951 he joined the newly formed SLFP and in the 1970 general election he was elected to parliament as the representative for Gampola. In 1977 the SLFP suffered a landslide defeat and Jayaratne lost his seat. In 1989 he was elected MP for Kandy and appointed minister for agriculture, food and co-operatives.

Jyaratne was re-elected in 2000 and was reappointed to the agriculture, food and co-operatives portfolio. In 2004 he became minister of post and telecommunication and in 2007 took over at the ministry of plantation industries. He also served as chairman of the Asia-Pacific region of the Food and Agriculture Organization in 2001.

Career Peak

In April 2010 Jayaratne was appointed premier by President Mahinda Rajapaksa, heading up a seven-party United Popular Front coalition. With a coalition majority in parliament and backed by the popular president, Jayaratne began his tenure in a strong position. While his role is largely ceremonial, he is responsible for leading government business in parliament.

One of his key challenges was to oversee proposed constitutional reform, particularly the lifting of long-standing emergency powers and anti-terrorism laws. These, alongside reported human rights abuses and weak labour laws, have adversely affected the country's international trading relations, particularly with the European Union.

Jyaratne's mandate ended on 9 Jan. 2015 with the swearing in of a new government led by Ranil Wickremesinghe, who became prime minister for the third time.

Jebali, Hamadi (Tunisia)

Introduction

An engineer and journalist, Hamadi Jebali of the Islamist Ennahada Party served as prime minister from Dec. 2011 until March 2013 in the wake of the Arab Spring.

Early Life

Hamadi Jebali was born in Sousse on 12 Jan. 1949 and graduated from Tunis University in mechanical engineering. Specializing in solar and wind power, he set up his own practice in Sousse while pursuing a parallel career in journalism as editor-in-chief of *Al Fajr (Dawn)*, the weekly newspaper of the Ennahada Party. In June 1990 he received a suspended sentence and a fine for an article criticizing the lack of democracy in Tunisia. In Nov. the same year, he was sentenced to 12 months in prison for publishing another article deemed inflammatory. In Aug. 1992 Jebali and 170 other members of Ennahada were charged with plotting a coup d'état. Despite protesting his innocence, Jebali was given a 16-year sentence.

Spending more than 10 years in solitary confinement, he engaged in several hunger strikes and was released in Feb. 2006 on the 50th anniversary of Tunisian independence. After the 'Arab Spring' civil unrest of Jan. 2011 that prompted President Ben Ali to flee into exile, Ennahada was legalized. An interim parliament was created in Oct. 2011 and Moncef Marzouki, head of the Congress for the Republic Party (CPR), was installed as president 2 months later. On 14 Dec. he appointed Jebali as prime minister.

Career Peak

With tourism weak in the wake of the 2011 uprising, Jebali took office faced with both political and economic instability and rampant unemployment. He was also confronted with building workable relations between Islamists and liberal secular forces in the wake of the collapse of the previous authoritarian government.

Implementation of a series of fiscal stimulus packages from June 2011 saw the economy embark on a slow and faltering recovery. However, hopes of improving the political climate were hit by the assassination of an opposition leader, Chokri Belaid, on 6 Feb. 2013. Jebali called for the creation of a new government of technocrats to see the country through the crisis but this was rejected by the Ennahada Party and Jebali resigned his premiership on 19 Feb. 2013.

Jiang Zemin (China)

Introduction

Jiang Zemin was appointed party leader (General Secretary) in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre in June 1989. In April 1993 he also became president. Jiang has overseen a period of economic liberalization but has maintained a conservative approach to social and political reform. China's human rights record under Jiang remains a source of international unease.

Early Life

Jiang Zemin was born on 17 Aug. 1926 in Gansu province. His family placed much importance on literature, both Chinese and foreign, but Jiang chose a career in technology. He was educated at Jiaotong University (an engineering institution) in Shanghai, where he took part in anti-Nationalist Party movements and, in 1946, joined the Chinese Communist Party. He graduated with a degree in electrical engineering in 1947. Jiang began work as an engineer in Shanghai and in 1955 was sent to the Soviet Union for training. On his return he received the first of several, increasingly prestigious, appointments as head of a technological institute.

Although he kept a low profile during the Cultural Revolution, Jiang's organizational abilities came to the notice of the authorities in Beijing and, in 1970, he was posted to Romania as a representative of the Ministry of Machine Building. In 1980 Jiang became deputy director of the State Import/Export Administration and the first administrator of the new special economic zone at Shenzhen, on the border with Hong Kong. Jiang held other government posts concurrently and in 1982 was appointed to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1983 he became electronics minister.

In 1985 Jiang left Beijing when he was made mayor of Shanghai. In office, he attracted Western investment into the city, tackling its transport, pollution and communications problems and at the same time built up a network of contacts with like-minded economic reformists in the city, later to be known as the 'shanghai faction'. Jiang firmly handled unrest in the city during the pro-democracy demonstrations by students and workers in Beijing in 1989. At the beginning of the unrest he sacked the liberal editor of a Shanghai newspaper, a prominent figure in the city. Jiang's speedy reaction impressed Beijing and Deng Xiaoping brought Jiang back to the capital after the Tiananmen Square massacre. Jiang became a member of the Politburo and general secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in June 1989.

Career Peak

As party leader Jiang sought to increase economic development. But his first task was to purge the party of those who had sympathized with the Tiananmen Square protesters. Deng Xiaoping came to regard Jiang as his successor and as Deng's health deteriorated Jiang took on more of his day-to-day responsibilities. In 1990 Jiang became chairman of the Central Military Committee and in March 1993 was elected president. As head of state and party leader, his policy was interpreted by some observers as an attempt to stem the demand for human rights by offering economic prosperity.

Developing Deng's theory of a 'socialist market economy'. Jiang was responsible for a privatization drive and increased foreign investment in the

1990s, which paved the way for China's entry into the WTO in 2001. He also successfully won backing from the military, not a natural source of support for Jiang, by initiating modernization following the 1991 Gulf Conflict.

His record in foreign affairs fluctuated. His economic reforms were well received in the West and in 1992 he re-established friendly relations with Russia. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (along with Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to fight terrorism and promote national stability and economic growth in the region.

However, his international standing was coloured by his links to the Tiananmen Square massacre, frequent run-ins with Taiwan and a poor human rights record. Political corruption and oppression of opposition groups, such as the Fulan Gong religious movement, continued throughout his years in office. The return of Hong Kong (1997) and Macao (1999) to Chinese sovereignty put the nation's social and political infrastructures further under the international spotlight. There were several stand-offs with the US, notably after the US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Sarajevo in 1999 and the capture of a US spy plane in 2001. However, by 2002 the US and Chinese administrations were in frequent contact.

At the Communist Party congress of Nov. 2002 Jiang was succeeded as general secretary by Hu Jintao, who took over the presidency in early 2003. Jiang was expected to retain influence in Chinese government through his network of allies on the Politburo and by keeping control of the Central Military Committee. Many observers believed Hu would attempt to incorporate Jiang's *Theory of Three Representations* (his treatise on Chinese political thought) into the CCP charter.

Jinnah, Muhammad Ali (Pakistan)

Introduction

The founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, known in Islam as Quaid-e-Azam (the Great Leader), was responsible for advancing the case for the partition of India. He laid the constitution for a secular nation which would protect the interests of Indian Muslims, faced with the formation of an Hindu-biased government in post-Independence India. Though hailed by Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866–1915) as the 'best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity'. Jinnah was not without political enemies. His wish for a separate Muslim home-land were opposed to the ideas of both the Indian National Congress and the British administration.

Early Life

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was born on 25 Dec. 1876 in Karachi, into the family of a wealthy merchant. His grandfather, a Gujarati Khoja Muslim, had been a Hindu before converting to Islam. Educated at Gokuldas Tejpal School, then Mission High School, Karachi, Jinnah passed the entrance examination for Bombay university at the age of sixteen. In 1893, following an arranged marriage to a child-bride, he was sent to England to join a trading company which did business with his father. Against parental wishes, he gave up his employment to train as a barrister. In 1895, at the age of 19, he was called to the bar, becoming the youngest Indian ever to qualify.

In England he was a frequent visitor to the House of Commons, coming under the influence of British Liberal prime minister, William Gladstone. In 1896 he returned to India to establish a legal career in Bombay.

In parallel to his rise to prominence as a lawyer (he became one of the most highly respected and highly paid lawyers of his time), Jinnah took a growing interest in Indian politics. In 1906 he attended the Calcutta session of the All-India Congress Party, presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji (the first Indian to be elected to the British parliament) for whom Jinnah acted as secretary. In the same year the All-India Muslim league was formed. Offering support to British rule, the party initially held no attraction to Jinnah.

On 25 Jan. 1910 Jinnah joined the Imperial Legislative Council as Bombay's Muslim representative. Three years later, while still a member of the Congress party, Jinnah joined an increasingly pro-independence Muslim League, helping to draft its constitution. Presiding over a Muslim League and Congress conference in 1916, Jinnah was instrumental in getting both parties to agree on a series of electoral reforms, resulting in 1916 in the Lucknow pact which proposed separate Muslim and Hindu electorates.

In 1918 Jinnah married Rattanbai Petit with whom he had a daughter, Dina (b. 1919). In 1919 the Rowlatt Acts (also known as the Black Acts) were instituted, giving powers to the viceroy to silence the press, detain political activists without trial and to make arrests without warrants. In protest, Jinnah resigned from the Imperial Legislative Council.

Taking a more stringent opposition to the Acts, Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) began the Satyagraha movement. Jinnah opposed the campaign as an incitement to violence. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre at Amritsar (1919), where 379 Indian protesters were killed by British forces, increased backing for the movement and for Gandhi. Jinnah resigned from the Home Rule League after Gandhi became its president, stating that the changes introduced were appeals to the 'the inexperienced youth, the ignorant and the illiterate'. Voicing his beliefs at a session of Congress in Nagpur in 1920, Jinnah was heckled off the stage.

Shortly afterwards he left for England where he attempted to win a seat in the British parliament. Unsuccessful in this and at the behest of several Muslim League members, he was persuaded to return to India and lead the Muslim League as their president (a role which he retained throughout the 1920s).

Leading the independent factions within the central legislative assembly, Jinnah signed a pact in 1924 with the Swaraj party, led by moderate politician, Motilal Nehru, to create an alternative to Gandhi's Congress party. Although this initially formed a powerful grouping, the pact subsequently broke down in 1925. Motilal Nehru, following appeals from Gandhi, shortly joined the non-cooperation movement. With relations between the Hindu and Muslim communities deteriorating (the abolition of the Muslim Khilafat movement in 1924 provoked rioting and a tide of anti-Hindu sentiment amongst Indian Muslims) Jinnah became politically isolated.

The Delhi Muslim proposals in March 1927, formulated by Jinnah, were an attempt to re-align Muslim and Hindu interests. A year later, the Nehru report, representing Congress proposals for the future constitution of an independent India, provided further blocks to unity with its rejection of separate electorates for Muslims and Hindus. In 1929 Jinnah drafted a fourteen point constitution in response, demanding one-third representation for Muslims in the central legislative assembly.

Witnessing the ever-increasing popularity of the Congress party, the movement towards independence and growing anti-British sentiment, Jinnah appealed to the British Labour prime minister, Ramsay Macdonald, to declare support for Indian dominion status. His hope was that such a declaration would pacify demands for complete independence. In the second of three Round Table Conferences (1930–32) Gandhi insisted that he alone should speak for India. With irreconcilable differences between Gandhi's Congress party and the representatives of Muslim, Christian and other minority groups, Jinnah withdrew from politics to continue his legal career in England.

In 1934 he returned to India to preside over a session of the Muslim League, an event which revived his interest in both the party and its role in Indian politics, and led him to re-adopt his role as party leader.

Career Peak

In 1935 the Government of India Act was passed, giving greater prominence to provincial elections. Two years later, the Congress party won a majority in 8 provinces while the Muslim League was in competition with other, smaller Muslim parties and failed to win a single province. Leading the Congress party, Jawaharlal Nehru claimed that India comprised of only two groups: the Congress party and the British, and urged that all other parties should 'line up'. an appeal rejected by Jinnah.

A few months later Jinnah changed tactics. With the specific aim of re-organizing the Muslim League to achieve a single political base for Muslim Indian interests, he focused on religion. In campaigning for a Muslim seat in a by-election to the Uttar Pradesh assembly, the Muslim League raised the cry of 'religion in danger'. whilst Jinnah's personal appeals were made in the name of 'Allah and the Holy Koran'. Jinnah accused the Congress party of being a Hindu organization that did not have the right to speak for other religious groups whilst proclaiming the exclusive right of the Muslim League to speak for Indian Muslims. At a session of the Muslim League in Lucknow in Oct. 1937 Jinnah argued that an over powerful Congress party would lead to 'class bitterness and communal war' and that 'justice or fair play at their hands' could not be expected. In April of the following year rioting broke out in Allahabad.

The advent of World War II in 1939 saw a growing rift between the British government and the Congress party. When talks between the two broke down, Jinnah called for Muslims to observe a Deliverance Day (22 Dec. 1939) from

the ‘tyranny, oppression and injustice’ of the Congress ministries which had been formed 2 years previously. Three months later Jinnah made the first formal demand for separate ‘autonomous and sovereign’ Muslim states at a Muslim League session in Lahore. Later known as the Pakistan resolution, the demand was firmly opposed by Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Gandhi’s Quit India movement, launched in 1942, resulted in the imprisonment of major Congress party leaders. With the British administration seeing a new enemy in the Congress party, the Muslim League became a potential ally. In Muslim majority provinces, the Muslim League gained unprecedented support.

Dialogue between Jinnah and Gandhi in 1944 failed to produce a resolution. In spite of Gandhi’s reluctant acceptance of partition as a concept, the two were unable to agree on its implementation. In 1946 negotiations opened, with a British Cabinet Mission. Jinnah demanded the accession of six provinces for autonomous Muslim rule in the northwest and east of India even though one of the provinces, Assam, in the east of the country, had only a 33% Muslim population. Jinnah was intransigent in his discussions with both the cabinet mission and the Congress party. His ultimate rejection of the Cabinet Mission Plan was accompanied by a reference to direct action. On 29 July 1946 Jinnah addressed the Muslim League council, stating ‘this day we say good-bye to constitutional methods.’ The Muslim League declared 16 Aug. as a day of direct action. Beginning in Calcutta, mass rioting spread across the country resulting in some 4,750 deaths and 15,000 injured. Jinnah argued that such violence was the inevitable consequence of a unified Muslim and Hindu country.

Although the Congress party had been given the role of leading the interim government during the process of British secession, Gandhi suggested that Jinnah and the Muslim League be invited to form India’s first constitutional government as a final gesture to prevent partition. The suggestion was dismissed by Nehru.

Following the arrival of the last British Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, events moved quickly towards independence and partition. On 15 Aug. 1947 independence was granted with Jinnah sworn in as the first governor general of Pakistan and Nehru as the first prime minister of India. On 11 Aug. 1947 Jinnah gave an inaugural speech which called for a tolerant, secular state: ‘You are free, free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.’ Attempts were made to censor portions of the speech although the full transcript successfully went to press. In an official biography commissioned by the Pakistani government and published in 1954 whole sections of the speech were omitted.

Jinnah died on 11 Sept. 1948 in Karachi at the age of 71 from lung-related illnesses.

Jóhannsson, Sigurður Ingi (Iceland)

Introduction

Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson became prime minister in April 2016 following the resignation of Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson.

Early Life

Born on 20 April 1962 in Selfoss, Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson grew up on his family’s farm. He studied veterinary medicine at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and, after graduating, ran a farming and veterinary business. He joined the Progressive Party in 2001 and was elected to parliament in 2009. In the same year, he became deputy chairman of the Progressive Party’s parliamentary group.

From 2009–10 he served on the parliamentary review committee on the Special Investigation Commission report into the country’s banking collapse. He also sat on the fisheries and agriculture committee from 2009–11, and from 2009–13 was a member of the Icelandic delegation to the West Nordic council. Between 2011 and 2013 he served on the industrial affairs committee and as deputy speaker of parliament. Following the 2013 general election, when the Progressive Party entered a governing coalition with the Independence Party, Jóhannsson was appointed minister of fisheries and agriculture; from 2013–14 he also served as minister for the environment and natural resources.

The coalition government claimed success in negotiating a deal with the creditors of Iceland’s failed banks and in taking steps to restore public trust in the banking system. However, in April 2016 the naming of Prime Minister Gunnlaugsson in reports of secret offshore investments triggered mass public demonstrations. Gunnlaugsson stepped down as prime minister, appointing Jóhannsson as his successor. Amid some initial confusion over the permanence of Gunnlaugsson’s resignation, Jóhannsson was sworn in as prime minister on 7 April 2016.

Career Peak

Jóhannsson came to office promising to hold early general elections. Meanwhile he signalled that he would continue with the government’s plans for a controlled exit from currency controls in a bid to restore Iceland’s economic stability.

Jóhannsson resigned as prime minister on 30 Oct. 2016 following parliamentary elections held the previous day and left office in Jan. 2017 to be succeeded by Bjarni Benediktsson.

John Paul II (Vatican City State)

Introduction

Karol Józef Wojtyła, a Pole, was elected by the College of Cardinals to succeed Pope John Paul I in 1978. The 264th pope, he was the first from outside Italy since the Dutch Hadrian VI in 1523. Wojtyła played an important role in dismantling East European communism and had sought to build bridges with other major world religions, particularly Judaism. He had also sought closer relations with the Orthodox Eastern Church. Socially conservative, he re-enforced Vatican opposition to homosexual practices, abortion, contraception and the ordination of women. He also undertook many trips abroad, preaching to millions.

Early Life

Wojtyła was born in Wadowice, near Kraków, in Poland on 18 May 1920. His father served with the Polish army. His mother died when he was eight and his elder brother died 4 years later. Wojtyła enrolled at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków from 1938 but his studies were interrupted by the German invasion of Poland the following year. After a brief absence from the city, he returned to Kraków to continue his academic career.

Escaping deportation by virtue of his job in a chemical plant he became active in an underground actors company. His father died in early 1942 and late the following year he began attending a secret seminary group. He narrowly avoided a Nazi purge of Kraków in 1944 and spent the rest of the war hiding in the palace of the archbishop. Wojtyła was ordained in Nov. 1946 and left to study in Rome.

Returning to Poland in 1948, Wojtyła held junior clerical positions and academic posts at the Jagiellonian University and the Catholic University of Lublin. In Dec. 1963 he was appointed Archbishop of Kraków by Pope Paul VI. He took part in the Second Vatican Council (1963–65), working with the Commission for the Study of Problems of the Family, Population and Birth Rate and voicing support for better relations with Judaism.

Promoted to cardinal archbishop in June 1967, Wojtyła became skilled at serving the church within the officially atheistic communist setting. Though his time in Poland has not escaped criticism, notably his silence during the 1968 government-led pogrom, Wojtyła stood apart from the communist authorities.

Following the death of Paul VI in Aug. 1978, Albino Luciani was voted his successor but died just over a month after taking office. With the College of Cardinals facing a potential division over his replacement, Wojtyła was selected as a compromise candidate. He took the name John Paul II. On 22 Oct. he officially became bishop of Rome, vicar of Jesus Christ, successor of the prince of the apostles, supreme pontiff of the universal Church, patriarch of the West, primate of Italy, archbishop and metropolitan of the Roman province, sovereign of the state of Vatican City, and servant of the servants of God.

Career Peak

John Paul II made regular trips abroad, travelling further than all the previous popes combined. One of his earliest trips, in 1979, was to South America, during which he preached to a crowd of over 5 m. in Mexico. Among his most important expeditions were his 1979 trip to Turkey, where he met the head of the Eastern Orthodox church, and his visit back to Poland where his support for the Solidarity trade union movement contributed to the collapse of communism.

He escaped an attempted assassination in May 1981 by a Turkish assailant, Mehmet Ali Acga, widely believed to have been sponsored by the Soviet Union. John Paul was outspoken in criticizing dictatorial regimes, including those of João Baptista de Oliveira in Brazil, Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, Baby Doc in Haiti, Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay, Augusto Pinochet in Chile and Chun Doo Hwan in South Korea. He was also critical of Western materialism.

John Paul made significant strides towards theological co-existence, though his stance caused controversy within the church. He made several symbolic gestures including preaching to Muslim audiences and entering Jewish synagogues. Also, the Vatican apologised for crimes against other religions and denominations. Having witnessed first hand the effects of the Holocaust in Poland, he discussed Pius XII's widely condemned silence throughout World War II, though without expressly apologising for his predecessor.

Though willing to accept the importance of science and empiricism, as epitomized by his assertion that parts of the Bible should be read not literally but symbolically, John Paul remained a conservative. He confirmed Vatican opposition to female ordination, pre-marital sex, abortion, euthanasia and homosexual acts. His continued denunciation of contraception attracted strong criticism with the spread of the AIDS epidemic, particularly in Africa. His autocratic leadership also attracted criticism. He stated that 'it is a mistake to apply American democratic principles to the faith and the truth' and backed conservative Catholic sects, notably Opus Dei.

John Paul's health deteriorated in the 1990s and in 2001 the Vatican confirmed that he was suffering from Parkinson's disease. Nonetheless, he continued to travel and make speeches. In 2002 he became the first pontiff to address the Italian parliament. He used his speech to encourage Italians to have more children (Italy had the second lowest birthrate in the world), and criticized Western consumerism. He also addressed political subjects, calling on parliament to reduce prison sentences to relieve overcrowding and to ease the financial burden on large families.

On 28 Sept. 2003 John Paul announced the appointment of 31 new cardinals, including six Italians, three from France and two from Spain. One was named *in pectore* to protect his identity. The college of cardinals was increased to 194, 135 of whom were under 80 years of age and therefore eligible to vote in the consistory for a new pope. After battling Parkinson's disease and other illnesses for many years John Paul II died on 2 April 2005. Over four million people went to view his body in what was probably the largest single Christian pilgrimage in history. On 1 May 2011 he was beatified, the last stage before being named a saint. He was declared a saint, along with Pope John XXIII, by Pope Francis on 27 April 2014.

Johnson, Lyndon B. (United States of America)

Introduction

As vice president to John F Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson became the 36th president of the United States after Kennedy's assassination on 22 Nov. 1963. He was elected for a full term in office in 1964 and is credited with enacting civil rights legislation initiated by the Kennedy administration. Johnson is also remembered for escalating the war in Vietnam. He did not seek re-election in 1968.

Early Life

Born near Stonewall, Texas on 30 Aug. 1908, Johnson's parents were farmers. He was educated at Johnson City High School in 1924 and South-west Texas State Teachers' College, graduating in 1930.

Campus politics led to him campaigning for Democratic congressman Richard M. Kleberg who appointed Johnson his secretary, a post he held for 4 years. In 1934 Johnson married Claudia Alta Taylor, with whom he would have two daughters.

In 1935 Johnson was made director of Texas' National Youth Administration. Two years later a congressional district in Texas became vacant and, campaigning on a pro-New Deal ticket, he was elected to the House of Representatives. He impressed President Franklin D. Roosevelt while serving on the Naval Affairs Committee and in 1940 was appointed head of the House Democratic Campaign Committee.

In 1941 Johnson lost the Democratic nomination for a senate seat to W. Lee O'Daniel despite having Roosevelt's support. In Dec. he joined the navy and was awarded the Silver Star Medal. He returned from active service to Washington in July 1942 to chair the Subcommittee on Naval Affairs and subsequently served on the Post-war Military Policy Committee. Johnson was elected to the senate in 1948. He became a member of the Armed Services Committee and supported President Truman's decision to intervene in Korea. In 1953 he was elected party leader of the Democratic minority.

A year later the Democrats regained control of the senate and Johnson was made majority leader. An effective deal-broker, he co-operated with Republican president Dwight D. Eisenhower to win congressional approval for measures of social reform, including, in 1957, a first civil rights bill. In 1960 Johnson hoped to win the Democratic nomination for president. However he was beaten by John F. Kennedy who then asked him to be his running mate, believing that Johnson could help 'deliver' the southern vote.

Sworn in as vice-president Johnson was appointed head of the National Aeronautics and Space Council (NASA). On a visit to southeast Asia in May 1961, he insisted that the United States would not back away from Vietnam. Later in his career, Johnson confessed that he 'detested every minute' of being vice-president.

Career Peak

On 22 Nov. 1963 Kennedy was assassinated and Johnson became president, taking the oath of office on the presidential plane Air Force One. 5 days later he addressed a joint session of Congress and signalled his immediate intention to push through legislation on taxes and civil rights that Kennedy had sought to implement but Congress had refused to pass.

Using the deal broking skills he had honed as senate leader, Johnson guided a Tax Reduction Bill through Congress in 1964. In May he outlined his concept of the Great Society—'a place where every child can find knowledge to enrich and enlarge his talent'. In July he persuaded Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act.

Buoyed by the whirlwind start to his presidency, Johnson selected Hubert H. Humphrey as his running mate and trounced Republican opponent Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election, winning 43 million votes to 27 m., the largest winning margin in American history. He now had the support of a Congress controlled by liberal Democrats. Medicare, health insurance for the elderly, was set up while Johnson's commitment to civil rights was reinforced by a Voting Rights Act. New programmes to provide federal aid for education and housing in impoverished areas were also introduced.

Johnson's undoing was Vietnam. In 1964 he increased the number of American troops in South Vietnam from 16,000 to 25,000. By 1965, with a victory for the North Vietnamese in prospect, he gave another push to American involvement. By the end of the year there were 180,000 American troops in Vietnam, a figure that doubled in 1966. By the summer of 1967, nearly 80,000 Americans had been killed or wounded in the conflict. The public turned against involvement in southeast Asia, not least because increased military expenditure led to a delay in domestic reforms. In 1966 congressional elections saw the Republicans gain 47 seats in the house and three in the Senate.

Against the background of rising discontent, rioting occurred in the black neighbourhoods of several large American cities in the summer of 1967. At the same time significant anti-Vietnam war protests took place on university campuses across the country. By the beginning of 1968 there were 500,000 American troops in Vietnam but the Tet offensive in Jan. 1968 appeared to confirm that the war was unwinnable. Under increased political pressure after Robert Kennedy decided to seek the presidential nomination, Johnson announced on 31 March that there would be a pause in the US bombing of Vietnam and that he would not seek re-election. Johnson's preferred presidential candidate, Vice President Humphrey, won the Democratic nomination after Robert Kennedy was assassinated. However, Humphrey was defeated by Republican opponent Richard M. Nixon.

Later Life

After leaving office on 20 Jan. 1969, Johnson retired to the LBJ ranch near Johnson City, in Texas. He wrote and edited his memoirs and died of a heart attack at the age of 64 on 22 Jan. 1973.

Johnson-Sirleaf, Ellen (Liberia)

Introduction

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became Africa's first elected female president in Jan. 2006, having defeated the former footballer, George Weah, in a run-off. A US-educated economist, she returned from exile to attempt to resurrect Liberia's shattered economy after 14 years of civil war. She was re-elected in presidential polling held in Oct.–Nov. 2011, pledging to continue her reform and anti-corruption agenda.

Early Life

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was born in Monrovia, Liberia on 29 Oct. 1938. She was educated at the College of West Africa in Monrovia from 1948–55, before graduating in accountancy in 1964 from the University of Wisconsin in the USA. From 1967 she served as special assistant to the secretary of the treasury in Liberia before undertaking an MA in public administration at America's Harvard University from 1969–71. Returning to Liberia, Sirleaf became assistant minister of finance in the administration of William R. Tolbert, Jr. Following public criticisms of Tolbert's presidency she resigned and left the country, taking up a post as a loan officer for several Latin American countries at the World Bank. In 1977 she was invited to return home to become deputy minister of finance for fiscal and banking affairs. In Aug. 1979 she replaced James T. Philips as minister of finance.

Shortly after a coup d'état and Tolbert's assassination on 12 April 1980, the new military leader, Sgt Samuel Doe, appointed Sirleaf president of the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment. However, she resigned in Dec. 1980 and returned to the World Bank, before becoming vice-president of Citibank in Nairobi, Kenya in mid-1981. She stood in Liberia's general elections in Oct. 1985, at which Doe was controversially elected president. Sirleaf was elected senator but was sentenced to 10 years in jail as part of Doe's crackdown on 'opponents' following a failed coup in Nov. 1985. Pardoned and released in June 1986, she again left Liberia for the USA, where she worked for the Equator Bank in Washington, D.C., followed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in New York.

While in the USA, Sirleaf joined other Liberian exiles in criticizing Doe and helped raise funds for a fellow exile, Charles Taylor, to lead the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) into Liberia from the Côte d'Ivoire in 1989. It triggered a devastating civil war that led to the deaths of over 200,000 people by the time a ceasefire was declared in Aug. 1996. Disillusioned with Taylor, Sirleaf resigned as director of the UNDP's Bureau for Africa (a post she held from July 1992) and stood against him on behalf of the Unity Party in presidential elections in 1997. She received only 10% of the vote (against 75% for Taylor) and was later charged with treason by him. Forced into exile again, she became active in various humanitarian projects, including investigations into the 1994 Rwandan genocide for the Organization for African Unity and serving on the board of the International Crisis Group and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. Liberia again descended into civil war but Sirleaf returned after Taylor was forced into exile in Aug. 2003 (to be later imprisoned in 2012 by the International Criminal Court for abetting war crimes in neighbouring Sierra Leone). She headed the governance reform commission until resigning in March 2005 to enter the presidential race.

During her campaign, Sirleaf criticized the transitional government's inability to fight corruption. She went through to a run-off against George Weah, a former World Footballer of the Year who was representing the Congress for Democratic Change, and on 11 Nov. the national elections commission declared Sirleaf the winner. Although Weah accused her of fraud, her victory was confirmed on 23 Nov. Independent observers declared the vote to be free, fair and transparent and her inauguration took place on 16 Jan. 2006.

Career Peak

In her inaugural speech, Sirleaf vowed to wage a war on corruption, promising that leading civil servants and ministers would have to declare their assets. She also pledged to work towards reconciliation by bringing former opponents into a government of national unity, and spoke of establishing peaceful relations with neighbouring West African states. She appointed a number of women to ministerial positions and controversially nominated a Nigerian soldier to head Liberia's army. While rebuilding the country's shattered economy—with a road network in ruins, no national telephone network, no national electricity grid and no piped water—has remained a major challenge, the World Bank and other international bodies have praised her government's efforts in office. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was inaugurated with a mandate to investigate human rights abuses during the long civil war, and she has made progress in confronting poor governance and corrupt officialdom.

In Nov. 2010 Sirleaf appointed a 22-member acting cabinet after placing their predecessors on 'mass administrative leave'. Several ministers were subsequently reappointed to their posts. She retained the presidency in Nov. 2011 when she was re-elected in a second round of voting, but there was a low turnout after rival candidate William Tubman boycotted the process because of alleged electoral fraud.

In Oct. 2011 Sirleaf was jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Her presidency from 2014 was dominated by efforts to contain the spread of an Ebola epidemic. The outbreak had killed nearly 5,000 Liberians by Jan. 2016 when the World Health Organization declared the whole of West Africa free of the disease. Furthermore, the crisis disrupted business and commerce and threatened to undermine the country's post-civil war economic revival.

In June 2016 UN peacekeeping troops handed responsibility for Liberia's security back to the country's military and police forces.

Owing to the constitutional term limit, Sirleaf was ineligible to stand for a third time in the presidential elections scheduled for 2017. During the campaign she refused to support Vice-President Joseph Boakai's candidacy and she was consequently expelled from the Unity Party. Rival candidate George Weah won a clear victory and succeeded Sirleaf as president on 22 Jan. 2018.

Jomaa, Mehdi (Tunisia)

Introduction

Mehdi Jomaa was appointed interim prime minister in Jan. 2014 after months of political paralysis. An engineer, he had no political affiliation and little political experience. His administration organised and oversaw the elections of Nov. and Dec. 2015.

Early Life

Mehdi Jomaa was born in Mahdia on 21 April 1962. He graduated from the National Engineering School of Tunis in 1989 and later received a postgraduate diploma in structural mechanics, design and modelling.

Having joined Hutchinson, part of the French conglomerate Total, in 1988, he spent the next 23 years working as a senior engineer and manager. Following the revolution that toppled the regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Jan. 2011, Jomaa left the private sector to take a role in Tunisia's transition to democracy. He was invited to serve as an independent candidate in the Islamist (Ennahda)-led coalition government of Prime Minister Ali Larayedh, becoming minister of industry in March 2013.

The assassination of opposition politician Mohammed Brahmi in July 2013 triggered popular protests and a general strike, prompting the resignation of the government in Oct. After prolonged political deadlock, Ennahda and the mainly secular opposition agreed that Jomaa should lead an interim administration of independents ahead of fresh elections in 2014. He took office as interim prime minister on 29 Jan. 2014.

Career Peak

Despite having apparently garnered support from across the political spectrum, the task of organizing a free and fair general election by the end of 2014 is a significant challenge. In March Jomaa warned that Tunisia's economic woes were potentially 'catastrophic'. Faced with a US\$2.5 bn. hole in the

national budget, he announced plans for a bond issue while casting doubt on its ability to sufficiently boost the public coffers.

Jomaa's tenure as interim prime minister came to an end in Feb. 2015 following the appointment of Habib Essid to the premiership.

Jonathan, Goodluck Ebele (Nigeria)

Introduction

The National Assembly appointed Goodluck Jonathan as acting president in Feb. 2010, replacing President Umaru Yar'Adua. An academic and former governor of Bayelsa State, Jonathan had been vice-president since Nov. 2007. He became president in May 2010 on Yar'Adua's death and was then elected to the post in April 2011. His term in office became increasingly dominated by an escalating insurgency in the northeast of the country by Islamist militants aligned to the Boko Haram movement. Amid concerns over his government's inability to contain the security situation, he was defeated by Muhammadu Buhari at the polls in March 2015. He remained in office until handing over power in May.

Early Life

Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was born on 20 Nov. 1957 in Otuke, Bayelsa State, in the oil-rich Niger Delta. A member of the indigenous Ijaw people, he was raised as a Pentecostal Christian by his father, a canoe builder and fisherman. After attending local primary schools Jonathan went to Mater Dei High School in Imiringi. He graduated in zoology from Port Harcourt University in 1981.

After completing military service Jonathan pursued an academic career, gaining a master's degree in hydro-biology and fisheries in 1985 and a PhD in zoology 10 years later, both from Port Harcourt University. He worked as a lecturer, education inspector and environmental protection officer before entering politics in 1998 with the People's Democratic Party (PDP). He was appointed deputy governor of Bayelsa State in 1999 and again in 2003. When state governor Dieprie Alamiyeseigha was charged with corruption in the UK in 2005, Jonathan replaced him.

In Dec. 2006, months after his wife Patience Faka was accused of, but not charged with, money laundering, Jonathan was elected vice-presidential running mate to Yar'Adua for the 2007 elections. The pair won, although opponents questioned the legitimacy of the vote and Jonathan's house in Bayelsa was bombed shortly after.

Jonathan's knowledge of the Niger Delta region helped Yar'Adua secure a ceasefire and disarmament with Delta rebels, generally considered the biggest achievement of his time in office. In Nov. 2009 Yar'Adua left Nigeria for medical treatment in Saudi Arabia without designating an interim presidential replacement. Jonathan was granted presidential powers after much wrangling by a parliamentary resolution of 9 Feb. 2010, though its constitutional validity was questioned. Yar'Adua returned to Nigeria in Feb. 2010 but remained out of public view, fuelling speculation about his condition.

Career Peak

On becoming acting president, Jonathan made moves to secure his tenuous position. In a government reshuffle he replaced two-thirds of Yar'Adua's appointments, including the justice minister and the national security adviser. He selected a London-based Goldman Sachs banker as finance minister and named the first female oil minister.

Jonathan vowed to calm militancy in the Delta region and address electricity shortages. He met with major oil corporations in Feb. 2010 after one of the main rebel groups renewed its campaign against the oil infrastructure in Dec. 2009. In April 2010 he dismissed the head of the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. After Yar'Adua died on 5 May 2010, Jonathan was sworn in as his successor the following day.

In Sept. 2010 Jonathan announced that he would contest presidential elections to be staged in 2011. The following month Nigeria marked 50 years of independence from Britain, although the celebrations were marred by a car bombing in Abuja in which at least 12 people were killed. The presidential poll took place in April 2011 and Jonathan was returned with almost 60% of the vote, although voting was divided along religious and ethnic lines.

In Feb. 2013 the main opposition parties merged to form the All Progressives Congress (APC), a new anti-PDP electoral alliance. At the same time, Jonathan faced serious divisions within his own party, as rival factions fought for influence ahead of the presidential poll scheduled initially for Feb. 2015. Having replaced several cabinet ministers in Sept. 2013, Jonathan then lost his majority in parliament in Dec. after 37 dissident PDP deputies defected to the APC. A powerful faction of state governors similarly crossed over to the APC, leaving the PDP with fewer governors than the opposition.

From 2011 Jonathan's administration was confronted with serious sectarian violence between the Christian and Muslim communities and an escalating insurgency, particularly in the northeast, orchestrated by the extremist Islamist Boko Haram sect. Most prominent among the continuing series of attacks and atrocities committed by Boko Haram, both in Nigeria and in neighbouring countries, was the abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls from a boarding school in Chibok in April 2014. The apparent inability of the security forces to obtain their release or contain the growing Islamist threat damaged Jonathan's domestic and international credibility. At elections postponed from Feb. 2015 until the following month, Jonathan was defeated by Muhammadu Buhari of the APC, who had been president in the 1980s. Jonathan remained in office until Buhari was sworn in on 29 May.

Josipović, Ivo (Croatia)

Introduction

Ivo Josipović was sworn in as president on 18 Feb. 2010 after winning the second round of elections on 10 Jan. 2010 on an anti-corruption platform. His term in the largely ceremonial role was for 5 years. He presided over Croatia's entry into the European Union in July 2013 and sought to improve relations with the country's ex-Yugoslav neighbours. He was defeated in the second round of the presidential election in Jan. 2015 and he was succeeded by Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in Feb. 2015.

Early Life

Josipović was born on 28 Aug. 1957 in Zagreb. He studied law at the University of Zagreb, qualifying for the bar in 1980. He returned as a lecturer in 1984, specializing in criminal procedure and international crime. In 1985 he gained an MA in criminal law and in 1994 received his PhD in criminal sciences. Josipović also pursued musical interests, graduating from the composition department of the Zagreb Music Academy in 1983. From 1987–2004 he taught at the Academy and has written over 50 compositions and won several awards for his work.

He began his political career in 1980 when he joined the League of Communists of Croatia (SKH). The party rebranded its image in the early 1990s, with Josipović helping to write the first statutes of the new Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP). In 1994 he retired from politics to work as an international law specialist in cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. He was a key author of Croatia's genocide case against Serbia before the International Court of Justice.

In 2003 Josipović returned to politics. Elected to parliament as an independent MP, he was selected as vice-president of the SDP Representatives' Group in parliament. In 2005 he became a representative in the City of Zagreb assembly and was re-elected to parliament in 2007, formally rejoining the SDP a year later. On 12 July 2009 he was selected as the SDP presidential candidate and on 27 Dec. 2009 won the first round of voting with 32% of the vote. He received 60% in the second round to secure the presidency.

Career Peak

Josipović's top priority was to fight corruption, a pre-requisite to Croatia's membership of the EU. He also faced the challenge of mending ties with ex-Yugoslav neighbours in the wake of the Balkan wars of the 1990s—most notably Serbia. In April 2010 Josipović went to the Bosnian parliament and expressed regret over Croatia's part in the Bosnian conflict. In July that year he also visited the Serbian capital of Belgrade, heralding an improvement in bilateral relations that was further encouraged by the Serbian president's visit in Nov. to the Croatian city of Vukovar, the site of wartime civilian killings by Serb forces.

Josipović's term as president ended on 15 Feb. 2015 following the swearing-in of Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović—Croatia's first female head of state. He had won the first round of elections held on 28 Dec. 2015, but lost in the 11 Jan. 2015 run-off against Grabar-Kitarović.

Jospin, Lionel (France)

Introduction

The former leader of the Parti Socialiste (PS), Lionel Jospin was prime minister of France between 1997–2002. Heading a coalition government of Socialist, Greens and Communists, Jospin formed a *cohabitation* (power sharing) with President Jacques Chirac who represented the right-wing Rassemblement pour la République (Rally for the Republic; RPR). Major reforms introduced by Jospin included a 35-h working week and limited autonomy for Corsica. A presidential candidate in the 1995 elections, Jospin stood again in the 2002 election. But when he was beaten by the Front National leader Jean-Marie Le Pen in the first round, Jospin fell out of the race. He immediately resigned as prime minister and leader of the PS.

Early Life

Jospin was born on 12 July 1937 in Meudon, Paris. The son of a teacher and a midwife, he is from a staunchly socialist family. In 1956 Jospin finished his studies at the Institute of Politics in Paris. Following 2 years national service, from 1965 he studied at the Ecole National d'Administration, the training ground for French politicians and senior civil servants. Two years later, Jospin joined the foreign ministry, becoming a secretary for foreign affairs. After studying in the USA, Jospin taught politics at the IUT University of Technology in Paris until 1981.

Jospin followed in the family political tradition and joined the PS in 1971. He became a protégé of François Mitterrand, serving as one of the group of experts around the party leader. Between 1975–79 Jospin was responsible for mediations between the PS and the Parti Communiste Français. In 1981 he supported Mitterrand's electoral campaign.

On Mitterrand's election, Jospin was voted party secretary of the PS, a post he held for 7 years. From 1988–92, he served as minister for education, youth and sport. Reforms included new classrooms nationwide and the building of seven new universities. He aroused opposition when he allowed Muslim girls to wear the hijab, or headscarf, at school. France's national education system had been strictly secular since reforms in 1882 disallowed any demonstration of religious allegiance. Internal disputes in the PS came to a head at a difficult party conference at Rennes in 1990. Unhappy with party wranglings, Jospin resigned from the PS committee in 1993, only returning to the PS when Michel Rocard took over its leadership. In 1995 Jospin was voted PS representative at the presidential elections with 65% of party votes. After leading the RPR candidates Balladur and Chirac in the first round, Jospin came second with 47% of votes to Chirac's 53% in a run-off election. He was voted Party Secretary for the second time with 94% of votes.

Career Peak

Chirac called an early election in 1997, a gamble that led to a socialist majority in the Assembly. Consequently, an opposition prime minister had to be instated. On election, Jospin promised lower unemployment, then running at 12.6%, and a reduction of the working week to 35 h. He also pledged to reverse unpopular right-wing economic policies, which had been introduced to meet qualification requirements for the single currency.

In his first 2 years, Jospin reversed the nationalization policies of Mitterrand and privatized £12 bn. of the public sector. By 2000 France's economy was in good shape. Unemployment was below 10%, and there was a 3% economic growth. Exports and foreign investments were aided by a weak euro. In Feb. 2000 the 35-h working week finally took effect. Economic prosperity in France allowed Jospin to cut taxes on income and profits. His failure to reduce fuel taxes led to angry demonstrations by fishermen, farmers and hauliers who blockaded ports and oil depots. Despite pressure from the Greens to remain firm on fuel tax, Jospin conceded a reduction. Following years of political tension and nationalist activism in Corsica, in Sept. 2000 Jospin controversially granted limited rights of autonomy and a promise of

devolved law making powers by 2004. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the interior minister, resigned in protest.

Jospin's *cohabitation* with Chirac was not always easy. In defiance of the convention that the president should handle international affairs, in Feb. 2000 Jospin went on a controversial visit to Israel where he angered the Arab community by referring to Hizbollah activists as 'terrorists'. Despite falling unemployment, down to 8.7% in March 2001 (the lowest since 1983), and healthy economic growth, large private sector redundancies led to public opposition. In the local elections of March 2001, the left lost ground. Strikes by railway workers and midwives added to Jospin's problems. By April 2001, tensions within the leftwing coalition were near breaking point.

Nonetheless, Jospin announced his candidature for the 2002 presidential election as the chief rival to Chirac. Despite sustained growth and lower unemployment under Jospin, and despite both candidates' awareness of the public's concern with crime, the inability of both prime minister and president to curb crime in the last 5 years led some voters to favour the extreme policies of Front National leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. In a shock first round result, Le Pen beat Jospin to second place with 16.86% of votes to 16.17%. Jospin resigned his premiership and stepped down from the leadership of the PS. In the June parliamentary elections the left lost their ruling majority to a rightwing coalition. Jospin's successor as Prime Minister was Jean-Pierre Raffarin.

Later Life

After leaving office, Jospin claimed he was retiring from active political life although in 2005 he published a book setting out his political vision which fuelled speculation that he was considering running for leadership of the PS. However, he ruled himself out in Sept. 2006 and campaigned on behalf of Ségolène Royal during the 2007 presidential election although he later revealed that he had voted for her rival Dominique Strauss-Kahn. He remains a leading figure within the PS and supported Martine Aubry for the leadership in 2008.

Juan Carlos (Spain)

Introduction

Juan Carlos Victor María de Borbón y Borbón became the King of Spain in 1975 after the death of General Francisco Franco ended a 36-year dictatorship. Considered by Franco as his natural successor to lead his right-wing Falangist party, Juan Carlos proved instead to be democratic. He encouraged the liberalization of Spanish society, paving the way for the election of a socialist government to lead the country between 1982–96. In 1981 an attempted coup by Francoists wanting to return Spain to autocratic rule was successfully aborted.

Early Life

Juan Carlos was born on 5 Jan. 1938 in Rome. His father was Juan Carlos Teresa Silverio Alfonso de Borbón y Battenburg, the third son and heir of the previous monarch, King Alfonso XIII. Alfonso had left Spain in 1931 when the country became a republic.

Juan Carlos was privately educated in Switzerland before being sent to continue his studies in Spain in 1947 where Franco set about moulding him as his successor. After his secondary education, the young prince was trained in the army, navy and air force in Zaragoza, Pontevedra and Murcia respectively. He then studied international law and economics at Madrid's Complutense University. In 1962 he married Princess Sofia of Greece with whom he had three children, Princess Elena, Princess Christina and Crown Prince Felipe.

Career Peak

In 1969 Juan Carlos was designated Franco's successor. But he was not the upholder of right-wing ideology that Franco had hoped for. Instead, when he came to the throne after Franco's death in 1975, he restored multi-party government and cleared the way for the transition to democracy and liberalization. But Franco's supporters were still active. On 23 Feb. 1981 Civil Guards led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero occupied parliament and General Milans del Bosch ordered his tanks onto the streets of Valencia. As head of the Spanish armed forces, Juan Carlos successfully resisted the coup.

In the elections of the following year, the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) leader Felipe González Márquez came to power to begin his 14 year term in government. After the closed society of Franco, Spain opened up internationally joining NATO in 1981 and the EU in 1986. Subsequent to the 1982 elections, Juan Carlos served a largely ceremonial role in Spanish politics, acting almost exclusively on the advice of parliament. Indeed, for the majority of his reign, he was a relatively popular figure amongst the public, careful in appeasing both the left and right establishments of Spanish politics. His popularity waned considerably towards the end of his reign during Spain's economic crisis. This was compounded by the revelation that he had undertaken an elephant hunting trip to Botswana in 2012, for which he was widely criticized by both politicians and the media.

On 2 June 2014 Juan Carlos announced his abdication in favour of his son Prince Felipe of Asturias, who became King of Spain on 19 June. Upon relinquishing his title, he cited the need for a new, younger generation to respond to the economic challenges faced by Spain. Throughout his reign Juan Carlos received a number of international awards, including the Charlemagne Prize (1982) for his contribution to Europe, UNESCO's Bolívar Prize (1983) for representing the ideas of Venezuela's revolutionary hero Simón Bolívar and the Nansen Medal (1987).

Jugnauth, Anerood (Mauritius)

Introduction

One of the dominant figures of post-independence Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth has served as both president and prime minister. He was first elected premier in 1982 and his most recent tenure ended in Jan. 2017.

Early Life

Sir Anerood Jugnauth was born in Vacoas-Phoenix on 29 March 1930. He attended Regent College in Quatre Bornes before working as a teacher and a government clerk. He went on to study law in the UK, being called to the Bar in 1954.

In 1963 he became a member of the National Assembly (then the Legislative Assembly) for the first time as a member of the Independent Forward Bloc. He joined the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) in 1971 and soon rose to become head, serving as leader of the opposition from 1976–82 until assuming the premiership for the first time.

Shortly afterwards he left the MMM to found the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM). Jugnauth led his new party to victory at elections in 1983 and remained as prime minister for the next 12 years, winning two further mandates in that time. Under his tenure, the economy thrived amid a liberalization programme and a reduction in dependency on the sugarcane industry.

Jugnauth and the MSM suffered a resounding defeat at elections in 1995 but he returned as prime minister 5 years later on the back of a power-sharing deal with Paul Bérenger, leader of the MMM. During this tenure he encouraged the growth of technology industries in Mauritius and adopted a punitive policy towards drug offending. He resigned in 2003 to become president—a largely ceremonial role—as agreed in the deal with the MMM. He was re-elected president by parliament in 2008 and held the office until 2012.

In Dec. 2014 Jugnauth received his sixth mandate as prime minister, succeeding his political rival Navin Ramgoolam.

Career Peak

Jugnauth was sworn in on 17 Dec. 2014, vowing to bolster the economy. Early in his latest term he met with officials from the Seychelles to discuss a strengthening of ties in the interests of mutual maritime security. In March 2015 he hosted a visit by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during which India offered Mauritius a US\$500 m.-credit line for infrastructure development while also highlighting fears that a bilateral tax treaty was being abused by some Indian citizens for tax evasion purposes.

On 21 Jan. 2017 Jugnauth resigned from his position and handed power to his son, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, the minister of finance and leader of the country's main political party. Two days later his resignation became effective and he was appointed minister mentor, minister of defence and minister for Rodrigues in the new cabinet.

Juncker, Jean-Claude (Luxembourg)

Introduction

Jean-Claude Juncker was appointed prime minister in Jan. 1995, replacing Jacques Santer who became president of the European Commission. Having been re-elected as prime minister in 1999, 2004 and 2009, Juncker was at the time of his resignation in July 2013 Europe's longest-serving head of government. Committed to European integration, he played an important role in the decisions leading up to the creation of the European Union's single currency (euro). In 2014 he became president of the European Commission.

Early Life

Juncker was born in Redange-sur-Attert on 9 Dec. 1954. He obtained his primary and secondary education in Luxembourg and Belgium. Having studied law at the University of Strasbourg, he was admitted to the Bar of Luxembourg in Feb. 1980. He was an active member of the CSV and chaired its youth organization from 1979–84. Juncker was appointed state secretary for employment and social affairs in 1982. In 1984 he was elected to Parliament for the first time as minister of labour, minister of social security and minister in charge of the budget. When Luxembourg held the presidency of the European Community in 1985, Juncker chaired the council of ministers for social affairs and the budget. In 1990 he was elected party leader of the CSV. As president of the EC Economic and Finance Council in 1991, Juncker was among the core co-authors of the Treaty of Maastricht. He was a governor of the World Bank from 1989–95, and since 1995 has been the country's governor of the European Investment Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Career Peak

Juncker concurrently held the position of prime minister, minister of state and of the Treasury. In Oct. 2000 his government oversaw the abdication of the King, Grand Duke Jean, in favour of his son Prince Henri. In Feb. 2002 Juncker was awarded the Légion d'Honneur by French President Jacques Chirac. Following his re-election in mid-2004, he formed a new CSV coalition government with the Socialist Workers' Party. From Jan.–June 2005 he led Luxembourg's 6-month presidency of the European Union. In Dec. 2008 Luxembourg's parliament voted to amend the constitution so that bills no longer need the approval of Grand Duke Henri before passing into law following a controversy over proposed euthanasia legislation. In the June 2009 elections the CSV increased its vote share and its representation in the Chamber of Deputies and Juncker began his fourth term as prime minister at the head of the CSV–LSAP coalition.

On 11 July 2013 Juncker resigned as prime minister and called for quick elections following claims of several cases of misconduct by the country's security agency, which the prime minister oversees. He remained the head of a caretaker government until snap elections were held in Oct. and negotiations over the formation of a coalition government took place. In Dec. 2013 Xavier Bettel was sworn in as the new prime minister, bringing an end to Juncker's 18 years as the head of government.

Later Life

In June 2014 Juncker was named as the next president of the European Commission. He took office on 1 Nov. 2014.

Kabbah, Ahmad Tejan (Sierra Leone)

Introduction

Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party, served as president from 1996–2007, though he was briefly ousted in a coup in 1997. He sought to build a lasting peace as the country emerged from a long civil war and took steps to strengthen a devastated economy.

Early Life

Kabbah was born in 1932 and was educated in Sierra Leone and the UK. He entered the civil service in 1959, becoming a permanent secretary in the late 1960s. He subsequently spent over 20 years working for the UN Development Programme, travelling throughout the world.

He returned to Sierra Leone in 1992, shortly after the military had seized power. They invited him to chair the National Advisory Council. He was elected president at elections in 1996.

Career Peak

In May 1997 Kabbah was removed in a military coup and fled to Guinea. However, with the support of a West African intervention force and the British military, Kabbah re-established his government 9 months later. Backed by the UN, he opened negotiations with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) which resulted in several accords. By late 2001 the RUF acknowledged the legitimacy of the Kabbah government and in Jan. 2002 he declared the war at an end. In May 2002 he won re-election for a further 5-year term.

Despite lingering concerns in the international community over his authoritarian rule, he was promised significant international aid in a bid to rebuild the country. In July 2002 Kabbah inaugurated Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, aiming to heal the rifts caused by the country's bloody conflicts. However, unlike the South African model, the commission did not have the power to grant an amnesty. Having heard around 9,000 testimonies, the Commission submitted its report in 2005.

Corruption remained a problem under Kabbah's government, deterring prospective donor and creditor countries, and the security situation necessitated the retention of UN peacekeeping forces until Dec. 2005. In Aug. 2006, although not eligible to stand for the presidency again, Kabbah called early general elections for July 2007 to demonstrate his commitment to good governance and democracy. In Dec. 2006 he announced that US\$1.6 bn. of Sierra Leone's debt to international creditors had been written off. In accordance with the constitution, he stepped down from the presidency ahead of elections in Aug. 2007, postponed from July.

Kabbah died on 13 March 2014 at the age of 82 after a long battle with illness.

Kabila, Laurent (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Introduction

Laurent Kabila was president of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between 1997–2001. He led the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire in the rebellion that overthrew President Mobutu Sésé Séko in May 1997. Kabila was unable to bring peace to his riven country and he was assassinated in 2001.

Early Life

Laurent Desiré Kabila was born in 1939 in Jadotville, in what was then called the Belgian Congo. He studied political philosophy in France and also attended the university of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Kabila's political career began when he became youth leader in the Mouvement National Congolais, an organization aligned with Patrice Lumumba, the Congo's first president after independence.

Lumumba was overthrown and later killed by military forces headed by a former favourite of Lumumba, Mobutu Sésé Séko, who became the nation's principal power-broker. Kabila rallied Lumumba supporters against the new regime and formed alliances with rebel networks in Uganda and Rwanda, as well as with South American revolutionary Che Guevara. Kabila launched a rebellion in 1964 as the head of Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (ADFL) but Mobutu suppressed the movement and seized power for himself in 1965. The country was renamed the Republic of Zaire 6 years later.

In 1967 Kabila was one of 27 founder members of the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP). He based himself in the Kivu Province on the shores of

Lake Tanganyika where he created a mini-state based on Marxist-Socialist principles. Apart from a high-profile attempt to raise funds by kidnapping, the PRP attracted little international attention and, despite Sino-Soviet support, the movement was in serious decline by the 1980s.

After a spell as a gold dealer in Tanzania, Kabila returned to Zaire in the 1990s and re-established the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. Mobutu's pro-Hutu rule had resulted in large-scale civil discord between Hutus and Tutsis and in Oct. 1996 Kabila bolstered his movement with disaffected Tutsis, Rwandans and other anti-Mobutu factions and launched an offensive on Kinshasa, the capital, whilst Mobutu was out of the country. Mobutu went into exile in May 1997 and Kabila appointed himself president, renaming the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Career Peak

Kabila's accession was well-received internationally, with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright describing him as a 'beacon of hope'. His popularity soon diminished, however. He banned all rival political parties and waded on his promise to hold free elections. He antagonized the international community by refusing to address US\$14 bn. worth of debt and by obstructing UN investigations into allegations of massacres of Rwandan refugees during his rise to power. A national constituent and legislative assembly was established but Kabila became ever more ruthless in the suppression of his critics.

His failure to secure the shared borders with Uganda and Rwanda from rebel conflict led to a falling out with his former allies in Aug. 1998. The country was again overtaken by rebellion which reached the outskirts of Kinshasa. With the help of Angolan, Namibian and Zimbabwean forces he retained power but rebels controlled large areas in the east of the country.

In 1999 relations between the Ugandan-backed Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC) and the Rwandan-backed Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) deteriorated and the civil war intensified. Several internationally-brokered ceasefires were short-lived. On 18 Jan. 2001 Kabila was shot dead, apparently by one of his teenage bodyguards. His son Joseph Kabila succeeded him and took on the presidency of a country which had been crippled by war.

Kaczyński, Jarosław (Poland)

Introduction

Jarosław Kaczyński was sworn in as prime minister by the president, his identical twin brother, Lech Kaczyński, on 14 July 2006. Anti-communist activists in the 1970s and '80s, the brothers have garnered support for their right-wing Law and Justice Party by pledging to cut corruption and defend traditional Catholic values. In Oct. 2007 Kaczyński stepped down as prime minister after an electoral defeat.

Early Life

Jarosław Aleksander Kaczyński was born on 18 June 1949 in Warsaw. In 1971 he entered the University of Warsaw, where he studied law and administration to PhD level. He subsequently worked at the institute for science and higher educational policy in Warsaw University's branch in Białystok.

Involved in anti-communist opposition activities in the 1970s, he co-operated with the Workers' Defence Committee (Komitet Obrony Robotników) and, along with his brother Lech, he was a legal adviser to the Solidarność (Solidarity) movement. Lech, however, became more closely associated with Solidarity's leadership and moved to Gdańsk in 1980. From 1989 until the end of 1990 Jarosław Kaczyński was the editor-in-chief of *Tygodnik Solidarność* (Solidarity Weekly). In the multi-party elections of June 1989 he was elected a senator representing the Citizens' Parliamentary Caucus (OKP). He represented Solidarity in negotiations to form the government headed by Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

In May 1990 the Kaczyński brothers established the Centre Agreement Party (PC) to support the Solidarity leader, Lech Wałęsa, in his successful presidential campaign. Jarosław subsequently became minister of state for the chancellery in the presidential office but was ousted, along with Lech, in late

1991 by Wałęsa who blamed the brothers for the president's growing unpopularity. Jarosław remained chairman of the PC until 1997, but was unable to turn it into a major political party.

He was elected to the Sejm in 1997 representing the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) grouping of nationalist, conservative, centrist and Catholic parties. Despite performing well in the 1997 elections (gaining 201 seats in the Sejm and 34% of the vote) and forming the backbone of Jerzy Buzek's government, the AWS grouping became fragmented. In 2001, shortly before parliamentary elections in Sept., the Kaczyński brothers established the right-wing Law and Justice Party (PiS), which went on to win 44 seats in the Sejm. Jarosław became the head of the PiS parliamentary group and in 2003 he was elected the party's chairman, succeeding his brother who had been elected mayor of Warsaw.

Promising to fight crime and corruption Jarosław led the PiS to victory in the parliamentary elections of 25 Sept. 2005, taking 155 seats in the Sejm and ending 4 years of centre-left government. He appeared to be the front-runner to take the position of prime minister but instead backed the former physics teacher, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, who became premier in Oct. 2005. In the spring of 2006 the PiS reached a majority coalition agreement with the populist rural Self-Defence of the Polish Republic and the right-wing nationalist League of Polish Families. However, reports of disagreements over economic policy surfaced in mid-2006 and Marcinkiewicz resigned. The PiS political committee unanimously recommended Jarosław Kaczyński for the post of prime minister and on 14 July 2006 he was sworn in by the president.

Career Peak

On taking office, Kaczyński promised to stamp out corruption, reform public finances and build more roads and houses. The PiS fared reasonably well in local elections in Nov. 2006 but lost the battle for Warsaw when its candidate, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, was beaten by Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, a former governor of the central bank. Holding together the fragile coalition, reforming public finances and curbing emigration are among the administration's key tasks. After the Oct. 2007 electoral defeat of the PiS, Kaczyński stepped down from the post of prime minister, becoming leader of the opposition. Power was handed over to Donald Tusk's Civic Platform party and its allies, a centre-right party which plans to repair relations with Europe and withdraw troops from Iraq.

Later Life

Kaczyński contested the Polish presidential election held in June 2010 after his twin brother Lech (and the president at the time) had died in a plane crash 2 months earlier. However, Kaczyński lost in the second round run-off to the then acting president Bronisław Komorowski. Kaczyński remains the chairman of the PiS.

Kaczyński, Lech (Poland)

Introduction

Lech Kaczyński beat Donald Tusk in a run-off for the presidency in Oct. 2005. The conservative former mayor of Warsaw campaigned on a nationalist platform and garnered most votes in the country's poorer eastern provinces. His victory confirmed Poland's shift to the political right—the parliamentary elections in Sept. 2005 were won by the conservative Law and Justice Party, led by Lech Kaczyński's identical twin brother, Jarosław, who subsequently became prime minister in July 2006. Jarosław's government collapsed in Aug. 2007, paving the way for early elections in Oct. which were won by Tusk's opposition Civic Platform. On 10 April 2010 President Kaczyński was killed in a plane crash while on his way to a commemoration service for the Katyn massacre in Russia.

Early Life

Lech Aleksander Kaczyński was born on 18 June 1949 in Warsaw, the son of an engineer and a philologist. As a child, Lech Kaczyński and his brother, Jarosław, appeared in a popular film comedy, *The Two That Stole The Moon*. Lech studied law and administration at Warsaw University. Having received a

PhD from Gdańsk University in 1976, he embarked on an academic career, lecturing at both Gdańsk University and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.

An activist in the democratic anti-communist movement, in Aug. 1980 Kaczyński became a legal adviser to the strike committee in the Gdańsk shipyard and the Solidarność (Solidarity) movement. However, Kaczyński was one of many Solidarity activists to be arrested and interned after Gen. Jaruzelski, the first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), declared martial law in Dec. 1981. From the mid-1980s Kaczyński was an adviser to Solidarity's leader, Lech Wałęsa, and helped establish the Citizens' Parliamentary Caucus (OKP) in Dec. 1988. Kaczyński was present at the 'round table' negotiations that paved the way for multi-party elections in June 1989, at which he was elected a member of the Sejm.

In May 1990 Lech and his brother split the OKP and established the Centre Agreement Party (PC) to support Wałęsa's successful presidential campaign. Kaczyński was appointed minister of state for national security in the presidential office, but disagreements led to him leaving office in late 1991. Appointed chairman of the Supreme Control Chamber in Feb. 1992, Kaczyński became a leading critic of Wałęsa until the president was ousted by Aleksander Kwaśniewski in elections of Nov. 1995.

Kaczyński returned to the Sejm in 1997 as a representative of the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) grouping of nationalist, conservative, centrist and Catholic parties. He served as attorney general and minister of justice in Jerzy Buzek's government between June 2000 and July 2001, gaining popularity for his hard-line approach to law and order until dismissed by Buzek over a controversial criminal investigation. In 2001, shortly before parliamentary elections in Sept., the Kaczyński brothers established the right-wing Law and Justice Party (PiS). The Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) emerged victorious but the PiS took 44 seats in the 460-seat Sejm.

Lech Kaczyński was elected mayor of Warsaw in Nov. 2002 and supported the construction of the Museum of the Warsaw Rising. More controversially, he banned gay movement parades in 2004 and 2005. In March 2005 he declared his intention to run for president in the Oct. elections and campaigned on a nationalist platform, arguing the case for a Fourth Republic. He beat Donald Tusk of the Civic Platform with 54% of the vote in a run-off on 23 Oct. 2005.

Career Peak

Kaczyński said he would work to achieve a 'moral renewal' in Poland, campaigning for justice for victims of communist crimes, fighting corruption, providing economic security and combining modernization with tradition. He pledged to strengthen ties with the USA and improve relations with France, Ukraine and the Baltic States. However, relations with Russia and Germany have remained difficult.

In July 2006 Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz resigned as prime minister and was replaced by Lech's brother, Jarosław, at the head of the majority coalition government that had been formed in the spring between the PiS, the SRP and LPR, two small populist and eurosceptic parties. However, this populist and nationalist administration lasted only until Oct. 2007 when early elections resulted in the moderate Civic Platform gaining the largest share of the vote and forming a minority coalition government under Tusk's premiership.

The president has been criticized for gaffes in his conduct of foreign affairs, notably his withdrawal in July 2006 at short notice from a trilateral summit with France and Germany because of a satirical article in a German newspaper for which he demanded an apology.

In Oct. 2009 the eurosceptic Kaczyński finally signed the European Union's Lisbon Treaty on institutional and administrative reform, having stalled for months until the treaty was approved by Ireland following a second referendum. On 10 April 2010 he died in a plane crash along with 95 others including many of the country's most senior officials. The speaker of parliament, Bronisław Komorowski, was appointed acting president.

Kádár, János (Hungary)

Introduction

János Kádár had two terms as Hungary's Prime Minister (1956–58, 1961–65), and as First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

(1956–88) he was effectively his country's head of state. He was identified as an ally of Imre Nagy during the 1956 anti-Soviet uprising but shortly afterwards he altered his stance and was installed in power in the aftermath by Moscow. His unwillingness to adapt to the liberalizing reforms of the late 1980s led to his downfall.

Early Life

Kádár, who changed his surname from Czermanik, was born in Fiume in Hungary (now Rijeka in Croatia) on 26 May 1912. He did not know his natural parents and was brought up by foster parents in the village of Karpoly, where he went to the local school. Having trained as a mechanic, in 1931 he joined the Young Communist Workers' Federation and the then outlawed Communist Party. He was arrested on multiple occasions over the ensuing years for his activities and in 1942 he was called on to the Communist Central Committee. He was active within the Hungarian resistance movement throughout World War II, joined the Politburo in 1945 and became Assistant General Secretary of the Party a year later. In 1947, following disputed elections, the Communists came to power.

Kádár was appointed Minister of the Interior in 1948 but his view came to be regarded as anti-Stalinist. In 1950, under the Rákosi regime, he was removed from the party infrastructure and served a prison sentence from 1951 until 1954, when he was rehabilitated following Stalin's death in 1953. When the anti-Soviet Hungarian uprising of Oct. 1956 took place under the leadership of Imre Nagy, Kádár was regarded as one of Nagy's allies, publicly declaring it as 'our glorious revolution'.

Career Peak

Kádár was perceived as a 'national Communist', one who believed that Communism within Hungary should be adapted to suit the particular conditions of Hungary and not imposed along strict lines set out by Moscow. He was, however, regarded as more friendly to the Soviet hierarchy than Nagy and became nervous about the pace and extent of reform. In the immediate aftermath of the uprising he formed a 'revolutionary peasant workers' government' with Soviet blessing and set about reversing many of Nagy's reforms. While promising a degree of internal reform and advocating negotiations for the removal of Warsaw Pact troops from Hungarian territory, he also now condemned the uprising as a 'counter-revolution' and re-acknowledged the authority of the Warsaw Pact.

In the years following the events of Oct. 1956, Kádár aggressively implemented Soviet authority, imprisoning and executing many of those who had been involved in the uprising. By the 1960s his regime was becoming more liberal. Surveillance of citizens was reduced, a large number of political prisoners were released in a 1963 amnesty and there was a relaxation in the suppression of freedom of expression. His approach to reform and to its opposition was encapsulated by his quote of the early 1960s that 'those who are not against us are for us'.

In economic terms, he encouraged partial decentralization and allowed certain market devices outlined in a new economic policy of 1968, as a result of which the economy boomed in relation to its Eastern Bloc neighbours. However, his foreign policy remained entwined with that of the Soviet Union, as when he allowed Hungarian troops to be used in the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the suppression of the burgeoning reform movement there in 1968.

From the mid-1970s onwards, Kádár's reformist tendencies once again withdrew and as a consequence the economy went into steady decline. By the late 1970s the growth rate had fallen from 6.0% to 1.6% and, without the technology to compete with foreign economies, unemployment and inflation both spiralled and Hungary had huge foreign debts. Kádár was unresponsive to the reforms that swept through the Eastern Bloc in the mid- and late 1980s following the rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union. He was effectively removed from the political frontline when given the honorary post of party president in 1988 following political manoeuvring by Imre Pozsgay.

Later Life

Kádár remained party president until May of the following year when he was removed from the party structure altogether. He died on 6 July 1989 and by the end of the year the Communists had fallen from power in Hungary.

Kafando, Michel (Burkina Faso)

Introduction

Michel Kafando was sworn in as interim president on 18 Nov. 2014 to oversee a year-long transition to democratic elections. He was selected by a committee of the country's political, religious and military leaders after President Blaise Compaoré was ousted in the wake of mass protests. A former foreign minister and ambassador to the United Nations, Kafando also held the foreign affairs portfolio in the interim cabinet.

Early Life

Kafando was born in Ouagadougou, then the capital of the French-controlled Upper Volta, on 18 Aug. 1942. He studied law at France's University of Bordeaux, continuing his studies in Paris and Geneva. In 1990 he was awarded a doctorate in political science by the Sorbonne in Paris.

In 1982 he was appointed foreign minister, a post he retained through the 1982 coup led by Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo. From 1998 until 2011 he served as the country's permanent representative to the United Nations, including a 1-year stint as president of the Security Council.

In Oct. 2014 protests broke out against President Compaoré's attempt to rewrite the constitution to make possible an extension to his 27-year rule. On 31 Oct., after violent demonstrations in the capital, Compaoré dissolved the government and fled the country. In the wake of Compaoré's resignation, Isaac Zida, a lieutenant colonel in the presidential guard, declared himself the new head of state. Facing protests from the opposition, and under threat of sanctions from the African Union and the United Nations, the army agreed to restore the constitution and return to civilian government. A 23-person panel was convened to select a candidate to lead the transition; Kafando was the army's preferred choice.

Career Peak

Kafando oversaw an interim government and operated with tight restrictions on his power stipulated by a Transition Charter. The conditions of his appointment meant that he was not allowed to stand in elections that took place in Nov. 2015.

In Sept. 2015 Kafando and prime minister Isaac Zida were arrested by members of the presidential guard loyal to ex-president Blaise Compaoré. However, a deal between the presidential guard and the regular army was agreed a week later and Kafando and Zida returned to power.

Kafando's term as interim president ended in Dec. 2015 following the election of Roch Marc Christian Kaboré to the post.

Kalam, Abdul (India)

Introduction

On 25 July 2002 Abdul Kalam succeeded K. R. Narayanan to become India's president. Credited with founding and developing the country's nuclear missile programme, Kalam promoted a plan for India's economic development by 2020. A Muslim brought up in impoverished circumstances, his desire for social unity drew criticism from Muslim leaders. His non-political background and concern for the people's social and economic welfare on the other hand made him a popular and respected public figure. Kalam chose not to contest presidential elections held in July 2007.

Early Life

Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam was born on 15 Oct. 1931 in the Rameswaram district of Tamil Nadu. He was educated at a missionary institute in Ramanathapuram and at St Joseph College in Tiruchirappalli before going on to study aeronautical engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology.

Kalam's scientific career was involved principally with defence. He joined the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in 1958 and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in 1963, when he was also invited to spend 4 months in the USA working for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Ten years after rejoining DRDO in 1982 Kalam became scientific adviser to the defence minister and secretary until 1999. From 1999 to 2001 he acted as principal scientific adviser to the government with the rank of cabinet minister.

In 1998, under Kalam's scientific direction, India detonated its first nuclear bomb. While this increased tension with neighbouring Pakistan and earned international condemnation and sanctions, many Indians have felt that this marked out India as an emerging world power.

Nominated by both Prime Minister Vajpayee's National Democratic Alliance and its primary opposition party, the Indian National Congress, Kalam was elected president on 18 July 2002. He defeated his chief rival, Lakshmi Sahgal, by a margin of over 800,000 votes.

Career Peak

While his powers of office were largely nominal and ceremonial, India's 'Missile Man' took advantage of his high profile to advocate the development and the promotion of science and technology. He upheld his pre-presidential vision of India as an economically developed country by 2020, largely through the exploitation of natural resources and education.

A practising Muslim, Kalam was said to be equally familiar with the Koran and the Bhagvad Gita. However, his endorsement of tolerance and pluralism met with disapproval by Muslim leaders, which led to accusations of affiliation with the Hindu militant group, Sangh Parivar. Although at first seen as an extension of India's military, Kalam's secular and humanitarian approach attracted wider support.

After losing the support of a number of political parties who had previously backed him, however, Kalam decided not to stand for a second term at presidential elections in July 2007. He was replaced by Pratibha Patil, India's first female president.

Later Life

In July 2015 Kalam suffered a heart attack while delivering a lecture at a university in Shillong and died aged 83.

Kallas, Siim (Estonia)

Introduction

Siim Kallas of the Reform Party was elected prime minister of Estonia in Jan. 2002 following the resignation of coalition partner Mart Laar. As head of the central bank in the post-communist period, he reintroduced the national currency. A proponent of a free market economy, he pushed for Estonia's membership of the EU and NATO. In March 2003 he led his party to third place in parliamentary elections.

Early Life

Kallas was born on 2 Oct. 1948 in Tallinn. In 1972 he gained an economics degree from Tartu University. After postgraduate studies, he joined the Estonian SSR's finance ministry in 1975, becoming director of the Estonian Savings Bank 4 years later, a post he held until 1986. A brief period as deputy editor of the state-owned Estonian language newspaper, *Rahva Hää* (Peoples' Voice), was followed by chairmanship of the Trade Unions Association (1989–91). Between 1991–95 at the head of Estonia's National Bank he implemented a tight fiscal policy, lowering inflation and reintroducing the national currency, the kroon.

In 1994 he established the centre right Reform Party to contest the March 1995 parliamentary elections, winning 16.2% of the vote. Six months later the party joined a coalition government under Prime Minister Tiit Vähi. Kallas

became deputy premier and foreign minister, positions he held until the party left the coalition at the end of 1996. In 1999 he was made finance minister in Prime Minister Mart Laar's coalition government, comprising Laar's Pro Patria Party, the Reform Party and Mõõdukad.

Career Peak

At the beginning of 2002, disputes within the coalition forced Laar to step down. Kallas was chosen as Laar's successor and was appointed in Jan. 2002. Forming a coalition with the Centre Party, he pledged to continue to work towards EU and NATO membership. In 2002, Estonia was invited to join both organizations with effect from 2004.

In March 2003 the Reform Party came third in parliamentary elections with 19 seats, behind the Centre Party (28 seats) and Res Publica (27). Juhan Parts, the leader of the Res Publica party, was invited by the president to form a coalition government with the Reform Party and the People's Union.

Later Life

After leaving office, Kallas held a number of positions at the European Commission, serving as Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs in 2004, and then as Commissioner for Administrative Affairs, Audit and Anti-Fraud from 2004–10. In Feb. 2010 Kallas was appointed to head the Commission for Transport. He also served as Vice-President of the European Commission from 2004–14 under President José Manuel Barroso.

Kalvītis, Aigars (Latvia)

Introduction

Aigars Kalvītis was prime minister from Dec. 2004–Dec. 2007. Prior to taking office, his ministerial responsibilities included 2 years as minister of economics and one as minister of agriculture. His centre-right coalition administration became Latvia's first government since independence to be returned to power in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2006. On 20 Dec. 2007 a new coalition government was approved after Kalvītis resigned amid widespread opposition.

Early Life

Born in Riga in 1966, Kalvītis is a former milkman and tractor driver. He first graduated in 1992 from the Latvian University of Agriculture with a degree in agricultural economics. This was supplemented by a master's degree in the same subject gained in 1995. In addition he was awarded a master's degree in food industry business administration from University College Cork in Ireland in 1993 and completed in-service training with the Holstein Association at the University of Wisconsin, USA. From 1992–98 he was the manager of a variety of agricultural businesses, and began his career in politics in 1997 as one of the founders of the People's Party. He was first elected to parliament in 1998. He served as the minister of agriculture from 1999–2000 and as minister of economics from 2000–02. Kalvītis was re-elected to parliament and became the leader of the parliamentary faction of the People's Party in 2002.

Career Peak

Kalvītis became prime minister on 2 Dec. 2004, leading a government consisting of his own People's Party, the New Era party, the Union of Greens and Farmers and Latvia's First Party (although the New Era party later withdrew in April 2006 in protest at alleged high-level corruption within the coalition). As prime minister, Kalvītis identified health issues and inflation as government priorities. In 2005 parliament ratified the proposed new EU constitution. Following the Oct. 2006 elections, in which the People's Party led the poll with 23 seats, Kalvītis re-established the ruling coalition with the Union of Greens and Farmers and Latvia's First Party and also included the Fatherland and Freedom Alliance/LNNK to bolster the government's

majority in the legislature. He pledged to maintain policies designed to boost the free market. On 7 Nov. 2007 Kalvītis announced that he would step down on 5 Dec. 2007, after encountering widespread opposition, including two large street protests, following his dismissal of the head of the anti-corruption bureau. Latvian legislators approved a new coalition government headed by the new prime minister Ivars Godmanis.

Kan, Naoto (Japan)

Introduction

Naoto Kan became prime minister in June 2010 when he was voted leader of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). This followed the resignation of the incumbent prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama. A populist figure who had spent much of his political career in opposition, Kan championed economic reforms, promising to cut bureaucracy and redirect investment to health and welfare. He had to govern without a majority in the upper house from July 2010. Following the devastating tsunami and subsequent nuclear accidents in March 2011, Kan's popularity suffered and he resigned in Aug. 2011.

Early Life

Born on 10 Oct. 1946 in Ube City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Naoto Kan studied at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. After graduating in 1970, he worked in a patents office from 1971–74 and became active in politics, working for women's rights campaigner and MP Fusae Ichikawa and campaigning on environmental issues. He stood unsuccessfully for election to the Diet three times before being elected in 1980 as a representative of the small, centre-left Social Democratic Federation.

From Jan.–Nov. 1996 he was minister for health and welfare in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)-led coalition government of Ryutaro Hashimoto, winning praise for admitting the government's responsibility for distributing HIV-infected blood in the 1980s. In 1998 he joined Yukio Hatoyama in founding the DPJ, an amalgamation of four older parties, and was elected its president. As a vigorous critic of bureaucratic unaccountability, he identified himself as a grassroots politician from outside the ruling establishment.

In May 2004 he was forced to resign after accusations that he had failed to pay his full state pension contributions but he received widespread public support by making pilgrimages to Buddhist shrines and was subsequently exonerated. Following the DPJ's election victory in Sept. 2009, which overturned decades of LDP rule, he was appointed deputy prime minister under Hatoyama and given responsibility for science and technology, fiscal policy and national strategy. The last post included a brief to reassign power from bureaucrats to elected officials, a key DPJ policy.

From Jan.–June 2010 he served as finance minister, overseeing spending cuts and tax increases while warning against the unsustainability of the public deficit. In June 2010, following criticism over his failure to remove the US military base from Okinawa, Hatoyama resigned and his cabinet followed suit. Kan was elected leader of the DPJ and became premier on 8 June 2010.

Career Peak

Kan took office promising to cut the deficit and introduce stimulus measures to rebuild the economy but his proposal to increase sales tax from 5% to 10% failed in the face of strong resistance. At elections in July 2010, the DPJ lost its majority in the upper house of the Diet and in Sept. 2010 he survived a leadership challenge from former DPJ secretary general, Ichiro Ozawa. On 1 March 2011 the lower house passed Kan's 92.4trn. yen budget but he failed to obtain authorization from the upper house for government bonds to help fund it. Following the tsunami and nuclear accidents later in the month, Kan's approval ratings plummeted. In June Kan narrowly survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence. Facing mounting criticism and calls to step down, Kan agreed to resign but not until two pieces of legislation, the deficit financing bond bill and the new energy promotion bill, were passed. With the bills approved 2 months later, Kan resigned in Aug. 2011.

Karamanlis, Konstantinos (Greece)

Introduction

Konstantinos Karamanlis served as prime minister of Greece from Oct. 1955–Nov. 1963 and from July 1974–May 1980. He was the country's president from 1980–85 and again from 1990–95. He greatly assisted the restoration of democracy to Greece in 1974 after 7 years of military dictatorship. He was also a driving force behind Greece's assimilation into the EEC.

Early Life

Karamanlis was born on 23 Feb. 1907 in Proti, a village in the prefecture of Sérrai, northern Greece. He was the eldest son of a schoolmaster, and was educated with the assistance of local benefactors. He studied law at Athens University and received his degree in 1932. He went on to practise law in the capital, before entering the political arena in 1935 as a deputy for the Populist Party in the constituency of Sérrai. During the dictatorship of Metaxas and the Nazi occupation of Greece he withdrew from politics, returning in 1946 when he was appointed labour minister. He held numerous cabinet posts, but firmly established his administrative credentials as minister of social welfare. In this role he was to organize the repatriation of over half a million refugees who had fled their villages during the civil war. As minister of defence he again aided the rural poor by securing military help to rebuild many communities.

Career Peak

Karamanlis abandoned the ailing Populist Party in 1951 and joined the new right-wing Greek Rally, led by Field Marshal Alexander Papagos. He became minister of public works in 1952. When Papagos died in Oct. 1955, King Paul chose Karamanlis to be the new prime minister. This royal appointment caused his opponents to dismiss him as an illegitimate leader. Within 4 months of succeeding to power, he founded the National Radical Union (ERE) party, which won three successive elections in 1956, 1958 and 1961.

Under Karamanlis' first 8 year tenure Greece's economy and industrial infrastructure were strengthened to achieve a resilience and stability which had been hard to come by in the aftermath of the civil war. However, the left-wing and liberal alliance in the Greek parliament claimed that the 1961 election was rigged, and in the face of personal criticism after the assassination of the left-wing deputy Grigoris Lambrakis by right-wing hooligans in May 1963, Karamanlis resigned. In the elections that were held in Nov. that year, Giorgios Papandreou's Centre Union won a marginal victory, and the shocked Karamanlis handed the leadership of the ERE to his deputy, Panayotis Kanellopoulos. He went into voluntary exile in Paris for 11 years, during which time Greece was subject to military dictatorship.

Karamanlis returned to Greece in 1974 after Papadopoulos' junta had been deposed. He was invited to restore peace and order to the country in the wake of the military's disastrous attempt to annex Cyprus. He was sworn in as prime minister on 23 July, and quickly formed a government of national unity which managed to prevent war with Turkey, and brought the armed forces under government control. He established the New Democracy party, which was restored to power with a convincing majority in the elections of Nov. 1974. After the election he gave the people the chance to vote on whether they wanted Greece to be a republic or retain its monarchy. The outcome was two-to-one in favour of abandoning the monarchy. Karamanlis also legalized the Communist Party and was responsible for restoring Greek nationality to thousands of political refugees who had fled the country during the rule of the military junta. His most significant achievement was securing Greek membership of the EEC in May 1979.

In May 1980 he relinquished the leadership of the New Democracy party, and was elected as President of the Republic by a three-fifths majority. He resigned from this post in 1985 and went into retirement after the prime minister, Andreas Papandreou withdrew his support. When the 1990 presidential election resulted in stalemate, Karamanlis agreed to stand, and in May that year he was elected president once again. His advanced age and ill-health meant that he was less politically active than he had been during his first term, and eventually he resigned to make way for a middle-ground candidate, Costis Stephanopoulos. He died on 23 April 1998.

Karamanlis, Konstantinos 'Kostas' (Greece)

Introduction

Dr Konstantinos 'Kostas' Karamanlis became prime minister after leading the New Democracy (ND) to victory at the general election of March 2004, ending over 10 years rule by Pasok (the Panhellenic Socialist Movement). Karamanlis promised to streamline Greece's bureaucracy, fight corruption in government and reduce taxation while increasing social welfare spending. He retained the premiership as the ND narrowly won the Sept. 2007 general election, but his party lost to Pasok in the Oct. 2009 elections.

Early Life

Karamanlis was born on 14 Sept. 1956 in Athens. His uncle was Konstantinos Karamanlis, the founder of ND and three times prime minister of Greece. Karamanlis graduated from Athens University Law School, then undertook further study at the private Deree College before taking a doctorate in international relations and political science from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the USA.

From 1974–79 Karamanlis served in ONNED, the youth arm of ND. Following his period of study in the USA, he practised as a lawyer from 1984–89. At the same time he was active within the infrastructures of ND and ONNED and was teaching politics at Deree College. In 1989 he entered parliament as the ND member for Thessaloniki, which he represented until 2004 when he became member for Larissa. Following electoral defeat in 1996, Karamanlis was chosen as party leader the following year. At the general election of 2000 Pasok defeated ND by less than one percentage point.

By early 2004 opinion polls were showing ND with an eight-point advantage over Pasok. The gap narrowed after Pasok's appointment of George Papandreou in Jan. 2004 and observers predicted a close-run election. At the polls on 7 March 2004, however, the ND won a sweeping victory and secured a large majority in parliament.

Career Peak

Although lacking ministerial experience, Karamanlis had been in frontline politics as leader of ND for 8 years when he took office. With preparations for the Athens Olympics in Aug. 2004 behind schedule and international concern over security arrangements, Karamanlis assumed control of the culture ministry, and thus responsibility for Olympics affairs. He announced his intention to reduce taxes, lower unemployment and increase spending on reforming the agricultural and education sectors. He also declared plans to privatize many of the larger state-owned industries and promised to encourage foreign investment. Despite pre-election pledges to reduce the size of government, his first cabinet comprised 47 members. In foreign affairs he was expected to continue to pursue a negotiated agreement with Turkey over the future of Cyprus, despite the rejection in April 2004 by the Greek Cypriot population of the UN-backed plan for the island's future.

Karamanlis' unpopular plans for pension and labour reforms, coupled with high unemployment and rising inflation, prompted industrial unrest in 2005 and 2006. His government also came under pressure from the European Commission to reduce Greece's budget deficit to the level permitted under the eurozone stability pact. Further criticism of the government in 2007 stemmed from a series of financial scandals and its handling of devastating summer forest fires. Karamanlis nevertheless called an early election in Sept. (6 months ahead of schedule), in which the ND secured a slender parliamentary majority.

Allegations of corruption within his government continued to undermine Karamanlis' approval ratings through 2008. In Oct. thousands of public-sector employees went on strike in protest over privatization, pay levels and pension reform. Then, in Dec., the shooting of a teenage boy by police in Athens sparked days of anti-government rioting and a general strike in the worst disturbances in the country since the end of military rule in 1974. There was further unrest in Jan. 2009 as farmers demanding more government

subsidies paralysed much of the country by blocking main roads. Karamanlis was succeeded by Georgios Papandreou on 6 Oct. 2009 after ND lost to Pasok in the general election.

Karami, Rashid (Lebanon)

Introduction

A Sunni Muslim, Karami was the prime minister of Lebanon eight times between 1955 and 1987. He was killed on 1 June 1987 in a helicopter crash that was the result of sabotage.

Early Life

Born on 30 Dec. 1921 near Tripoli, Karami trained as a lawyer before entering politics in 1951 as an elected National Assembly deputy. After serving as minister of national economy, he became prime minister for the first time in Sept. 1955. However, his opposition to Maronite president Camille Chamoun led to his resignation in March 1956. Two years later he was reappointed as prime minister and served five terms under Presidents Chehab and Hérou by 1970 (from Sept. 1958–May 1960, Oct. 1961–Feb. 1964, July 1965–April 1966, Dec. 1966–Feb. 1968 and Jan. 1969–Sept. 1970).

Career Peak

Karami's seventh term as prime minister from July 1975–Dec. 1976, heading a government of national salvation, spanned the turbulent period of the civil war. He was reappointed prime minister under President Amin Gemayel for the last time in April 1984. However, his government wielded little authority over the divided country and made no headway in resolving constitutional or security issues by the time of his death in office in June 1987.

Karimov, Islam Abduganiyevich (Uzbekistan)

Introduction

Islam Karimov, a former Soviet official, was president from when Uzbekistan declared independence in 1990 through to Sept. 2016. His regime was characterized by the suppression of domestic political and religious opposition, and his electoral victories were questioned for their irregularities. Karimov sought to build ties with the West, and won US favour for co-operation in the war against terrorism in the aftermath of the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks. However, reports of torture and other human rights violations, culminating in an alleged massacre of Uzbek civilians in Andizhan in May 2005, provoked international criticism of his regime. In Dec. 2007 he retained the presidency in an election widely condemned as undemocratic and constitutionally illegal, and was returned again for a further term in March 2015. He died in Sept. 2016.

Early Life

Karimov was born on 30 Jan. 1938 in Samarkand. He qualified as a mechanical engineer at the Central Asian Polytechnical Institute and graduated in economics from the Tashkent Institute of National Economy. He then worked in Tashkent at farm machinery and aircraft plants. In 1966 he moved to the state planning committee of Uzbekistan, attaining the rank of vice-chairman.

In 1983 Karimov was appointed finance minister for Uzbekistan and 3 years later became deputy head of government, as well as chairman of the state planning committee. In 1989 he was named head of the Uzbek Communist Party. The following year Uzbekistan claimed sovereignty from the USSR

and Karimov was chosen as president. Following the attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow in 1991, Karimov declared full independence.

Career Peak

Against little organized opposition, Karimov dominated presidential elections and led Uzbekistan into the Commonwealth of Independent States. In 1992 he continued his campaign against domestic opposition, banning two leading parties—Birlík (Unity) and Erk (Freedom)—and imprisoning many members. In 1994 he agreed an economic integration treaty with Russia and signed a co-operation pact with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan which was developed into a single economic community in 1996. In 1995 Karimov won a further 5 years in office by plebiscite.

In 1999 Tashkent was the scene of several car bombings which Karimov blamed on the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). Government and IMU forces clashed several times, the culmination of growing tensions between the two sides since the mid-1990s. In the same year Karimov withdrew Uzbekistan from the CIS agreement on collective security, increasing the nation's isolation among Central Asian nations predominantly loyal to Moscow.

Karimov was re-elected to the presidency in 2000 with over 90% of the vote, although the electoral process was severely criticized by the international community, notably the opposition candidate's assertion that he himself would vote for Karimov. Following the 11 Sept. attacks in New York and Washington, Karimov permitted the USA to use Uzbek air bases for the war in Afghanistan. In the same year he signed up to the Shanghai Co-operation Society (with China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), established to promote regional economic co-operation and fight religious and ethnic militancy.

In Jan. 2002 Karimov secured a constitutional change, accepted by referendum, extending the presidential term from 5 to 7 years. His assistance in the US campaign in Afghanistan was meanwhile rewarded by US\$160 m. worth of aid from Washington. Also in 2002 a long-running border feud with Kazakhstan was settled.

In March 2004 a series of shootings and explosions in the Tashkent and Bukhara regions left dozens of people dead. Further bombings near the US and Israeli embassies and in the Prosecutor General's Office in Tashkent occurred in July. Karimov's government blamed Islamic militants. Then in May 2005 several hundred civilians, protesting against the trial of local businessmen accused of Islamic extremism, were reportedly killed by security forces in Andizhan. Unrest also spread to the towns of Paktabad and Kara Suu before troops reasserted government control. At the end of July, in a punitive response to international criticism of the massacre, Karimov gave the USA 6 months to close its military airbase in Uzbekistan. His relations with the European Union also became increasingly strained in the wake of the events in Andizhan and the subsequent convictions of those accused of instigating unrest. The EU imposed an arms embargo and a visa ban, and these sanctions were extended in 2006. Uzbekistan meanwhile sought to strengthen its military and economic co-operation with Russia.

In Dec. 2007 Karimov's re-election as president failed to meet democratic standards, according to international observers, and was condemned by opposition activists as a sham.

In late 2008 and early 2009 there was some improvement in relations with the West as Karimov allowed the USA and NATO to transport non-lethal supplies through Uzbekistan to their armed forces in Afghanistan and the EU eased sanctions despite continuing concerns about human rights. The EU's decision followed the release of some political prisoners and the abolition of the death penalty.

In mid-2009 two terrorist incidents in Andizhan and Khanabad were attributed to increasing Islamist militancy.

In Sept. 2012 Karimov warned of potential confrontations with neighbouring Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan over their plans for large dam projects that he claimed would give the two countries unfair control of regional water resources.

In March 2013 the then 75-year-old Karimov was rumoured to have suffered a heart attack. This prompted speculation about potential successors, one of whom, his daughter Gulnara Karimova, was placed under house arrest and charged with corruption in 2014.

As in previous parliamentary elections, polling over two rounds in Dec. 2014 and Jan. 2015 returned only those political parties loyal to Karimov. At the presidential election of March 2015 he claimed over 90% of the vote to win a further term in office.

Karimov allegedly suffered a stroke in Aug. 2016, and died on 2 Sept. 2016. With no successor in place, chairman of the senate Nigmatilla Yuldashev took over the presidency on an interim basis.

Karmal, Babrak (Afghanistan)

Introduction

A Marxist, from 1979 until 1986 Babrak Karmal served as the third president of Afghanistan, in the period of the socialist Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).

Early Life

Babrak Karmal (roughly translated as 'little tiger'. was born on 6 Jan. 1929 in the village of Kamari, Afghanistan. His father, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Hussain, was a provincial governor and friend of the royal family, including Gen. Mohammad Daoud Khan, who served as prime minister from 1953–63 and president from 1973–78. Although born into a wealthy family, Karmal lived in hardship following the death of his mother.

Karmal graduated from Nejat High School in 1948. He was originally refused entry to Kabul University because of his leftist views but was accepted by the faculty of law and political science in 1951. His Marxist political activities led to his imprisonment in 1952. After his release in 1956, he worked in the ministry of education as a German and English translator. In 1957 he was conscripted for 2 years' military service, after which he resumed his university studies before entering the ministry of planning.

Karmal was one of the founders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in Jan. 1965. He served as its secretary and held posts in the National Assembly from 1965 until 1973. In 1967 the PDPA split into rival factions: the Khalq ('Masses'), consisting mainly of rural purists who emphasized the class struggle of classic Marxism, and the Parcham ('Banner'), a more middle-class, moderate faction sympathetic to the USSR. As leader of the Parcham, Karmal supported the government of Mohammad Daoud Khan that came to power in a coup in 1973. However, relations between Daoud and the political left soon soured. In 1977 the PDPA's factions reunited and the following year overthrew Daoud's government in a coup that culminated in the president's death.

Karmal was appointed first deputy prime minister in the new DRA. However, the PDPA split once again and the Khalq relieved most of the Parchamis of their government positions, exiling many to ambassadorial posts abroad. Karmal was sent to Prague as ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1978–79. Khalq rule in Afghanistan grew increasingly unpopular, prompting a Soviet invasion in Dec. 1979. The Soviets assassinated the Khalq president, Hafizullah Amim, and installed Karmal as his replacement. Karmal was also party secretary and head of the Revolutionary Council.

Career Peak

Following the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan descended into civil war between the PDPA–Communist-controlled regime and the Mujahideen. Many Afghans were reluctant to accept the legitimacy of a government widely viewed as a puppet administration of Moscow.

During his presidency Karmal proved little more than a figurehead, denied real power and unable to unite the country or win the trust of resistance fighters. After 7 years in office, he lost the support of the Kremlin and in May 1986 Mohammad Najibullah, former head of the secret police, replaced him as secretary-general of the PDPA. Six months later Karmal had little choice but to resign the presidency.

Later Life

Once relieved of all government and party posts, Karmal moved to Moscow purportedly to seek medical treatment. He returned to Afghanistan in 1991 but left once more and died of liver cancer in Moscow on 3 Dec. 1996. He was buried in Hayratan, Afghanistan.

Karzai, Hamid (Afghanistan)

Introduction

Hamid Karzai was sworn in as chairman of the interim government of Afghanistan in Dec. 2001 before taking the position permanently in June 2002. He was appointed by the United Nations in consultation with the Northern Alliance and the *Loya Jirga*, a group of elected tribal delegates. His main aim has been to bring stability to the country but resistance by the Taliban has continued, particularly in the south and east. His other major challenges have been tackling widespread corruption and drug-trafficking. He was controversially re-elected in autumn 2009 but was ineligible to stand again in the April 2014 presidential poll, after which he would remain in office until his successor was sworn in.

Early Life

Karzai was born on 24 Dec. 1957 into the powerful Popolzai tribe. His father, who was chief of the clan, was assassinated in 1999 in what was widely believed to be a Taliban attack.

Karzai first entered politics in the early 1980s during the Soviet occupation and organized the Pashtun Popolzai against Moscow. He spent time in Pakistan before returning to Afghanistan in 1992 and linking up with the leader of the Northern Alliance, Burhanuddin Rabbani. When Rabbani formed the first mujahideen government, Karzai served as the deputy foreign minister before leaving the government because of infighting.

Karzai initially supported the Taliban when it was created in 1994 but in 1995 he rejected a government post, disillusioned by increasing foreign interference. He left the country in 1996 but secretly re-entered in 2001 during the USA's post-11 Sept. air strikes to co-ordinate Pashtun resistance to the Taliban.

Career Peak

Since taking office, Karzai has enjoyed the support of a majority of the main tribal leaders. However, his military weakness has necessitated alliances with regional factions and his rule has remained tenuous outside the capital. Despite the precarious security situation, he won the country's first-ever democratic presidential election on 9 Oct. 2004 with 55.4% of votes cast.

In May–June 2006 Afghanistan experienced the worst insurgent violence and casualties since the US invasion and toppling of the Taliban in 2001. Having taken over the leadership of military operations in the south from July 2006, NATO then assumed responsibility for security across the whole of the country from Oct., taking command in the east from a US-led coalition force. NATO and Afghan forces have since sought to contain the Taliban resurgence, although Karzai has continually expressed his concern over the high and ongoing civilian casualty rate in military operations.

In 2009 US President Barack Obama announced a further substantial US troop deployment to Afghanistan, partly to train and support the Afghan army and police service. This reinforcement heralded the launch in Feb. 2010 in Helmand of the biggest coalition offensive in the country since the defeat of Taliban government in 2001.

Despite continuing violence in 2011, there were tentative moves towards opening channels of communication with the Taliban and in May 2012 NATO endorsed a planned withdrawal of foreign combat troops by the end of 2014, with Afghan forces progressively assuming increased security responsibilities.

Meanwhile, in Jan. 2011 Karzai had made the first official visit to Russia by an Afghan leader since the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989. In Oct. that year he signed a strategic partnership with India which further unsettled Afghanistan's already fragile relationship with Pakistan.

In 2009 Karzai had sought re-election as president in a campaign tainted by alleged widespread fraud. In the first round in Aug. he claimed to be ahead of rival candidate Abdullah Abdullah with 54% of the vote. In the face of domestic and international concern over the evidential scale of vote-rigging, he subsequently conceded that the elections should go to a second round that was scheduled for early Nov. However, Abdullah Abdullah then withdrew his candidacy and Karzai was declared the winner as the only remaining contender. The president subsequently struggled in Jan. and Feb.

2010 to form a new government as a hostile parliament rejected many of his nominees for cabinet posts.

In late Feb. 2010 Karzai provoked further criticism when he assumed exclusive power to appoint all five members of the independent Electoral Complaints Commission (three of whom had previously been UN nominees), which had earlier rejected his claims to a first-round victory in the 2009 presidential elections. Parliamentary elections were then held in Sept. that year, but reports of voting fraud again threatened to undermine the validity of the poll. Official results were not released until Nov. and indicated the disqualification of many candidates and votes cast owing to irregularities. The political influence of Karzai's majority ethnic Pashtun community was significantly reduced in the new parliament, which was inaugurated in Jan. 2011.

Against the background of continuing Taliban military action, the priority for Karzai's government in 2013 was building up the capacity of the security forces ahead of the scheduled NATO withdrawal in 2014. In June the Afghan army formally took over responsibility for all security operations from Western forces. However, agreement on a post-withdrawal mission to train and advise the Afghan army was hampered by Karzai's decision in Dec. not to sign a new security pact with the USA but to instead leave that responsibility to his successor following the April 2014 elections.

Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai—also of Pashtun heritage and a former minister of finance—succeeded Karzai as president on 29 Sept. 2014. A new security pact with the USA allowing troops to remain in the country until 2016 was subsequently signed by Ghani's government.

Kasyanov, Mikhail (Russia)

Introduction

Mikhail Kasyanov was Russia's prime minister from May 2000–Feb. 2004. A technocratic market economist and a skilled negotiator, he was appointed by Vladimir Putin. While many observers had noted Putin's lack of economics experience, Kasyanov has little political experience outside the economics sector. He was regarded as a manager, overseeing economic reform and negotiations with the West, while Putin steered policy-making. He was dismissed before the 2004 presidential elections.

Early Life

Kasyanov was born in 1957 in Sointsevo, now an area of Moscow. He graduated in construction engineering from the Moscow Automotive and Road Engineering Institute and then worked within the state construction ministry. From 1989–90 he worked for the state planning committee's department of external economic ties. The following year he took a post at the economy ministry's department of external economic ties.

In 1993 he moved to the finance ministry, holding the ranks of deputy minister, first deputy minister and, from May 1999, minister. Having gained a reputation for skilful operations within the foreign credit and debts sector, he was appointed deputy prime minister by Putin in Jan. 2000. He was seen as independent of Russia's major financial oligarchies.

Career Peak

One of Kasyanov's most important tasks was the improvement of relations with the International Monetary Fund, which held back lending to Russia following the 1998 rouble crisis, and with major industrialized donor countries. In March 2001 he warned the West not to 'drive Russia into a corner' over debt repayments.

Kasyanov was criticized for lack of progress in restructuring debt repayments, and the Duma granted him only a small fraction of the budget required to fulfil repayment requirements. Despite a generally improving economy, in March 2001 he faced a motion of no confidence in the Duma, proposed by the Communist Party. However, with the Unity Party withdrawing their support from the Communists, he survived comfortably.

In Jan. 2001 Kasyanov authorized the destruction of the Mir space station, which had been in orbit for 10 years longer than its intended lifespan. In March 2001 he suggested that the proposed union with Belarus, signalled by a treaty between the two countries in 1999, had been made a distant prospect by

Belarus' weak economy. In Nov. 2001 he backed an Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' initiative to reduce oil production in an attempt to stabilize prices.

Seen as a survivor from the Yeltsin era and increasingly linked to the oligarch businessmen attacked by Putin, Kasyanov was sacked with the entire government in Feb. 2004—the only way the president could remove him constitutionally ahead of presidential elections. Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Khristenko became acting prime minister.

Katainen, Jyrki (Finland)

Introduction

Jyrki Katainen became prime minister in June 2011, heading a six-party coalition. He resigned as premier and leader of the centre-right National Coalition Party (KOK) in June 2014 in a bid to secure a top international post and the following month became a European Commissioner.

Early Life

Born on 14 Oct. 1971 in Siilinjärvi, Jyrki Katainen studied social sciences at Tampere University. In 1993 he was elected to the Siilinjärvi municipal council as a KOK member and served as the council's second vice-chair from 1997–98. In 1998 he obtained a master's degree in social sciences and spent the 1990s working as a supply teacher and at the National Education Association.

In 1997 he became a member of the regional council of Northern Savo, serving as its first vice-chair from 2001–04. In 1999 he was elected to parliament for the KOK. He was vice-president of the European People's Party (EPP) youth organization from 1998–2000 and in 2005 was elected vice-president of the EPP as a whole. During the same period he rose within the KOK to become its deputy chair in 2001, before successfully challenging Ville Itälä for the leadership in 2004.

He served on the foreign affairs committee from 2004–07 in the government of Matti Vanhanen. Following the KOK's entry into coalition government with the Centre Party in 2007, Katainen was appointed finance minister and deputy prime minister. In the aftermath of the 2008 global economic crisis, he won praise for controlling Finland's deficit and retaining its top-grade international credit rating. He continued to embrace fiscal discipline during recession in 2009. In 2010 he called for stronger IMF surveillance of financial systems. In April 2011 the KOK emerged from general elections as the largest party and, after complex negotiations, Katainen formed a coalition government with the centre-left Social Democratic Party and four smaller parties from across the political spectrum.

Career Peak

Katainen took office on 22 June 2011, pledging to rebuild the economy while limiting government borrowing. In late 2011 he signalled that Finland might require guarantees or stricter conditions before agreeing to further EU bailout measures. His chief challenges were economic uncertainty at home and abroad, which he attempted to confront whilst maintaining unity across his coalition in the face of strong opposition from the nationalist True Finns party. In 2013, Katainen invited representatives of political parties, research institutes and interest groups to the Heureka Forum—a conference exploring the future challenges faced by Finland's economy. However, despite attempts to revitalize the country's industry and finances, in particular by promoting entrepreneurship and start-up businesses, Katainen's government was met with widespread criticism from the public over its austerity programme.

In April 2014 Katainen announced his intention to vacate his chairmanship of the National Coalition Party and subsequently step down as prime minister of Finland in order to seek a European or international position. He was replaced as premier by newly appointed NCP leader Alexander Stubb.

Later Life

In July 2014 Katainen became European Commissioner for economic and monetary affairs and the euro under Commission president José Manuel

Barroso. He was later confirmed as vice-president when Jean-Claude Juncker took over as president from Barroso, with responsibility for jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness.

Kaunda, Kenneth (Zambia)

Introduction

Kenneth Kaunda was Zambia's first president, remaining in office for 27 years. A respected leader of the independence movement, Kaunda lost popular and international support during his presidency for his one-party rule and his failed socialist economics. After losing dramatically in multiparty elections in 1991, Kaunda's reputation improved with his peaceful departure from office and his persecution at the hands of Frederick Chiluba's government. Known as 'Father of the Nation', Kaunda has remained an influential figure in politics and in the anti-AIDS programme.

Early Life

Kenneth David Kaunda was born on 24 April 1924 at Lubwa Mission, near Chinsali in Northern Province, Northern Rhodesia. His parents, born in Nyasaland (Malawi), were teachers at the mission school where Kaunda received his primary education, before going on to the Mualali Secondary School. He returned to Lubwa to teach, as headmaster from 1944–47. He married Betty Banda in 1946, with whom he had two daughters and seven sons (one adopted).

Kaunda became active in African welfare in the late 1940s, leading a farming association and serving as welfare officer at the Chingola Copper Mine. He returned to Lubwa where he founded a branch of the Northern Rhodesia National Congress, becoming its secretary-general in 1953 when it became the African National Congress (ANC). Kaunda gained political experience as an assistant to a member of the Legislative Council, Sir Stewart Gore-Browne. In Jan. 1954 Kaunda was arrested for possession of seditious material and was imprisoned for 2 months.

By the late 1950s he had built up a following within the ANC, a section of which, in 1958, supported his breakaway party, the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC). The ZANC was founded with Simon Kapwepwe, a childhood friend and radical anti-colonialist, to whom the country's independent name—Zambia—was attributed. The ZANC vociferously opposed Northern Rhodesia's inclusion in the Central African Federation with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, instituted in 1953. Kaunda was imprisoned for promoting civil disobedience in 1959. Following his release in 1960 he became president of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), created in 1959 by Mainza Chona.

Kaunda and Kapwepwe attended negotiations held in London in Dec. 1960 on the future of Northern Rhodesia. The British government rejected the recommendations of the Moncton Commission, which had proposed a constitution giving Africans a legislative majority. Instead, a constitution was promulgated that aimed to guarantee protection for whites while appeasing African demands for representation. The ensuing elections gave no party a majority, though an African government was formed through a coalition of the UNIP and Harry Nkumbula's ANC. The federation with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland ended on 31 Dec. 1963, with independence promised by the colonial government.

An amended constitution was obtained by Kaunda, who convinced the British that an African government would not disregard the rights of white settlers. Elections with universal suffrage were achieved in 1964, giving Kaunda and his party decisive victories. He became president of the independent Zambia on 24 Oct. 1964.

Career Peak

Independent Zambia was faced with formidable challenges. The economy's dependence on copper mining exposed the lack of African industrial expertise. Kaunda focused investment on mining which provided income for welfare and communications schemes but left the economy vulnerable to world copper prices. The neglect of agricultural reform encouraged urban migration and necessitated food subsidies in the 1970s.

Kaunda's support for groups that opposed white supremacy in neighbouring states damaged the Zambian economy. Lusaka became the foreign headquarters for South Africa's ANC and was subject to raids by South African special forces. Zambia also hosted rebel forces fighting the Portuguese—the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)—and Ian Smith's government in Rhodesia—the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). The closure of the border with Rhodesia in 1973 precipitated an energy and trade crisis, partly eased by Chinese investment in the rail link to Dar es Salaam.

Political divisions within the UNIP were exacerbated by the 'tribalism' of the Zambian polity and the absence of a common African language. Kaunda attempted to limit factionalism by responding to tribal pressures with frequent government changes. Relations with Kapwepwe, his foreign minister, were strained after 1967 when he replaced Kaunda's vice-president, Rueben Kamanga. As vice-president, Kapwepwe clashed with Kaunda on economic policy and raised tribal tensions. In 1971 Kapwepwe admitted to leading a rival party, the United Progressive Party (UPP), and resigned from the government.

The prohibition of the UPP in 1972 and the arrest of Kapwepwe and his followers signalled a crisis in Zambian politics. Kaunda decided to push through the abolition of all opposition parties in a bid to end tribal strife. He justified the legality of the UNIP as sole party on the grounds of its nationwide support. The 'second Republic' ('one-party participatory democracy'. was instituted on 1 Jan. 1973.

Kaunda cemented the hegemony of his party in the face of leadership challenges from Kapwepwe and Harry Nkumbula, the ex-ANC chief. Their last-minute disqualification demonstrated Kaunda's increasingly dictatorial style of leadership. Both withdrew from politics, denting Kaunda's reputation in the party and the state.

The oil crisis of 1973 and the drop in copper prices in 1975 spelled disaster for the Zambian economy. Heavy borrowing sustained ambitious spending schemes but the mismanagement of foreign aid discouraged foreign investment and, in 1987, lost the support of the International Monetary Fund.

Despite endorsements of his presidency in the one-candidate elections of 1983 and 1988, Kaunda faced increasing opposition in his final decade in power, beginning in Oct. 1980 with an attempted coup involving UNIP members. Popular grievances focused on government and administrative corruption and the one-party constitution. Kaunda's popularity waned after he banned strikes in public service sectors in 1985. Demonstrations continued in the late 80s, culminating in the riots in Lusaka in June 1990 caused by crippling price inflation, especially for maize, a staple food.

Political opposition crystallized in 1990 under the leadership of Frederick Chiluba, a trade unionist. Chiluba formed the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), bringing together a broad spectrum of politicians with the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZTCU). After another attempted coup in July 1990, UNIP's national council bowed to public pressure and scheduled multiparty elections for Oct. 1991. Kaunda legalized opposition parties and agreed to foreign observers at the elections. Chiluba won 76% of the votes and took the MMD into government.

Later Life

Despite the peaceful transfer of power, Kaunda campaigned against the new president. After several years of popular dissatisfaction with Chiluba's government, Kaunda came out of semi-retirement to lead the UNIP as its president in June 1995. Attacking Chiluba's government on grounds of corruption and ethnic imbalance—his cabinets leant heavily on the Bemba ethnic group—he was arrested twice in 1995. The government outmanoeuvred Kaunda's attempt to challenge Chiluba in the 1996 presidential elections with a constitutional amendment prohibiting candidates whose parents were born abroad.

Following an attempted coup in Oct. 1997 and rumours of a foreign invasion to reinstate Kaunda as president, Kaunda was detained at Kamwala Prison as a security risk. Kaunda responded by going on hunger-strike. Popular disgust at his treatment and appeals from Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere and the British government forced Chiluba to release him. After 5 months of house arrest, Kaunda announced his retirement from politics.

Kaunda's security became a national issue after an assassination attempt in April 1999 and the murder of his son, Wezi Kaunda in Nov. 1999. Kaunda accused the government of persecuting him and his family (his daughter, Catherine, fled to South Africa in 1997) and claimed that Wezi's murder was politically motivated. Popular support for Kaunda increased in the face of attempts to end his pension and strip him of his Zambian citizenship in 2000.

Kaunda attacked Chiluba's attempts to amend the 1991 constitution, which barred the president from seeking a third term in office, and supported his son, Tilyenji Kaunda, in the 2001 presidential elections. Kaunda continued his bitter public feud with Chiluba during the presidency of Levy Mwanawasa, whose anti-corruption campaign stripped Chiluba of his immunity from prosecution. Kaunda welcomed Chiluba's arrest in Feb. 2003 on corruption and theft charges.

Keating, Paul (Australia)

Introduction

Paul Keating was Prime Minister of Australia and leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) between 1991 and 1996. He made his name as a combative and effective treasurer in the Bob Hawke administration, before ousting Hawke from the premiership. A republican, Keating embraced the Asia-Pacific region and pursued a reconciliation programme with the Aboriginal population.

Early Life

Keating was born in Sydney on 18 Jan. 1944. He left school at 15, joined the ALP and took a job with Sydney City Council before joining the New South Wales Electricity Commission. In 1968 he joined the Federated Municipal and Shire Council Employees' Union and a year later he entered the House of Representatives as the member for Blaxland, New South Wales. He was appointed minister for Northern Australia in 1975 for the last month of Gough Whitlam's government. In the same year he married Anna Johanna Maria Van Iersel (Annita), with whom he had four children. Between 1976–83 he served as opposition spokesman for agriculture, then for minerals and energy, before taking the post of shadow chancellor. Keating became chancellor following Hawke's victory at the election of 1983 and was instrumental in Australia's economic upturn. Under his guidance, the financial sector was deregulated, tax overhauled, the dollar floated and a wage and price agreement reached with the trade unions. In 1988 he struck a deal with Hawke by which Keating would become prime minister in 1990. However, when the time came, Hawke refused to resign. Keating broke away to launch two leadership bids in 1991. He lost the first in June but won the second in Dec. by 56 votes to 51. The once admired team, in which Hawke's 'man of the people' image was complemented by the sometimes aggressive style of Keating, was irredeemably split. Hawke became one of Keating's fiercest critics.

Career Peak

Australia's economy was deep in recession by the early 1990s. As prime minister, Keating launched his One Nation programme in Feb. 1992, setting out major tax cuts. He also introduced a superannuation scheme, deregulated the civil aviation and telecommunications sectors and established a National Electricity Grid Corporation. Although deemed an 'unwinnable' election, Keating led the ALP to victory with an increased majority in March 1993, against a John Hewson-led coalition.

The issue of Aboriginal land rights played a major role during his administration, following the High Court's Mabo decision of June 1992. The decision overturned a previous ruling that the Aboriginal title to land had not survived British settlement of the continent. Keating officially acknowledged the injustice done to the Aboriginal population and 'Native Title' legislation was passed in Dec. 1993. Keating's foreign policy hinged on a move away from Europe and America to the emerging Asian economies. He reached agreement on a security pact with Indonesia's President Suharto in Dec. 1995 and increased Australia's participation within the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) group. Keating was also renowned as a republican and it was widely reported in the media when he laid a guiding hand upon the Queen's personage at an official function. He wanted to make Australia a republic by 2000, with the head of state chosen by parliament. However, before he could introduce the relevant legislation he was defeated at the election of 2 March 1996, losing to a coalition led by John Howard.

Later Life

Keating resigned from Parliament on 23 April 1996 and has subsequently taken various visiting professorships and worked as a business consultant. He and Annita separated in 1998. He retains a presence on the political scene and has been a prominent critic of Liberal Prime Minister John Howard. Keating claimed that Howard's intervention in Timor-Leste in 1999 was Australia's 'worst foreign policy disaster since the Vietnam War'.

Kekkonen, Urho (Finland)

Introduction

Urho Kekkonen served as Finland's prime minister on two occasions (1950–53, 1954–56) and as the president from 1956–81. His Soviet-oriented foreign policy aimed to win back Finnish territories occupied by the USSR, and neutralize the threat of further Soviet invasion. He was noted for his defence of the country's impoverished agricultural community. Kekkonen was acclaimed as one of the foremost statesmen of his age.

Early Life

Kekkonen was born on 3 Sept. 1900 in Kajana. He was the son of a forestry foreman, and was educated at the University of Helsinki, where he was awarded bachelor's and doctoral degrees in law. He began his career as a lawyer but from the 1920s onward he became increasingly interested in the agrarian movement. From 1927–32 he worked for a local government federation before transferring to the Ministry of Agriculture. He became a member of Parliament in 1936, representing the Agrarian Union. Initially he opposed Soviet incursions into Finnish territory, and favoured an alliance with Nazi Germany to prevent further occupation. However by 1943 it was clear that Germany would lose the war on the Eastern front and Kekkonen realized that if Finland wanted to retain its independence it had to conduct a foreign policy that leaned towards the Soviet Union without falling under its control.

Career Peak

In 1948 Kekkonen helped to negotiate the Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance which guaranteed Finnish neutrality while upholding the principles of free democracy. After several ministerial and legislative roles (including Minister of Justice and Minister of the Interior) Kekkonen became prime minister in 1950 under the presidency of J.K. Paasikivi. In 1956 he succeeded Paasikivi and continued a cautious and tactful foreign policy which became known as the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line. Kekkonen encouraged 'Finlandisation', a guarded assertion of national identity, and a means of diplomatic survival in a difficult situation. Kekkonen was re-elected to the presidency on three successive occasions from 1962–78. In 1974 a majority of delegates from all parties voted to postpone the planned presidential elections, bypass the electorate and extend Kekkonen's tenure by 4 years. His position as president allowed him absolute control of foreign policy which he used to negotiate free trade agreements with EFTA and, later, the EC. This, combined with a thriving trade with the USSR, helped boost the Finnish economy.

Later Life

Kekkonen's later years were marred by illness which compelled him to resign from office in 1981. He died on 31 Aug. 1986.

Kemakeza, Allan (Solomon Islands)

Introduction

Sir Allan Kemakeza was elected prime minister of the Solomon Islands by parliament in Dec. 2001. He was confronted with a weak economy and a general breakdown in infrastructure and law and order, resulting from years of

civil war, ethnic fighting and corruption. Earlier in 2001 Kemakeza had been forced to give up the vice-premiership after alleged financial irregularities, and his appointment as prime minister concerned many international aid donors. Following elections in April 2006, Kemakeza announced his resignation as prime minister and head of the People's Alliance Party.

Early Life

Kemakeza was born in 1951 and worked as a policeman before entering political life. He rose to be vice-premier in the government of Mannasseh Sogavare but was forced to resign when he was accused of diverting compensation for victims of the civil war (which ended in 2000) to his own family, friends and supporters. He denied any wrongdoing and stood for the premiership in Dec. 2001. He won 29 of the 50 available parliamentary votes and was sworn in on 17 Dec.

Career Peak

Although the war between the Isatabu Freedom Movement and the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) was officially brought to an end in 2000 after 2 years during which Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu was overthrown, fighting between the two groups continued to the detriment of national political and economic stability. Major export industries, including the timber trade, were badly hit and corruption in public life had depleted national reserves as well as dissuaded the international community from investing in national restructuring.

Kemakeza's involvement in the war compensation scandal in early 2001 saw his appointment receive a muted response from abroad. Australia and New Zealand, two potentially vital donor countries, set out requirements for further aid including the reformation of the police force, which contained many former militia accused of profiteering from their new positions.

In Jan. 2002 the government faced a strike by civil servants complaining about non-payment of wages. In the same month Australia promised to send government advisors to Honiara, the national capital, to assist in government reform. Nonetheless, law and order remained a major problem and the police force was accused of extorting money from the government. In Dec. 2002 Kemakeza defeated a confidence motion instigated by the opposition.

The Solomon Islands' fragile economy received a new setback in Dec. 2002 when Cyclone Zoe devastated two islands in the chain. Ethnic militancy escalated throughout 2003 and in June Kemakeza asked Australia and New Zealand for military assistance to restore order. In July 2003 a 2,225-strong Australian-led peacekeeping force landed, including troops from the Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. The Malaita Eagle Force, among the country's most important rebel groups, announced it would surrender its arms to international peacekeeping forces on 15 Aug. 2003. The MEF had been in possession of the capital, Honiara, until the peacekeeping force arrived.

In Nov. 2003 a national economic recovery plan and budget was agreed by parliament and presented to donors. The World Bank and Asian Development Bank agreed to re-engage, and the European Union also announced the release of aid funds frozen since 2000.

In April 2006 parliamentary elections were held and the People's Alliance Party were defeated. Kemakeza tendered his resignation and parliament elected former deputy prime minister Snyder Rini to replace him on 18 April 2006.

Later Life

Kemakeza was appointed Minister of Forestry in Dec. 2007.

Kennedy, Charles (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Charles Kennedy succeeded Paddy Ashdown as leader of the Liberal Democrats (Lib Dems) in 1999. As head of what was then Britain's third party, after Labour and the Conservatives, Kennedy pursued broad co-operation with Blair's Labour government. He resigned in Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Charles Kennedy was born on 25 Nov. 1959 in Inverness, Scotland. Having joined the Labour Party when he was 15, he studied at Glasgow University, winning an MA in politics and philosophy and becoming president of the Union. In 1982 he was employed by BBC Highland before winning a Fulbright Scholarship at Indiana University in the USA, studying politics and communications.

Disillusioned by Labour's self-destructive dogmatism, Kennedy became an early member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In early 1983 he was selected as candidate for the SDP in the constituency of Ross, Cromarty and Skye. At the general election 6 weeks later he defeated a former Conservative minister and, at 23 years of age, became the youngest member of the House of Commons.

Kennedy variously served as a party spokesman on the welfare state, agriculture and rural affairs, Scotland, health and Europe. He was also an integral member of the all-party select committee that recommended televising parliament. In 1987 Kennedy was the first SDP member of parliament to support the proposed merger with the Liberal party. In 1990 he was appointed president of the Liberal Democrats, a post he held until 1994.

Kennedy's relationship with Ashdown faltered following Labour's landslide election victory in 1997 when Kennedy expressed reservations about making deals with the new government in return for promises of cabinet representation. However, when Ashdown retired from Westminster politics in 1999, Kennedy, a skilled media operator, defeated rival candidate Simon Hughes for the leadership.

Career Peak

Kennedy maintained close relations with Blair's government, while continuing to be critical of many aspects of government policy. His attitude to the Conservatives was less favourable and before the 2001 general election he observed that 'William Hague's Conservatives in government would be... an unmitigated disaster'.

Kennedy favoured co-operation with the government as the best chance of improving Britain's European relations and securing entry to the single currency, a major Lib Dem goal. This approach also ensured a Lib Dem ministerial presence in the Scottish parliament, where they were at the time the second party.

In Oct. 1999 Kennedy was appointed to the Privy Council. At the general election of June 2001 the Lib Dems increased their parliamentary representation from 47 to 52 seats. In the aftermath of the election he considered proposals to end the co-operation pact with the Labour government. The pact, agreed by Ashdown and Blair in 1997, established a joint consultative committee (JCC) to discuss Scottish and Welsh devolution and electoral reform. With the issue of devolution resolved, Lib Dem resentment grew at Blair's failure to hold a referendum on electoral reform. Kennedy's belief that the pact held his party back from 'effective opposition' led to a joint statement from the two leaders in Sept. 2001 formally disbanding the JCC.

In the general election of May 2005 the Lib Dems achieved a total of 62 seats (their highest number since 1923) and 22% of the overall vote. Despite this Kennedy attracted criticism within his party from those who felt that he had failed to take advantage of a weakened Conservative Party to push the Lib Dems forward. Donnachadh McCarthy, the former deputy chairman of the Federal Liberal Democrat Party, resigned claiming that the party was moving to the right in order to chase Conservative votes.

Kennedy came under fire again in Dec. 2005 when he handed out the ballot papers for the party leadership a week before the election was due to take place, leaving little preparation time for any potential challengers.

On 5 Jan. 2006 Kennedy announced that he had been receiving treatment for alcoholism. He acknowledged the damage that this had done to his relationship with his party and called a leadership contest to resolve the concerns surrounding his ability to continue as leader. Within days of his statement he received a letter signed by 25 Lib Dem frontbench speakers, calling for his resignation by 9 Jan. 2006. On 7 Jan. 2006 Charles Kennedy resigned as the leader of the Liberal Democrats.

Later Life

As well as remaining an active force within the party, in Feb. 2008 he was elected to serve a 3-year term as rector of the University of Glasgow. He kept his seat in the House of Commons as MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber in the 2010 general election, winning over 50% of the vote, but lost it to the Scottish National Party in May 2015.

Kennedy died aged 55 at his home in Fort William, Scotland on 1 June 2015.

Kennedy, John F. (United States of America)

Introduction

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the 35th President of the United States, taking office in Jan. 1961. His term was ended by his assassination on 22 Nov. 1963. The first Roman Catholic to become President, Kennedy had to deal with a volatile international situation but also managed to put in place several landmark domestic programmes that would come to full fruition after his death.

Early Life

Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts on 29 May 1917 to Joseph Patrick and Rose Kennedy (née Fitzgerald). The second of 9 children, Kennedy attended several private schools before spending the summer of 1935 in England at the London School of Economics. He then enrolled at Princeton University but had to leave after an attack of jaundice. In the autumn of 1936 he enrolled at Harvard University where he graduated in 1940. He spent several months studying at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business in California and was accepted into the Navy as a lieutenant in 1943 after being rejected by the Army because of a back problem.

After serving in World War II with distinction Kennedy was awarded the Purple Heart and the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. But recurring problems with his back and a bout of malaria, led to him being discharged from service in 1945. Meanwhile, his elder brother, Joseph, was killed in action. Kennedy returned to Boston in 1946 to enter politics, winning a democratic primary in June 1946. He was elected to the House of Representatives for the 11th Massachusetts Congressional District. Re-elected in 1948 and 1950, Kennedy entered the US Senate in Nov. 1952 after defeating Republican incumbent Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr.

After marrying Jacqueline Bouvier in Sept. 1953, he became seriously ill and had to undergo two spinal operations in 1954 and 1955. He returned to the senate in 1955 and was re-elected by a wide margin in 1958. In Jan. 1960 Kennedy announced that he would seek the Democratic Party's presidential nomination and after a hard fought campaign he defeated Hubert H. Humphrey Jr. in the primaries before seeing off the challenges of Lyndon B. Johnson and Adlai E. Stevenson to win the Democratic Party's nomination. In the presidential election he defeated his republican rival Richard M. Nixon by a little over 119,000 votes out of almost 69,000,000 cast and by 303 electoral college votes to 219.

Career Peak

Sworn in on 20 Jan. 1961 Kennedy made a famous inauguration speech urging the American people to struggle 'against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war'. Young and charming, Kennedy and his family, including two children, Caroline and John Jr., born in 1957 and 1960, captured the public imagination. His early days in office were characterized by radical proposals on a whole gamut of issues from the reform of taxation to policies to spur economic growth. By 1962 \$1.2 bn. had been pledged for social and housing programmes.

Domestic policies were overshadowed by a series of international crises. In April 1961 anti-Castro Cubans, trained and supported by the CIA, attempted and failed to invade the Bay of Pigs in Cuba. Kennedy took responsibility for the botched operation but was soon plunged into a battle of will with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. In Aug. 1961 the building of the Berlin Wall symbolized a hardening of the Cold War. Kennedy increased the American military presence in South Vietnam from 700 at the beginning of his term in office to 15,000 to counter the threat of communist domination.

The deterioration in US-Soviet relations culminated in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 when, for a week, the US armed forces were on combat readiness after it was discovered that Soviet missile bases were being built in Cuba. After the Soviet Union backed down Kennedy was widely praised

for his firmness and diplomatic skills. Thereafter relations between the two superpowers thawed to the point of negotiating the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which the USA, USSR and Great Britain signed in July 1963. This treaty saw the first halt in the expansion of nuclear arms since the beginning of the cold war.

Kennedy did not live to see many of his domestic reforms bear fruit. He boosted the USA's financial commitment to the space race and vowed to send an American into space by the end of the decade – a prediction that was fulfilled 6 years after his death. Similarly, significant civil rights legislation would only be introduced once his successor Lyndon Baines Johnson was in office.

At 12.30 pm on 22 Nov. 1963 Kennedy was assassinated while he drove through Dallas, Texas. Kennedy was pronounced dead at Parkland Memorial Hospital half an hour later. The same day Lee Harvey Oswald, an ex-Marine, was arrested for his murder, although he was himself shot dead 2 days later by nightclub owner Jack Ruby. Kennedy was buried on 25 Nov. in Arlington National Cemetery. A seven-member commission chaired by Chief Justice Earl Warren to investigate Kennedy's assassination concluded that Oswald had been a lone assassin, although conspiracy theories have abounded ever since.

Kennedy, Robert F. (United States of America)

Introduction

Robert Francis Kennedy (popularly known as 'Bobby'. served as US Attorney-General from 1961–64 while his brother John Fitzgerald Kennedy was president. After his brother's assassination he served as Senator for New York from 1965–68 and was campaigning to secure the Presidential nomination when he was assassinated in June 1968.

Early Life

Born in Brookline Massachusetts on 20 Nov. 1925 to Joseph Patrick and Rosemary Kennedy (née Fitzgerald), Robert Kennedy was one of nine children. During World War II he served in the US Navy. He then went to Harvard University where he gained a BA and the University of Virginia, where he was awarded an LLB.

Bobby served as campaign manager as his elder brother John ran for the Senate in 1952 and for president in 1960. He also came to national prominence for his work on the Senate Rackets Committee between 1957 and 1959.

Career Peak

After his brother was inaugurated as president, Bobby was appointed Attorney-General. His term was characterized by civil rights issues and attempts to crack down on organized crime. He also acted as his brother's confidante and advisor during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. After John F. Kennedy's assassination on 22 Nov. 1963, Bobby continued to serve as Attorney-General under new president Lyndon Baines Johnson, but was rejected by the new president as a potential running mate in the 1964 election.

On 3 Sept. 1964 Kennedy resigned as Attorney-General to run for the Senate in New York. He was duly elected, as was his younger brother Edward who was elected Senator for Massachusetts. For the next 4 years Bobby supported Johnson on domestic matters, such as civil rights legislation, but grew increasingly critical of escalating American involvement in Vietnam.

Urged by many to challenge Johnson for the presidential nomination in 1968, Kennedy entered late, believing that Johnson was unbeatable. 15 days later the incumbent made the surprise announcement that he was withdrawing from the race. Kennedy was now the clear frontrunner to secure the Democratic nomination. However on 5 June, just before midnight, and only hours after defeating Senator Eugene McCarthy in a primary in California, Kennedy was shot and fatally wounded as he left the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. His assassin was identified as Sirhan Sirhan, a Palestinian immigrant who was angered by Kennedy's support for the state of Israel. Surgeons fought to save Kennedy but he was pronounced dead on 6 June, 20 h after he had been shot.

Kenny, Enda (Ireland)

Introduction

Enda Kenny became prime minister (Taoiseach) on 9 March 2011. He was leader of the centrist Fine Gael from June 2002 to June 2017 and is currently Ireland's longest-serving member of parliament.

Early Life

Kenny was born in 1951 in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. He studied at the University of Galway and St Patrick's College of Education in Dublin and then worked as a primary school teacher for a year.

His father was the Fine Gael member of parliament for Mayo West and a parliamentary secretary. Enda regularly assisted with constituency matters and on his father's death in 1975 took over the Mayo West seat after winning a by-election. Over the next decade Kenny served as a backbencher but in 1986 was appointed junior minister for education and labour in the government of Garret FitzGerald.

After Fine Gael lost the 1987 election, Kenny served on the opposition front bench. He became party chief whip in 1993 and a year later, after the collapse of Albert Reynolds' Fianna Fáil government, helped negotiate a 'rainbow coalition' with the Labour Party and the Democratic Left. He served in that government as minister for tourism and trade and chaired the European Union Council of Trade Ministers during Ireland's 6 month presidency of the EU in 1996.

Fine Gael left government after the 1997 general election and Kenny ran unsuccessfully for party leader in 2001. In 2002, following the party's worst ever election performance, he was elected its new leader. In 2004 Fine Gael made significant gains at the European elections and out-pollled Fianna Fáil, the first time Fianna Fáil had come second in elections across the country since 1927. In 2006 Kenny became vice-president of the European People's Party (EPP), the centre-right grouping in the European Parliament.

Kenny led Fine Gael to a strong showing at the 2007 general election despite coming second to Fianna Fáil. In 2010 he held off a leadership challenge before overseeing victory at the 2011 general election on the back of strong anti-Fianna Fáil sentiment in light of the country's economic collapse. With 76 of a possible 166 seats, Fine Gael was the largest single party for the first time in its history and Kenny formed a coalition government with the Labour Party.

Career Peak

Kenny's primary challenge was to spur a recovery in the financial system. Prior to the election he pledged to renegotiate the conditions of the €85 bn. EU-IMF bailout package agreed by the previous government. In July 2011 EU leaders agreed to cut the interest rate on the rescue deal and to extend the repayment period. Ireland's fiscal position improved under the austerity regime of tax rises and spending cuts but the economy has remained vulnerable. Continuing weak growth pushed the country back into recession in 2013, although in Dec. that year Ireland was able to formally exit the EU-IMF bailout programme.

In July 2011 Kenny courted diplomatic controversy with an attack on the Vatican, which he accused of having tried to cloud the extent of sexual abuse of children by Catholic clergy in Ireland. In response, the Vatican recalled its envoy from Dublin.

In July 2013 parliament passed a controversial law allowing limited abortion rights for the first time, despite strong Catholic opposition, while in May 2015 Ireland became the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage in a referendum with over 60% of the electorate voting in favour.

Kenny announced a series of ministerial changes, including five new appointments to the cabinet, in July 2014 during an address to parliament in which he said that the Irish economy was entering 'a new phase of recovery'.

However, in a snap general election in Feb. 2016 Fine Gael lost substantial ground, resulting in a hung parliament. In April Fine Gael secured opposition support to form a new minority government and in May Kenny became the first Fine Gael leader to be re-elected as prime minister by parliament.

In Aug. 2016 the European Commission ruled that long-standing taxation arrangements between US computer giant Apple Inc. and the Irish

government constituted illegal state aid under European Union law and that the company should pay €13 bn. in corporate back taxes. Kenny said that the government would appeal the ruling as it would harm job creation and foreign investment in Ireland.

On 17 May 2017 Kenny announced his resignation as leader of Fine Gael but continued to carry on his duties as prime minister until Leo Varadkar was elected by Parliament to succeed him on 14 June 2017.

Kenyatta, Jomo (Kenya)

Introduction

Jomo Kenyatta was the first president of Kenya (1964–78). As a young African nationalist he was imprisoned during the Mau-Mau uprising. Later, as president he adopted a non-aligned policy. The stability that resulted from his tight control of the country attracted foreign investment. Many Africans saw Kenyatta as a role model. He wrote two books *Facing Mount Kenya* and *Suffering Without Bitterness*. He died in office and was succeeded by Daniel T. arap Moi. Kenyatta's image still looms large in Kenya today. His son was recently given one of parliament's reserved seats and is tipped as a possible successor to Moi.

Early Life

Jomo Kenyatta's exact date of birth is unknown, but is generally put between 1890 and 1893. He was educated in a Church of Scotland mission school outside Nairobi. In the 1920s he worked for Nairobi municipality, but soon joined the nationalist movements emerging in Nairobi. He became editor of the Kikuyu Central Association's magazine *Muigwithania* in 1923. The following year he went to Britain to give evidence to the Carter Land Commission on the injustice felt by the native African majority in Kenya. Kenyatta travelled around Europe between 1931–46. On his return to Kenya 15 years later he became leader of the newly formed Kenya African Union, the predecessor of the Kenya African National Union which governs Kenya today.

Kenyatta was imprisoned by the British in 1953 during the Mau-Mau uprising. Despite international attention an appeal for release was rejected and in 1959 he was sent to internal exile.

Career Peak

In 1960, while still in exile, Kenyatta was elected president of the newly founded Kenyan African National Union (KANU). In Aug. 1961 he was released and worked with the British to draft a new constitution for an independent Kenya. Kenyatta entered the Legislative council in 1962 and the following year became prime minister in the coalition government. When Kenya was granted independence in 1964 Kenyatta became its first president.

Although Kenyatta steered a successful economic policy and saw the national income double in the first 10 years of independence, political freedoms were lacking. In 1964 the main opposition party, Kenya Africa Democratic Party, dissolved and joined the coalition government.

Throughout the late 1960s key dissenting voices in and around government were silenced. There were several attempted coups. In 1969 opposition parties were outlawed and in 1974 a one-party state was established.

Kenyatta died on 22 Aug. 1978 while still in office.

Kérékou, Mathieu (Benin)

Introduction

Former army general Mathieu Kérékou was the dominant political figure in the Republic of Benin from the early 1970s. Following his military seizure of power in 1972, he ran Benin (then called Dahomey) as a Marxist state before renouncing the ideology in 1990 and restoring democracy. Having been defeated in the 1991 election by Nicéphore Soglo, he returned to power in

1996 and was re-elected in 2001. Kérékou's term ended in 2006. Kérékou died in Oct. 2015 aged 82.

Early Life

Born on 2 Sept. 1933 in Kouarfa, Kérékou was educated in Senegal and received his military training in France. During the rule of the first post-independence president, Hubert Maga (1960–63), he served as aide-de-camp in the national army. He became increasingly influential, both within the army and in politics. During the turbulent years of the 1960s he participated in several military coups. In 1970 a presidential commission, led by Maga, Justin Ahomadegbé-Tomêtin and Sourou Migan Apithy, took control in an attempt to restore stability. Kérékou held the post of minister of planning. When Maga handed over power to Ahomadegbé, Kérékou took the opportunity to seize control in a military coup on 26 Oct. 1972. The three-man council was dissolved and its leaders imprisoned.

Career Peak

Kérékou turned the country into a Marxist state, nationalizing the major economic sectors including banking. In 1975, using the name of a former African kingdom, he renamed the country Benin in an attempt to distance the state from its colonialist past. The new country nevertheless remained unstable, and Kérékou consequently imposed repressive state centralization and one-party rule. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s he sought aid from Communist states in eastern Europe and Asia. In Jan. 1987 he left the army to become a civilian head of state.

By the late 1980s Benin's economy had deteriorated. Faced with the loss of international support after the collapse of European Communism, and with increasing student and labour unrest at home, Kérékou was forced to accept political and institutional change. In 1989 he renounced Marxism, restored democracy and reintroduced multi-party politics. A transitional government was established after the *Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives de la Nation* (National Conference of the Active Forces of the Nation) in Feb. 1990. In presidential elections the following year, Kérékou was defeated by Nicéphore Soglo.

After a period of political inactivity he returned to contest the 1996 elections. His manifesto emphasized social reform, in contrast to Soglo's concentration on economic growth, and he won with 52.5% of votes in the run-off poll. During his second period of rule, Benin was divided into 12 administrative departments while the state monopoly on broadcasting was finally lifted in 1997. The new regime also sought to establish closer regional relations, by joint military exercises with Togo and Burkina Faso, and by contributing troops to the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) Cease-fire Monitoring Group. In the 2001 presidential elections, Kérékou won the first round with 45.4% of the vote to Soglo's 27.1%. Soglo and the third place candidate, Adrien Houngbédji, then withdrew amid claims of polling irregularities. In the run-off with the fourth place candidate, Bruno Amoussou, Kérékou was returned to power with 84% of the vote. Parliamentary elections were held on 30 March 2003, in which the Presidential Movement supporting Kérékou took 52 of the 83 assembly seats.

Benin's constitution forbids a presidential candidate to be over the age of 70 and allows a president to stand for a maximum of two terms. Therefore, Kérékou was obliged to stand down in April 2006.

Later Life

Kérékou died on 14 Oct. 2015 of an undisclosed health issue.

Kern, Christian (Austria)

Introduction

Christian Kern, a social democrat, became chancellor at the head of the coalition government in May 2016.

Early Life

Christian Kern was born 4 Jan. 1966 in Vienna. He graduated in journalism and communication from the University of Vienna, then completed his

postgraduate studies at the Management Zentrum St Gallen in Switzerland. In 1989 he began working as a business journalist. A member of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ), he entered politics in the early 1990s as an assistant to the Federal Chancellery's undersecretary of state for the civil service.

In 1997 Kern joined Austria's largest electricity supplier, Verbund AG, and soon rose through the ranks to join its management board. In 2010 he was appointed CEO of Austria's federal railway operator. He won praise for improving industrial relations and strengthening the company finances. He was named chairman of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies in 2014, working to help shape European Union (EU) transport policy and the sector's regulatory practices. In 2015 he was also credited with assisting the smooth transportation of huge numbers of asylum seekers travelling to, and through, the country.

Career Peak

With a high public profile as a result of his role in the refugee crisis, Kern was chosen by the SPÖ to contest the chancellorship following the resignation of incumbent Werner Faymann in May 2016. Kern was appointed to the position on 17 May—8 days after Faymann's resignation—and became the SPÖ's party chairman on 25 June.

He heads a coalition with the Austrian People's Party and has ruled out any future deal with far-right parties such as the Freedom Party. As well as addressing Austria's faltering economy, he has called for reform of the EU although he has rejected holding a referendum on Austria's membership. Following the victory of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) in the parliamentary election of Oct. 2017, Sebastian Kurz replaced him as chancellor on 18 Dec.

Key, John (New Zealand)

Early Life

John Phillip Key was born on 9 Aug. 1961 in Auckland, where his British father and Austrian–Jewish mother ran a restaurant. When his father died in 1967 the family were left with large debts and lived in state housing in a suburb of Christchurch. After finishing at Burnside School, he graduated in accounting from the University of Canterbury. He then studied management at Harvard University in the USA.

In 1982 Key began working as an auditor, subsequently joining a clothing manufacturer as a project manager. In 1985 he started his career in foreign exchange (forex) trading just as the NZ dollar was floated on currency markets. In 1988 he was recruited by the Bankers Trust in Auckland as head of their forex dealing team, remaining there until 1995.

Key then joined Merrill Lynch as managing director of the Asia forex group in Singapore, subsequently becoming head of Merrill's global forex group in London. In 2001 he moved to Sydney as head of the institution's debt markets. In 2008 Key was listed in the National Business Review's rich list with an estimated wealth of NZ\$50 m.

In 2001 he joined the National Party, winning the seat for Helensville, a newly created constituency in northwest Auckland. He won re-election in 2005, a year after joining the opposition front benches as finance spokesman, and again in 2008. In 2006 Key became party leader following the resignation of Don Brash. He led the party to victory at the general election of 8 Nov. 2008 and was sworn in as prime minister 11 days later.

Career Peak

Following the election, the National Party signed deals with ACT New Zealand, the Maori Party and United Future, which offered ministerial positions outside the cabinet. Key guaranteed the continuation of a number of Maori-specific parliamentary seats. He had a reputation as a pragmatic centrist and favoured privatization, but his first year in office was largely overshadowed by the longest economic recession in the country's history. In Feb. 2009 he launched an NZ\$480 m. strategy to help small businesses, which included a 90-day probation period for workers, lowered provisional tax and relaxed tax penalties for businesses with incorrect tax returns. The plan also provided for short-term export credit and the fast-tracking of several government building projects.

In foreign affairs, there was a diplomatic rift over alleged interference by New Zealand in Fijian affairs that saw the mutual expulsion of high commissioners in 2009 before relations were restored in July 2012.

In Nov. 2010 Key declared a national state of mourning in response to a mining accident on the South Island in which 29 miners were killed. In Feb. 2011 Christchurch was struck by a 6.3-magnitude earthquake that killed at least 166 and caused damage put at US\$12 bn.

In parliamentary elections in Nov. 2011 the National Party increased its share of the vote and Key won a second term in office, heading a new coalition with ACT New Zealand and United Future.

In April 2013 New Zealand became the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to legalize same-sex marriage. In Aug. parliament narrowly passed legislation which allowed its main intelligence agency to spy on residents and citizens in the interests of national security, despite strong opposition from domestic and international bodies. The following month an opinion poll showed that Key's popularity rating had fallen to its lowest level since he became prime minister. He nonetheless secured a third term in office as the National Party again emerged as the largest party in parliamentary elections in Sept. 2014.

In Oct. 2013 the government announced the resumption of bilateral military co-operation, after nearly three decades, with the USA to counter the growing regional influence of China.

On 5 Dec. 2016 Key handed in his resignation expressing a desire to spend more time with his family away from politics. He was succeeded as prime minister by Bill English.

Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (Saudi Arabia)

Introduction

The fifth son of the founder of the Saudi dynasty, Khalid ascended to the throne on 25 March 1975 after the assassination of his brother Faisal. He was considered a reserved and unspectacular monarch, who nevertheless accelerated the economic development of the Kingdom and won respect in international circles. His caution and moderation served as a stabilising factor in the volatile politics of the Middle East. Under his leadership, the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) was established with five other Gulf states in 1981 against the backdrop of the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Having been troubled for many years by bad health, he died of a heart attack on 13 June 1982.

Early Life

Born in 1913, Khalid had early experience of government as governor of the Hejaz region from 1932–34 and as interior minister from 1934. In 1964, on Faisal's accession to the throne, he was named as Crown Prince and deputy prime minister.

Career Peak

Khalid succeeded Faisal in March 1975, announcing that he would continue the late King's policies promoting Islamic solidarity and Arab unity in the wake of hostilities with Israel. In practice his moderate stance was in marked contrast to the militancy of many other Arab states, particularly over oil pricing by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and Egypt's 1978 peace treaty with Israel. Khalid was also involved in early efforts to stop the civil war in Lebanon, and inaugurated the GCC in 1981.

Domestically Khalid maintained the royal family's absolute political control and the conservative Islamic character of the country. However, some opposition to his regime was demonstrated in Nov. 1979 when Sunni Muslim extremists occupied the mosque at Makkah (Mecca). A 2 week siege ensued, with over 200 deaths. The second and third 5-year development plans (1975–79 and 1980–84), both launched by King Khalid, set in train the establishment of much of the country's current economic infrastructure. This in turn improved welfare services and the standard of living in general.

Owing to Khalid's poor health throughout his reign there were repeated rumours that he might abdicate. Much of his executive responsibility had already been assumed by Crown Prince Fahd before his death in 1982.

Khama, Ian (Botswana)

Introduction

Lieut.-Gen. (retd) Seretse Khama Ian Khama succeeded Festus Mogae as president in 2008. Formerly head of the army and a paramount chief of the Bamangwato people, he entered politics in 1998 and has been closely associated with government efforts to diversify the economy and promote transparency.

Early Life

Seretse Khama Ian Khama was born in the UK on 27 Feb. 1953, the son of Seretse Khama (who later became Botswana's first president) and his English wife. Following the family's return to Botswana in 1956, Khama grew up in Serowe and attended the local school. He pursued further studies in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), Swaziland and Switzerland, before enrolling at Sandhurst Military Academy in the UK. After graduating, he joined the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and rose rapidly through the ranks. In 1977 he was promoted to brigadier and became deputy commander of the BDF under Lieut.-Gen. Mompoti Merafhe.

In 1979 he was made paramount chief of the Bamangwato people, Botswana's largest tribal group. However, Khama devoted his time to the army and in 1989, when Merafhe retired to enter politics, became its commander. Under Khama the BDF developed into a professional force, participating in international peacekeeping, disaster relief and anti-poaching missions.

On 1 April 1998 Khama, newly retired from the army, was named vice-president by the incoming president Festus Mogae. The appointment was widely seen as an attempt to inject new blood into the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and to tap into Khama's reputation and influence. Initially unable to take up his post because he did not hold a seat in the National Assembly, Khama was sworn in on 13 July 1998 after winning a by-election in Serowe North. He was put in charge of presidential administration and public affairs and became an arbiter of complaints against government ministers, which made him some political enemies.

Following the BDF's victory in the 1999 general election, Khama was controversially allowed a year's sabbatical to fulfil his duties as chief of the Bamangwato. On his return to the national scene he oversaw the implementation of the government's national development plan, which included privatization measures. Supporters praised him as forceful and efficient while critics accused him of authoritarianism. In 2000 he censured MPs for demanding a salary increase, winning support from the electorate but further alienating some colleagues.

In 2003 Khama became chairman of the BDP, fuelling speculation that he was Mogae's chosen successor. In March 2008 Mogae stood down and the National Assembly elected Khama to the presidency. He took office on 1 April 2008.

Career Peak

Khama was sworn in for his first full 5 year term on 20 Oct. 2009 following the BDP's success in parliamentary elections held on 16 Oct. in which they took 45 of the 57 available seats. In April 2010 a breakaway faction of disaffected BDP members formed the Botswana Movement for Democracy, a move criticized by Khama as misguided and self-interested. A damaging nationwide strike by public sector workers over pay in April–May 2011, reflecting deteriorating economic prospects, dented his administration's reputation for good governance and political stability. Nonetheless, the BDP retained power in parliamentary polling in Oct. 2014, albeit with a reduced majority, and Khama was re-elected as president and sworn in for a second term.

Having served for the maximum period allowed by the constitution, he stepped down on 1 April 2018, handing his duties over to his vice-president and fellow BDP member Mokgweetsi Masisi until the 2019 general election.

Khama, Seretse (Botswana)

Introduction

Leader of the Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP), Sir Seretse Khama was the founding president of Botswana from 1965 until his death in 1980. By exploiting Botswana's diamond resources to create a prosperous export-driven economy, Khama lifted his country from poverty and implemented welfare reforms. He also managed to uphold a liberal democracy in the face of tribal tensions to make his rule one of modern Africa's few success stories.

Early Life

Seretse Khama was born on 1 July 1921 in what was then known as Bechuanaland. He was the grandson of the famous chief, Khama III (c. 1835–1923), ruler of the Bangwato tribe. His father died when he was very young and he became chief, with his uncle Tshekedi acting as regent and later sole guardian. As a young nobleman he was sent to boarding school in South Africa and later went to Balliol College, Oxford to read law. Whilst studying there he met and married a young English typist called Ruth Williams. White supremacists in neighbouring South Africa pressured the British government to denounce Seretse's chieftainship and he was exiled from Botswana.

In 1956 the British government determined to distance itself from the racist institutions of South Africa and Seretse was able to return home. In 1961 he began to make a name for himself as a nationalist politician, becoming leader of the BDP, which won the first universal franchise elections in 1965. He was knighted a year later.

Career Peak

At this stage Botswana was still perceived to be a hostage nation, reliant on its wealthy neighbours for goods and support. However, its vast diamond wealth was soon uncovered and Khama took advantage of this good fortune to revamp Botswana's economy. He laid the foundations for an export-driven economy relying on the country's reserves of diamonds and copper and on its beef processing industry. On a domestic level he largely succeeded in fostering local democracy and the rule of law and dispensing with the traditional powers of the chiefs.

The result of these policies was the emergence of a country that was wealthy and yet upheld the tenets of liberal democracy in spite of the racial and tribal tensions evident in neighbouring states. Seretse Khama channelled the profits of the diamond and copper trade into providing educational, developmental and sanitary advances throughout Botswana. Internationally he continued to support the decolonization of other African nations, and was present during talks to liberate Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe).

Later Life

Khama was successively re-elected until his death on 13 July 1980.

Khanal, Jhalanath (Nepal)

Introduction

Jhalanath Khanal, leader of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), was elected prime minister in Feb. 2011, ending months of political deadlock. A veteran left-winger, Khanal came to power with the support of Maoist Party MPs. However, after 6 months in office he resigned from the post, having failed to agree on a new constitution with the opposition and advance a peace process.

Early Life

Jhalanath Khanal was born on 20 May 1950 in Sakhejung in Ilam district, Mechi, Nepal. From 1965 he was an active pro-democracy campaigner and in

1967 served as president of the Mechi student union. After graduating in political science and history from Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, he worked as a secondary school teacher from 1971–73. He was jailed for his political activism in 1969, from 1973–74 and again in 1975. On being released in 1975, he joined an underground revolutionary movement.

While serving a further jail term from 1976–79, Khanal became a founder member of the Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML). Released during an amnesty for political prisoners, he spent the next 11 years masterminding underground political activities and served as general secretary of the CPN-ML from 1982–90. In 1990, after the monarchy relinquished absolute power, Khanal served in the government firstly as minister for agriculture, land reform and management, and then as minister for forest and environment. He was elected to parliament in 1991, representing the enlarged and renamed CPN-UML.

In 1997, after the Maoists had left parliament and begun an armed conflict aimed at ending the system of parliamentary monarchy, Khanal served as minister for information and communication in the coalition government of monarchist prime minister, Lokendra Bahadur Chand. After the end of the civil conflict in 2006 and the curtailment of the monarch's powers, Khanal was re-elected as CPN-UML representative for Ilam and, in 2008, succeeded Madhav Kumar Nepal as party general secretary, becoming chairman in Feb. 2009. In May 2009 the party left the Maoist-led coalition government, leading to its collapse.

The CPN-UML headed a replacement coalition, with Nepal briefly serving as prime minister. However, in June 2010 he resigned citing political deadlock. Following 16 inconclusive parliamentary ballots for the premiership in which Khanal repeatedly stood as the CPN-UML candidate, he was finally victorious in Feb. 2011 when the Maoists withdrew their candidate, Prachanda, and switched support to Khanal, giving him 368 of the 557 votes cast.

Career Peak

Khanal took office promising speedy progress on drafting a new constitution and reintegrating 19,000 former Maoist fighters. However, both issues led to problems in establishing a workable coalition. Having vowed to resign as premier if he could not make significant advances in the peace process, Khanal stepped down on 14 Aug. 2011.

Khatami, Hojatolislam Mohammad (Iran)

Introduction

Having served in post-revolution governments from 1982–92, Mohammad Khatami, a noted liberal, was elected President in May 1997. His first term of office signalled a shift away from Islamic extremism, his moderate policies provoking unease among conservatives within the governing establishment. He received a further mandate to pursue reform when he was re-elected in June 2001 with 77% of the popular vote and stood down before the elections of June 2005.

Early Life

Mohammad Khatami was born in 1943 in Ardakan in the central province of Yazd. The son of a respected Islamic clergyman, Khatami attended the theological colleges at Qom and Esfahan after his high school graduation in 1961. He obtained a BA degree in philosophy at Esfahan University in 1969 and then went to Tehran University in 1970 for a postgraduate MA course in education. Subsequently returning to Qom, he resumed his philosophical studies.

Khatami began his political activities within the Association of Muslim Students of Esfahan University. He also participated in the anti-Shah Islamic movement in Qom. Having headed the Islamic Centre in Hamburg, Germany, at the time of the 1979 revolution, he stood successfully for election to the Majlis in 1980.

Career Peak

In 1982 he joined the government as minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, retaining that post until 1992, when he was appointed cultural adviser to the then President Rafsanjani and head of Iran's National Library. Appointed a member of the High Council for Cultural Revolution in 1996, he became its head on his election as the fifth president of the Islamic Republic on 23 May 1997. Despite opposition from the conservative Islamic establishment, his reformist approach proved a rallying point for a wide-ranging coalition of industrial interests, urban middle classes, university students and technocrats, and he secured an unexpected landslide electoral victory with almost 70% of the vote. Continuing support for his moves towards a more liberal society was confirmed by his re-election for a second term by an even larger margin on 8 June 2001.

In Jan. 2002 Khatami's government responded angrily to US President George W. Bush's assertion that Iran, along with Iraq and North Korea, formed an 'axis of evil'. In June 2003 the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran promised increased cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) but refused to allow inspections of the Kalaye Electric Company in Tehran, which it claims was not part of its nuclear programme. In the same month Tehran witnessed widespread popular protests against the ruling clerical regime. In July 2003 the EU threatened to review its relations with Tehran, indicating that any trade agreements will be dependent on Iran's co-operation on nuclear proliferation, terrorism, human rights and the Middle East peace process. Earlier in July 2003 Minister of Intelligence Ali Yunesi admitted for the first time that the Iranian government was holding members of the al-Qaeda terrorist network, including several leading figures.

Relations with the US improved in Oct. 2003 after Iran agreed to cooperate with the IAEA over its nuclear programme and delivered documentation to the agency. However, tensions remained between the two countries—the International Court of Justice delivered a verdict in Nov. concerning American attacks on Iranian oil platforms during the Iran-Iraq War. The Court refused compensation to either side but censured the US for the attacks. The European Union played an important part in preventing the deterioration of US–Iranian relations in the publication of the IAEA report, which set strict conditions for Iran but did not recommend sanctions.

The Iranian government's attitude towards the US-appointed administration in Iraq also improved in late 2003. The Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) announced the expulsion of the People's Mujahideen (Mujahideen-e-Khalq; MKO), an Iranian rebel organization supported by the Ba'athist regime, and the intention to provide reparations to Iran for the 1980 invasion.

A devastating earthquake hit Iran on 26 Dec. 2003, close to the ancient city of Bam, much of which was destroyed. Over 26,000 were killed and tens of thousands left homeless. International aid was swift, though Khatami's government rejected the American offer of a humanitarian delegation. Khatami, however, did improve relations with another long-running enemy—Egypt. In Dec. 2003 he met the Egyptian premier, Hosni Mubarak, in Geneva, paving the way for the restoration of full diplomatic ties. Tehran's city council removed one of the main stumbling blocks by changing the name of a street that remembered the assassin of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

A domestic crisis developed during preparations for parliamentary elections in Feb. 2004. The Council of Guardians disqualified over 2,000 candidates—mostly reformists—of a total of around 8,000. Khatami promised to fight for every candidate unfairly disqualified and threatened the resignation of his entire administration if hard-liners did not satisfy his demands. The largest student organization called for a boycott of elections and over 80 members of parliament, disqualified from contesting their seats, expressed their opposition with a sit-in at the Majlis. The intervention of Ayatollah Khamenei on national television in Jan. 2004 forced the Council of Guardians to compromise, restoring over 700 candidacies, including current politicians expressly supported by the spiritual leader. Nevertheless, over a third of the Majlis' deputies resigned on 1 Feb. in protest against the hard-line policy of the Council.

Khatami stood down from office at the 2005 presidential elections. He claimed that unnamed candidates had orchestrated 'dirty tricks' campaigns in the election build-up.

In 2009 he stood as a candidate in the presidential election initially against the incumbent, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, but withdrew to back the campaign of Mir Hossein Mousavi. After Ahmadinejad won the disputed poll, Khatami continued to question the result's legitimacy.

Khomeini, Ruhollah (Iran)

Introduction

Returning to Iran from exile on the overthrow of the Shah's pro-Western regime in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini assumed the role of head of state. Under his leadership a turbulent Islamic revolution restored fundamentalist Shia Muslim principles and traditions. His rule was marked by a protracted war with Iraq and the suppression of internal opposition. He died on 3 June 1989.

Early Life

Born Sayyed Ruhollah in Sept. 1902, Khomeini took his clerical name from his birthplace, Khomein, in central Iran. In the early 1920s he went to the holy city of Qom where he continued his theological studies and then taught in a seminary. By the 1950s he had emerged as a noted Islamic scholar and was designated an ayatollah. By the early 1960s he had received the title of grand ayatollah, thereby making him a supreme religious leader of the Shia Muslim community.

Khomeini first came to political prominence in 1962, when he led traditional religious opposition to the Shah's plans to reduce the clergy's property rights and to emancipate women. His arrest in 1963 provoked riots in Tehran and other cities. The following year he was ordered into exile by the Shah's secret police. After a brief period in Turkey, he settled in Iraq in the Shia holy city of Najaf in Oct. 1965. From there he called for the Shah's overthrow and the establishment of an Islamic republic.

In 1977–78, widespread demonstrations in support of Khomeini broke out across Iran. In Oct. 1978 he was forced to leave Iraq and moved to Paris, where he orchestrated the campaign against the Shah's rule. Intense civil unrest forced the departure of the Shah from Iran in Jan. 1979, and Khomeini returned to Tehran in Feb. to be acclaimed the religious leader of the revolution. On 1 April 1979, Khomeini proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Under a new constitution, approved by referendum in Dec. 1979, he was designated the republic's spiritual leader (*wali faqih*) for life.

Career Peak

For the next decade Khomeini remained the centre of political power and the anchor of the Islamic regime, despite his increasing age and gradual withdrawal from day-to-day guidance of the revolution. Internal opposition was repressed and thousands of executions took place. Iran's foreign relations during his rule were dominated by the 1980–88 war with Iraq, and implacable hostility to the United States, relations with which reached a nadir in 1979–81 over the seizure of hostages in the US embassy in Tehran by Iranian students. Khomeini continued to denounce the US until his death in June 1989. Earlier that year, he caused further international controversy for exhorting devout Muslims to execute the British novelist Salman Rushdie and the publishers of his book *The Satanic Verses* for blasphemy.

An estimated 9 m. mourners attended his funeral in Tehran.

Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeyevich (Russia)

Introduction

Nikita Khrushchev succeeded Stalin as first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, holding the post until his resignation in 1964. He was premier from 1958. In domestic policy, he allowed a modicum of liberalization and avoided the harsher excesses of Stalin's rule though his regime was characterized by oppressive cultural and intellectual policies. Relations with China deteriorated but he sought 'peaceful coexistence' with the West. However, during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the stand-off with the US threatened nuclear war.

Early Life

Khrushchev was born in Kalinovka on 17 April 1894 and trained as a mechanic in the Ukrainian coal mines where his father worked. He joined the Communist Party in 1918 and fought with the Red Army during the civil war. While working in the mines he was politically active as a local party secretary. He attended Moscow's Industrial Academy to study industrial administration. In 1931 he took a job with the district party committee in Moscow, becoming its first secretary 4 years later. In this appointment he was responsible for the construction of the Moscow underground. A rising star of the Stalin regime, he was involved with the political purges of the 1930s. In 1938 he was sent back to the Ukraine to become first secretary of the Republic's Communist Party and was appointed a full Politburo member the following year.

Khrushchev served in the Red Army during World War II, emerging with the rank of lieutenant general. During this period he was instrumental in suppressing burgeoning nationalist movements in Poland and the Ukraine. He also played prominent advisory roles in the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk.

In the aftermath of the war, Khrushchev had to deal with a debilitating famine in the Ukraine that was to influence his later views on agricultural policy. In 1949 he rejoined the Moscow party structure and became secretary of the Communist Central Committee. In an atmosphere of political intrigue intensified by Stalin's deteriorating health, Khrushchev's plan for restructuring the agricultural collectives was rejected in 1951.

Career Peak

Following Stalin's death in March 1953, Khrushchev won the power struggle to succeed him. He was instrumental in the execution of one of his chief rivals, Lavrenty Beria, and outmanoeuvred Georgi Malenkov to become first secretary of the party in Sept. 1953. Malenkov remained as prime minister for a further 2 years before Khrushchev supplanted him with Nikolai Bulganin.

Khrushchev's tenure saw a loosening of the political reigns Stalin had held so tightly. His speech at the 20th Party Congress in 1956 was groundbreaking in its denunciation not only of Stalin's tyranny and personality cult, but for the implicit criticism of the party itself. He followed this up with the release of political prisoners.

Khrushchev allowed expelled nationalities to return to their ethnic homelands within Russia (except for the Volga Germans and the Crimean Tatars), arguing that all Soviet nationalities would eventually meld with the Russians as the dominant group. He used his agricultural expertise to gain popular support, pioneering vast grain projects. When his plans met with opposition in Kazakhstan, he dismissed the republic's leaders and put future premier Leonid Brezhnev in charge.

Khrushchev's more liberal regime was, nonetheless, not free of tyrannical elements. Religious bodies suffered ruthless suppression and his attitude to dissident voices was inconsistent. For example, he was hard on Boris Pasternak (awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1958) but more lenient to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who documented life in Stalin's concentration camps. In addition, having survived an attempted coup in 1957, Khrushchev schemed to remove and discredit his opponents. Within a year he was prime minister as well as first secretary.

Khrushchev was a volatile figure on the international scene. Relations with the Soviet Union's great ideological ally, China, virtually collapsed over differences in interpretation of Marxist doctrine and Chinese opposition to Khrushchev's attempts at détente with the West (which came to be known as 'peaceful co-existence'). The Sino-Soviet arms aid agreement was abandoned in 1959.

Co-existence with the West came under severe strain on several occasions. The Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 to suppress the reforms of its liberal regime caused international uproar, although Khrushchev allowed greater autonomy in the Eastern Bloc states. A summit between President Eisenhower and Khrushchev in 1959 raised hopes of a thawing in US–Soviet relations. However, these were soon dashed by a spying scandal in 1960 in which a US U–2 reconnaissance aircraft was shot down and its pilot, Gary Powers, captured. Tensions were further raised by the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and by the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion by US troops attempting to overthrow Fidel Castro's communist regime in Cuba.

Relations with the US reached their lowest point during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. When it was feared that Khrushchev was planning to install nuclear weapons in Cuba, US President Kennedy imposed a naval blockade

and the two powers came perilously close to nuclear war. After intense negotiations, Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles in exchange for American assurances that Cuba would not be invaded. A nuclear test-ban treaty followed in 1963.

While Khrushchev was subsequently lauded for his role in averting disaster in 1962, his standing at home waned. The crisis was seen as a defeat for the Soviet Union and the collapse of relations with China as an added failure. His personal leadership style antagonized many senior party figures and, with his grand plans for agricultural expansion failing to reap rewards, his position was precarious. He was forced to resign on 14 Oct. 1964, following a coup led by his successor Leonid Brezhnev.

Later Life

Khrushchev in retirement took no further part in politics. His memoirs appeared in the West in 1970. He died on 11 Sept. 1971 but, unlike his predecessors, was not given a state burial at the Kremlin.

Kibaki, Mwai (Kenya)

Introduction

Economist and former vice president Mwai Kibaki was first elected president in Dec. 2002. Representing the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) of opposition parties in a bid to oust the KANU party, in power since independence in 1963, he campaigned on an anti-corruption ticket to end Daniel arap Moi's 24 year-presidency. However, Kibaki's government itself became widely tainted by corruption scandals. His controversial re-election in Dec. 2007 was violently disputed by supporters of Raila Odinga, the leader of the opposition ODM, before a power-sharing agreement was negotiated in Feb. 2008.

Early Life

Kibaki was born on 15 Nov. 1931 in Othaya, Nyeri District. In 1950 he joined the youth section of the pro-independence Kenyan African Union. In 1954 he graduated in economics, history and political science at Makerere University, Uganda, before further studies at the London School of Economics in the UK (1956–59).

Along with the subsequent presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi, Kibaki campaigned for independence from British colonial rule, which was finally achieved in 1963. He contributed to a new constitution and was among the original members of the KANU party (Kenyan African National Union). He served as the party's chief executive officer from 1961–63 before being elected representative of Bahati, Nairobi in 1963. From 1963–66 he worked for the finance ministry, after which he was appointed commerce and industry minister. From 1970–81 he served as finance minister. Vice president under Kenyatta and then his successor Moi, he also served as home affairs minister (1982–88) and health minister (1988–91).

A one-party state from 1964, the ban on opposition parties was finally lifted in 1991. In 1992 Kibaki and other party members left KANU to form the Democratic Party, criticizing government corruption. In the country's first multi-party presidential elections that year, Kibaki took third place as Moi retained the presidency despite alleged irregularities. In 1997 he again stood against Moi, coming second with 30.9% of votes.

In 2002 he was chosen to head the opposition NARC. The ruling party was split when Moi announced his chosen successor to be Uhuru Kenyatta (son of Jomo Kenyatta), and several KANU members joined NARC. Kibaki's campaign focused on growing discontent with Moi's presidency. In the Dec. 2002 elections Kibaki won a landslide victory with 62.2% to Kenyatta's 31.3%, ending nearly 40 years of KANU rule.

Career Peak

On election, Kibaki prioritized the fight against corruption, which had deterred international aid donors and investors since 1997. All public figures were obliged to declare their wealth confidentially to the anti-corruption police. Kibaki also vowed to provide free education and outlined plans for a

new constitution, that was approved in a referendum by two-thirds of Kenyans in Aug. 2010 and promulgated later that month.

Kibaki was constitutionally barred from seeking re-election in the 2013 elections, already having served two terms. In April 2013 he was succeeded as president by Uhuru Kenyatta.

Kiesinger, Kurt Georg (Germany)

Introduction

Kurt Georg Kiesinger was West German Chancellor between 1966–69, heading the *Grand Coalition* of his own Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). He was the only Chancellor to have been a member of the Nazi Party, but after World War II was a conservative reformer who sought to improve West Germany's standing with the West, and to improve relations with East Germany.

Early Life

Kurt Georg Kiesinger was born in Ebingen, Germany on 6 April 1904. He studied at the universities in Tübingen and Berlin before practising as a lawyer. He joined the Nazi Party in 1933 and worked in the Propaganda Section of the Foreign Ministry throughout World War II. He was interned by Allied troops for 18 months after the war but was cleared of any illegal Nazi activities and released.

He became a member of Chancellor Adenauer's CDU, entered the *Bundestag* in 1949 and sat as chairman of the foreign policy committee. He advocated Germany's integration into international institutions and oversaw reform of the constitutional court. He left parliament in 1958 to take the post of Minister President (Prime Minister) of Baden-Württemberg and achieved success in rejuvenating the *länder's* economy. On a national level he pushed for reform of the higher education system. During 1962–63 he was president of the *Bundesrat* (the upper house of parliament).

Career Peak

When Ludwig Erhard resigned as Chancellor in Dec. 1966 Kiesinger replaced him. The *Grand Coalition* reformed the penal system, introduced changes to pensions and tax, and was successful in reversing the economic slump that marked the end of Erhard's tenure. Kiesinger also oversaw legislation that allowed more time for the prosecution of suspected Nazi war criminals. In foreign policy, he promoted closer relations with the USA and France. He believed in strengthening the European Economic Community and campaigned for the inclusion of the UK. While strongly opposed to the Soviet Union, he worked alongside Foreign Minister Willy Brandt to improve relations with East Germany and re-instituted diplomatic relations with Romania in 1967 and with Yugoslavia the following year. However, this early version of Ostpolitik (Eastern Policy) faltered after the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1968.

Kiesinger's links to the Nazis proved a major hurdle to his domestic popularity. A significant section of the electorate were immediately suspicious of his past, and when the right-wing National Democrat Party made gains in provincial elections he was in a weak position to condemn them. When student activism reached its zenith, Kiesinger was a popular target for the country's disaffected youth. Moreover, the Grand Coalition lacked parliamentary opposition. When it passed an Emergency Law, enabling an appointed council to take power in exceptional circumstances, Kiesinger was accused of moving towards authoritarianism.

By 1969 relations between the CDU and SPD were strained. Kiesinger's party did well at the elections of that year but the Coalition was dead and the SPD formed a government with the Free Democrats. Brandt succeeded Kiesinger as Chancellor on 21 Oct. 1969.

Later Life

Kiesinger remained President of the CDU until 1971 and left the *Bundestag* in 1976. He died on 9 March 1988 in Tübingen.

Kikwete, Jakaya (Tanzania)

Introduction

Jakaya Kikwete became president of Tanzania on 14 Dec. 2005, winning an overwhelming majority in national elections that were generally considered free and fair. A Muslim from the coastal district of Bagamoyo, Kikwete was a military leader in the 1970s and 1980s and served as foreign minister for 10 years from 1995. He was re-elected in Oct. 2010.

Early Life

Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete was born on 7 Oct. 1950 in Msoga, Bagamoyo District on the coast of Tanganyika. He attended schools in Msoga and Kibaha, before studying economics at the University of Dar es Salaam. In 1975, while at university, Kikwete joined the ruling Tanganyika African National Union, which later became the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM, Revolutionary State Party). Following his graduation in 1978, Kikwete joined the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF), where he served as a lieutenant from 1972–79 and subsequently as captain.

In 1984, having spent a year at the Monduli military officers college in Arusha, Kikwete became chief political instructor of the TPDF. In 1988 he was elected to represent Bagamoyo parliamentary constituency, a post he held for three consecutive terms. He was deputy minister of energy, water and minerals from 1988–90 before being promoted to minister and serving under President Ali Hassan Mwinyi for 4 years. Following constitutional reform that legalized opposition parties in 1992, Kikwete retired from the army.

In 1995, having served as finance minister for a year, Kikwete became one of 14 challengers for the CCM leadership. He lost to Benjamin Mkapa, who led the party to victory in national elections in Oct. 1995 amid widespread allegations of voting irregularities. Kikwete was appointed foreign minister, a post he held until 2005, winning praise for his mediation work in war-torn Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His department was credited with advancing regional integration within the East African Community and in the Southern African Development Community. Kikwete won the right to lead his party into the 2005 national elections and emerged victorious from the poll on 14 Dec. He received 80% of the vote and replaced Mkapa as president. The CCM retained its overwhelming majority in parliament, with 206 out of 232 seats.

Career Peak

In his inauguration speech, Kikwete vowed to continue the free-market policies of Mkapa and prioritized the improvement of relations with the semi-autonomous islands of Zanzibar. He inherited a country in which poverty is widespread but whose economy had been growing at a rate of 6% a year. He sought to maintain political stability as the country benefited from rising gold production and donor-supported investment. In Aug. 2006, in recognition of the government's economic reform efforts, the African Development Bank cancelled US\$645 m. of Tanzanian debt and also agreed a loan of US\$74 m. for poverty reduction programmes.

In Feb. 2008 Prime Minister Edward Lowassa and two other ministers resigned in the wake of a corruption scandal involving an energy deal with a US-based electricity company, in response to which Kikwete dissolved the cabinet and appointed Mizengo Kayanza Peter Pinda as the new premier. Kikwete served as chairman of the African Union for 2008.

In Oct. 2010 Kikwete and the CCM were returned to power in presidential and parliamentary elections. Following allegations of ministerial misuse of public funds, Kikwete sacked six members of his cabinet in May 2012. In Dec. 2013 he sacked another four following accusations of abuses committed by security forces, prompting a further government reshuffle in Jan. 2014.

In Aug. 2012 the government confirmed that Iranian oil tankers had been operating under the Tanzanian flag to circumvent international sanctions on Iranian oil trading. The USA, in response, threatened possible action against Tanzania unless the practice was stopped.

There were increasing religious tensions between Christians and Muslims in the country in late 2012 and 2013, with attacks on churches and mosques.

Jakaya Kikwete's term as president ended in Nov. 2015 when he was succeeded by the winner of the Oct. elections, John Magufuli (also of the CCM). Kikwete was not eligible to stand for a third successive term owing to a constitutional limit on presidential mandates.

Kilman, Sato (Vanuatu)

Introduction

Sato Kilman, the leader of the People's Progress Party (part of the Alliance bloc), served a fourth term as prime minister from June 2015 to Feb. 2016. He came to office less than a fortnight after being sacked from his role as foreign minister by the incumbent prime minister, Joe Natuman. Kilman successfully moved a parliamentary vote of no confidence against Natuman before replacing him.

Early Life

Kilman grew up in Lakatoro, on Vanuatu's Malekula Island. He came to public attention in 2004 for his criticism of Prime Minister Serge Vohor's attempt to establish diplomatic relations with Taiwan. After moving the confidence motion that deposed Vohor, Kilman served as foreign minister from 2004–07 in the government of Ham Lini.

Kilman was dismissed in a cabinet reshuffle at the end of 2007 over allegations of misappropriating state funds. He and his Alliance bloc subsequently served in opposition until Nov. 2009, when Prime Minister Edward Natapei dismissed several of his coalition partners in favour of the Alliance. Kilman was appointed to succeed Lini as deputy prime minister.

Following a vote of no confidence in Natapei after he refused to hand over the rotating leadership of a regional trade forum to Fiji's interim prime minister, Kilman was appointed his successor by the parliamentary speaker on 2 Dec. 2010.

On 24 April 2011 Kilman was narrowly defeated in another vote of no confidence and replaced by Serge Vohor, who became prime minister for a fourth time. However, Vohor's election was declared invalid on 13 May 2011 because he could not claim an absolute majority. Kilman was reinstated, only to be ousted again after a court upheld the charge brought by Natapei that Kilman's initial appointment was unconstitutional because the speaker had failed to conduct a secret ballot. Kilman nevertheless returned to office on 26 June 2011 after gaining 29 parliamentary votes against Serge Vohor's 23, but resigned in March 2013 ahead of a no confidence motion. He was succeeded as prime minister by Moana Carcasses Kalosil, who was in office until May 2014 when Joe Natuman assumed the premiership.

On 4 June 2015 Kilman was sacked as foreign minister by Natuman for 'disloyalty'. However, after a motion of no confidence was passed against Natuman, Kilman defeated opposition MP Ham Lini in a parliamentary vote by 28 votes to 22, and again became prime minister.

Career Peak

Under Kilman's leadership in May 2011 Vanuatu became the fifth nation—after Nauru, Nicaragua, Russia and Venezuela—to recognize Abkhazia (in Georgia) as a sovereign nation. In May 2012 a diplomatic row with Australia erupted over an incident at Sydney airport involving alleged discourtesy to Kilman and the arrest of his private secretary on tax fraud charges. In response, a small Australian police contingent was expelled from Vanuatu.

Kilman's return to the premiership in June 2015 was widely interpreted as a blow to the hopes of West Papuan groups seeking membership of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (a move opposed by Indonesia, for whom Kilman made clear his support).

Domestically, corruption dogged Kilman's term, as 14 members of his government were convicted and imprisoned, and in Nov. President Baldwin Lonsdale dissolved parliament. Following snap elections in Jan. 2016, Charlot Salwai was elected unopposed by parliament the following month to succeed Kilman as premier.

Kim Dae-jung (South Korea)

Introduction

The election of Kim Dae-jung as President of South Korea on 18 Dec. 1997 completed a remarkable journey from persecuted dissident and opposition leader to head of state of a truly democratic nation. However, the success of the opposition in 2002 by-elections coupled with a corruption scandal surrounding Kim's family weakened his presidency. Under the terms of the constitution he was required to give up the presidency in 2003. The last months of his tenure were marked by increasing international tension over North Korea's nuclear activities.

Early Life

Kim was born to a farming family on 3 Dec. 1925. He came top of his school in his final examinations but poverty prevented him from having a university education. Kim took an office job with a Japanese-owned firm. When the Japanese occupation of Korea ended in 1945, Kim took over the firm. His business acumen helped the company prosper and he became a wealthy man.

As a successful businessman, Kim fell victim to the Communists during the Korean War (1950–53). Sentenced to death, he managed to escape capture. After the Korean War, he became one of the most eloquent voices of opposition in an increasingly authoritarian South Korea. He opposed the policies of President Rhee and then the military junta of General Park.

After several unsuccessful campaigns, Kim was eventually elected to the National Assembly in 1961. In 1970, Kim was elected leader of the opposition Korean Democratic Party. The following year he stood against Park for the presidency. In elections, generally regarded to be flawed, he still won more than 40% of the votes cast.

As President Park's rule became more dictatorial, opposition was increasingly risky. While he was in Japan, Kim was kidnapped and smuggled out of the country by the Korean secret service in 1973. The incident severely strained relations between Tokyo and Seoul. Kim's detention was brief.

In 1976 Kim's campaign for the restoration of democracy to South Korea led to his arrest. This time, he was detained for 3 years. Released just before Park was assassinated, Kim continued his fight for a democratic South Korea. However, he was arrested again by Park's successor, President Chun. Kim was sentenced to death but international protests, and pressure from the United States, led to the sentence being commuted to life imprisonment. This was later reduced to 20 years.

In 1982 Kim was allowed out of prison to receive medical treatment in the United States. He was not allowed back home until 1985 when he regained the leadership of the opposition. He ran for the presidency twice and lost in 1987 and 1992. In 1995 Kim founded a new political party, the National Congress for New Politics, now called the Millennium Democratic Party. By 1997 the political climate in South Korea had thawed but the system was also corrupt and inefficient. Kim won the 1997 presidential election, taking office in 1998.

Career Peak

In office Kim concentrated on ways to improve relations with the Communist North. His 'sunshine Policy' allowed South Korea to invest in the North. Also, a limited number of South Koreans are able to visit their relatives in the North. Kim held an unprecedented summit with Kim Jong-Il, the then leader of North Korea, in 2000. Both leaders agreed on reunification as a goal. Later that year Kim Dae-jung won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to improve relations on the Korean peninsula.

However, relations deteriorated in late June 2002 after a naval battle in the Yellow Sea between North and South forces killed four South Korean and around 30 North Korean sailors. The North Korean president, Kim Jong, blamed the US and South Korea for the attack. Kim Dae-jung suspended rice shipments to the north and demanded an apology.

In by-elections 2 months later, the opposition Grand National Party gained a majority in the assembly when it took 11 of the 13 seats contested. At the same time, parliament rejected Kim's two nominees for the largely ceremonial role of prime minister, Chang Sang and Chang Dae-Whan. Furthermore, earlier in the year his family became embroiled in a corruption scandal for which he apologized in April 2002. Kim was constitutionally

barred from standing in the presidential elections of Dec. 2002 but the Millennium Democratic candidate, Roh Moo-hyun, secured victory. Roh Moo-hyun replaced Kim in Feb. 2003 and was expected to continue his predecessor's effort to find a diplomatic solution to the dispute over North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

Kim died of heart failure on 19 Aug. 2009 after a long battle with pneumonia.

Kim Il-sung (North Korea)

Introduction

Kim Il-sung was the founder of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the originator of the Juche (self-help) philosophy. Routinely referred to in North Korea as the 'Great Leader', he remains the centre of an unprecedented personality cult. Kim is addressed by many titles including 'The Greatest Genius the World has Known'. Every North Korean must wear a metal badge bearing a picture of the Great Leader and every home must display his portrait on the wall. Upon his death in 1994, Kim Il-sung was proclaimed Eternal President, and his son, and successor, Kim Jong-il left the presidency vacant.

Early Life

Kim was born on 15 April 1912 near Pyongyang. His original name was Kim Song-ju. In 1925, Kim's parents fled to neighbouring Manchuria to escape Japanese rule. During the 1930s, Kim joined a guerrilla group that fought the Japanese army of occupation in Korea. At this time, he adopted the name Kim Il-sung, the name of an earlier guerrilla leader who also fought the Japanese. His talents were spotted by his superiors who sent him to the Soviet Union for training.

During World War II (1939–45), Kim led a Korean brigade in the Soviet Army. When Japanese rule in Korea ended in 1945, and a Soviet zone of administration was established in the country, Kim returned to the peninsula with other Soviet-educated leaders. In Oct. 1945, they founded the (Communist) Korean Workers' Party. Kim became the first General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party. Then, in Sept. 1948, a Communist government was established in Pyongyang, effectively partitioning Korea between a Communist North and a pro-Western South. North Korean sources give a different version of events, picturing Kim as the heroic leader of a guerrilla force based at Paekdusan, Korea's highest mountain, from where he drove the Japanese out in 1945.

Career Peak

Kim became the prime minister of the first government of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea in Sept. 1948. In office Kim initially achieved some success in raising living standards and in improving access to health and educational facilities. But, from the outset, his regime allowed no criticism. He attempted to reunite the partitioned country by invading the South in 1950. This action began the Korean War. Early military successes saw South Korea reduced to a rump around Pusan and other coastal cities, but US-led United Nations forces reversed the flow of the conflict. Only the intervention of Chinese forces supporting Kim prevented much of North Korea from being overrun.

The war ended in stalemate and partition confirmed. Kim set about tightening his grip on his country. He removed the last potential rivals to power and established an absolute dictatorship that soon became internationally known for its austerity. Into this militaristic society, Kim introduced his philosophy of Juche, by which the country was to develop without any help from outside. Industrialisation gathered pace in the later 1950s and the 1960s despite North Korea's international isolation. However, by the late 1970s North Korea had fallen far behind its southern neighbour and a period of stagnation began.

To strengthen his position, Kim introduced the personality cult that came to characterise his rule. This policy became more extreme after 1972 when he abandoned the premiership and assumed the presidency.

Kim maintained close relations with China and the Soviet Union, and maintained hostility towards the United States and South Korea. When the

Soviet Union collapsed in 1990–91 economic aid from Russia dried up. At the same time, the barter system that Pyongyang had negotiated with Moscow also ended. This coincided with an economic crisis that included a food shortage and widespread famine. Kim's policy of isolationism prevented news from outside from becoming public knowledge. North Koreans were unaware of how economically backward their country had become. They were told that famine was a world-wide problem and that their state was better off than most.

Kim Il-sung groomed his less charismatic son, Kim Jong-il, for the succession and created the first Communist dynasty. However, the elder Kim's death in office on 8 July 1994 left a vacuum at the centre of North Korean politics and society. Since his death, veneration of the Great Leader has intensified and has reached quasi-religious proportions.

Kim Jong-il (North Korea)

Introduction

Kim Jong-il was the second ruler of the world's only Communist dynasty. Groomed to succeed his father, Kim Il-Sung, the founder of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Kim junior was commonly known to his countrymen as the 'Dear Leader'. North Korea's nuclear weapons programme caused international unease, particularly from Oct. 2006 when the country claimed to have carried out its first nuclear test. Multilateral talks with the USA, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea on disabling the North's nuclear facilities made stuttering progress and suspicions remained about the true ambitions of Kim's secretive regime.

Early Life

According to some accounts, Kim Jong-il was born on 16 Feb. 1941 on Paekdusan, the highest mountain in Korea, although it is probable he was born in the Siberian city of Khabarovsk, where his father was based at the time.

Kim Jong-il returned with his family to Korea after World War II, only to be sent to China for safety at the outbreak of the Korean War (1950–53). Thereafter, he grew up in North Korea, apart from a brief period in East Germany training to be a pilot. On his return he studied at the Kim Il-sung University in Pyongyang.

From the early 1960s Kim Jong-il was groomed to succeed his father and was named as his heir in 1980. During the 1970s and 1980s he was appointed to various high offices, beginning with election to the Korean Workers' Party (KWP) Politburo in 1974, and in Dec. 1991 he took over the country's armed forces.

Career Peak

Following Kim Il-sung's death in 1994, Kim Jong-il did not immediately assume any of his father's offices of state. He became general secretary of the KWP in 1997 and chairman of the National Defence Commission, a role that is effectively head of state. He maintained spending on the military, considered the base of his support, and encouraged the development of a missile programme. His regime was widely perceived to have nuclear ambitions and in Jan. 2002 US President George Bush labelled North Korea part of an 'axis of evil' with Iraq and Iran.

In 2000 he received the then South Korean president Kim Dae-jung on an unprecedented visit. Although the two leaders agreed that reunification was the eventual aim of both Koreas, relations deteriorated in June 2002 after a naval engagement in the Yellow Sea between North and South forces. In Sept. 2002 the then Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi visited North Korea in a move to re-establish diplomatic relations, although Kim was forced to admit to, and apologize for, the kidnapping of 11 Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s. In Oct. 2002 North Korea admitted to developing nuclear technology in contravention of an agreement signed with the USA in 1994. The crisis intensified in Dec. 2002 and Jan. 2003 when North Korea reactivated a nuclear plant and demanded the withdrawal of inspectors from the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). North Korea then announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

President Bush responded with proposals for a 'tailored containment' strategy, potentially involving economic sanctions.

Relations with the international community deteriorated further in early 2003. The IAEA formally reported North Korea to the UN Security Council for failing to comply with nuclear non-proliferation accords. Pyongyang responded by asserting its capability to attack US interests throughout the world if provoked. Kim then withdrew from border liaison negotiations with US officials and the North Korean parliament increased its defence budget. Pyongyang had earlier claimed that joint military exercises between the USA and South Korea, which coincided with the invasion of Iraq, were a sign that the USA intended to launch strikes on the North's nuclear establishments. In April 2003 Chinese-brokered talks with the USA ended acrimoniously and the following month Pyongyang announced its withdrawal from a 1992 accord with South Korea guaranteeing the Korean peninsula as a nuclear weapon-free zone.

In July 2003 Pyongyang claimed to have produced enough plutonium to start making nuclear bombs. Over the next 3 years there were several rounds of inconclusive negotiations between North Korea and the USA, together with South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. Kim's regime admitted publicly in Feb. 2005 that it had built nuclear weapons for self-defence before agreeing in principle in Sept. 2005 to give up its development programme in return for aid and security guarantees. However, that accord was almost immediately undermined when North Korea then demanded the delivery of civil nuclear equipment. In July 2006 North Korea test-fired seven missiles in defiance of international warnings, and on 9 Oct. announced that it had carried out its first nuclear test. Reflecting worldwide condemnation, the UN Security Council voted to impose punitive sanctions, which Kim's regime called an act of war. However, as the crisis threatened to escalate further, Pyongyang announced at the end of Oct. that it would rejoin multilateral negotiations with the USA, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea, on dismantling its nuclear programme.

The talks resumed in Dec. 2006 and in Feb. 2007 North Korea agreed to shut its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon in return for fuel aid. Although implementation of the agreement was initially delayed, due to the freezing of North Korean funds under US-instigated international sanctions, inspectors were able to verify in July that Yongbyon had been shut down. There were further grounds for optimism in Oct. 2007 when Kim Jong-il met the South Korean president in Pyongyang for only the second-ever summit between the leaders of the divided peninsula since the Korean War. At the same time, at further multilateral talks in Beijing, North Korea agreed to declare all its nuclear development programmes by the end of 2007. However, Kim Jong-il failed to honour this commitment, giving no explanation for missing the deadline.

In June 2008 Pyongyang submitted its overdue declaration of nuclear assets, but fresh concerns over its intentions were triggered in Sept. by its threat to resume plutonium reprocessing. However, in Oct. the USA agreed to remove the North from its list of states that sponsor terrorism in return for full access for IAEA inspectors to nuclear sites. Meanwhile, Kim Jong-il's absence from public events fuelled speculation from mid-2008 over the state of his health.

International tensions increased again from late 2008 and in April 2009 North Korea walked out of negotiations on its nuclear activities. The following month a second underground nuclear weapon test was conducted, prompting worldwide condemnation, and the government declared that it would no longer be bound by the armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953. In response, the UN Security Council voted unanimously in June to impose new sanctions on the North. Some optimism was generated in Oct. when Pyongyang indicated that it might be willing to resume the international talks on the nuclear issue. However, in 2010 there was further serious friction between North and South Korea. In Jan. there were renewed military exchanges near their disputed maritime border. In March a South Korean naval vessel was sunk, killing 46 seamen, in an unexplained explosion for which the South blamed the North. Then, in Nov., North Korea launched an artillery attack on a small South Korean island close to the two countries' maritime border, which killed four people and prompted international condemnation. North-South contact eventually resumed in July 2011 as envoys from each side held their first nuclear talks since the collapse of negotiations in 2009.

In parliamentary elections in the North in March 2009, the 687 candidates nominated by the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland (led by the Korean Workers' Party) were returned unopposed, and the following month the Supreme People's Assembly confirmed Kim Jong-il as Chairman of the National Defence Commission.

In a rare public apology to the people by the Pyongyang regime, in Feb. 2010 the prime minister acknowledged that a redenomination of the *won* in Nov. 2009 had led to a currency collapse, triggering steep price rises and threatening famine. In the same month lavish celebrations marked Kim Jong-il's birthday, although rumours of his declining health continued to circulate.

In Sept. 2010 Kim Jong-un, the youngest son of Kim Jong-il, was promoted to senior positions within the government and the KWP leading to strong speculation that he was to be named Kim Jong-il's successor. On 19 Dec. 2011 state-run television announced that Kim Jong-il had died 2 days earlier whilst on a train visiting an area outside Pyongyang. According to the official KCNA news agency, the 69-year-old suffered a heart attack owing to physical and mental over-work. His son, Kim Jong-un, was announced as Jong-il's heir and 'the great successor'.

King, Martin Luther, Jr (United States of America)

Introduction

Martin Luther King was an influential black Baptist minister who was a figurehead for the Civil Rights movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968. Through his non-violent tactics, King helped end the legal segregation of blacks in the southern states and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

Early Life

King was born on 15 Jan. 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, the son of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. and Alberta Williams. His family were staunch Baptists and at the age of 15, King was accepted by Morehouse College before graduating high school under a special programme for exceptionally gifted children. King studied at Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania and was ordained as a minister in 1948 at the age of 19. At Crozer he studied the non-violent philosophies of Mohanda Gandhi and was awarded his bachelor of divinity in 1951 before going on to Boston University where he was awarded a PhD in 1955.

While studying in Boston, King met Coretta Scott, a student at the New England Conservatory of Music. The couple married in 1953 and went on to have four children. In 1954 King was made pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1955 King became leader of the Montgomery Improvement Association, a group formed to boycott the city's segregated bus system. Despite threats to his family and an attack on his home, King held firm and just over a year later the city's bus system was desegregated.

In 1957 King founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to press for further reforms and to bring the issue of civil rights to a wider audience. His involvement with the SCLC led him to resign his position at Dexter Avenue and move back to Atlanta in 1959 where he was appointed co-pastor with his father of Ebenezer Baptist Church. As head of the SCLC King lectured throughout the country and met a wide variety of political and religious figures.

Career Peak

From 1960 to 1965 King led a series of non-violent marches and sit-ins to bring about civil rights reform. In all he was arrested 30 times for his involvement in civil rights activities and was jailed in 1963 along with other demonstrators protesting against segregation. On 28 Aug. 1963 King helped organize the famous March on Washington when 200,000 people marched on the nation's capital to demand equal rights. After gathering by the Lincoln Memorial, King delivered a famous speech in which he outlined his 'dream' and belief that all men could live together as brothers, regardless of race.

The march helped swing public opinion behind the civil rights movement and in 1964 president Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, which ended segregation in public accommodation and facilities and outlawed discrimination of employment. At the end of the year King's contribution to the Civil Rights movement was recognized by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Over the next 3 years, King's tactics were challenged by militant black groups who questioned his creed of non-violence. King's critics felt that the pace of civil rights reform was too slow, despite the introduction of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. However King remained committed to non-violence and in 1967 he led a rally condemning American military involvement in Vietnam.

In the early part of 1968, King was planning a Poor People's March to Washington when he visited Memphis, Tennessee to lend his support to a strike by sanitation workers. On 4 April he was shot and killed while standing on the balcony of his motel. James Earl Ray was arrested for his murder in London, England later that year and extradited back to the United States where he pleaded guilty to King's murder. He was convicted in 1969 and sentenced to 99 years in jail. Since 1986 the United States has observed a national holiday in King's honour on the third Monday of every Jan.

King, Stephenson (St Lucia)

Introduction

Stephenson King took office in Sept. 2007 to become St Lucia's ninth prime minister since independence in 1979. He succeeded Sir John Compton, who died in office, and served until Nov. 2011.

Early Life

King was born on 13 Nov. 1958. He entered parliament in 1987, representing the United Workers Party (UWP), and was appointed minister for community development, social affairs, youth and sport. He held a range of portfolios in the governments of Sir John Compton in the 1990s including health, local government, and information and broadcasting. From 1997–2006 the UWP was in opposition, with King serving in various capacities, including party general secretary. After winning the Castries North seat for the UWP in the Dec. 2006 general election, King was appointed minister for health and labour relations.

Career Peak

From May to Sept. 2007 King served as acting prime minister as Compton's health went into decline. Compton died on 7 Sept. Amid rumours that two UWP MPs were withholding support for King to succeed Compton unless they were given cabinet posts, all ten UWP representatives in the House of Assembly finally agreed on his appointment. King was sworn in as prime minister by Governor-General Dame Pearlette Louisy on 9 Sept.

In his first cabinet, King appointed himself minister of finance (including international financial services), external affairs, home affairs and national security. Tackling gang culture and the drugs trade was his first priority. He also sought US investment for the development of Castries into a major cruise ship and yachting destination. In late 2007, following wide-ranging price rises across the Caribbean, King announced price caps on certain food items. In Dec. 2007 the government launched a scheme to increase youth employment by providing private sector-driven training.

In Nov. 2007 a by-election candidate claimed that he was offered a position in the economics department if he suspended his campaign in favour of the daughter of the late Sir John Compton.

King suffered defeat in the general election held on 28 Nov. 2011, with his UWP receiving only six out of 17 seats in Parliament. He was succeeded by the opposition leader and former prime minister Kenny Anthony.

Kinnock, Neil (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Neil Kinnock was leader of the Labour Party from 1983–92 and, while never achieving electoral victory, was instrumental in reforming the party and

paving the way for the Blairite era. On resigning the party leadership, Kinnock left the domestic political arena to become a UK commissioner at the European Commission before taking a seat in the House of Lords.

Early Life

Neil Gordon Kinnock was born on 28 March 1942 in Tredegar, South Wales. He studied industrial relations and history at Cardiff University before taking a postgraduate qualification in education.

In 1970 he entered the House of Commons as the member for Bedwellty (which became Islwyn in 1983), gaining a reputation as a leading light on the party's left wing. In 1975 he voted against Prime Minister Harold Wilson's spending cuts, designed to counter a currency crisis, and later refused junior office in the government of Jim Callaghan. Kinnock joined the shadow cabinet in 1980 as its education spokesman, winning prominence during the difficult years of Michael Foot's party leadership.

Career Peak

Kinnock was elected leader of the Labour party following the resignation of Foot, who had overseen the disastrous 1983 general election. The early phase of Kinnock's leadership was dominated by his conflict with the party's hard left Militant Tendency, a contributory factor in Labour's failure at the polls. The clash came to a head when Kinnock attacked Militant (and specifically its influence within Liverpool's council) at the 1985 party conference.

There followed a series of expulsions of Militant figures from the party as Kinnock, assisted by his director of communications, Peter Mandelson, began to renew Labour's image. The expulsions were generally well received, as was Kinnock's opposition to the hardline tactics of the miners' trade union leader, Arthur Scargill, during the long-running dispute with the Conservative government over pit closures. The party also adopted a new emblem, a red rose.

However, as Labour approached the 1987 election Kinnock was criticized for, among other things, his continued commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament. Though avoiding the humiliation of being overtaken by the Social Democrats, Labour were unable to stop the Conservatives winning with a parliamentary majority of close to 200.

In 1988 Kinnock successfully defended his leadership against a challenge from the Left-wing Tony Benn, ushering in a period when the party re-established itself as a viable alternative to the Conservatives, as they were wrenched apart by disagreement over the poll tax and Europe, culminating in the removal from office of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1990. As the 1992 general elections neared, Labour was considered a likely winner. However, with much of the press lampooning Kinnock as a 'Welsh windbag' and after a number of public relations disasters (including a triumphalist party rally a week before the elections), Thatcher's successor, John Major, led the Conservatives to a fourth consecutive election victory. Clearly shocked by the defeat, Kinnock and his deputy, Roy Hattersley, resigned as leader and deputy leader of the party.

Later Life

Kinnock remained in parliament until 1995 and then served as a British commissioner in the European Commission from 1995–2004, taking an active role in reforming and streamlining the organization. In 2004 he became chairman of the British Council and also served as president of Cardiff University. Kinnock was made Baron Kinnock of Bedwellty in 2005.

Kirchner, Néstor (Argentina)

Introduction

Néstor Kirchner, a Peronist, was president of Argentina from May 2003 until Dec. 2007. Following the withdrawal of his opponent, Carlos Menem, from a run-off, Kirchner took office with only 22% support from a first round of voting. His tenure was largely focused on trying to restore Argentina's

faltering economy. He did not stand for a further term in 2007 and was replaced as president by his wife, Cristina.

Early Life

Kirchner was born on 25 Feb. 1950 in Río Gallegos in the Santa Cruz province. In 1976 he graduated in law from La Universidad Nacional de La Plata and became active in the Justicialist Party and the Peronist youth movement.

In 1983 he took a job in the local government of Río Gallegos and in 1987 was elected mayor. He ran an efficient administration and in 1991 was elected governor of Santa Cruz. The province had one of the strongest economies in the country, benefiting from high oil revenues and a low population, and Kirchner won a reputation for his financial skills. However, he was criticized for depositing public money in Swiss and Luxembourgian banks and for unpopular spending cuts. He introduced changes to the regional constitution allowing him to keep the governorship for multiple terms and was re-elected in 1995 and 1999.

At the presidential elections of 2003 Kirchner represented Frente para la Victoria (Front for Victory), the Peronist grouping of incumbent president Eduardo Duhalde, against seven opponents. Kirchner won 22% of the vote in the first round while former president Carlos Menem, representing a rival Peronist group, polled 24%. Menem's opposition rallied behind Kirchner in the build-up to the run-off and, facing heavy defeat, Menem withdrew from the race. The move further splintered the already divided Peronists and left Kirchner without the clear mandate many observers considered essential to the rebuilding of the Argentinian economy. Kirchner was sworn in on 25 May 2003.

Career Peak

Kirchner sought to repair the economy which was in a fragile state after the crisis of Dec. 2001. Following his election, in a bid to win support from the commercial sector, he retained Roberto Lavagna, a Duhalde-appointment, as finance minister (Lavagna having been widely praised for restoring some economic stability in the aftermath of the 2001 crash). Once in office Kirchner set about persuading creditors to overlook defaulted debt repayments worth billions of dollars and instead accept repayments on the balance over several decades. He also undertook a purge of the national defence forces and the police.

In Aug. 2003 congress abolished amnesty laws that provided members of the repressive military regime of 1976–83 with immunity from prosecution for alleged human rights abuses. Kirchner, who had himself been briefly imprisoned by the military junta, had vowed to end this immunity, stating that 'a society without justice or memory does not have a destiny.'

Argentina failed to make a US\$3 bn. debt repayment on 10 Sept. 2003, fuelling fears that Kirchner's government would fail in its attempt to turn the economy around. However, the following day an agreement was struck with the IMF for a 3-year aid plan. US\$21 bn. of debt was refinanced in a bid to put Argentina back on the road to solvency. Kirchner has since taken much of the credit for a recovery that saw the economy grow by around 9% in both 2004 and 2005, although poverty and unemployment remained at high levels. In March 2005 he declared the restructuring of the country's sovereign debt to have been completed and in Jan. 2006 Argentina paid off its debts to the IMF in full.

In congressional elections on 23 Oct. 2005, Peronist supporters of Kirchner won 69 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Despite facing a series of scandals, including the resignation of his economics minister when a bag containing US\$60,000 was found in her office, Kirchner's popularity remained high. Ahead of elections in 2007, his poll rating was around 60%. However, in July 2007 he announced his intention not to stand for another term. Instead his wife, Cristina, ran for the presidency and comfortably won the election in Oct. 2007. Power was handed from husband to wife on 10 Dec.

Later Life

After leaving office, Kirchner continued to exert considerable political influence as head of the ruling Front for Victory party. However, he suffered a blow in the June 2009 legislative elections when they lost their majority in both houses and ceded the traditional Peronist stronghold of Buenos Aires Province district to the Republican Proposal. He was also subject to investigation over allegations that he authorized spying on political opponents

during his time in office. In May 2010 he was unanimously elected to head the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

In 2010 Kirchner's health deteriorated. He underwent heart surgery in Feb. 2010 and again in Sept. 2010 following a heart attack. Strong rumours still circulated that he intended to run for president in 2011 but he died suddenly from heart failure on 27 Oct. He was granted a state funeral and the government declared 3 days of national mourning.

Kirkilas, Gediminas (Lithuania)

Introduction

Taking office as prime minister of Lithuania in July 2006, Gediminas Kirkilas headed the country's 14th government in 15 years. His appointment ended a political crisis that had started in May when Algirdas Brazauskas, leader of the centre-left Social Democrats, resigned as premier. Kirkilas' tenure ended in Oct. 2008 when his party was defeated at the general election.

Early Life

Gediminas Kirkilas was born on 30 Aug. 1951 in Vilnius, Lithuania, then a Soviet Socialist Republic. Having completed military service with the Navy in 1972 he worked at the monument restoration trust as an interior restorer. He studied Lithuanian language and literature at Vilnius' teacher training college and began working for the central committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) in 1982. Promoted to the department of culture in 1986 he was the assistant to Algirdas Brazauskas, who became first secretary of the LCP in Oct. 1988.

As communism weakened, Kirkilas and Brazauskas were part of a group of pro-independence communists who formed the Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (LDDP), modelling the movement on Western social democratic principles. As deputy chairman, Kirkilas helped guide the party to victory in parliamentary elections on 26 Oct. 1992, winning 75 out of 141 parliamentary seats. Brazauskas went on to win the presidential election of Feb. 1993.

Serving on the foreign affairs committee and as a delegate to the North Atlantic Assembly in the mid-1990s, Kirkilas developed closer ties with Baltic neighbours and Scandinavian states and took part in early negotiations to join NATO. He was re-elected to parliament (*Seimas*) in Oct. 1996, although the LDDP lost to the conservative Homeland Union amid corruption scandals and public resentment at continuing high levels of unemployment and poverty.

In Jan. 2001 the LDDP merged with the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) to form the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (also known as LSDP), led by Brazauskas. In 2002 Kirkilas was appointed special representative to the president (Valdas Adamkus) on the thorny issue of transport routes through Lithuania between Russia and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. He also worked closely with Brazauskas (who had become prime minister in June 2001) to implement the reforms needed for EU membership. Lithuania joined the EU in May 2004.

Kirkilas was re-elected to the *Seimas* in the Oct. 2004 elections in which no party won overall control. Brazauskas agreed to form a broad power-sharing coalition (including the Labour Party, which had won the most seats). Having been nominated by the president in Dec. 2004 to continue as prime minister, Brazauskas appointed Kirkilas as defence minister. When a series of scandals forced the Labour Party to pull out of the ruling coalition in May 2006, Brazauskas found himself without a majority in parliament and resigned. The president nominated Kirkilas for the premiership, and after this was approved by parliament he was sworn in on 4 July 2006.

Career Peak

Kirkilas formed a four-party coalition government comprising the LSDP, the Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union (formerly the Peasants' and New Democratic Party Union), the Liberal and Centre Union, and Civil Democracy (a group which broke away from the Labour Party in May 2006). His priorities were Lithuanian membership of the Schengen area and the eurozone. He also pledged to promote education and access to health care

and promised to maintain the economy's robust growth by promoting high-tech industries and attracting investors to regional centres such as the port of Klaipėda.

At the general election of Oct. 2008 Kirkilas' Social Democrats came second to the Homeland Union party, which formed a new government.

Kissinger, Henry A. (United States of America)

Introduction

Henry Alfred Kissinger was US national security advisor from 1969–75 and secretary of state from 1973–77. A major force in shaping American foreign policy under Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford, Kissinger was jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with North Vietnamese counterpart Le Duc Tho for his efforts in ending the Vietnam War.

Early Life

Born in Fürth, Germany on 27 May 1923, Kissinger and his family emigrated to the United States in 1943 to escape Nazi persecution. He was naturalized on 19 June 1943 and served in the US counter-intelligence corps from 1943–46. After the war, Kissinger studied at Harvard. After gaining a BA he went on to be awarded a PhD in 1954. From 1954 until 1971 Kissinger taught at Harvard in the department of government and the center for international affairs, also serving as director of the Defense Studies Program from 1959–69.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s he held numerous advisory posts which brought him into contact with the administrations of Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. He was study director of nuclear weapons and foreign policy for the council of foreign relations from 1955–56 and director of the special studies project for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund from 1956–58.

Kissinger's 1957 book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, helped establish him as a leading authority on foreign and strategic policy. He proposed a policy of 'flexible response' in the event of a nuclear attack as opposed to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' concept of 'massive retaliation'.

Career Peak

After Nixon was elected President in 1968, Kissinger was appointed assistant for national security affairs and became head of the national security council a year later. He worked for more cordial US–Soviet relations which led to the SALT I arms agreement of 1972. He also helped initiate a rapprochement with China. When Nixon was re-elected president in 1972 Kissinger was appointed the 56th US Secretary of State. He was sworn in on 22 Sept. 1973.

Advocating a hard-line policy towards North Vietnam, Kissinger helped plan the bombing of Cambodia in 1969–70. However by 1973, he was negotiating for the withdrawal of troops from South Vietnam. A cease-fire agreement and an outline for a permanent peace was announced on 23 Jan. 1973 for which Kissinger was later jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, along with North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho. The same year, Kissinger played a major role in securing a truce that ended the Arab–Israeli War.

Later Life

After Nixon's resignation in 1974, Kissinger continued in office until 1977. He then formed his own company, Kissinger Associates, which advised on foreign investment and affairs. He also continued to write and lecture. In Nov. 2002 he was appointed by President George W. Bush to head a commission to investigate the failure of intelligence agencies to prevent the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks on New York and Washington. But shortly after he resigned from the post citing the conflict between his public role and his private business. Kissinger had been reluctant to make public details of Kissinger Associates.

Earlier in 2002, Kissinger was called as a witness by a Chilean judge investigating US involvement in the 1973 Chilean coup which overthrew the Socialist president Salvador Allende, and also by French and Spanish judges investigating the same period.

Kiviniemi, Mari (Finland)

Introduction

After Matti Vanhanen stood down, Mari Kiviniemi became prime minister in June 2010 as leader of the Centre Party, heading a centre-right coalition in power since 2003. Aiming to reduce the budget deficit through improvements in productivity, she led her party to fourth place at elections in April 2011. Her tenure continued as opposition parties sought to establish a coalition and she left office 2 months later.

Early Life

Born in Seinäjoki on 27 Sept. 1968 Kiviniemi was educated in Jalasjärvi before moving to the University of Helsinki to study economics in 1988. She became secretary general of the Centre Party student union and stood unsuccessfully for parliament in 1991. During this period she also became active in the Norden Association, a non-party political organization promoting co-operation between Nordic countries. From 1990–92 she was vice-chair of its Youth League in Finland and between 1998 and 2003 held a series of posts in the Pohjanmaa region.

In 1994 she completed a master's degree in social sciences. In 1995 she was elected to parliament for the Centre Party, representing a constituency in Etelä-Pohjanmaa. Over the next 12 years she served on the supervisory boards of various institutions, including Leonia Bank, the alcoholic beverage monopoly Alko, the food company Lännen Tehtaat Oyj and the Finnish National Fund for Research and Development. She was vice-chair on the parliamentary commerce committee in 1999 and again from 2000–03. She served on the parliamentary grand committee from 2003–07 and was twice vice-chair of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee (2003–04 and 2006–07).

In 2004, following the victory of the Centre Party's coalition in the previous year's general elections, Kiviniemi was appointed special adviser to Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen. From 2005–06 she served as minister for foreign trade and development, and minister at the prime minister's office. In 2007 she was appointed minister of public administration and local government, and minister at the ministry of the interior. She oversaw the merging of several municipalities, attracting criticism that the move would reduce the influence of Swedish-speaking Finns.

In Dec. 2009, with the Centre Party's support dropping in the face of economic problems and allegations of a funding scandal, Vanhanen announced his resignation. Kiviniemi bid to replace him in early 2010, arguing that Finland's economic problems could be addressed by improving productivity and introducing modest tax rises, while avoiding deep spending cuts. Appealing to the liberal urban electorate (and benefiting from being untainted by the funding allegations), she was elected with 57% of the vote. She took office as prime minister on 22 June 2010.

Career Peak

Kiviniemi's tenure began with the formulation of a national growth programme, which identified the green economy as an area of opportunity. In Aug. 2010 she called for closer co-operation between the EU and Russia. Attaching great importance to Russia, in Dec. 2010 she visited Prime Minister Putin to discuss developing trade relations. Her chief challenges included the budget deficit, the fallout of the global economic downturn and the strain placed on the economy by a rapidly ageing population.

Kiviniemi was succeeded by Jyrki Katainen, who formed a coalition after his National Coalition Party won the elections of April 2011.

Later Life

In June 2014 Kiviniemi was appointed a deputy secretary general of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Klaus, Václav (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Dr Václav Klaus was the first Czech minister of finance following the Velvet Revolution of 1989. He was elected prime minister in 1992 and oversaw the Republic's transition from a state-planned economy to a free market system, initially outstripping the economic growth of the other post-communist nations in the region. Having resigned in 1997 following a party financing scandal, he succeeded Václav Havel as president in March 2003 and was re-elected in Feb. 2008. A noted eurosceptic, Klaus was the last head of state to sign the European Union's Lisbon Treaty on institutional and administrative reform in Nov. 2009.

Early Life

Born on 19 April 1941 in Prague, Klaus graduated from the Prague School of Economics in 1963, continuing his education in Naples, Italy and at Cornell University in New York. He was then a researcher at the Institute of Economics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences until 1970, during which time he came into contact with Václav Havel, the dissident writer and future Czech president.

From 1971 until 1987, Klaus held posts at the Czechoslovak State Bank before joining the Academy of Sciences' Economic Forecasting Institute. On 17 Nov. 1989, in the infancy of the Velvet Revolution, Klaus discovered that his son had escaped a beating from police in Prague. Two days later he joined the Civic Forum movement that would be instrumental in the overthrow of the communist regime. He was appointed finance minister in the first post-revolution government in Dec. 1989, implementing a range of reformist policies.

The Civic Forum, as a loose anti-communist alliance, began to splinter and Klaus joined the centre-right ODS, which aimed to restructure, deregulate and liberalize the market. He became party chairman in April 1991, deputy premier in Oct. and prime minister in June 1992 following the ODS electoral victory.

Career Peak

Following the split with Slovakia, the Czech Republic underwent rapid reform and privatization, and Klaus was acclaimed internationally as the architect of an economic miracle. However, the ODS fared less well than expected at the July 1996 elections and the governing coalition lost its majority in the House of Representatives. Klaus' authority within the ODS was further weakened that year by a public feud with his foreign minister, Josef Zieleniec. The economy was also beginning to suffer, and there followed a series of crisis budgets, austerity measures and ultimately devaluation in 1997. Further problems for Klaus included the resignation of Zieleniec, popular protests against the government and damaging corruption allegations concerning ODS party funding. The charges concerned improper donations in return for preferential treatment in relation to privatization and Zieleniec publicly declared that Klaus had been aware of certain key donations. President Havel called for the government to step down and Klaus resigned on 29 Nov. 1997, although he denied any wrongdoing. However, he retained significant influence as speaker of the Chamber of Deputies from 1998–2002. In Jan. 2003 he twice stood for election to the presidency in succession to Havel but, despite winning most votes on both occasions, failed to secure the requisite 50%. Havel resigned on 3 Feb. 2003 and Klaus was chosen to succeed him at the third attempt.

In June 2003 membership of the EU, scheduled for 2004, won 77% approval in a national referendum. Klaus, however, had described entry into the EU as a 'marriage of convenience rather than love'. Parliamentary elections in June 2006 resulted in a political stalemate until Sept., when a centre-right minority administration took office under Mirek Topolánek of the ODS. However, this government collapsed the following month. In Nov. Klaus again designated Topolánek as prime minister and a new coalition took office in Jan. 2007. Klaus was re-elected for a second term in Feb. 2008.

Topolánek resigned in March 2009 after his government lost a parliamentary vote of confidence and Klaus appointed Jan Fischer, an economist, as interim prime minister. Meanwhile, with the Czech Republic having assumed the 6-month presidency of the EU in Jan. 2009, Klaus made plain his distrust

of the Union's Lisbon Treaty for national sovereignty reasons. However, having unsuccessfully sought a national opt-out from aspects of the treaty, Klaus eventually signed it in Nov. 2009 following a ruling by the Czech Constitutional Court on its legitimacy.

Following inconclusive parliamentary elections in May 2010, in which the Social Democrats (ČSSD) became the largest party but with insufficient support to form a government, Klaus asked Petr Nečas of the ODS, as the second largest party, to form a new centre-right coalition government that took office in July.

Shortly before completing his second term in office the Czech Senate charged Klaus with high treason over a highly controversial prisoner amnesty that he granted in Jan. 2013.

The Czech Republic's first direct presidential elections held in Jan. 2013 were won by Miloš Zeman. Term limits prevented Klaus from seeking re-election.

Klestil, Thomas (Austria)

Introduction

A former high-ranking career diplomat, Klestil won the presidential election as the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) nominee in 1992. He was an effective emissary for Austria's interests in the European Union (EU) and beyond, helping to end Austria's international isolation after the presidency of Kurt Waldheim and to strengthen the country's ties with the emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. In his second term from 1998 he was successful in limiting the international damage arising from the participation of right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ) in the coalition government formed in early 2000. He died after a heart attack 2 days before the end of his second term.

Early Life

Thomas Klestil was born in Vienna on 4 Nov. 1932, the youngest of five children. His father, who died in 1941, came from Bohemia but had lived in Vienna since 1912. Klestil was educated in the capital, achieving a master's degree and doctorate in economics at the College of World Trade (now the University of Economics and Business Administration) in 1956–57. He then started a career in the civil service, joining the Department for Economic and Commercial Affairs in the Federal Chancellery. In 1959 he was assigned to the Austrian delegation to the Organization for European Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris and in 1962 was appointed economic attaché at the Austrian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Returning to Vienna in 1966, he served on the chancellor's personal staff advising on economic policy until his appointment as Austrian consul general in Los Angeles, USA, in 1969. From 1974 Klestil was director of the Foreign Ministry's Office for International Organisations. From 1978–82 he was Austria's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York (during Kurt Waldheim's second term as secretary-general), and then became Austrian ambassador to the USA and to the Organization of American States. Recalled from Washington in 1987, he served as secretary-general for foreign affairs in Vienna until his election as the presidential candidate of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) on 24 May 1992, receiving 56.9% of the vote in the second round.

Career Peak

Following his election Klestil made official visits to restore international links, particularly in Europe. He was a strong supporter of Austria's accession to the EU (approved by referendum in 1994 and achieved on 1 Jan. 1995) and of EU projects such as monetary union and enlargement to include former communist states. He also visited Israel where he expressed sympathy for the Jewish people in a speech before the Knesset. Klestil was a keen supporter of NATO. Austria joined the NATO Partnership for Peace programme following EU accession in 1995 but held back from applying for full membership. Public support for Austria's traditional neutrality was still strong but the accession of Eastern European states to NATO was believed to be crucial for Austrian support for joining the organization.

Although illness and publicity about marital difficulties overshadowed his first term, he was re-elected on 19 April 1998, defeating four contenders by a substantial majority with 63.4% of the vote. This time he stood as an

independent candidate, with the backing of both the ÖVP and SPÖ. He also had the support of the FPÖ, paving the way for its incorporation into a coalition with the ÖVP in Feb. 2000. Klestil married his political aide, Margot Löffler, shortly after his re-election.

The FPÖ, returned as the second strongest party in the 1999 elections, was critical to the formation in Feb. 2000 of the coalition government with the ÖVP. However, with its far-right credentials, its inclusion led to a storm of protest from the international community and Austria's EU partners. Klestil attempted to calm public agitation by declaring that the new government was constitutionally sound, despite personal hostility towards the FPÖ. Klestil also appealed to the EU against political sanctions. Addressing the European Parliament in April 2000, Klestil defended Austria's parliamentary democracy. After submitting to a human rights investigation, sanctions were lifted in Sept. 2000.

Relations with his own party and with the chancellor, Wolfgang Schäussel, deteriorated during his second term, especially after Klestil's opposition to the coalition with the FPÖ. However, when a new coalition was formed with the FPÖ in 2003, Klestil accepted it without criticism.

Klestil died on 6 July 2004 from multiple organ failure after a heart attack.

Kocharyan, Robert (Armenia)

Introduction

Robert Kocharyan served as president of Armenia from 1998 to 2008, having been appointed prime minister a year earlier. He had previously served as premier and president of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian-dominated region at the centre of a dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Kocharyan's past as a leading independence fighter was a source of contention with Azerbaijan throughout his tenure.

Early Life

Kocharyan was born on 31 Aug. 1954 in Stepanakert in Nagorno-Karabakh, then an autonomous region within the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. From 1972–74 he served in the Red Army and in 1982 graduated in electrical engineering from the Polytechnic Institute in Yerevan. As a factory engineer in Stepanakert, he was active within Komsomol (the Soviet youth wing) and the communist party of Karabakh.

Calls for self-determination in Nagorno-Karabakh by the Armenian majority increased during the 1980s. Kocharyan was involved with the Groong movement, which promoted Armenian history and culture, and later founded Miatsum (Unification), which called for reunification with Armenia.

He was elected to the Supreme Council of Armenia in 1989 as the representative for Nagorno-Karabakh. In the same year fighting began in the enclave between Armenian nationalists and the Azeri minority, with Kocharyan a key figure in organizing armed nationalist forces. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991, Kocharyan was elected to the first Supreme Council of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (RNK) and again took responsibility for military organization. Conflict escalated in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Azeri army occupied large areas of the region in 1992. Kocharyan was elected prime minister of the RNK and oversaw the expulsion of Azeri forces. In 1994 RNK and Azerbaijan agreed a ceasefire and a peace process began, brokered by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Kocharyan was elected president of the RNK and set about rebuilding the ravaged economy.

In 1997 he was made prime minister of Armenia by President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, despite having only obtained citizenship a short time before. Ter-Petrosyan resigned over the Nagorno-Karabakh issue in Feb. 1998 and Kocharyan was approved by the electoral commission to stand for the presidency. He stood against Karen Demirchyan in a run-off in March 1998 and won with 59.7% of the vote.

Career Peak

Kocharyan's victory caused some international unease. The USA announced that it would not support any move by Armenia to annex Nagorno-Karabakh, while Azerbaijan viewed the appointment as a 'provocation'.

Faced with a depressed economy, Kocharyan authorized tax cuts in a bid to kick-start the industrial sector and reduce unemployment and attempted to bring in foreign investment. Significant funds were also directed to repairing infrastructure destroyed during an earthquake in 1988.

In Oct. 1999 Armenian Prime Minister Vazgen Sargsyan, the parliamentary speaker and six other officials were shot dead when a gang stormed Yerevan's parliament building. The assassins claimed they wanted to highlight Armenia's economic plight and government mismanagement and corruption. In late 2000 Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to consolidate their ceasefire agreement and in Jan. 2001 jointly gained membership of the Council of Europe.

In presidential elections in Feb. 2003 Kocharyan won a further term, defeating Stepan Demirchyan in a run-off. The OSCE said that the election process 'fell short of international standards in several key respects'. In early 2004 there were sporadic demonstrations calling for his resignation and opposition parties began a boycott of parliament. A referendum on proposed constitutional amendments took place in Nov. 2005. The proposals aimed to enhance the role of parliament while placing some restrictions on presidential powers. Although voters favoured the changes, the opposition protested and claimed that the referendum had been rigged. In May 2006 the Country of Law Party left the pro-Kocharyan governing coalition and joined the opposition.

The issue of Nagorno-Karabakh was a feature of Kocharyan's time in office. Hopes of a breakthrough in negotiations were raised briefly in Feb. 2006 when he met Azerbaijan's President Aliyev in Paris, France, but the two sides failed to agree on a 'declaration of principles' on the disputed territory. In Dec. 2006 voters in the Armenian enclave opted overwhelmingly in a referendum for a constitution declaring their own sovereignty. However, Azerbaijan rejected any move towards independence.

In May 2007 pro-Kocharyan parties headed by the Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) retained power in parliamentary elections which European observers judged to have met international standards.

Later Life

Kocharyan was succeeded as president by his long-time ally Serzh Sargsyan, raising concerns that Kocharyan would continue to exert considerable influence over government policy-making and appointment beyond his official retirement. The 2008 presidential elections (in which Kocharyan did not stand but was the incumbent head of state) were marred by violent protests in their aftermath, in which several people died. Opposition leaders have since tried to pin the blame for the bloodshed on Kocharyan.

Kohl, Helmut (Germany)

Introduction

Helmut Kohl was Chancellor of West Germany between 1982–90 and then of re-unified Germany until 1998. His tenure will be best remembered for the German re-unification that he actively promoted and oversaw following the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Whilst the re-integration was inevitably painful at times, it was speedier and smoother than many observers had predicted. He was also one of the most significant driving forces behind European union and the single European currency. When Kohl fell from power after 16 years, his standing as an international statesman was high. However, his reputation was subsequently blighted by allegations of financial irregularities within his party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), during his time as leader.

Early Life

Kohl was born in Ludwigshafen-am-Rhein on 3 April 1930. His family were Catholic and conservative. He studied at the University of Frankfurt and received a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Heidelberg in 1958. Entering politics the next year, he was elected to the Rhineland-Palatinate state legislature, becoming CDU Deputy Chairman in 1961 and Chairman in 1963. He was Minister-President (Prime Minister) of the state in 1969 and joined the CDU's federal executive in 1966. Three years later he

became Deputy Chairman of the executive and in 1973 he was Chairman. In 1960 he had married Hannelore Renner, with whom he had two children.

Kohl served as Minister-President of Rhineland-Palatinate until 1976 when he was elected to the Bundestag, where he became Christian Democratic floor leader. Kohl lost his bid for the chancellorship in 1976 against Helmut Schmidt, but when Schmidt resigned following the collapse of his government in Oct. 1982 Kohl was voted in as his successor. His appointment was confirmed in general elections held on 6 March the following year when his CDU–Christian Social Union (CSU)–Free Democrats (FDP) coalition achieved a 53 seat majority.

Career Peak

Kohl's early years as Chancellor did not suggest that he would retire as one of the most respected politicians of his age. He was a poor public speaker and was thought to be more suited to domestic than international affairs. Following a conservative line, he reduced public spending on welfare and continued to emphasise West Germany's relationship with the USA and the rest of Western Europe. His party was returned at the general election of Jan. 1987 but with a reduced majority. His popularity fell again and the CDU made losses in the 1989 European and local elections.

Events in the Soviet Union and throughout the rest of the Eastern Bloc completely altered the political scene. When the Berlin Wall fell and the barrier between East and West Germany disappeared in Oct. 1989, many of the West's leaders were hesitant as to what to do next. But Kohl, in his own words, 'grabbed the mantle of history'. In late Nov. 1989 he announced firm proposals for the process of reunification and in Feb. 1990 set out plans to introduce a single German currency. There was anger abroad over his unilateral actions, but in elections held on 18 March 1990 he was shown to have the overwhelming support of the West German public. Reunification negotiations were concluded on 3 Oct. with the signing of the Two-plus-Four Treaty, by which the two states became one.

Pan-German elections were held in Dec. 1990 with Kohl and his party winning a handsome victory. The unification process hit many financial and social obstacles over the following decade, and the massive expenses incurred led to reductions in welfare spending and increases in taxation. Unemployment hovered around 18% among East Germans and the Far Right re-appeared in small clusters, capitalizing on animosity towards immigrants. Moreover, the strong economic growth enjoyed by West Germany since the 1950s began to slow.

The new Germany was quickly recognized internationally and continued to be a major player in world politics. Kohl had been an advocate of increased European unity throughout his political life and he continued with this policy after re-unification, attempting to allay fears of other member states fearful of Germany's increased power. He was instrumental in framing the Maastricht Treaty in the early 1990s, was among the driving forces behind European Monetary Union and was heavily involved in negotiations to provide aid to the former communist nations. Within NATO Germany played a major role in the conflicts in Iraq and in the Balkans during the 1990s.

In Nov. 1994 Kohl was elected to serve another term as Chancellor, albeit with the slimmest margin of his political career. He remained Chancellor until the elections of 27 Sept. 1998, when he was succeeded by Gerhard Schröder (Social Democratic Party/SPD). Kohl's refusal to resign earlier and hand over the leadership of the CDU to his appointed successor Wolfgang Schäuble was widely blamed for the defeat.

Later Life

In 1999 allegations were made regarding CDU funding during Kohl's era. Kohl refused to reveal the sources of several million dollars. In addition, a number of Swiss bank accounts were exposed and it was alleged that certain favoured politicians had received cash gifts from the Kohl regime. In Jan. 2000 Kohl was forced to resign as the party's honorary chairman and he was subject to a criminal investigation. These events marked a rapid decline in Kohl's reputation but his contribution towards German and European integration remains undiminished. His political ideology is epitomized by his comment at the time of re-unification that 'Germany is our fatherland, the united Europe our future'.

Kohl published *Mein Tagebuch* ('My Diary') in 2000. He talked about his life as a politician but does not provide more information about the sources of contribution. He subsequently released two volumes of memoirs in March 2004 and Nov. 2005. Following the suicide of his wife in July 2001, he remarried in April 2008. He died aged 87 on 16 June 2017.

Köhler, Horst (Germany)

Introduction

Horst Köhler took office as federal president of Germany on 1 July 2004, having previously served as the first German managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from 2000–04. Prior to the IMF, he was involved in German financial politics, particularly in regard to German reunification and the European Union Maastricht Treaty negotiations in 1991.

Early Life

Köhler was born on 22 Feb. 1943 in Skierbieszów, Poland. Following the Soviet invasion in the Second World War, his family fled to East Germany. In 1953 they moved into West Germany. He earned a doctorate in economics and politics from the University of Tübingen, where he was a scientific research assistant at the Institute for Applied Economic Research during 1969–76. Between 1976–89 he held various posts in Germany's ministries of economics and finance. He played an important role in the economic planning for Germany's reunification and assisted in providing aid to Russia after the collapse of the USSR. In 1991 Köhler was Germany's lead official in the negotiations that led to the Maastricht Treaty. From 1990–93 he served as Germany's deputy finance minister and from 1993–98 he was president of the German Savings Bank Association. In 1998 Köhler was appointed president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). He took part in focusing the EBRD's priorities on small businesses rather than large infrastructure projects. During his presidency the EBRD improved its finances, from having lost US\$2,528 m. in 1998 to making a profit of US\$41 m. in 1999. In addition he was deputy governor for Germany at the World Bank, and was the personal representative of the federal chancellor in the preparation of the Group of Seven (G7) economic summits from 1990–93.

On 23 March 2000 Köhler was elected managing director and chairman of the Executive Board of the IMF, the first German to hold the post. His appointment came after the then chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, had campaigned to persuade European nations to back him. In 2002 his plan to allow indebted countries to file for bankruptcy caused protests from international financial markets.

Career Peak

Relinquishing his position at the IMF, Köhler was elected federal president of Germany on 23 May 2004. In his inaugural speech he encouraged the government to persevere with its economic reform programme, despite the short-term hardships that it would present. Following inconclusive parliamentary elections in Sept. 2005, he formally appointed Angela Merkel of the CDU as the first female federal chancellor at the head of a new coalition government in Nov. 2005. In May 2008 Köhler announced his candidacy for a second term as president in elections scheduled for May 2009. He went on to win re-election, defeating two opponents. In May 2010 he unexpectedly resigned after being criticized for endorsing proactive military action as a means of protecting national finances during an interview in Afghanistan. Following his departure the president of the Bundesrat, Jens Böhrnsen, took over the presidency on an interim basis until fresh elections could be held.

Koirala, Sushil (Nepal)

Introduction

Sushil Koirala became prime minister in Feb. 2014, heading a coalition formed after 3 months of negotiations. The leader of the Nepali Congress party, he is related to three former prime ministers—Matrika Prasad Koirala, Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala and Girija Prasad Koirala. He resigned following the adoption of a new constitution in Sept. 2015.

Early Life

Koirala was born on 12 Aug. 1939 into a clan involved in political activities supporting India's struggle for independence. Having joined the Nepali Congress in 1954, he went into exile in India in 1960 after King Mahendra implemented the *panchayat* system of government that eschewed political parties.

While in India, Koirala raised support for Nepal's democracy movement and edited the Nepali Congress newspaper, *Tarun*. In 1974 he was involved in the hijacking of a Royal Nepal Airlines plane carrying cash and, after a period as a fugitive, served 3 years in Indian prisons. A member of the Nepali Congress central working party from 1979, he returned to Nepal after reforms extended the freedoms of political parties. In 1990 the Nepali Congress joined the People's Movement, a broad alliance of left-wing and communist parties that successfully agitated for parliamentary democracy and in Nov. that year drafted a new constitution.

Koirala became general secretary of the Nepali Congress in 1996, at which time the party was in government and struggling with the newly launched Maoist insurgency. In 1998 he became party vice president and in 2001 unsuccessfully challenged for leadership of the parliamentary party. In 2008, the year in which Nepal became a federal republic, he was appointed acting president of the party and in 2010 took over the leadership.

The Nepali Congress emerged as the largest single party in the Nov. 2013 constituent assembly elections. After months of negotiation, a deal was reached with the second largest party, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), to back Koirala as the sole candidate for the premiership. In Feb. 2014 he won parliamentary approval by 405 votes to 148.

Career Peak

Koirala took office on 10 Feb. 2014 at the head of a coalition consisting of the two largest parties and an alliance of several smaller ones. His most pressing challenge was to draw up a new constitution, a task requiring him to achieve consensus across Nepal's disparate political spectrum. He was unable to oversee completion of a draft document by a deadline of 22 Jan. 2015, resulting in the continuation of political deadlock. However, a constitution was successfully promulgated on 20 Sept. 2015 after parliament voted in its favour by 507 votes to 25. It established Nepal as a federal and secular democratic republic.

Koirala subsequently resigned as prime minister following the adoption of the new constitution and was replaced by Khadga Prasad Oli.

Having been diagnosed with lung cancer in June 2014, Koirala succumbed to the disease on 9 Feb. 2016, passing away aged 78.

Koivisto, Mauno (Finland)

Introduction

Mauno Koivisto served as minister of finance (1966–67, 1972) before twice becoming prime minister (1968–70, 1979–80). In 1981 he was interim president, taking over from the ailing Urho Kekkonen. The following year he was elected president and served for two consecutive terms until 1994. He maintained his predecessor's foreign policy of friendly neutrality towards the USSR until the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s, when he moved Finland towards closer ties with Western Europe.

Early Life

Koivisto was born in 1923, the son of a ship's carpenter. After serving in the infantry in World War II, he began to take an active interest in politics. He joined the Finnish Social Democratic Party (SSDP) at university. After taking an initial degree in 1953, he wrote a doctoral thesis on social relations which was accepted 3 years later. He was the director of the Helsinki Workers' Savings Bank between 1959–68 and then governor of the Bank of Finland from 1968–82. In 1966 he was appointed minister of finance in the government of Rafael Paasio, where he was regarded as shrewd and pragmatic. In 1968, increasing dissatisfaction with Paasio catapulted Koivisto into the front line of likely successors. After much dispute within the SSDP, he was chosen as the

party candidate and elected prime minister later that year. Koivisto's first government came to an end in 1970.

Career Peak

In 1979, Koivisto was again elected prime minister, having built on his reputation for sound financial handling as governor of the Bank of Finland. In office he worked for a consensus with the left and the trade unions. When Kekkonen resigned because of failing health, Koivisto took the opportunity to launch a campaign for the presidency. He played a major role in dismantling the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the USSR which had been signed by a weakened Finland in 1948. He also fostered relations with the EU, paving the way for the country to become a member.

In his last years as president, Koivisto was a key figure in three important developments. He was almost unique in appreciating the urgent need for external economic support from the Soviet Union, and sought to persuade the US and the International Monetary Fund to lend assistance. When the three Baltic republics emerged as independent states, they looked to nearby Finland as a role model and supportive ally, which caused difficulties given the tenuous balance of Finnish relations with Russia. Finally, the question of whether Finland should seek EU membership involved much national soul-searching as well as complex foreign negotiations which Koivisto handled with characteristic tact and delicacy.

Later Life

In retirement he wrote his political memoirs. He died on 12 May 2017 following a long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Koizumi, Junichiro (Japan)

Introduction

Representing the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Koizumi became prime minister in 2001 following the resignation of Yoshiro Mori. Faced with a legacy of economic stagnation and a troubled banking system, he sought, with popular backing, a more radical approach to domestic reform. Internationally, he tried to effect a thawing of relations with North Korea, but courted wider regional hostility by his visits to Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine honouring Japan's war dead. He left office in Sept. 2006.

Early Life

Born on 8 Jan. 1942 in Yokosuka City in the Kanagawa Prefecture, Koizumi studied economics at Keio University. After graduating in 1967, he became involved in politics, working in 1970 as a secretary for the future prime minister Takeo Fukuda (1976–78). In 1972 he was elected to the Diet, where he served continuously until his premiership. He was appointed to his first cabinet post in Dec. 1988, with responsibility for health and welfare. He served in that capacity for several terms in subsequent governments through the 1990s, and also for a time as minister of posts and telecommunications. Within the LDP, he held senior posts from the early 1980s before being elected party president at his third attempt in 2001.

Following the resignation of Yoshiro Mori in April 2001, Koizumi stood against three other candidates to succeed him as LDP party leader and prime minister. Relatively unknown, and espousing radical proposals to counter Japan's economic problems, he defeated former prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996–98), whose own term had seen a period of economic decline.

Career Peak

On election, Koizumi attempted to reignite Japan's economy, signalling his intention to privatize the massive postal and savings system (the world's biggest financial institution). Nonetheless, recession continued. His perceived inaction on reform and an inability to stem deflation or the departure of businesses from Japan led the opposition to mount a confidence vote in July 2002. However, Koizumi survived with 280 votes to 185. In Sept. 2002 he reshuffled his cabinet, dismissing his financial services minister to force through a controversial reform to help the banking sector. For the first time,

the Bank of Japan allowed the government to use a 15trn. yen emergency fund to invest in commercial banks.

Improvements in the Japanese economy during 2003 eased pressure on Koizumi's leadership, and in the Nov. 2003 parliamentary elections the LDP won 237 seats in the 480-member Diet. Pursuing his policy of privatizing the postal and savings system in the face of broad parliamentary opposition, including from within his own party, Koizumi called a snap election in Aug. 2005. The LDP was returned with an increased mandate in Sept., vindicating his privatization plan and confirming his popular standing in the country.

At the international level, Koizumi sought to improve relations with North Korea, making two controversial visits to Pyongyang during his premiership. However, the issue of the disappearance of several Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s, attributable to North Korea's intelligence services, remained unresolved to Japan's satisfaction. Koizumi also visited Seoul and offered an apology for the suffering that South Korea endured under Japanese colonial rule. Relations with China meanwhile deteriorated from April 2005 over Japan's textbook portrayal of its military history and Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni shrine honouring Japan's war dead. On the wider stage, Koizumi's government launched Japan's application in Sept. 2004 for a permanent Japanese seat on the UN Security Council.

In April 2006 Koizumi became Japan's longest-serving prime minister since the early 1970s. However, in accordance with LDP rules, he resigned his office in Sept. 2006 ahead of a parliamentary vote to choose his successor. Shinzo Abe was selected on 20 Sept. 2006 and assumed office the following week.

Kok, Willem 'Wim' (Netherlands)

Introduction

Wim Kok served as prime minister between Aug. 1994 and April 2002. He was also president of the cabinet and minister of general affairs. His premiership attracted popular support for closer integration with the European Union. He resigned along with his entire administration after admitting that Dutch forces could have done more to prevent a war crime during the Bosnian conflict of the 1990s.

Early Life

Willem Kok was born in Bergambacht on 29 Sept. 1938. He graduated from the Nijenrode Business School and in 1961, after military service, he was appointed assistant international officer of the Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions, specialising in economic affairs. Throughout the 1970s Kok worked for various trade unions, eventually becoming chairman of the European Trade Union Confederation in 1979.

The first step of his political career came in 1986 when Kok was elected as a member of the Lower house for the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA). He was re-elected in 1989 and in the same year assumed the deputy chairmanship of the International Socialist Movement. In Nov. 1989 Kok was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in the third government of Ruud Lubbers. He held this post until 1994 when he was voted prime minister to succeed Lubbers.

Career Peak

In its first 4 years Kok's administration reduced the public-sector deficit from 4% to 1.5%, while the economy grew by an average 3.5% a year. Some 500,000 new jobs were created. Political commentators began to talk of a Dutch model for combining economic growth with a strong sense of social responsibility. Kok's government was also responsible for extending shopping hours and privatizing a number of state-owned utilities and companies. Income tax was lowered and savings were made by the reduction of the country's welfare provisions. Kok was returned to power in 1998. In his second term of office, he steered the Dutch economy into the first round of European Monetary Union. He also backed a controversial bill which exempted doctors from criminal liability if they assisted in the suicide of patients who had requested euthanasia.

Kok and his government resigned in April 2002, having admitted that Dutch peace keeping forces could have more strongly attempted to prevent the massacre of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims by Serb troops in Srebrenica in 1995.

Komorowski, Bronisław (Poland)

Introduction

Bronisław Komorowski was elected president in June 2010, having served as acting president following the death of incumbent Lech Kaczyński in an air crash in April 2010. A member of the governing Civic Platform (PO) party, he supports pro-market economic reforms and favours a more active role in the European Union.

Early Life

Bronisław Komorowski was born on 4 June 1952 in Oborniki Śląskie to an aristocratic family whose lands were confiscated by the Communist government. In 1977 he graduated in history from the University of Warsaw, where he had become politically active. He completed his master's degree the same year and from 1977–80 was editor of a Catholic journal. From 1980–81 he worked at the centre for social research of the trade union Solidarność (Solidarity), campaigning for democracy and against the existing communist regime.

After being interned for 4 months in 1981 when Poland came under martial law, he spent the next 8 years working as a teacher in Niepokalanów. Following the collapse of communism and the election of a Solidarity-led government in 1989, he was deputy minister for defence from 1990–93. At the 1991 general election he was elected as an MP for the Freedom Union party (UW), serving as its general secretary from 1993–95. In 1997 he co-founded a new party which allied itself with the Conservative People's Party to become part of the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) grouping.

Following the formation of an AWS–UW government in 1997, Komorowski was appointed head of the parliamentary national defence committee. As a member of Jerzy Buzek's government, he helped oversee Poland's entry into EU and NATO, and from 2000–01 served as defence minister. In 2001 Komorowski joined the new, reformist PO, led by Donald Tusk, and was elected to parliament at the 2001 general election, in which the AWS–UW lost power. Subsequently he served as deputy chairman of the parliamentary national defence committee and as a member of the parliamentary committee for foreign affairs.

In Oct. 2005 he was elected deputy speaker of the Sejm, becoming speaker in Nov. 2007. On 10 April 2010 President Lech Kaczyński died in an air crash. Under the constitution, Komorowski became acting president until presidential elections took place on 20 June 2010. Initially campaigning as a loyal supporter of Prime Minister Tusk's programme of economic reforms and public spending cuts, he promised not to use the presidential veto to block progress in these areas. However, during a closely fought contest he moderated his stance, softening his line on the need for reform of farmers' pensions and abandoning plans to raise the retirement age. Voting went to two rounds and in the run-off on 4 July 2010 he narrowly defeated the late president's twin brother, Jarosław Kaczyński, with 53.0% of the vote.

Career Peak

Komorowski sought to raise Poland's profile within the EU and to increase economic, defensive and diplomatic ties with key international partners, including the USA. However, in Aug. 2012 he accused US President Barack Obama of betraying Poland's national security over the 2009 cancellation of a controversial anti-ballistic missile system, and he called for Poland to build its own missile shield to ensure the country's defence.

Following the resignation of Prime Minister Tusk in Sept. 2014 to take up the EU position of president of the European Council, Komorowski asked Ewa Kopacz of the PO to form a new administration.

Komorowski's term as president came to an end in Aug. 2015 following his defeat to Andrzej Duda at elections held in May that year.

Kopacz, Ewa (Poland)

Introduction

Ewa Kopacz became prime minister on 22 Sept. 2014. She had previously acted as speaker of the Sejm, the first woman to hold that position.

Early Life

Born in Skaryszew on 3 Dec. 1956, Kopacz was raised in Radom. She graduated from the Medical University of Lublin in 1981, specializing in general practice and paediatrics. After working in several clinics, she headed the local health care facility in the town of Szydłowiec until 2001.

Kopacz joined the United People's Party in the 1980s and was later prominent in the Freedom Union Party in Radom. In 2001, having been elected as a parliamentary deputy, she joined the newly-established Civic Platform. In 2007 she was named minister of health when Civic Platform came to power and became the first female speaker of the Sejm in Nov. 2011.

Career Peak

Kopacz became Poland's second female prime minister in Sept. 2014 following the resignation of Donald Tusk to take up the EU position of president of the European Council. Her critics argued that she was chosen more for her loyalty to Tusk than for her competence and she has faced opposition from within her own party.

In her inaugural speech she called for 'one hundred days of cooperation' from her own party and the opposition. However, Civic Platform's position was weakened when it secured only a narrow electoral win over the Law and Justice Party in a contentious vote for provincial assemblies in Nov. 2014.

Outlining the government's plans in Jan. 2015, Kopacz designated significant funds for new crèches and kindergartens. She also aimed to oversee the extension of parental leave from 2016 and the introduction of other new parental benefits. In addition, she revealed plans to close four coalmines, leading to strikes involving some 3,000 miners the same month.

In foreign affairs, Kopacz said that she aimed to strengthen Poland's standing both within the EU and in central and eastern Europe. To this end, she made clear her intentions to veto UK Prime Minister David Cameron's plans to limit benefits paid to EU migrants in Britain and also sent humanitarian aid to Ukraine in response to the civil conflict in the country.

Kopacz's Civic Platform was defeated by the Law and Justice Party at the Oct. 2015 parliamentary elections. Kopacz's term as prime minister subsequently ended when she was replaced by Beata Szydło on 16 Nov. 2015.

Koroma, Ernest Bai (Sierra Leone)

Introduction

Ernest Bai Koroma became president in Sept. 2007 following victory in the second round of elections. He won re-election outright in the first round of voting in Nov. 2012. He had previously run unsuccessfully for the presidency in 2002.

Early Life

Koroma was born in 1953 in Bombali, northern Sierra Leone. Though the region is predominantly Muslim, Koroma is a Christian. After primary and secondary schooling, he graduated in 1976 from Fourah Bay College, part of the University of Sierra Leone, in Freetown. He then worked as a teacher before joining the National Insurance Company in 1978. In 1985 he moved to the Reliance Insurance Trust Corporation (Ritcorps), becoming managing director in 1988 and holding the post for 14 years.

A latecomer to politics, Koroma was chosen as the APC's presidential candidate in March 2002 but was beaten into second place by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP. Under Koroma's leadership the APC grew in popularity and won a landslide victory in the 2004 local government elections, winning

almost all seats in the densely-populated Western Area (which includes Freetown). In June 2005 Koroma was briefly stripped of his party leadership after the Supreme Court found him guilty of illegally altering his party's constitution. However, he was unanimously re-elected leader in Sept. 2005. Having spent most of his life in Freetown, his support base was strongest in the north though he also made inroads in the south ahead of the 2007 presidential election. In a run-off in Sept. 2007 Koroma won against Solomon Berewa and was sworn in on 17 Sept.

Career Peak

Koroma took over an almost bankrupt country, at the time ranked last out of 177 in the Human Development Index world rankings. He had to maintain the peace process that followed 10 years of civil war that ended in 2001, and also faced major challenges to promote economic development and rejuvenate energy and public services. He pledged a zero tolerance approach to corruption and in Nov. 2007 his government published a report detailing inadequacies in tax collection, health care and security services, as well as suspect loans.

Also in Nov. 2007 Koroma signed a commercial investment deal to double the country's rutile (titanium ore) production capacity and secured China's cancellation of US\$22 m. worth of debt. A large offshore oil discovery was reported in 2009 and in 2010 large iron ore extraction leases were granted to two British companies.

Koroma was re-elected president for a second term in Nov. 2012, with the APC securing a majority in parliamentary polling held at the same time. From 2014 his presidency was increasingly dominated by efforts to contain the spread of the Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa, which was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Aug. that year as an international public health emergency. Sierra Leone was eventually declared free of the disease by the WHO in March 2016.

In March 2015 Koroma had dismissed Samuel Sam-Sumana as vice-president, accusing him of fomenting political violence and anti-APC activity, and replaced him with Victor Foh.

Having served the maximum permitted two terms, he was succeeded by Julius Maada Bio in April 2018.

Kosor, Jadranka (Croatia)

Introduction

Jadranka Kosor became Croatia's first female prime minister on 1 July 2009 following Ivo Sanader's resignation. Amid opposition calls for early elections, Kosor's premiership was endorsed with 83 votes from the 153-seat parliament on 6 July 2009.

Early Life

Kosor was born on 1 July 1953 in Pakrac. Having graduated in law from Zagreb University, in 1972 she became a print and radio journalist. From 1991–95, during Croatia's war of independence, she hosted a radio show for refugees on Croatian Radio.

Elected as an MP in 1995, Kosor became vice-president of the House of Representatives after Franjo Tuđman invited her to join the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), of which she was also vice-president from 1995–97 (and again from 2002–09). From 1998–2000 she headed the conservative HDZ Women's Association, named after Katarina Zrinski. Under her leadership the number of female candidates standing for the HDZ in the 2000 elections doubled from the previous election. In 2003 Kosor was appointed to Sanader's government as deputy prime minister and minister of family, veterans' affairs and intergenerational solidarity. She ran for the presidency in 2005 but was defeated in the run-off by the incumbent, Stjepan Mesić.

Recommended as a possible successor to the premiership by Sanader on his resignation in July 2009, Kosor was endorsed by parliament on 6 July 2009. On 4 July 2009 she was also named president of the HDZ.

Career Peak

Kosor pledged to continue the policies of her predecessor. Proposed budget cuts were an early test of her government's strength, with the prospect of an

IMF bailout looming if they were rejected. Party in-fighting grew after the HDZ's poor showing at the first round of the presidential elections in Dec. 2009. On 4 Jan. 2010 Kosor took the decision to expel Sanader from the HDZ after alleged interference with her leadership.

Her key challenges included restarting talks on EU accession, which had been blocked by Slovenia until Nov. 2009 when Kosor met with her Slovenian counterpart in Stockholm to sign an agreement to bring their border dispute (over the bay of Piran on the Adriatic coast) to international arbitration.

In parliamentary elections held in Dec. 2011, Kosor and the HDZ were defeated by the Kukuriku coalition. Kosor was subsequently succeeded by the SDP leader Zoran Milanović on 23 Dec. 2011.

Koštunica, Vojislav (Serbia)

Introduction

Vojislav Koštunica served as prime minister of Serbia from March 2004 to July 2008. He had previously succeeded Slobodan Milošević as president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Oct. 2000 following disputed elections. After the first round of voting, Milošević claimed that Koštunica had failed to achieve the necessary absolute majority and pressed for a run-off. Public demonstrations led to the resignation of Milošević and the installation of Koštunica. A democratic nationalist, he pursued closer relations with the EU while distancing his regime from the USA. Following the break-up of Yugoslavia Koštunica became prime minister of Serbia in March 2004. He was re-elected to a second term in 2007, but could not keep the fragile coalition he had assembled to this purpose together and was forced to dissolve his government and call an election in May 2008. He was succeeded by Mirko Cvetković.

Early Life

Vojislav Koštunica was born on 24 March 1944 in Belgrade, into a family with a legal background. In 1966 he graduated from the Law School of the University of Belgrade, and completed a master's there 4 years later. Specializing in constitutional law, he lost his job at the University in 1974, following his criticism of the Tito government.

In 1976 Koštunica was awarded his doctorate. He speaks English, German and French and in 1981 published a Serbo-Croat translation of the *Federalist Papers*. Throughout his career he has advocated free speech. He never joined the communist party and when, in 1989, Milošević offered him a job at Belgrade University he refused.

In the same year Koštunica with Zoran Djindjić co-founded the Democratic Party. In 1990 he was elected to the federal parliament. He and Djindjić split in 1992 when Koštunica set-up the Democratic Party of Serbia. His opposition to Milošević throughout the 1990s was tempered by his own nationalist convictions and criticism of foreign intervention against Serbia. While he spoke out against ethnic cleansing and the worst excesses of Serbian paramilitary groups, he supported Serbian self-determination in Bosnia and opposed Kosovan independence. He condemned NATO's bombing of Serbia during the Kosovan conflict, not least for the galvanizing effect it had on Milošević's domestic popularity.

Though a relatively low profile figure in Yugoslav politics, Koštunica won the support of the opposition coalition to become Milošević's principal rival for the presidency. Untainted by any association with the old communist party or with Milošević himself, he rode a wave of popular enthusiasm. After the Milošević regime demanded a run-off, discontent erupted throughout the country and a crippling general strike was called on 4 Oct. The following day a crowd of several thousand gathered in Belgrade and surrounded parliament. Milošević, realizing that he could not rely on the support of the military and police, resigned. The following day Russia, having previously backed Milošević, recognized Koštunica as president.

Career Peak

The removal of Milošević and Koštunica's ascendancy were met by domestic and international euphoria. Koštunica, however, faced a massive task in restoring the fortunes of a financially impoverished, internationally isolated

and much reduced Yugoslav state. His first major domestic challenge was Montenegrin independence. The government of Montenegro, one of the remaining Yugoslav constituent republics, boycotted the elections that brought Koštunica to power. Within a week of his presidency he announced that 'the will of the people will be respected. . . even if it means that Montenegro does not want to be part of a joint state.'

Koštunica struck a power-sharing agreement with Milošević's former Socialist Party in Oct. 2000 before the Democratic Party won a convincing victory in the parliamentary elections of Dec. 2000. He assuaged foreign opinion by admitting Serbia's role in large-scale killings during the 1999 Kosovo conflict, although he refused immediate co-operation with a UN war crimes tribunal, insisting that Yugoslavia had more pressing problems of reconstruction. Despite this, Milošević was arrested by Yugoslav forces in April 2001 and handed over to the tribunal in the Hague.

Yugoslavia rejoined the UN on 1 Nov. 2000 and the OSCE on 8 Nov. On 14 March 2002 Serbia and Montenegro agreed to a new structure for the Yugoslav federation. Following European Union-brokered talks it was agreed that they would remain part of a single entity called Serbia and Montenegro, superseding the Yugoslav state. On 9 April 2002 the parliaments of Serbia and Montenegro ratified the agreement, and on 31 May 2002 the Yugoslav federal parliament also adopted the agreement. A Constitutional Charter was drafted paving the way for the establishment of Serbia and Montenegro in Feb. 2003.

With the restructuring abolishing the post of Yugoslavian president, Koštunica unsuccessfully stood for the Serbian presidency in 2002, with two rounds of voting declared invalid owing to low turnout. Instead he became prime minister of Serbia in March 2004, heading a minority coalition government. In May 2006 Montenegro held a referendum which approved secession from the union with Serbia. Koštunica strongly opposed the planned split but was forced to accept the result. Montenegro declared independence in June 2006.

Koštunica continued to distance himself from the US administration and seek closer ties with the EU, beginning preliminary entry talks in Oct. 2005. However, discussions were suspended in May 2006 when Serbia missed a deadline to hand over the war crimes suspect Ratko Mladić. Koštunica made a direct appeal to Mladić to surrender himself to The Hague tribunal but to no effect.

In parliamentary elections held in Jan. 2007, the nationalist Serb Radical Party won the most seats with a manifesto promising to deny Kosovo independence. Koštunica managed to form a new coalition and retain power, but only after months of negotiations. This fragile coalition was rendered unworkable by the declared independence of Kosovo and continued disputes over membership of the European Union. Koštunica was forced to dissolve his government, and a parliamentary election was called for May 2008, won by the For a European Serbia Party.

Kravchuk, Leonid (Ukraine)

Introduction

The first popularly elected president of the Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk served from 1991–94. Formally a prominent member of the Communist Party of the Ukraine SSR, he later advocated Ukraine's independence. But his economic reform programme failed and he was unable to secure a second term.

Early Life

Born on 10 Jan. 1934 in Velyky Zhityn, west Ukraine, Kravchuk studied economics at the Kiev T.G. Shevchenko State University. In 1958 he joined the Communist Party, serving in the central committee and becoming the head of the ideology department in 1988. Two years later he was made chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Soviet. Opposed to independence, he took an ambiguous stance on the attempted coup of Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991.

Career Peak

Changing his political stance, he left the Communist Party and in 1991, as a pro-independence nationalist, became the first democratically elected

Ukrainian president. With Boris Yeltsin and the Belorussian president Stanislau Shushkevich, he set up the CIS the same year.

But his term was marred by economic hardship as he failed to control the liberalization of the economy. Kravchuk had a difficult relationship with Russia, disagreeing over Russia's claim to the Crimean Peninsula, the division of the Black Sea Fleet and Yeltsin agreement with the US to reduce nuclear weapons. In 1993 Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma resigned and was replaced by Kravchuk. At the same time the economy collapsed, and the following year Kravchuk was succeeded as president by Kuchma on a pledge to cure the ailing economy and strengthen ties with Russia.

Later Life

Following his electoral defeat, Kravchuk continued his political career as a parliamentary deputy.

Kreisky, Bruno (Austria)

Introduction

Bruno Kreisky was chancellor of Austria from 1970 to 1983 and leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ), 1967–83. Having been imprisoned for his socialist activities in the 1930s, he escaped to Sweden before the outbreak of World War II. After the war he served as a diplomat and later as the minister of foreign affairs. His tenure as chancellor was characterized by social reform, economic prosperity and the pursuance of peace on the international stage.

Early Life

Kreisky was born in Vienna on 22 Jan. 1911. His father Max was a successful Jewish businessman. Bruno joined the SPÖ in 1926 and in 1929 he enrolled at the University of Vienna to study Law and Economics. The SPÖ was made illegal in 1934 and in response Kreisky, along with his friend Roman Felleis, established the Revolutionary Socialist Youth movement. A year later he was arrested for his political activities and imprisoned. In 1936 he was released but was not allowed to return to his studies until 1938.

In March 1938, after Austria was occupied by German troops, Kreisky was arrested by the Gestapo and taken into 'protective custody'. He was released in Aug. on orders to leave the country and made preparations to go to Bolivia before political allies in Sweden urged him to go there instead. He worked for the Stockholm Consumer Co-operative Association throughout World War II, whilst writing for a number of newspapers and journals. On 23 April 1942 he married Vera Fürth, with whom he would have two children. In Oct. 1945, in the aftermath of the war, he was an important communication link between Austria and the Swedish relief agency.

In May 1946 he returned to Austria before being assigned to the Austrian legation in Stockholm in Feb. 1947. In Jan. 1951 he returned to Vienna, taking up a post as a secretary in the economics section of the foreign affairs department of the Austrian Chancellery. He entered the National Assembly following the elections of 1956 as the member for St Pölten in Lower Austria and quickly moved up the SPÖ ranks, becoming party deputy chairman in 1959. In July of the same year he was appointed foreign minister in Julius Raab's coalition government. In this role he succeeded in converting the department into a fully fledged cabinet ministry and was a major force in the establishment of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

In March 1963 he was re-appointed to the ministry despite opposition from Austrian People's Party partners in the coalition. When the SPÖ lost heavily in the elections of 1966 and left the government, Kreisky was prominent in reforming the party, becoming chairman in early 1967. Following a general election in April 1970 the SPÖ formed a minority government with Kreisky as chancellor. In Oct. 1970 they made a better showing at general elections and formed the first of three consecutive majority governments.

Career Peak

The Austrian economy boomed during Kreisky's tenure and unemployment was low, which ensured continued support from middle-class voters. The welfare state grew under his guidance, relations between employers and unions improved and the justice and higher education systems also underwent

reform. In terms of foreign affairs, he pursued a policy of 'active neutrality' in which he sought closer ties with Eastern Bloc countries, including Czechoslovakia, Tito's Yugoslavia and other non-aligned neighbours. He hosted groundbreaking talks between Israeli officials and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

His time in office, however, was not without its controversy and there were a number of political scandals, notably concerning links between the consultancy firm of Minister of Finance Hannes Androsch and contractors employed by the socialist government. Kreisky endured the indignity of having his proposals for a nuclear power plant defeated in 1978. By the time of the general elections of April 1983 there were various rumours concerning the state of Kreisky's health but he was nonetheless declared fit to stand for re-election. The SPÖ lost only five seats but it was enough to end the party's parliamentary majority. Kreisky, unwilling to lead a coalition government, resigned as chancellor and gave up the party chairmanship a few months later.

Later Life

In April 1984 Kreisky underwent a kidney transplant operation. On 29 July 1990 he died in Vienna and was given a state funeral on 7 Aug. He had published his memoirs 2 years earlier. The Bruno Kreisky Archives Foundation, the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue and the Bruno Kreisky Foundation for Outstanding Achievements in Human Rights continue to document and promote work relating to his life's activities.

Krenz, Egon (Germany)

Introduction

Egon Krenz succeeded Erich Honecker as General Secretary of the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED) and as Head of State in Oct. 1989. By then the communist regimes in East Germany and throughout the rest of the Eastern Bloc were collapsing. He gave permission for restricted travel by East Germans to the West, paving the way for the collapse of the Berlin Wall. His fall from power thereafter was rapid and in 1997 he was convicted for involvement in the killing of German citizens at the Berlin Wall in the 1970s and 80s.

Early Life

Krenz was born on 19 March 1937 in Kolberg, Poland and moved to Damgarten in Germany when he was 7 years old. In 1953 he joined the Free German Youth movement (FDJ) and was apprenticed as a locksmith in Rostock. He then trained as a teacher in Putbus and around the same time became the secretary of the FDJ. He held a succession of different jobs in the FDJ before leaving for Moscow in 1964, where he studied until 1967.

He entered the *Volkskammer* (People's Chamber) in 1971 and 5 years later joined the Politburo with candidate status, becoming a full member in 1983. He was General Secretary of the FDJ from 1974 but relinquished his duties in 1983. At this time he was the Politburo's youngest member and was regarded as Honecker's natural successor. However he became concerned at the failing relationship between Honecker and Gorbachev's Soviet regime. When Honecker resigned on 18 Oct. 1989, Krenz replaced him as both Party Secretary and Head of State.

Career Peak

In a speech that same evening Krenz acknowledged the failure of the SED to anticipate developments and spoke vaguely of introducing change. On 24 Oct. he was elected by the Volkskammer as Chairman of the Council of State and Chairman of the National Defence Council, though for the first time in East German history it was not a unanimous decision. Almost immediately several thousand protesters gathered in East Berlin and demonstrations spread to other major cities.

On 8 Nov. the Politburo resigned but Krenz was re-confirmed as Secretary General of the SED. At the same time he opened the way for rival political parties, the most significant of which was Bärbel Bohley's New Forum. As

thousands of emigrants escaped to the West via the open borders with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Krenz tried to save face by declaring that citizens could travel freely after obtaining official permission. This only served to add to the confusion. Border guards were powerless to stop the tens of thousands of citizens who gathered at the Berlin Wall and tore it down. On 28 Nov. Krenz denied that German reunification was a possibility but his power had all but disappeared and he resigned on 3 Dec.

Later Life

On 21 Jan. 1990 Krenz was expelled from the SED. Later, criminal charges were brought against him for his involvement in the killing of German citizens at the Wall between 1971 and 1989. He was convicted in 1997 and began a six and a half-year sentence in Jan. 2000 at the Hakenfelde Prison in Berlin. He appeared at the European Court of Human Rights in Nov. 2000 in a bid to overturn the conviction, arguing that he could not be held accountable under unified German law for crimes allegedly committed under East German law. In Feb. 2000 Krenz was relocated to an open prison and on 18 Dec. 2003 he was released early.

Kubilius, Andrius (Lithuania)

Introduction

Andrius Kubilius became prime minister for the second time after his nomination by President Valdas Adamkus was approved by parliament on 27 Nov. 2008. He had previously served as premier from 1999–2000. His centre-right coalition government had to confront a major economic crisis during the global downturn.

Early Life

Andrius Kubilius was born on 8 Dec. 1956 in Vilnius. In 1979 he graduated in physics from Vilnius University, where he remained for a further 11 years to pursue an academic career. In 1988 he became involved in the pro-independence movement and joined Sajūdis ('Unity'/Reform Movement of Lithuania). He was appointed executive secretary of its council in 1990, serving for 2 years until he was elected to the Seimas (parliament).

In 1993 Kubilius joined the newly-established conservative Homeland Union party and was re-elected to the Seimas in 1996, becoming its vice chairman. In Oct. 1999 he was named prime minister by President Valdas Adamkus following the resignation of Rolandas Paksas. Kubilius' appointment was approved by the Seimas by a vote of 82 to 20. His term lasted from Nov. 1999–Oct. 2000. Policy priorities included reform of the Soviet-era bureaucracy and economic liberalization.

In the Oct. 2000 general election Kubilius won re-election to the Seimas despite the Homeland Union suffering a heavy defeat. He served as the party's first deputy chairman from 2000 until 2003, when he became party leader. In Oct. 2006 he was appointed deputy speaker of the Seimas and chair of the parliamentary committee on European affairs.

After gaining a lead in the first round of voting at the Oct. 2008 general election, the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats (TS-LKD), which had formed in May 2008 following a merger between the two parties, won 44 of a possible 141 seats, providing a mandate to form a coalition government. The Homeland Union joined with three smaller centre-right parties, jointly controlling 79 seats.

Career Peak

Kubilius' principal challenge has been to tackle the country's worsening economic crisis. Hours after being sworn into office he won parliamentary approval for tax reforms, cuts to public spending and measures to support businesses. However, there was widespread public discontent at tax increases following election promises that they would be cut. He proposed adoption of the EU's single currency (euro) by 2011, but that target was missed in light of the economic downturn. Over the medium term, a return to growth depends on banks' ability to restart lending and on a recovery of external demand.

Kubilius' government oversaw the decommissioning of the Ignalina power plant at the end of 2009 as part of Lithuania's EU accession agreement. However, the closure of the plant has raised the spectre of dependency on Russian gas, a situation Kubilius is keen to avoid. An electricity bridge between Sweden and Lithuania that could solve the country's energy problem has yet to be built.

Kubilius' party, the Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats, lost the Oct. 2012 parliamentary elections to Algirdas Butkevičius' Social Democrats. Butkevičius was appointed prime minister in Nov.

Kubitschek, Juscelino (Brazil)

Introduction

Juscelino Kubitschek De Oliveira was president of Brazil from 1956 to 1961. It was during his presidency that the costly building of the new capital, Brasília, caused massive inflation.

Early Life

Born in Diamantina in 1902, Kubitschek studied medicine and practised as a surgeon. He entered the federal chamber of deputies in 1934, was mayor of Belo Horizonte from 1940 to 1945, returned to the federal chamber of deputies a year later and was governor of Minas Gerais from 1951–55, when he oversaw many large-scale public building and road construction schemes. Widely regarded as heir apparent to the former president Getulio Vargas, Kubitschek defeated two opponents for the presidency in 1956.

Career Peak

In office Kubitschek sought to increase industrial investment by offering tax incentives and instigating massive road-building programmes. Working to a 5-year plan, the economy suffered when coffee prices fell and industrial unrest became widespread.

In an attempt to accelerate the development of Brazil's interior, Kubitschek decided to move the national capital from Rio de Janeiro to a new site, to be called Brasília. However, the scale and ambition of the plan was costly, creating rapid inflation and leaving Brazil with a huge national debt. Accompanied by vast spending to assist the drought-hit northeast of the country, the economy ran into serious trouble. In 1961 Kubitschek was succeeded by Janio Quadros.

Kubitschek was elected to the national senate in 1962 and nominated for president again 2 years later by the Social Democratic Party. However, he was forced into exile by a military coup later in the year.

Later Life

Kubitschek returned to Brazil in 1967 and entered the banking profession. He died in a car crash on 22 Aug. 1976.

Kučan, Milan (Slovenia)

Introduction

Milan Kučan was president of Slovenia from the country's declaration of independence in 1991 until the elections of Nov. 2002. Previously he had led Slovenia within the federal structure of Yugoslavia. Widely regarded as a safe pair of political hands, Slovenia remained stable throughout his tenure.

Early Life

Kučan was born on 14 Jan. 1941 in Krizevci, in the Prekmurje region in eastern Slovenia. His father, a teacher who served in the resistance movement, died during World War II. Kučan graduated in law from Ljubljana University in 1964, joining the Slovenian youth association in the same year. He served

as the association's president from 1968–69. From 1969 until 1973 he sat on the central committee of Slovenia's League of Communists.

Between 1973 and 1978 he was secretary of the Socialist Alliance of Slovenia and was president of the Slovenian Assembly from 1978 until 1982. He was then the Slovenian representative on the presidency for the central committee of the Yugoslav League of Communists, leaving in 1986 to become president of the Slovenian branch of the central committee.

In 1989 the Slovenian parliament paved the way for secession from federal Yugoslavia. At the country's first multi-party elections the following year Kučan was elected president of the presidency, with Slovenia still part of the federal structure.

Career Peak

A declaration of independence won majority backing in a referendum during 1990 and Kučan announced the split with Yugoslavia in 1991. Armed conflict followed in which around a hundred people died. Yugoslav troops, under the terms of an EU-brokered agreement, withdrew from the country by the end of the year. In 1992 Slovenia held its first elections as an independent state. Kučan won the presidency with 64% of the vote. Janez Drnovšek of the Liberal Democrats won the premiership and the two held power until Nov. 2002, except for 7 months in 2000 when Drnovšek was out of office.

The long tenures of Kučan and Drnovšek provided Slovenia with political and economic stability that few other former Yugoslav states enjoyed. Slovenia joined the IMF in 1993 and became a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme. In 1999 it granted airspace to NATO for its bombing raids on Kosovo and Serbia. In 1996 Slovenia signed an associate agreement with the EU and opened full membership talks the following year. In Oct. 2002 the EU included Slovenia in its plans for enlargement scheduled for 2004.

Kučan won re-election in 1997. In 2001 he entered negotiations with the Croatian president, Štipe Mesić, to improve relations between the two countries. They settled several border disputes, one of which granted Slovenian entry to the Adriatic, and agreed on joint management of the Slovenia-based Krsko nuclear power station.

The Slovenian constitution debarred Kučan from standing for a third term as president in Nov. 2002. He was succeeded by Drnovšek.

Kuchma, Leonid (Ukraine)

Introduction

Leonid Kuchma was elected Ukrainian president in 1994 and re-elected in 1999. He stood down in Nov. 2004. His free market reforms helped Ukraine broker the transition from communism to independence, but his alleged suppression of the media and involvement in the murder of an opposition journalist tarnished his leadership. Under Kuchma the Ukraine stalled on modernizing its administration and eradicating corruption.

Early Life

Kuchma was born on 9 Aug. 1938 in Chikino, Chernigov region. After studying engineering at the Dnepropetrovsk State University, between 1960–92 he worked at the world's largest space missile plant, Pivdenne design bureau, where his technological developments won him both the Lenin Prize and the Ukrainian State Prize. There he was Communist Party secretary between 1975–82. He also worked as a technical director at Baikonur space centre in Kazakhstan.

In 1990 he was elected to the Ukrainian parliament, and again 4 years later. Between 1992–93 he served as prime minister until a difference of opinion with President Leonid Kravchuk led Kuchma to resign his position.

Career Peak

In 1994 he stood for president against Kravchuk and five others. On election he proposed the implementation of free market reforms and closer relations with Russia. Privatization was begun that year and in Feb. 1998 a 10-year economic agreement was signed between Ukraine and Russia. But his reforms were slow, and much of the larger industrial sector enterprises remained state-owned. Ukraine also suffered the fall out of Russia's economic problems.

Kuchma did, however, reform the constitution, extending the president's powers in reform implementation and ministerial appointments. In 1999 he was elected for a second term with 56.3% of votes. He appointed Viktor Yushchenko as his prime minister who soon became popular not only within the Ukraine, where he was credited with kickstarting the economy, but also internationally. But in Dec. 2000 a journalist critical to Kuchma's leadership, Georgiy Gongadze, was murdered. Claims that Kuchma was involved in his disappearance, coupled with press freedom restrictions, led to public manifestations in Feb. 2001 and demands for his resignation from opposition politicians. The president defied these calls and denied accusations of his involvement. Two months later he sacked Yushchenko replacing him with Anatolii Kinakh, a member of Kuchma's own United Ukraine Party. Other allegations of the illegal sale of arms to Iraq further damaged his reputation.

Nonetheless, in 2000 the economy saw a 5.8% growth followed in 2001 by 9%. In March 2002 parliamentary elections, Yushchenko's Our Ukraine Party gained a narrow lead over Kuchma's United Ukraine Party, taking 112 seats to the latter's 102. With neither gaining a majority, Kuchma maintained influence over parliament.

As opponents accused him of employing increasingly authoritarian tactics, in Nov. 2002 Kuchma dissolved the government and replaced Kinakh as prime minister with Viktor Yanukovich, a close ally of the president. The previous month Kuchma had lost his presidential majority in parliament when five deputies withdrew support over an alleged police assault against one of their colleagues. Kuchma also faced a damaging miners strike over poor pay and working conditions.

A wave of popular protests in early 2003 forced Kuchma to agree to transfer some presidential powers to parliament, including the right to appoint the prime minister. However, his tenure continued to be dogged by scandal. A constitutional court ruled that Kuchma would be eligible to stand for a third term, claiming his first term did not count under the terms of the 1996 constitution. He was then forced to backtrack on a proposed constitutional amendment that would have seen future presidents selected by parliament rather than popular vote. In June 2004 there was widespread unease when Kuchma's son-in-law won a tender for the country's biggest steel plant.

Kuchma did not stand for a third term in Nov. 2004. Yanukovich, his chosen successor, narrowly lost the first round to the pro-Western Viktor Yushchenko. However, Yanukovich was declared winner of the run-off and a tense stand-off ensued as mass rallies took place in Kiev and throughout the country amid allegations of election fraud. The result was subsequently annulled by the Supreme Court. In new elections on 26 Dec. Yushchenko received 54.1% of the vote and Yanukovich 45.9%.

Later Life

In March 2005 Kuchma was questioned as part of the investigation into the murder of Georgiy Gongadze, shortly after Interior Minister Yuri Kravchenko apparently killed himself before he was due to give evidence. It was reported that Kravchenko left a note implying Kuchma's responsibility for Gongadze's death.

Kuczynski, Pedro Pablo (Peru)

Introduction

Pedro Pablo Kuczynski was sworn in as president on 28 July 2016. A former World Bank economist, he previously served as prime minister from 2005 to 2006. He resigned amid charges of corruption on 21 March 2018.

Early Life

Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, popularly known as PPK, was born in Lima on 3 Oct. 1938. His parents, a German-Jewish physician and Swiss-French teacher, had fled to the Peruvian capital in 1936 to escape Nazism in Europe. In 1953 Kuczynski was sent to boarding school in England and in 1956 won a scholarship to read politics, philosophy and economics at Exeter College, Oxford. On graduating, he moved to the USA to study at Princeton University.

Kuczynski began his career at the World Bank in 1961. In 1967 he moved back to Peru to become director of the Central Bank under President Fernando

Belaúnde Terry. When the president was ousted in a coup in 1968, Kuczynski accepted a new position at the World Bank but returned as minister of energy and mines when Belaúnde regained power in 1980. In 1982 he left government to pick up his career in international finance and private equity. Kuczynski served two stints as minister of economy and finance (2001–02 and 2004–05) under President Alejandro Toledo, and then served as prime minister from 2005–06. In 2007 he founded a non-governmental organization dedicated to delivering clean water to Peru's remote communities.

In the 2011 presidential elections Kuczynski stood as the candidate for a coalition of centrist parties but finished behind Keiko Fujimori and the eventual winner, Ollanta Humala. After coming second in the first round of the 2016 elections, his candidacy was boosted by the support of centrist and leftist parties opposed to Fujimori. In the run-off poll on 5 June, for which turnout was 80.1%, he won 50.1% of the vote against 49.9% for Fujimori.

Career Peak

Kuczynski's legislative plans for economic and judicial reform have been obstructed by parliament as his centre-right party, Peruvians for Change, had secured only 18 of the 130 seats against 73 for Keiko Fujimori's opposition Fuerza Popular following the April 2016 elections. Fuerza Popular has also sought to implicate Kuczynski in a major construction corruption scandal, although in Dec. 2017 he narrowly survived an impeachment vote in Congress as his opponents failed to muster the two-thirds majority needed to oust him. Later that month Kuczynski granted a humanitarian pardon to Keito Fujimori's father Alberto, a former president from 1990 to 2000 who had been sentenced to 25 years imprisonment in 2009 for human rights crimes. Earlier, in Sept. 2017, Congress had dismissed Prime Minister Fernando Zavala, who was replaced by Second Vice-President Mercedes Araóz. He resigned in March 2018 and was succeeded by Martín Vizcarra.

Kufuor, John (Ghana)

Introduction

John Kufuor became president of Ghana in Jan. 2001. Leader of the New Patriotic Party, his principal aim was to revitalize the country's struggling economy. Kufuor stepped down in Dec. 2008 having served the maximum permitted two 4-year terms.

Early Life

John Agyekum Kufuor was born on 8 Dec. 1938 in Kumasi, Ghana. He was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in England in 1961, and graduated in politics, philosophy and economics from the University of Oxford in 1964.

In 1967 he became Kumasi's chief legal officer and town clerk, and the following year sat in the constituent assembly which drafted a new constitution. He held a similar role when another constitution followed 10 years later. In 1969 he was appointed deputy foreign minister but left parliament following the 1972 military coup, returning in 1979. In 1982 he became local government minister in Jerry Rawlings' national government, laying the groundwork for the country's system of decentralized district assemblies. He resigned after 7 months to pursue business interests.

In 1996 Kufuor unsuccessfully challenged Rawlings for the presidency, standing as the NPP candidate. In Oct. 1998 he was selected as leader of the NPP and again stood for the presidency in Dec. 2000. When no candidate achieved the 50% threshold for victory after the first round, Kufuor went into a run-off against the National Democratic Congress' John Atta Mills. Kufuor won the support of the five candidates who dropped out after the first round and won the election with 57%.

Career Peak

Taking office in Jan. 2001, Kufuor aimed to lead Ghana into an economic 'golden age.' He faced inflation at over 40%, interest rates at over 50% and the collapse of the cedi, the national currency. By May 2002 inflation was down to 14%, interest rates down to 26% and the cedi had stabilized. However, the government's withdrawal of fuel subsidies saw petrol prices increase by 60% and the price of utilities also rocketed. In April 2001 Ghana received major debt relief under a World Bank/IMF scheme and in May 2002

the African Development Bank wrote off 80% of the country's debts. The relief was seen as a reward for Kufuor's handling of the economy.

His tenure was marked by continued tribal conflict, particularly in the north of the country, where a state of emergency was declared in April 2002. In May 2001 Kufuor declared a national day of mourning after 126 people died during a stampede at a soccer match, for which the police were heavily criticized. In June 2001 Accra experienced severe flooding which forced 100,000 people from their homes.

Kufuor did much to distance himself from the Jerry Rawlings era. In 2001 the government abandoned public holidays celebrating Rawlings' 1979 coup. In May 2002 he instituted a reconciliation committee to investigate allegations of human rights abuses during Rawlings' rule. He also attempted to improve relations with Ghana's West African neighbours.

In Dec. 2004 Kufuor was re-elected as president with 52.5% of the vote in the second round. The NPP meanwhile secured a majority of seats in parliamentary elections.

Kufuor was chairman of the African Union for a 1-year term of office in 2007. Ghana celebrated 50 years of independence from Britain in March 2007, and the discovery of a major offshore oilfield was announced in June of the same year. However, in Sept. 2007 the country experienced its worst flooding for more than 30 years.

Kufuor was succeeded in Dec. 2008 by John Atta Mills, who narrowly won a run-off vote against Nana Akufo-Addo of Kufuor's New Patriotic Party. Mills had been defeated by Kufuor in the two previous elections.

Kumaratunga, Chandrika Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga came to power in 1994. Both her parents served as prime ministers. Her mother, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, became the world's first female prime minister in 1961 while her father, Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike, served as prime minister from 1956 until his death in 1959. Kumaratunga frequently clashed with Ranil Wickremasinghe's United National Front (UNF) government (Dec. 2001–April 2004). A constitutionally empowered prime minister, Wickremasinghe forced a reluctant Kumaratunga to negotiate a peace settlement with Tamil rebels. Her party defeated the UNF in 2004 elections, allowing her to install the moderate Mahinda Rajapakse as prime minister. Rajapakse went on to succeed Kumaratunga as president in 2005. A widow by her husband's assassination in 1988, Chandrika Kumaratunga has a son and daughter.

Early Life

Chandrika Kumaratunga was born on 29 June 1945. After receiving a convent education at St Bridget's school, Colombo, she studied at Aquinas University College, Colombo, and then at the Institute of Political Studies, Paris. As a student she took part in and was influenced by the student riots of 1968. Graduating with a diploma in international relations, she began working towards a PhD in development economics. When her mother's government launched a land reform programme, Kumaratunga left France to serve as a director and then as principal director of the land reforms commission (1972–76), on behalf of the nationalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Conflict between her socialist ideals and her mother's nationalist policies prompted her departure from the party along with her film-star/politician husband, Vijaya Kumaratunga, whom she married in 1978.

In 1986 she became president of the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP), founded 2 years earlier by her husband. Following his assassination in 1988, Chandrika Kumaratunga became the leader of a four-party coalition, the United Socialist Alliance (USA). By the early 1990s, however, she had rejoined the SLFP which headed a coalition of left wing parties, the People's Alliance (PA). When provincial council elections were held in May 1993, Kumaratunga was returned for the Western province and appointed chief minister.

In Aug. 1994 she was prime ministerial candidate for the People's Alliance. The PA won the parliamentary elections and formed a government on

19 Aug. 1994 with Kumaratunga as prime minister. In the presidential elections of Nov. 1994, Kumaratunga was elected by an overwhelming majority to become the country's first female president. She appointed her mother as prime minister in a largely ceremonial role.

Career Peak

The PA toppled the United National Party (UNP), ending its 17 years of power. Although there was initial optimism regarding a settlement of the Tamil-Sinhalese ethnic conflict, this soon subsided. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) violated a 100-day truce while opposition groups in parliament stood against Kumaratunga's plans to devolve increased power to the northeastern region's Tamil population. An approach which at first coupled dialogue with the LTTE with their suppression by the Sri Lankan army gave way to all-out war. In Dec. 1995 Sri Lankan government forces captured the Jaffna peninsula. With violence continuing unabated Kumaratunga declared a state of emergency in April 1996. This was only partially successful and in 1999 Kumaratunga's government called for Norway to act as an independent mediator.

Presidential elections were held in Dec. 1999. In the run-up Kumaratunga was in a suicide bomb attack. 20 people were killed but Kumaratunga survived with minor injuries to her right eye. She capitalized on this by giving a television address to the nation wearing an eye patch. Winning by a narrow margin a second consecutive term as president, she lost out in the general election held in Dec. 2001 when her main political rival, Ranil Wickremasinghe, whom she had defeated in the earlier presidential elections, pledged to reduce presidential powers if his party, the United National Party (UNP), formed the government. The UNP won 109 seats against 77 for Kumaratunga's People's Alliance party. As prime minister, Wickremasinghe demanded freedom to appoint a cabinet of his choice. Kumaratunga was forced to give up control of the ministries of defence and finance, whilst retaining her title as commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

The elections, which placed in power a prime minister and president of opposing parties for the first time in 7 years, were viewed as an opportunity to move towards a peace-deal. A ceasefire was agreed in Dec. 2001 but Kumaratunga then criticized Wickremasinghe's confidence building measures with the LTTE. She also complained that the Norwegian mediators had overstepped their role by applying a demarcation line between government-controlled and LTTE-controlled areas and that this constituted an attack on Sri Lanka's sovereignty. Despite threats that she could, as commander-in-chief of the army, end the peace-deal whenever she wanted, Kumaratunga reluctantly followed Wickremasinghe's initiatives. In Sept. 2002, under pressure from the prime minister, she conceded to the lifting of the ban on the LTTE, a step which laid the ground for subsequent peace talks. In Dec. 2002 the government and LTTE signed a peace deal granting the Tamil population autonomy.

Kumaratunga created political turmoil in Nov. 2003 by removing three key portfolios from cabinet ministers and by proroguing parliament for two weeks. The defence, interior and information ministries were put under presidential control while the prime minister was meeting the US president, George W. Bush, in Washington, D.C. Citing national security interests for her actions, Kumaratunga declared a 10-day state of emergency on 6 Nov., condemned by the speaker of parliament, the prime minister, and the LTTE's Velupillai Prabhakaran. By the end of the month, Prabhakaran had threatened to resume the struggle for Tamil independence if the president and prime minister could not work together on the peace process.

On 13 Jan. 2004 Kumaratunga held a secret swearing-in ceremony to extend her term of office until the end of 2006. Heavily criticized by the prime minister, she defended the extra year by claiming it from her previous term, cut short by early elections in 1999. Kumaratunga further jeopardized the peace process by forging an alliance later that month with an extreme left-wing Sinhalese party, the People's United Liberation Front (JVP), which had voiced its opposition to Tamil autonomy. Prabhakaran condemned the alliance and a potential military agreement with India that would supply the Sri Lankan army. Dissolving parliament in Feb. 2004, Kumaratunga called early elections for 2 April. Her United People's Freedom Alliance took the most seats in parliament, defeating Prime Minister Wickremasinghe's party and forcing him to resign. She appointed Mahinda Rajapakse, her party's leader in parliament and a former fisheries minister, as prime minister. Rajapakse declared that he would seek constitutional reform to implement a parliamentary system and that he would cede the premiership to Kumaratunga.

The Supreme Court rejected Kumaratunga's claim to office until the end of 2006 and her term came to an end in Nov. 2005. On 18 Nov. 2005 she succeeded as president by PM Rajapakse.

Kvirikashvili, Giorgi (Georgia)

Introduction

Giorgi Kvirikashvili became prime minister on 30th Dec. 2015 following Irakli Garibashvili's resignation the week before. He retained office following the Georgian Dream coalition's parliamentary election victory in Oct. 2016.

Early Life

Born in Tbilisi on 20 July 1967, Kvirikashvili graduated in medicine from the Tbilisi State Medical University in 1992. Three years later he received a degree in economics from the Tbilisi State University, followed by a master's degree in finance from the University of Illinois in the USA in 1998. From 1993–99 he also held executive positions at various banks.

In 1999, having won a parliamentary seat representing the New Rights party, Kvirikashvili joined the State Chancellery. However, following the 2003 'Rose Revolution' he returned to the banking sector. From 2006–11 he was chief executive of the Cartu Bank which was owned by business tycoon and future prime minister, Bidzina Ivanishvili. When the Georgian Dream coalition took power in Oct. 2012, Kvirikashvili was appointed minister of economy and sustainable development in Ivanishvili's cabinet. In July 2013 he also took the post of deputy prime minister, and in Sept. 2015 was named minister for foreign affairs. On 25 Dec. 2015 Georgian Dream named Kvirikashvili as Garibashvili's replacement as premier, and his candidature was confirmed in a parliamentary vote on 29 Dec.

Career Peak

Kvirikashvili was expected to continue implementing the policies pledged by Georgian Dream in 2012. These have included pursuing closer ties with the USA and the European Union, with a view to eventual EU and NATO membership. He also reiterated the need for a pragmatic approach to rebuilding relations with Russia. In economic terms, he is an advocate of privatization. His critics, however, have questioned his lack of front-line political experience and the extent of background influence Ivanishvili continues to yield over the government. The Georgian Dream coalition increased its representation in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2016, taking 115 of the 150 seats. In Oct. 2017 parliament approved constitutional changes promoting a more parliamentary system of government despite an earlier attempt to veto the legislation by President Margvelashvili. Kvirikashvili championed the amendments, claiming that they marked a major step forward in the democratic development of the country. He resigned on 13 June 2018 after relations with his own party deteriorated over his cabinet's economic policy.

Kwaśniewski, Aleksander (Poland)

Introduction

Aleksander Kwaśniewski became post-communist Poland's second president in 1995 and won a second term in 2000. His efforts to take Poland into the EU and NATO appeased leaders in Europe and the US who were worried about his communist past. As required by the constitution, he stood down from office at the end of his second term in Dec. 2005.

Early Life

Kwaśniewski was born on 15 Nov. 1954 in Białogard in the northwest of Poland. He graduated in economics from Gdańsk University where he became active in communist politics. In 1977 he joined the Polish United Workers' Party and edited party publications in Warsaw until 1985. He then

joined the council of ministers and 2 years later was appointed minister of youth affairs and physical culture. He married Jolanta Konty in 1979, with whom he has one child.

As communism lost its grip throughout Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, Kwaśniewski was part of the round table discussions (incorporating the church, Solidarity and other political groups) that paved the way for free elections. Following the dissolution of the United Workers' Party, he founded the Democratic Left Alliance which counted many former communists in its membership. It emerged as the largest party from the 1993 elections and Kwaśniewski formed a coalition with the Peasant Party, which itself had a large number of former communists.

At the presidential elections of 1995 Kwaśniewski stood against Lech Wałęsa, the Solidarity leader whose popularity had rapidly declined while in office. Kwaśniewski won and took office in Dec. 1995.

Career Peak

Kwaśniewski's communist heritage caused concern among many Western leaders but he confirmed his intention to press for EU and NATO membership. Market reforms and privatization continued apace. In 1999, at a joint ceremony with Czech president Vaclav Havel, Kwaśniewski signed Poland into NATO.

He consistently disassociated himself from his communist past and in 1998 promised to renew citizenship to Jews forced to flee during the pogrom of 1968. Also in 1998 Kwaśniewski formalized relations with the Vatican. However, he clashed with the church in 2000 when he refused to ratify an anti-pornography bill, claiming that sex education should be employed rather than censorship. Relations with the Vatican further deteriorated later in the year when a video was released of a close aide of Kwaśniewski mocking the pope.

In the build-up to the presidential elections of Oct. 2000 Kwaśniewski was accused of complicity with the secret police during the communist era but was subsequently cleared. He was re-elected to the presidency after one round of voting. In Oct. 2002 Poland was one of ten countries included in plans for EU expansion in 2004. Membership won 77% backing in a national referendum in June 2003.

Prime Minister Leszek Miller resigned on 2 May 2004, a day after accession to the EU. Kwaśniewski designated Finance Minister Marek Belka to succeed him. Belka was initially rejected by the Sejm but was confirmed as prime minister in June 2004. Kwaśniewski remained in office until his term ended on 23 Dec. 2005, when he handed power to his elected successor, Lech Kaczyński.

Later Life

Kwaśniewski is president of the board of Amicus Europae—an organization that he had founded in 2004 while still president of Poland to support European integration and to promote dialogue and reconciliation as a method of resolving political and regional conflicts.

In March 2006 he was appointed distinguished scholar in the practice of global leadership at Georgetown University. In Oct. 2008 he became chairman of the new European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation, staying in the role until 2015 when he was succeeded by former British prime minister Tony Blair.

Between June 2012 and Nov. 2013 Kwaśniewski also co-led the European Parliament monitoring mission in Ukraine that aimed at monitoring criminal cases against former Ukrainian prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko, Yuriy Lutsenko and Valeriy Ivaschenko.

Lagos Escobar, Ricardo (Chile)

Introduction

Elected in 2000, Ricardo Lagos Escobar became the first Socialist president of Chile since Salvador Allende Gossens (1970–73), and the third consecutive Coalition of Parties for Democracy (CPD; Concertación de los Partidos por la Democracia) leader. On election Lagos had to cope with a severe recession and charges of corruption against outgoing president Eduardo Frei Ruíz-Tagle and his Christian Democrat Party (PDC; Partido Demócrata Cristiano), which forms part of the Coalition. He also faced the emotive issue of trying former dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet Ugarte for human rights abuses.

Early Life

Lagos was born in the Chilean capital, Santiago, on 2 March 1938. The son of a farmer, he studied law at the Universidad de Chile before gaining a doctorate in economics from Duke University in North Carolina. In the 1960s Lagos became a member of the Socialist Party of Chile (PS; Partido Socialista de Chile). Between 1967–72 he continued his academic career at the Universidad de Chile, working as director of the economics school. In 1973 he was appointed by Allende's administration as Chile's ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Following the military coup led by Pinochet, Lagos lived in exile in the USA. After working at the University of North Carolina, he worked for the UN as an economist between 1978–84. On his return to Chile, he re-entered politics in opposition to Pinochet. He succeeded the PDC's Andrés Zaldívar Larraín as president of the opposition alliance known as the 'democratic opposition', winning 71% of votes. In 1986 Lagos was imprisoned following an assassination attempt on Pinochet in which five of his bodyguards were killed. Lagos was held without charge, but was released after 19 days due to strong international pressure. As the PS was outlawed under the regime, in 1987 Lagos formed the Party for Democracy (PPD; Partido por la Democracia), a coalition of parties opposed to Pinochet.

In 1988 Lagos made a televised attack on Pinochet's rule. He called on people to overcome their fears and vote against Pinochet in the 1989 elections. At the end of 1988, the PPD joined the newly-formed CPD. The centrist coalition backed the candidature of the PDC leader Patricio Aylwin Azócar. Under Aylwin's administration, Lagos served as minister for education during which time he overturned a rule barring pregnant girls from education. From 1994–98 he served as minister for public works under Frei. Reforms included improved communication networks with Chile's neighbouring countries.

Career Peak

In the Dec. 1999 presidential elections, Lagos stood against the right-wing Independent Democratic Union (UDI; Unión Demócrata Independiente) representative, Joaquín Lavín Infante. Serving as an economist under Pinochet, Lavín was a long-time supporter of the regime. Even so, both campaigns promised similar policies, including job creation and the alleviation of rural poverty and street crime. Lagos received 47.96% of votes to Lavín's 47.52%, the strongest showing for the right since Pinochet's dictatorship. A run-off election was held on 16 Jan. 2000. The turnout was 7.3 m. voters out of a possible 8 m. Lagos took 51.3% of votes and Lavín conceded defeat with 48.7%.

On his election Lagos pledged to reform the labour code, increase the minimum wage, introduce unemployment insurance and provide better health care, education and housing. He also promised to abolish constitutional privileges, such as those extended to the 10 non-elected senators (including Pinochet) appointed by the military government, and announced performance targets for cabinet members. He made it clear that the prosecution of Pinochet was not a high priority, saying it was up to the courts to try him, not the government. Lagos meanwhile had to tackle the fall-out from the worst recession in Chile since the early 1980s, the result of a collapse in the price of copper.

Chile's economy improved during his first few months in power, although the second half of 2000 proved less optimistic. Despite a growth of 5.5% in GDP and a 20% increase in exports, unemployment increased to 10.7% from 8.4% in Jan. 2000. In the Oct. 2000 municipal elections, the CPD held an overall majority, although Santiago was won by the right-wing.

In March 2003 Lagos' government faced allegations of financial corruption after the executive vice president of Corfo, the state business development agency, was forced to resign and the head of Corfo's treasury department was charged with fraud. The scandal followed the criminal investigation in 2002 of several parliamentarians, including two former ministers, who had accepted bribes. Lagos refused the resignation of economics minister Jorge Rodríguez in March 2003, but investor confidence was nevertheless damaged.

In Aug. 2005 Lagos endorsed a bill embodying a series of constitutional reforms, effectively eliminating the remaining political influence of the military. The reforms cut the presidential term from 6 to 4 years, ended designated senators and senators for life, reduced the powers of the National Security Council, and restored power to the president to remove the armed forces' commanders.

In Jan. 2006, a month after the 2005 elections, Lagos was succeeded in office by Michelle Bachelet.

Later Life

In May 2007 Lagos was appointed as a United Nations Special Envoy on Climate Change.

Lahoud, Emile (Lebanon)

Introduction

Emile Lahoud was sworn in as president on 24 Nov. 1998. As commander of the armed forces, his election on 15 Oct. required a constitutional amendment as serving state officials were formerly prohibited from standing for the presidency. His mandate was extended for a further 3 years from Sept. 2004 under a constitutional amendment approved by parliament. On 23 Nov. 2007 Lahoud controversially declared a 'state of emergency', handing over power to the army, leaving a political vacuum in Lebanon.

Early Life

Born in 1936 in Baabdat, Emile Lahoud was educated at Brumana High School before joining the Military Academy as a cadet officer in 1956. Between 1958–80 he attended courses at naval academies in the UK and USA as he progressed through the ranks to captain. By 1985 he was a rear-admiral and on 28 Nov. 1989 was promoted to general and commander of the armed forces at the start of Elias Haraoui's presidency.

Career Peak

Credited with rebuilding the Lebanese armed forces and restraining the warring militias that held sway in 1975–90, Lahoud was a respected public figure by the time of his election as president in Nov. 1998. He secured the votes of 118 deputies of the 128-member National Assembly, reflecting his wide acceptance across sectarian lines. The early part of his presidency saw the completion of Israel's military withdrawal from south Lebanon in May 2000. His term of office was originally set to end in late 2004, but was extended for a further 3 years when the parliament approved a controversial constitutional amendment (believed to have been influenced by Syria) in Sept. 2004. In Feb. 2005 the former prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri was killed by a massive car bomb in Beirut. The assassination caused a series of anti-Syrian rallies, which led to calls for Syria to withdraw its troops, and Lahoud came under pressure to resign. In April 2005 Syria claimed to have withdrawn all its military forces, as demanded by the United Nations.

In Nov. 2006 the pro-Syrian president indicated that he would not support a plan for an international tribunal to try suspects in the murder of al-Hariri (a United Nations inquiry having already implicated Syrian officials in the killing). Lahoud also claimed that Prime Minister Siniora's cabinet lacked sectarian balance following the resignation of a number of Shia Muslim ministers and called for a new government of national unity.

On 23 Nov. 2007 Lahoud declared a 'state of emergency', deciding to hand power over to the army when his mandate expired after the government failed to elect a head of state. Rival leaders have agreed on Gen. Michel Suleiman as the consensus candidate to fill the presidency in the next vote. Under the Lebanese sectarian power-sharing system the president is elected by Parliament, not by popular vote, and must be a Maronite Christian.

Lavaka Ata 'Ulukalala (Tonga)

Introduction

After only a year's experience in government, Prince Lavaka Ata 'Ulukalala was appointed prime minister by his father, King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, in Jan. 2000. He left office 6 years later amid pressure for less royal influence in government.

Early Life

Prince Lavaka ata 'Ulukalala was born on 12 July 1959 in Nuku'alofa, capital of what was then the British protectorate of Tonga. He is the youngest son of King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV and Queen Halaevalu Mata'aho. In 1981 Prince Lavaka joined the naval arm of the Tongan defence services, where he served for several years before enrolling at the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He graduated with a diploma in strategic studies in 1988 and from 1991–95 he was commander of the Tongan navy.

Having gained an MA in defence studies from the University of New South Wales, Australia (1997) and an MA in international relations from Bond University, Queensland (1998), Prince Lavaka entered politics. He took over the portfolios for foreign affairs and defence from his brother, Crown Prince Tupouto'a, who resigned after 25 years in office to pursue business interests. Following the resignation of Prime Minister Baron Vaea on 3 Jan. 2000, the king (as both head of state and of government) appointed Prince Lavaka to succeed him.

Career Peak

By 2004 Prince Lavaka was also minister for agriculture and forestry, fisheries, marine and ports, civil aviation, communications, works and disaster relief activities. In March 2005, in the face of increasing public pressure, four additional ministers were appointed from the elected members of parliament. This step towards reform was well received. However, a series of pro-democracy protests demanding less royal involvement in government led to Prince Lavaka tendering his resignation on 11 Feb. 2006. He was succeeded by Feleti Sevele, Tonga's first non-noble prime minister.

Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore)

Introduction

Although he continued to hold the official title of Senior Minister until May 2011, Lee Kuan Yew was the first prime minister and architect of a modern and independent Singapore. Taking office in 1959, the multilingual Lee recreated Singapore as an economic powerhouse. However, Lee was criticized for repressive and authoritarian social and political policies. He was married to Kwa Geok Choo and had three children.

Early Life

Born on 16 Sept. 1923, Lee Kuan Yew was educated in Singapore at the Raffles Institution and Raffles College before moving to the UK to study at the London School of Economics and to read law at the University of Cambridge. Upon his return to Singapore in 1949 he began his career by practising law.

In Nov. 1954 he helped to found the socialist People's Action Party (PAP), of which he became secretary-general; he won a seat in the 1955 general elections. After Singapore had achieved full internal self-government in 1959, the PAP was elected the majority party in a new Legislative Assembly. On 5 June of that year Lee Kuan Yew was sworn in as Prime Minister of Singapore.

Career Peak

After Singapore left the Federation of Malaysia, 2 years after its inception in 1963, and the announcement of British withdrawal from its bases in 1968, he embarked on an ambitious economic programme that transformed Singapore from a trade distribution centre to a high-tech producer nation.

He raised the quantity and quality of the output by introducing new labour laws, improving education and exercising a high degree of control over the welfare state. The economic and social stability that followed supported foreign investor confidence, while both foreign and domestic enterprise was encouraged through subsidies and tax concessions. In the early 1970s, Singapore reached almost full employment.

While Lee did much to promote ethnic and cultural diversity with, for instance, the creation of the Constitutional Commission on Minority Rights in late 1965, Singapore's predominantly one-party state has come under severe

criticism from those who advocate greater political freedom. Following Lee's voluntary resignation in 1990, the Singaporean government appointed him as senior minister; a largely symbolic post.

Later Life

Lee Kuan Yew's son, Lee Hsien Loong, became Singapore's third prime minister on 12 Aug. 2004. Lee Kuan Yew held the post of Minister Mentor in his son's administration until retiring from the cabinet in May 2011 at the age of 87.

Lee died aged 91 on 23 March 2015.

Lee Myung-bak (South Korea)

Introduction

Lee Myung-bak made his name by playing a key role in establishing Hyundai among the world's leading industrial firms. He was elected president in Dec. 2007, promising to revitalize the economy and resurrect close ties with the USA. However, his term in office proved difficult amid financial and currency turmoil and turbulent relations with North Korea.

Early Life

Lee Myung-bak was born on 19 Dec. 1941 near Osaka, Japan, where his Korean parents worked as farm labourers. The family moved to Pohang in the newly liberated southern Korea in 1946, with Lee attending Dongji Commercial High School. He studied business administration at Korea University in Seoul, financed in part by his work as a street cleaner.

A politically active student, Lee served a short prison term for demonstrating against the normalization of South Korea's diplomatic links with Japan. As a result, he struggled to find employment but was taken on by a then small manufacturing company, Hyundai Engineering. He became its youngest chief executive officer at the age of 35 and was chairman at 46. Known as 'the Bulldozer', Lee pushed through a range of large-scale construction projects that underpinned the country's transformation from a poor agricultural economy to a major industrial power. Hyundai became one of the region's most powerful conglomerates, with around 160,000 staff by the time Lee left in 1992. During the boom years of the 1970s and 1980s, Lee became a wealthy property owner.

Lee entered political life in the 1992 parliamentary elections with the then ruling conservative New Korea Party, the predecessor of the Grand National Party (GNP, formed in 1997). He contested the mayorship of Seoul in 1995 but lost to the former prime minister, Chung Wong-sik. Lee subsequently spent a year as a visiting professor at George Washington University in the USA.

On his return to South Korea, Lee established several companies specializing in internet-based financial services. In 2002 he returned to public life when he was elected mayor of Seoul. Over the next 5 years he earned plaudits for his campaigns to regenerate the city by investing in parks and open spaces and public transport. The restoration of the Cheonggye stream, which had been submerged by concrete in the 1970s, provoked protest but has become one of Seoul's most popular attractions. In 2007 he was named a 'hero of the environment' by *Time* magazine.

In May 2007 Lee declared his intention to run for the presidency of the right-leaning opposition GNP. Three months later he defeated Park Guen-hye in the party's primary. His campaign centred on economic issues, including the ambitious '747' plan aiming to achieve 7% annual GDP growth and to double average GDP per head to US\$40,000 to advance South Korea from the world's 11th to seventh largest economy over the next decade.

Lee's fondness for large-scale infrastructure projects was underlined by plans to build a canal between Seoul and the port of Busan, which he has claimed would create 300,000 jobs, improve and diversify the transport system and revitalize the country's interior. He also floated a plan to create a Korean high-tech version of Silicon Valley in the central region of Chungcheongnam. Much of his campaign was dogged by allegations of involvement in stock market price manipulation in 2001. He denied the charges and was formally cleared of fraud in Feb. 2008 after an investigation

by an independent counsel. Lee won a landslide victory in the presidential election of 19 Dec. 2007, defeating Chung Dong-young of the United New Democratic Party.

Career Peak

Lee was sworn in as president on 25 Feb. 2008. He promised to slash economic regulations, initiate tax reforms, streamline government and attract foreign investment. He also pledged to strengthen ties with the USA and hinted at a tougher line than his predecessor, Roh Moo-hyun, in relations with North Korea. In April 2008 Lee's GNP won an overall parliamentary majority in elections to the National Assembly. However, his poll ratings then fell markedly in the wake of his unpopular agreement to resume US beef imports (suspended since 2003 on health grounds) and also the impact of the global credit crisis which led the government to announce a US\$130bn. intervention package in Oct. 2008 to support the banking system and stabilize financial markets. In Feb. 2009 the central bank reduced interest rates to a record low as the economy faced its first contraction in over a decade, and in April the GNP suffered a crushing defeat in parliamentary by-elections. In Sept. 2009 Lee replaced his prime minister in a cabinet reshuffle and also removed the defence minister, with whom he had clashed over military spending. In June 2010 the GNP suffered a major defeat in local elections, heralding further senior cabinet changes including the prime minister in Aug.–Sept.

Meanwhile, relations with North Korea remained unpredictable and volatile. In Jan. 2009 the North announced that it was abandoning all military and political agreements signed with South Korea because of the latter's 'hostile intent'. Then in May the North conducted its second nuclear weapon test and declared that it was no longer bound by the armistice that ended the Korean War, heightening tensions further. However, later in the year Pyongyang made some conciliatory gestures towards Lee's government, including agreeing to resume a programme of family reunions suspended since 2008 and indicating a willingness to return to multilateral talks on its nuclear programme. But in 2010 hostilities again reignited as forces from both sides exchanged artillery fire near their disputed maritime border in Jan., a South Korean naval vessel was sunk allegedly by the North in March and the North launched an artillery attack on a small South Korean island close to the two countries' maritime border in Nov. North–South contacts eventually resumed in July 2011 as envoys from each side held their first nuclear talks since the collapse of negotiations in 2009.

In Aug. 2012 Japanese–South Korean relations deteriorated as a result of Lee's visit to the Liancourt Rocks, islets over which both countries claim sovereignty. He subsequently stated that the Japanese Emperor should not visit South Korea unless he apologized to the victims of Japan's past colonialism. Japan temporarily recalled its ambassador in Seoul.

Term limitations prevented Lee from seeking re-election at the Dec. 2012 presidential elections. Shortly before leaving office in Feb. 2013, Lee issued controversial pardons, triggering nationwide criticism.

Leterme, Yves (Belgium)

Introduction

Yves Camille Désiré Leterme first served as prime minister from March to Dec. 2008 and became premier for the second time in Nov. 2009, replacing Herman Van Rompuy who had resigned to become the first president of the European Council. The Flemish Leterme was leader of the Christian Democratic and Flemish Party (CD&V) and a former minister-president of Flanders. He served in a caretaker capacity since April 2010 when his fragile coalition government collapsed over a long-simmering linguistic dispute between Belgium's Flemish and French-speaking politicians, triggering early parliamentary elections. The elections proved inconclusive and negotiations over the formation of a new coalition remained deadlocked until King Albert II appointed a new prime minister in Dec. 2011.

Early Life

Yves Leterme was born in Wervik, West Flanders on 6 Oct. 1960. Brought up by his Dutch-speaking Flemish mother and French-speaking Walloon father, he is bilingual. He went to school in Ypres before graduating in law from the

Catholic University of Leuven in 1981. After obtaining a BSc in political sciences from Ghent University, he earned an LLB in law and then a master's in public administration. In 1984 he also completed a postgraduate course at the International Centre for European Training.

After becoming involved in local youth politics, the Christian People's Party (CVP) invited Leterme to join them and in 1983 he became the chairman of the Youth-CVP Ypres group. He worked closely with the CVP for the next decade, supporting two CVP regional parliamentarians, acting as Ypres district CVP secretary (1985–87) and then serving as national vice-secretary (1989–91) and national secretary (1991–92). He worked at the Court of Audits for 2 years (1987–89) and in 1992 became a civil servant at the European Commission, where he stayed for 5 years. During this period he remained politically active, becoming a municipal councillor in 1995 and an MP in 1997. In 2001 he became head of the CD&V (ex-CVP) faction in the Chamber of Representatives and in 2003 he was elected party leader.

In 2004 Leterme was appointed minister-president of the Flemish government. There he made significant strides in eliminating the government's debt and introducing public-private partnerships as a means of boosting investment. Following the CD&V success in the June 2007 elections, King Albert invited Leterme to negotiate a coalition while Guy Verhofstadt remained as caretaker prime minister. Negotiations faltered over constitutional reforms aimed at devolving powers to the Dutch-, French- and German-speaking communities, with Leterme twice threatening to resign before talks finally failed. From Dec. 2007–March 2008 he served as minister of budget, transport, institutional reform and the North Sea (focusing on environmental issues).

Career Peak

Leterme finally assumed the premiership in March 2008, serving for 9 months at the head of a five-party coalition. The central challenge he faced was pushing through reforms to allow greater independence for the separate language groups, most crucially in the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde region. His policy was widely rejected by the francophone community. Back in 2006 Leterme had angered parts of the Walloon community after a series of public relations blunders, including his comment that 'apparently the French speakers are intellectually not capable of learning Dutch'. He was subsequently caught out in an interview when he wrongly identified the francophone Belgian national anthem. Nonetheless, his personal popularity remained high.

Leterme's failure to achieve a consensus on language reforms prompted him to offer his resignation in July 2008, which was refused by King Albert. In Sept. 2008, amid the worsening global economic climate, Belgium (together with the Netherlands and Luxembourg) agreed to inject funds into the ailing Fortis regional retail bank and (with France and Luxembourg) to rescue Dexia Bank, the world's biggest lender to local governments. The following month saw a nationwide strike over rising prices. On 19 Dec. 2008 Leterme again offered his resignation as a crisis grew over the sale of Fortis Bank to BNP Paribas, with shareholders taking the government to court over lack of consultation. His resignation, and that of the entire government, was accepted on 22 Dec. He remained in office until 30 Dec. 2008 when he was succeeded by Herman Van Rompuy, also of the CD&V.

In a cabinet reshuffle in July 2009 Leterme was named foreign minister. In this post he established bilateral relations with Vietnam, making it the only Asian country with preferential trade agreements with Belgium. Leterme became prime minister for a second time in Nov. 2009 after Van Rompuy was elected the first president of the European Council. Though he maintained his commitment to institutional reform, Leterme's main challenges were economic. In Jan. 2010 Opel revealed it was closing one of its factories and InBev announced a 10% workforce cut.

In April 2010 the Open Vld party withdrew from the ruling coalition causing the collapse of the government. Leterme remained in office as caretaker prime minister. Early parliamentary elections were held in June but subsequent inter-party negotiations to construct a new coalition government proved unsuccessful. On 13 Sept. 2011 Leterme announced that he would leave the post of caretaker prime minister by the end of the year to become deputy secretary-general at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. After a record 541 days without a government, King Albert II named Elio Di Rupo as prime minister on 6 Dec. The following day Leterme was appointed to the honorary title of Minister of State.

Later Life

Following his departure from public office, Lettner became a deputy secretary general of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), serving from Dec. 2011–June 2014. In June 2014 he was appointed secretary general of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Letta, Enrico (Italy)

Introduction

Enrico Letta was prime minister from April 2013–Feb. 2014, heading a grand coalition of his centre-left Democratic Party (PD) and Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right People of Freedom Party (Pdl). Letta's appointment followed 2 months of post-electoral negotiation.

Early Life

Born on 20 Aug. 1966 in Pisa, Letta studied international law at the University of Pisa and completed a PhD in European Community law at the city's Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies. Having joined Christian Democracy (DC), from 1991–95 he was president of the umbrella organization Youth of the European People's Party. He also worked for the Agency of Research and Legislation think tank, becoming its secretary general in 1993.

After the demise of the DC in 1994, Letta joined the successor Italian People's Party (PPI). In Nov. 1998 he was appointed minister of European affairs in the government of Massimo D'Alema before taking on the industry portfolio from 1999–2001. He was elected to parliament in 2001 representing Democracy is Freedom–The Daisy Party (DL), into which the PPI had merged. From 2001–04 he was the DL's shadow minister for economic policy.

From 2004–06 he sat in the European Parliament, serving on the committee for economic and monetary affairs. In 2006 he returned to national politics, joining Romano Prodi's centre-left coalition government. When the DL became part of the newly formed PD in 2007, Letta challenged for the leadership but secured only 11% of the vote. In 2008 he won a parliamentary seat and in 2009 became the PD's deputy leader under Pier Luigi Bersani. During the 2011–13 tenure of Prime Minister Mario Monti, Letta broadly supported the premier's programme of fiscal austerity.

In the inconclusive general election of Feb. 2013, the PD emerged as the largest party in the Chamber of Deputies. After 2 months of political deadlock and the rejection of successive presidential nominees, Bersani and the rest of the PD leadership resigned. In April 2013 President Giorgio Napolitano nominated Letta as prime minister at the head of a grand coalition of the PD and the Pdl.

Career Peak

Letta was sworn in on 28 April 2013, having assembled a cabinet composed of figures from the left and right. He urged that policies to boost growth should run alongside existing fiscal austerity measures. As well as reviving the economy, he has faced the challenge of restoring public confidence in government while balancing the demands of his own party against those of the Pdl. His task has been further complicated by Italy's reliance on economic support from the European Union and other international financial institutions.

In Oct. 2013, following the resignation of several of Berlusconi's centre-right ministers, Letta called for a confidence vote to keep the government alive. Berlusconi ultimately decided to support Letta and the government survived the confidence vote by 235 votes to 70. Berlusconi was subsequently expelled from the Senate following his earlier conviction for tax fraud.

Letta resigned as prime minister on 13 Feb. 2014 after the PD voted in favour of a new government. The party's secretary, Matteo Renzi, who had led criticism of Letta's failure to both push through bureaucratic reforms and improve the economy, was subsequently asked to form a government by president Giorgio Napolitano. He was sworn in as Letta's replacement on 22 Feb. 2014.

Later Life

In Sept. 2015 Letta became Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs at the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po).

Leung Chun-ying (Hong Kong, China)

Introduction

Leung Chun-ying was sworn in as chief executive on 1 July 2012.

Early Life

Leung Chun-ying was born on 12 Aug. 1954 in Hong Kong and studied valuation and estate management at Bristol Polytechnic (now the University of the West of England) in the United Kingdom. In 1977 he returned to Hong Kong and worked for 5 years for the British real estate company, Jones Lang Wootton. In 1988 he was elected secretary-general of the Basic Law Consultative Committee, tasked with easing Hong Kong's transition to Chinese control in 1997.

In 1993 Leung established his own surveying company and was president of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors from 1995–96. He also served as an advisor to the governments of Shenzhen, Tianjin, Shanghai and Hebei province. In 1997 he became minister for housing before becoming leader of Hong Kong's Executive Council in 1999, a post he held until 2011. He was also a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference parliamentary body. He was chosen as chief executive of Hong Kong on 25 March 2012 with 689 of 1132 votes cast by the election committee.

Career Peak

Leung took office amid controversy over his alleged abuse of planning laws, something for which he had attacked a rival candidate. He advocates closer ties with mainland China but in Sept. 2012 withdrew plans to impose mandatory Chinese patriotism classes for schoolchildren after widespread public protest. He has pledged to build over 100,000 homes by 2018.

In Sept. 2014 protests organized by the Hong Kong Federation of Students and other opposition activist groups broke out following the proposal of electoral reforms by the government in Beijing. The reforms, which protesters alleged would restrict future chief executive appointments to candidates endorsed by the Chinese administration, were supported by Leung. His subsequent suggestion that open elections would negatively result in Hong Kong's impoverished population controlling politics further damaged his standing among the growing pro-democracy movement, which called for his resignation the following month. Beijing's proposals were subsequently rejected in a vote by the Hong Kong legislature in June 2015. In Dec. 2016 he announced that he would not be seeking re-election in 2017. He was succeeded by Carrie Lam on 1 July 2017.

Li Peng (China)

Introduction

Li Peng has been called the 'great survivor' of Communist China, adapting to the changing views of the prevailing Communist leadership until late in life. He has occupied a variety of state posts since 1979, and from 1988–98 was prime minister. During his premiership, Li oversaw great economic progress, but he will be remembered as the hard-liner who suppressed the Tiananmen Square demonstrations with great loss of life.

Early Life

Li was born in Oct. 1928 (the exact date is unknown) in Sichuan province. His father, the writer Li Shuoxin, was executed by the Kuomintang (Nationalist) authorities because of his Communist sympathies. The younger Li, an orphan, was adopted at the age of three by the future Communist premier Zhou Enlai,

although after 1939 he was largely brought up by Zhou's wife Deng Yingchao. In 1948 Zhou sent his adopted son to Moscow to train as an engineer at the Moscow Power Institute. He did not return to China until 1955.

Li returned to a China that had been transformed. He had left a country wracked by civil war; he returned to a Communist state in which his foster father held high office. Li worked his way up the party hierarchy, but his energies were spent supervising major electrical power projects during the period 1955–79. The influence of Li's foster father eased a rapid career development.

From 1979 Li became more involved in politics. In 1982, he was appointed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. He was elected to the Politburo in 1985 and to the standing committee of that body 2 years later. Li held only one ministerial post—education minister (1985–88)—before he was chosen by Deng Xiaoping to be prime minister in 1988.

Career Peak

In economic matters, Li was renowned for his caution. Nevertheless, he implemented the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping. During his premiership an economic boom began, and the GDP grew by more than 10% per annum. Living standards rose but Li was concerned that with prosperity would come a growing demand for civil liberties.

In April 1989 Li strongly advocated the use of force against the student and worker demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, Beijing. Early in the crisis, he appeared on national television with student leader Wang Dan, who lectured him. Li never forgave this loss of face. He declared martial law and sent the military in to crush the demonstrations in June. Always perceived as austere, Li's unpopularity increased because of his part in the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Li remained uncompromising in the face of Western calls for respect for civil liberties in China and disregarded international criticism. He survived a heart attack in 1993 and had the satisfaction of seeing the Three Gorges power project, which he had advocated for many years, finally approved. He served two 5-year terms as prime minister (the limit set by the constitution).

Later Life

In 1998 Li was appointed chairman of the National People's Congress, the Chinese parliament. Although the legislature has limited power, Li was regarded as the leader of China's Communist hard-liners and second only to President Jiang Zemin in influence. At the Communist Party congress of Nov. 2002 he was among several high-profile figures to announce their retirement from the Politburo, effective in March 2003.

Lilo, Gordon Darcy (Solomon Islands)

Introduction

Gordon Darcy Lilo served as prime minister from Nov. 2011–Dec. 2014, taking over following the resignation of Danny Philip amid controversy over development funding. A finance minister in previous administrations, Lilo promised increased political transparency.

Early Life

Born on 28 Aug. 1965 in Ghatere on Kolombangara Island, Lilo studied economics at the University of Papua New Guinea. As a civil servant he was a permanent secretary at the ministries of environment and conservation and finance. He received a master's degree in development and administration from the Crawford School of Economics and Government at the Australian National University in 2001.

Having returned to the Solomon Islands, Lilo was elected to parliament as MP for Gizo/Kolombangara in Dec. 2001, serving as leader of the independent group in parliament from Dec. 2001 until April 2006. In May 2006 he was appointed finance minister by Prime Minister Sogavare. He then served as minister for environment and conservation under Prime Minister Sikua from Dec. 2007.

In Aug. 2010 Lilo was again appointed finance minister in the National Coalition for Rural Advancement (NCRA) government led by Danny Philip.

He subsequently oversaw development projects across a range of sectors including agriculture, forestry, education and infrastructure. In Nov. that year a scandal erupted over the alleged misuse of Taiwanese-provided development funds by Philip, forcing him to resign the premiership. In the ensuing parliamentary ballot Lilo was elected his successor by 29 votes to 20.

Career Peak

Taking office on 16 Nov. 2011, Lilo pledged to continue the main policies of the NCRA government. These included developing the Solomon Islands' agriculture sector and diversifying the economy away from logging. In response to criticism of cronyism in government, he proposed a stronger role for the audit office and increased public consultation.

In foreign affairs, closer relations were sought with Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

Lilo's term as prime minister ended on 9 Dec. 2014 following his party's defeat at the general elections held in Nov. He was succeeded by former two-time premier Manasseh Sogavare, who returned to power almost 7 years after his last stint in office.

Lipponen, Paavo (Finland)

Introduction

Representing the 'rainbow coalition' which includes his own Finnish Social Democratic Party (SSDP), Paavo Lipponen has served as Finland's prime minister since 13 April 1995. Strongly pro-European, Lipponen administered Finland's entry into the EU in 1995 and promoted the adoption of the EMU in 1998. He led the SSDP to second place behind the Centre Party in the elections of March 2003 but has remained prime minister while a new government is formed.

Early Life

Born on 23 April 1941 in Turtola, Lipponen read political science at university where he was the editor of the student newspaper, *Ylioppilaslehti*. In 1965 he started working as a freelance reporter for the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE. Two years later he became an active member of the SSDP, serving as the party's research and international affairs secretary and then as planning chief of the political section from 1967–79. In 1979 he became the political affairs adviser to the prime minister, a post he held until 1982. In 1983 he was elected a member of parliament and later became the Chairman of the SSDP in the Helsinki District. Whilst head of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (1989–91), he was re-elected to parliament and appointed to the executive council of the SSDP. In 1993 he became the party chairman.

Career Peak

In response to the parliamentary elections of March 1995 when the ruling Finnish Centre Party suffered a heavy defeat, Lipponen formed the so-called 'rainbow coalition', comprising the SSDP, the National Coalition Party, the Greens, the Left-Wing Alliance and the Swedish People's Party. Among the government's most notable achievements was securing favourable terms for Finland's entry to the European Union, boosting the domestic economy and reducing unemployment. In the 1999 elections the National Coalition Party and the Centre Party made substantial gains at the expense of the Social Democratic Party which nonetheless remained the biggest party in parliament. Lipponen formed his second rainbow coalition and the Centre Party again found itself in opposition. In July 1999 when Finland assumed the Presidency of the European Union, Lipponen made a strong effort to promote financial integration and monetary union in particular. In the same year Finland became one of the first wave of countries to adopt EMU. In the latter half of 2000 Lipponen embarked on a successful initiative to extend paternity leave in Finland.

In May 2002 the Greens left the government in protest at a vote authorizing the construction of a nuclear reactor, Europe's first in over a decade. The decision to build another reactor was an attempt to lessen Finland's dependence on Russia for energy.

The war in Iraq in 2003 caused difficulties for Lipponen's government. Amid popular opposition to the US-led war, Lipponen was criticised for his friendly relations with the American president. The official Finnish position demanded UN Security Council clearance for any military attack.

Later Life

At the elections of March 2003 the Centre Party won 55 of 200 seats (24.7% of the vote) while the SSDP won 53 seats (24.5%). The Centre Party leader, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, was elected prime minister by parliament on 17 April. She formed a coalition government with Lipponen's SSDP and the Swedish People's Party but Lipponen declined a ministerial position. He stated support for the new government and his intention to remain as his party's chairman until the end of his term in 2005. In April 2003 he was elected speaker of the Finnish parliament—a position he held until March 2007.

Lipponen contested the 2012 presidential election as the SSDP candidate but failed to progress beyond the first round of voting.

Liu Shaoqi (China)

Introduction

Liu Shaoqi was head of state of the People's Republic of China from 1959–68 and was considered, by many, to be Mao's heir. One of the outstanding leaders of Communist China, he fell from office in 1968 in circumstances that have still not been fully explained. His death, in 1969, was not made public until 11 years later.

Liu was born in Hunan province in 1889—the exact date of birth is not certain. By the time he was 30 was involved in politics, joining the Socialist Youth League.

Early Life

In 1920 Liu went to Moscow to study and joined the new Chinese Communist Party while he was learning about Communism firsthand in Russia. This time spent abroad made Liu one of the few Chinese leaders of his generation with any real experience of the outside world. Returning to China in 1922 he gained a party post in his native Hunan province and became active in labour leadership.

When the Nationalists turned on the Communists in 1927, Liu went underground. In the same year he was elected to the party's Central Committee. Joining Mao Zedong's forces in western China in the 1930s, Liu became a member of the Politburo, but he left the Long March to work in Beijing against the Japanese invaders. After being in charge of the (underground) party in North China and then in Central China, he returned to Mao's side. A series of lectures, *How to be a good Communist*, increased his influence and by the time China emerged from the Second World War, Liu was firmly established as one of the most powerful men in the Communist Party, of which he had become the official spokesman.

Career Peak

Upon the establishment of the People's Republic of China on 1 Oct. 1949, Liu was appointed deputy premier and a deputy leader of the party. His experience as a student in Moscow stood Liu in good stead as China's chief negotiator with the Soviet Union and his labour leadership made him an obvious choice to promote industrialisation. It fell to Liu to outline the Great Leap Forward that was intended to boost China's industries. By the mid-1950s Liu was clearly Mao's heir and in 1959 succeeded him as head of state (Chairman of the State Council).

As head of state Liu made many visits abroad. But in 1968, during the Cultural Revolution, he fell from power. It seems likely that Liu, the pragmatist, was opposed to the wilder excesses of the student Red Guards, the instruments of Mao's new revolution. What was perceived as the extravagant lifestyle of Liu's wife, Wang Guangmei, also attracted adverse comment. In Oct. 1968, Liu lost his post and party positions. At the same time his Politburo ally Deng Xiaoping was purged.

Later Life

Purged from the Communist Party, Liu Shaoqi disappeared from view. Rumours of his death spread in 1974 but the party did not announce that the former head of state had died on 12 Nov. 1969 in Henan province until 1980. In the same year, the party—led in fact if not in name by Deng Xiaoping—completely rehabilitated Liu, acknowledging the important part he played in the establishment of Communist China.

Lobo Sosa, Porfirio (Honduras)

Introduction

Porfirio Lobo Sosa was elected president on 29 Nov. 2009, ending months of political turmoil that followed the ousting of President Zelaya in a coup. The right-wing former agronomist has faced the challenge of uniting the country, re-establishing regional alliances and combating rising lawlessness and violence.

Early Life

Porfirio Lobo Sosa was born on 22 Dec. 1947 in Trujillo, Colón district, the son of a wealthy politician who served in Honduras' National Congress in the 1950s. Lobo grew up near Juticalpa, Olancho, attending a local Catholic school and then the San Francisco Institute of Tegucigalpa from 1961–65. He went to the University of Miami in 1966 to study business administration before returning to Honduras in 1970 to work in his family's agricultural business and to teach politics and economics at a college in Juticalpa. In the 1970s Lobo travelled to the Soviet Union and enrolled at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow. He is reputed to have joined the Communist Party of Honduras on his return before making a political about-turn to join the right-wing National Party (PNH), becoming president of the party's Olancho branch in 1986.

In the general election of Nov. 1989 Lobo secured a seat in the National Congress for the PNH. He worked in the department for agriculture and economics under the new president, Rafael Leonardo Callejas, and headed the corporation for forestry development until 1994. Lobo was elected president of the PNH's central committee in June 1999 and served as president of congress from 2002–06. Selected as the PNH candidate to contest the presidential election of 27 Nov. 2005, he took a hard line on crime, promising the death penalty for convicted gang members. This contrasted with the approach of his rival, José Manuel Zelaya, of the centre-right Liberal Party (PLH) who pledged to introduce re-education programmes for criminals. Lobo was defeated with 46% of the vote to Zelaya's 50%.

Lobo took over as leader of the opposition PNH in Jan. 2006. He criticized Zelaya's lurch to the political left in 2007 and the president's alliance with the Venezuelan leader, Hugo Chávez, who persuaded Honduras to join regional leftist alliances. Zelaya's popularity was dented by his attempts in 2008 to hold a referendum to change the constitution that barred him from standing for re-election—a path taken by Chávez in Venezuela and President Morales in Bolivia. Zelaya pushed ahead with the referendum, despite opposition from the PNH, national legal bodies and much of the military.

On 28 June 2009, after the Supreme Court had ruled that the bid to change the constitution was illegal, the army launched a coup and forced Zelaya into exile in Costa Rica. A wave of international criticism (and suspension from the Organization of American States—OAS) ushered in 5 months of sometimes violent turmoil between Zelaya's supporters and backers of the interim president, Roberto Micheletti. In the presidential election of 29 Nov. 2009 (scheduled prior to the coup), Lobo secured 56% of the vote and was sworn in on 27 Jan. 2010.

Career Peak

Lobo promptly granted amnesty to those involved in the political crisis and paved the way for Zelaya to leave for exile in the Dominican Republic. The move was one of the conditions of an accord signed in Oct. 2009 after efforts by the OAS to broker a political settlement. Lobo promised to 're-establish channels of friendship with all nations' and to seek foreign investment to revive the economy. In 2010 Honduras was readmitted to the Central

American Integration System and in May 2011 an internationally-brokered agreement to allow Zelaya to return to the country prompted Honduras' resumption of participation in OAS proceedings in June. In Sept. 2011 Lobo replaced some members of his cabinet, including foreign minister Mario Canahuati and interior minister Óscar Álvarez, reportedly over political differences. Drug-related crime has meanwhile continued to increase, and Honduras has been ranked among the most violent countries in the world.

Lobo was succeeded as president by National Party candidate Juan Orlando Hernández on 27 Jan. 2014. Since the constitution of Honduras prohibits successive presidential terms, Sosa was not eligible to run for re-election.

Loeak, Christopher (Marshall Islands)

Introduction

Christopher Loeak was sworn into office on 10 Jan. 2012 following his appointment by the 33-member *Nitijela* (parliament) on 3 Jan. 2012.

Early Life

Christopher Loeak was born on 11 Nov. 1952 on Ailinglaplap Atoll to a family of tribal leaders. He was educated at Marshall Island High School before attending the Hawaii Pacific College. He completed his legal training at Gonzaga University, Washington in 1982.

Loeak then joined the Kwajalein Atoll Corporation as a lobbyist based in Hawaii. In 1983, whilst still in Hawaii, he unsuccessfully stood for the Ailinglaplap parliamentary seat. 2 years later he contested it again and won, serving in the cabinet of Amata Kabua as minister of justice from 1988–92. In 1992 he became minister of social services and in 1996 took on the education portfolio in Kunio Lemari's government, a post he retained after Imata Kabua (the younger cousin of Amata Kabua) took over as president.

Loeak was appointed minister for the Ralik Chain of islands in 1998 and a year later was also named minister in assistance to the president. Loeak was re-elected to the *Nitijela* in 2007 and in 2008 was reappointed as minister in assistance to President Litokwa Tomeing. He successfully defended his seat in the Nov. 2011 elections and on 2 Jan. 2012 was elected president when he won parliamentary backing by 21 votes to 11 against the incumbent president, Jurelang Zedkaia.

Career Peak

Loeak's main challenge has been to raise levels of education and to gain a measure of financial independence from the USA, on which the Marshall Islands have been heavily reliant for aid. In Sept. 2013 Loeak and other Pacific Islands Forum heads adopted the Majuro Declaration calling for urgent action to address climate change. In April 2014 the government began a legal action at the International Court of Justice against nine countries with nuclear weapons, arguing that they had violated their obligation to pursue disarmament.

Upon completion of his 4 year term, Loeak was replaced by Casten Nemra as president (although he was only in office for a week before in turn being replaced by Hilda Heine).

Lubbers, Ruud (Netherlands)

Introduction

Ruud Lubbers was the longest-serving Dutch Prime Minister, and he has continued to develop his political and especially his diplomatic expertise in the academic world following his retirement from domestic politics in 1994.

Early Life

Rudolphus Lubbers was born in Rotterdam on 7 May 1939. He graduated from the Netherlands School of Economics, and began his career working as a secretary of the board of Hollandia Machine factory, a family concern. He was an active member of several associations of Christian employers and became a member of the Catholic Party (KVP) in 1964. His entry into politics came later in 1970 when he was elected to Rotterdam's Rijnmond Council. Only 3 years later he joined the Den Uyl government as Minister for Economic Affairs, and in 1977 he became leader of the Lower House of the States-General. The following year Lubbers rose to the leadership of the new Christian Democratic Alliance.

Career Peak

In Nov. 1982 he was elected Prime Minister for the first time and went on to lead 3 consecutive Cabinets variously composed of Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats. During his first term he decided to take radical action to turn around the ailing Dutch economy, and he was successful to this end, consolidating the country's international economic performance. In doing so he was considered largely responsible for what came to be known as 'The Dutch Model'. Lubbers was also a notable problem-solver in other political arenas. He managed to resolve a conflict between anti-nuclear activists and NATO about the stationing of nuclear missiles in the Netherlands, and following this diplomatic triumph he became increasingly sought after as an international negotiator. The political furore that broke out at the 1991 Maastricht talks as a result of Dutch proposals for a more federal Europe was calmed to a considerable extent by Lubbers' personal intervention. His tact and diplomacy prevented the talks from concluding in acrimonious dispute, and ultimately secured the introduction of a revised Treaty of Maastricht under the Dutch EC presidency.

Later Life

Following his resignation in 1994 he was widely tipped for high international office, including the posts of Secretary-General of NATO and of chairman of the European Commission, he never achieved these titles, and instead retired to his family business. From 1995 to 2000 Lubbers was a professor of global international economic relations at the University of Tilburg. He served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 2001 to 2005. He died on 14 Feb. 2018 aged 78.

Lugo Méndes, Fernando Armindo (Paraguay)

Introduction

Fernando Lugo was elected president in Aug. 2008 for a 5-year term. A former bishop of San Pedro, he was leader of the Christian Democratic Party and head of a 12-party coalition, the Patriotic Alliance for Change (APC). He was the first president from a party other than the National Republican Association (ANR, or Colorado Party) since 1947. In June 2012 Lugo was impeached by congress over a land dispute and removed from office.

Early Life

Fernando Lugo was born on 30 May 1951 in the San Pedro del Parana District of Itapúa. His parents were members of the ruling Colorado Party while Lugo's uncle, Epifanio Mendez Fleitas, was a Colorado Party dissident and the main rival of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner. During Stroessner's rule (1954–89), both Lugo's parents were arrested while his three brothers and uncle spent periods in exile.

In Oct. 1951 the Lugo family moved to Itapúa's capital, Encarnación, where Lugo completed his education and qualified as a teacher in 1969. He taught in the San Pedro department and in 1970 joined the Catholic Society of the Divine Word. In 1972 he took religious vows and in 1977 was ordained. He went as a missionary to Ecuador, where he spent five years and became influenced by liberation theology. Returning to Paraguay in 1982, the Church,

under pressure from the Stroessner regime, sent Lugo to Rome to study at the Pontificia Università Gregoriana. In 1987 he graduated in sociology and returned to Paraguay. He taught at the Superior Institute of Theology in Asunción, set up national and regional Episcopal commissions and, after Stroessner's fall in 1989, pressed for land reform. In 1992 he became vice president of the Confederation of Religious Leaders and in 1994 was made bishop of the diocese of San Pedro.

As internal rifts weakened the Colorado Party, Lugo's public profile rose and he became a leading non-partisan critic of the government. In 2005 he resigned his bishopric and in Dec. 2006 applied to be laicized to allow him to run for president. In Oct. 2007 he joined the Christian Democratic Party in a 12-party coalition and won the presidential election of April 2008. The Pope accepted his laicism in July 2008.

Career Peak

Having campaigned on a platform of social reform, Lugo needed to confront the country's widespread poverty and social inequality and promised to enact land reform, prompting conservatives to label him a leftist ally of President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela. In 2009 he initiated modest reforms in education and health care and negotiated an agreement with neighbouring Brazil to increase Paraguay's revenue from their jointly-controlled Itaipu hydro-electric plant. However, he encountered increasing hostility and resistance within Congress and from the armed forces, and had his moral authority undermined by paternity claims made against him by three women. In Aug. 2010 he was diagnosed with cancer but said that he would continue in office. In an impeachment trial held on 22 June 2012 the Senate voted (39-4) to remove Lugo over a land dispute that resulted in the deaths of 17 people. Vice president Federico Franco was sworn in to replace Lugo. His removal led to violent demonstrations by his supporters. Neighbouring countries denounced the proceedings, likening it to a coup d'état.

Lula da Silva, Luiz Inácio (Brazil)

Introduction

A former factory worker and trade union activist, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, better known as Lula, was elected president of Brazil in 2002 at his fourth attempt, representing the Workers' Party (PT; Partido dos Trabalhadores). The country's first elected socialist leader, he pledged to combat Brazil's widespread poverty while co-operating with the business sector and international community. He was re-elected in Oct. 2006.

Early Life

Lula was born on 27 Oct. 1945 in Garanhans in the northeastern state of Pernambuco, the seventh of eight surviving siblings. In 1952 his family moved to São Paulo state where his father worked as a docker. Living in Guarujá and Santos, Lula initially worked as a street vendor and shoe-shine boy and had little formal education. When his parents separated in 1956, he moved with his mother to the state capital. Following 2 years of odd jobs in the city's factories, he was employed from the age of 14 as a lathe operator in a São Paulo metalworks. He continued to work in the industry for the next 20 years.

In the late 1960s, when Brazil was under military rule, Lula became politically active in the metalworkers' trade union. Progressing through the union hierarchy, he was elected leader in 1975 with 92% support. He was re-elected just as emphatically 3 years later. In 1980 he founded the radical PT as a combination of trade unionists, left-wing groups and church activists. Contesting its first elections in 1982, the PT took only six seats, but increased its representation to nineteen 4 years later.

Lula first stood for the presidency in 1989 coming second to the National Reconstruction candidate Fernando Collor. Through the 1990s the party's rhetoric softened, although it continued its commitment to aiding the poor. Nonetheless, in the 1994 and 1998 presidential elections, Lula came second to the Social Democrat candidate Fernando Cardoso.

At the time of the Oct. 2002 elections, Brazil was suffering from the economic fall-out of a growing trade deficit, tax increases and reduced government spending. In the first round, Lula came first with 46.4% of

votes. In the second round run-off with the Social Democrat candidate, José Serra, he took 61.3%. The PT also won the most seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

Career Peak

Lula took office in Jan. 2003, having pledged to reduce poverty and hunger by redistributing wealth, improving education and health, and implementing agrarian reform, with the creation of a new 'social emergency' ministry. Brazil's financial markets were nervous, and the *real* faltered at the prospect of a socialist revolution. However, Lula also promised to co-operate with the business and banking communities, to adhere to IMF guidelines, to repay foreign debt and to continue his predecessor's attempts to control inflation. His government pursued sound macroeconomic policies, taking credit for low inflation, significant job creation and strong annual growth in GDP.

From May 2005 the PT was undermined politically by financial corruption scandals, leading to the resignations of several senior party officials and Lula allies, which tarnished the government's claim to probity and threatened to jeopardize the president's hopes of re-election. However, in Oct. 2006 Lula secured a second term of office after two rounds of voting in the presidential elections. The PT lost ground marginally in the parliamentary poll to become the second largest party in the Chamber of Deputies. In 2007 corruption allegations continued to haunt Lula's administration as the Supreme Court indicted 40 people in Aug., including the president's former chief of staff and other senior PT politicians. Nevertheless, the president maintained his personal popularity, achieving a 78% approval rating in a poll in late 2008. He also drew political credit for the resilience of Brazil's economy which, although not immune to the global financial crisis that unfolded in the latter half of 2008, was quick to rebound through 2009, reflecting the sound financial system, robust domestic demand and diverse trading partnerships.

In foreign affairs, Lula sought increasing engagement with other emerging powers on the world stage, particularly India and China, and expanded Brazil's diplomatic representation in Africa. He also championed the country's candidacy for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Lula was closely involved in Rio de Janeiro's successful lobbying for selection to host the 2016 summer Olympic Games, which was confirmed in Oct. 2009. After two terms Lula left office on 1 Jan. 2011 with almost 90% approval ratings. He ceded his presidency to Dilma Rousseff, the first female president in Brazil's history. The following month, federal prosecutors in Brazil accused Lula of misusing public funds to finance a political campaign in 2004 and requested the freezing of his assets.

Later Life

Lula was diagnosed with throat cancer in Oct. 2011, but made a full recovery following chemotherapy treatment.

In July 2017 he was sentenced to nearly 9 years and 6 months in prison after being found guilty of corruption and money-laundering charges, although the judge ruled that he could remain free pending an appeal. In Sept. 2017 Brazil's chief federal prosecutor charged Lula, as well as his successor as president Dilma Rousseff, with forming a criminal organization to divert funds from Petrobras (the country's state oil company). An appeals court upheld the conviction ruling in Jan. 2018.

Lumumba, Patrice (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Introduction

Founder of the Mouvement National Congolais (Congoese National Movement) and the first prime minister of independent Democratic Republic of Congo, Patrice Lumumba served only four months before being forced out of office and assassinated. Elected in 1960, the leftwing nationalist served in an uneasy alliance with Joseph Kasavubu, an opposition politician. Lumumba's death heralded 32 years of dictatorship under Mobutu Sésé Séko while securing his posthumous reputation as a freedom fighter and national hero.

Early Life

Lumumba was born on 2 July 1925 in Onalua, Kasai. After studying at a missionary school, he wrote for national journals before becoming a postal clerk in Kinshasa (then Léopoldville) and later a postal accountant in Kisan-gani (Stanleyville). He was involved in Congolese trade unionism and in the Belgian Liberal Party. After serving a year in prison for embezzlement, his political activism intensified. In 1958 he formed the MNC, which worked for the country's transition to independence from Belgium.

In 1959 an uprising resulted from an unpopular 5-year development plan. Although local elections were scheduled for Dec. 1959, nationalists were suspicious of Belgium's influence and refused to cooperate. When the Belgian authorities retaliated with force 30 people were killed in an uprising in which Lumumba was involved. He subsequently left the country but was imprisoned on his return. The MNC meanwhile entered the elections and took 90% of votes. In order to regain control, the Belgians held round table negotiations in Brussels. These were boycotted by the MNC until Lumumba was released from prison. The Belgian government capitulated and in early 1960 Lumumba joined the transitional negotiations. Independence was achieved in June 1960.

Career Peak

In the country's first elections in May 1960, the MNC won the most votes, taking 33 out of 137, but did not achieve a majority. With no party agreeing a coalition, the MNC compromised with the opposition Abako party (Alliance des Ba-Kongos), and Lumumba was appointed prime minister with the Abako leader Joseph Kasavubu becoming president. At his inauguration speech, attended by Belgian dignitaries, Lumumba riled his former colonists by attacking their treatment of the Congolese.

Before Lumumba could begin implementing any transitional reforms, the newly independent country fell into disarray. In July 1960 the army mutinied and the mineral rich Katanga region (now Shaba) declared its independence under Moïse Tshombe (later reintegrated into the DRC in 1964). Belgium sent forces ostensibly to protect remaining Belgian nationals. Sacked by President Kasavubu on 5 Sept. 1960, Lumumba's attempts to reassert his premiership were unsuccessful. He called on the UN to intervene, and was rumoured to have requested assistance from the Soviet Union, which angered the West. Meanwhile, President Kasavubu and the army leader Joseph Mobutu (later Mobutu Sésé Séko) agreed a ruling partnership. The government was recognized by the UN but not by all African countries.

Lumumba was handed over to the Kasavubu district by the Belgian army and was killed in Jan. 1961 by Moïse Tshombe's troops. Shot by firing squad, his body was dismembered and then dissolved in acid. It was over 40 years later that an independent Belgian investigation found the Belgian government complicit in Lumumba's murder. In 2002 Belgium apologized for its failure to protect the ousted prime minister.

Ma Ying-jeou (Taiwan, China)

Introduction

Ma Ying-Jeou of the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT) was elected president on 22 March 2008, ending 8 years of rule by the Democratic People's Party (DPP). The charismatic US-educated lawyer pledged to improve relations with mainland China after decades of impasse and to revive the economy.

Early Life

Ma Ying-Jeou was born on 13 July 1950 in Hong Kong, then a British overseas territory, to parents originally from Henan, China. His father, Ma Ho-ling, was a loyal supporter of China's Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT), founded in 1894 to end Manchu rule and unify the country. When Ma was a year old, his family moved to Taipei, Taiwan, which had become the seat of government of the Republic of China in 1949.

Ma was schooled in Taipei and graduated in law from the National Taiwan University in 1972. Following a 2-year spell in Taiwan's Marine Corps and the Navy, he took up postgraduate studies at New York University's School of Law and then at the Harvard Law School. Ma subsequently worked as a legal

consultant to the First National Bank of Boston and in 1981 was briefly employed by a Wall Street law firm.

Returning to Taiwan later that year, he began work as a civil servant in the presidential office, eventually serving as an English interpreter to President Chiang Ching-kuo. In 1984 Ma was appointed the KMT's deputy secretary-general for international affairs. Four years later he was promoted to the chair of the research, development and evaluation commission under the Executive Yuan (the government's executive branch). In 1991 he became deputy chairman and spokesman of the mainland affairs council. In the same year he was elected a KMT representative to the National Assembly. Having been appointed justice minister by President Lee Teng-hui in 1993, Ma sought to root out political corruption. This gained him plaudits from the public but made him enemies within the KMT and he was ousted in July 1996.

Maintaining his support for the KMT, Ma was briefly a minister without portfolio before resigning from government in 1997 in protest at continued corruption and public safety issues. Returning to academe, he took a position at the National Chengchi University Law School but less than a year later was persuaded to contest Taipei's mayoral election. He narrowly defeated the incumbent, Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic People's Party (DPP). Chen would go on to become Taiwan's president in 2000, defeating Lien Chan of the KMT.

Praised for his dynamism as mayor, Ma won a landslide re-election in Dec. 2002, receiving 64.1% of the vote. His second term was more difficult and Ma was criticized for failing to mobilize the Taipei city government sufficiently quickly to combat the threat of the SARS epidemic in early 2003. Nevertheless, he is credited with driving the regeneration of Taipei via a range of public infrastructure projects such as the M-Taipei Initiative (to create a city-wide wireless-internet network).

Ma was elected KMT chairman in 2005 and the party won local elections later that year. In 2006 he was at the centre of allegations that he had misused an expenses account while mayor. In Feb. 2007 he was indicted by the Taiwan High Prosecutors Office, forcing his resignation as KMT chairman. However, in mid-2007 he announced he would contest the presidency in 2008, promising to forge closer economic ties with Mainland China (via direct air and shipping links). He beat the DPP's Frank Hsieh in the election on 22 March 2008 with 58% of the vote. The following month he was cleared of all charges against him and on 20 May 2008 was sworn into office.

Career Peak

Ma has presided over thawing relations between Taiwan and Mainland China. The first direct weekend charter flights across the Taiwan Strait were launched in July 2008 and Taiwan was opened to tourists from mainland China. Ma has also eased restrictions on Taiwan investment on the mainland and approved measures allowing mainland investors to buy Taiwanese stocks. The moves were met by massive anti-China demonstrations in Taipei in Oct. 2008 with fears that Ma was compromising the independence of the state after the government failed to submit a request to become a United Nations member for the first time in 17 years. In 2010 further trade liberalization with China was expected after an Economic Co-operation Framework Agreement took effect in Sept. In May 2010 Taiwan was offered observer status at the World Health Organization, under the name Chinese Taipei. Ma was re-elected for a second term in Jan. 2012.

In April 2014 Ma's government came under pressure from mass demonstrations in Taipei protesting the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement—a treaty with mainland China intended to liberalize trade between the two economies.

Ma resigned as KMT chairman in Dec. 2014 following the party's crushing defeat at the Nov. local elections and was succeeded in Jan. 2015 by Eric Chu.

Ma's tenure as president ended in May 2016 following elections held in Jan. that year. He was ineligible to serve another term owing to constitutional limits, and Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party took over as president.

Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria (Philippines)

Introduction

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was swept to power in Jan. 2001 when her predecessor was forced from office by mass street protests. She is the daughter of

Diosdado Macapagal, the president of the Philippines from 1961–65. Returned to power in elections in 2004, she then survived two parliamentary attempts to impeach her over alleged corruption, human rights abuses and electoral fraud, and a failed coup attempt during the ensuing 6-year term.

Early Life

Gloria Macapagal was born on 5 April 1947 into a prominent Filipino political family. After education at a convent high school in the Philippines, she took a degree in commerce at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where the future US president Bill Clinton was one of her classmates. Returning to the Philippines, she studied for a master's degree and a PhD and then spent time teaching, during which period she married, becoming Mrs. Arroyo, although in her subsequent political career she has used both her maiden and married names.

Prominent as an economist as well as a member of a political dynasty, Arroyo was appointed to the government of President Corazón Aquino in 1986 as assistant secretary of the department of trade and industry, rising to become under-secretary. She also held the post of executive director of the garments and textile export board. During her tenure the textile industry grew to become the country's top foreign-currency earner.

When Aquino's presidency ended in 1992, Arroyo stood for the Senate and was elected at her first attempt. Although she had held office in the outgoing government, Arroyo was still something of a political unknown, and her initial appeal to many voters was the memory of her popular father. However, when she stood for re-election in 1995 her own reputation won her nearly 16 m. votes, the greatest number ever received by an individual in Philippine elections.

In 1998, Arroyo stood as a candidate for the vice-presidency. The presidency was won by Joseph Estrada, a former cinema actor, but in her electoral race, Arroyo received more votes than Estrada—12.7 m., the most ever received by anyone in a Philippine presidential or vice-presidential contest.

President Estrada appointed her vice-president and secretary of social welfare and development. She resigned from the Cabinet in Oct. 2000, but retained her role as vice-president. By that time the Estrada government was in trouble, the president having been accused of cronyism and taking bribes from illegal gambling syndicates. Impeachment proceedings began. Arroyo led the calls for Estrada to resign. Mass street protests forced Estrada to flee the presidential palace and the Supreme Court declared the presidency to be vacant. On 20 Jan. 2001, Arroyo was sworn in as president.

Career Peak

The immediate challenge facing President Arroyo was reconciliation. Many supporters of Estrada initially refused to recognize the transfer of power. She took office at a difficult time for the country, politically and economically. Arroyo set economic recovery, including a privatization programme, and economic and social reform as her priorities. However, one of her main problems was Islamic terrorism and the continued guerrilla activity by separatists in the south of the country and by communist insurgents. In 2003 Arroyo negotiated a cessation of hostilities with the separatists pending formal peace talks, although clashes with government troops still took place. She meanwhile vowed to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf, an Islamic terrorist organization responsible for bombings and the kidnapping and murder of foreign tourists and others, which has been linked to al-Qaeda by the US government.

In July 2003 Ramon Cardenas, a former junior minister to ex-President Joseph Estrada, was arrested after leading a military uprising in Manila. Several hundred troops took possession of a shopping and residential complex but withdrew after accusing Arroyo's government of corruption. Standing for Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, Arroyo was returned to power in the presidential elections of May 2004, ahead of Fernando Poe, Jr. of the Coalition of United Filipinos. Despite coming under intense pressure to resign in July 2005 over allegations of electoral vote-rigging, she survived an opposition attempt to impeach her in Sept. Arroyo declared a week-long state of emergency in Feb. 2006 after the military reported a plot to oust her in a coup. In July–Aug. 2006 a second opposition attempt to impeach her was blocked by her majority supporters in the House of Representatives, but her attempt later in the year to change the constitution and abolish the more independent Senate was withdrawn in Dec. in the face of popular protest.

Parliamentary elections in May 2007 were marred by violence, voter intimidation and irregularities. The opposition won the majority of the Senate seats while Arroyo's support in the lower house was strengthened. In July Arroyo set out a new agenda, pledging to create jobs, improve education,

health and welfare, and bring peace to the troubled south. She also defended a controversial new anti-terrorism law. In Sept. former president Estrada was sentenced to life imprisonment for corruption, but was subsequently pardoned by Arroyo. In Nov. 2007 a coup attempt by renegade soldiers occupying a hotel in Manila was quashed by security forces.

In July 2008 the government reached an agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to extend self-government for the semi-autonomous Muslim region covering parts of Mindanao and nearby islands. However, the deal collapsed the following month after Christian communities raised objections and petitioned the Supreme Court, sparking renewed violence on Mindanao.

In Nov. 2009, 57 people were killed on the island of Mindanao in a massacre seemingly related to political rivalry between powerful local clans. Amid reports of her alleged links with the clan believed to be responsible, Arroyo quickly distanced herself from the outrage and its perpetrators and her government appointed an independent commission to oversee the disbanding of private armies in the country before the presidential, legislative and local elections that took place on 10 May 2010. Under the constitution Arroyo was not eligible to stand in the presidential poll and left office on 30 June.

Later Life

Arroyo was arrested in Nov. 2011 on charges of election fraud and banned from leaving the country. She had wanted to leave the Philippines to seek medical treatment, claiming she was suffering from a bone disease. She was detained in a military hospital but was released on bail in July 2012. However, she soon returned to custody at the military hospital after refusing to enter a plea on charges that she misappropriated state lottery funds during her time in office.

Arroyo was re-elected to the House of Representatives in May 2013 while still under detention. However, in July 2016 the Supreme Court acquitted her of the charges relating to the misuse of state lottery funds and she was subsequently released from the military hospital.

Macías Nguema, Francisco (Equatorial Guinea)

Introduction

Francisco Macías Nguema was, from 1968–79, the first post-colonial president of Equatorial Guinea. His 11 year reign of terror caused a third of the population to flee, the greatest refugee exodus by percentage of any country in modern history. He ordered the deaths of thousands of suspected opponents, closed down churches and presided over economic collapse. In 1979 he was overthrown by his nephew, and subsequently put on trial and sentenced to death.

Early Life

The son of a witch doctor, Francisco Macías Nguema was born on 1 Jan. 1924 in Oyen in the Woleu Nteu province of Gabon. He was raised in the village of Mongomo in what later became Equatorial Guinea. Despite failing the entrance exam on three occasions, Macías worked his way up the ranks of the civil service, becoming an assistant court translator in Mongomo in 1951. In 1963 he became mayor of Mongomo and the following year was appointed minister of public works in a transitional government.

In 1968 Spain granted independence to Equatorial Guinea and in Sept. Macías was elected president, having defeated incumbent Bonifacio Ondo Edu, president since 1964 under the Spanish administration, and Antanasio Ndong Miyone, the founder of Equatorial Guinea's original nationalist party. Ondo Edu subsequently fled to Gabon but was forced back to Equatorial Guinea where, along with his wife, he was murdered.

Career Peak

Under Macías, relations with Spain rapidly deteriorated and by March 1969 all but a few hundred Spaniards had fled the country. By July 1970 Macías had created a single party state under the Partido Unica Nacional de Trabajadores. From 1971–73 he ruled by decree, declaring himself 'president for life' on 14 July 1972.

Intellectuals across the country were targeted and, under his command, ten of the twelve members of his original cabinet were murdered, including his vice president, Bosio Dieo. Furthermore, he ordered the execution of the former lovers of his third wife and was known to have had killed the husbands of women he desired, along with members of his own family. By 1979 he was responsible for the murder of at least 20,000 citizens.

Meanwhile, the country's economy and infrastructure collapsed. Macias closed the central bank, executing the director and keeping the country's treasury in his own home. Newspapers, printing presses and libraries were all banned (as was the word 'intellectual'). Private education was deemed subversive and abolished in 1975. A militant atheist, he also banned the church.

In Aug. 1979, Macias' nephew, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, led a coup that forced his uncle to flee. When Macias was found in the jungle several weeks later, he was arrested and charged with genocide. Along with six co-defendants, he was sentenced to death by firing squad at Malabo's Blabich Prison. Fearing supernatural powers, the army refused to carry out the execution order which was undertaken by Moroccan soldiers on 29 Sept. 1979. Obiang Nguema assumed the presidency the following month.

Mackenzie King, William Lyon (Canada)

Introduction

William Lyon Mackenzie King was three times Liberal prime minister of Canada (1921–26, 1926–30 and 1935–48).

Early Life

King was born in Ontario in 1874. His maternal grandfather, William Lyon Mackenzie, had led the 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada. A law graduate, King entered the civil service and in 1900 was appointed deputy minister of the department of labour. He was elected to the Commons in 1908 as a Liberal member and became labour minister the following year. King failed to win re-election in 1911 and 1917 but was made Liberal leader in 1919. Building on his popularity in Quebec, he was able to reunite the divided party and in 1921 the Liberals formed the government.

Career Peak

Dependent on the support of the farmers' groups during his first tenure, King reduced trade restrictions and tariffs. He was instrumental in creating Canada's welfare state, introducing a broad-based old-age pension scheme in 1926. However, in the same year the Liberals lost a vote of confidence. An election was called later in the year and King once more led his party to victory.

There followed a period of economic growth but in 1929 Canada was badly hit by the worldwide economic slump and the Wall Street Crash. The Liberals lost the elections of 1930 and King was opposition leader until winning a third term in 1935. With the worst of the economic downturn over, King led the country throughout World War II. As well as heading the war effort, he introduced unemployment insurance in 1940 and laid down the basis for health insurance. He retired from office in 1948.

Later Life

King died in 1950.

Macmillan, Harold (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Harold Macmillan succeeded Anthony Eden as Conservative British prime minister in 1957 and went on to secure another term in 1959 before resigning

in 1963. In the earlier part of his administration, the economy was strong and prosperous but it experienced trouble in later years. In terms of foreign policy, Macmillan oversaw the granting of independence to numerous British colonies and also built closer ties with the US. His attempts to take Britain into the European Economic Community (EEC) were unsuccessful and the last months of his tenure were blighted by the Profumo affair.

Early Life

Maurice Harold Macmillan was born on 10 Feb. 1894 in London. He had American heritage on his maternal side and the Macmillan family were the owners of the London publishing house of the same name. He attended Eton and Balliol College, Oxford before serving with distinction in World War I with the Grenadier Guards. On his return he was employed in the family firm and in 1924 he entered the House of Commons as the Conservative member for Stockton-on-Tees in northeast England.

His constituency, a run-down industrial town, focused Macmillan's belief in the need for social reform and prompted him to join a leftist group within the Conservative party. He lost his seat in 1929 but regained it 2 years later and spent much of the 1930s expressing his disapproval of the government's economic policies and of German appeasement. Churchill gave Macmillan a junior ministerial position in 1940 and in 1942 he was appointed resident minister at Allied Forces HQ, Mediterranean Command, taking up his post in North Africa.

At the end of the war Macmillan lost his seat but soon returned as MP for Bromley. He was opposition spokesman for economic and industrial matters. When Churchill returned as prime minister in 1951 he made Macmillan minister for housing. He was moved to the ministry of defence 3 years later, then to the foreign office in 1955 before becoming chancellor of the exchequer later in the year.

Career Peak

Churchill's successor as prime minister, Anthony Eden, resigned in 1957 following the Suez Crisis. Macmillan was installed in his place having fought off a challenge from Rab Butler for the Conservative leadership. Despite his chancellor, Peter Thorneycroft, resigning in Jan. 1958 on the question of government spending, the economy was in a sound position, unemployment was falling and the government put into place various social reforms. By the time of the 1959 general election, the country's finances were so vibrant that Macmillan famously commented that 'most of our people have never had it so good'. Dubbed 'supermac' by the media, he won the election comfortably.

However, Macmillan's premiership after 1959 soon ran into problems. The economic boom was losing its momentum, despite the establishment of the National Economic Development Council (or Neddie) in 1962. In 1961 the government had implemented a pay freeze and the following year saw the 'night of the long knives' when Macmillan, faced with mounting public dissatisfaction, sacked six ministers in a single re-shuffle. On the international stage Macmillan courted America and met with both Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy on a number of occasions. The Kennedy administration agreed to provide Britain with Polaris weapons in Dec. 1962 but this had a knock-on effect for Macmillan's other great aim, entry into the EEC. A displeased Charles de Gaulle, wary of American intervention in Europe, rejected Britain's application a month later.

In terms of colonial policy, Macmillan, a staunch supporter of the anti-apartheid movement, acknowledged the calls for African independence when he spoke of 'the wind of change...blowing through the continent' in 1960. During his tenure he ended the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Zambia and Zimbabwe) and granted independence to many other states. His international reputation was heightened in 1963 when he co-signed the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty with the US and USSR. But domestic strife was taking a toll on his government's popularity at home.

The disastrous Profumo scandal broke in June 1963, marking the beginning of the end of Macmillan's time in office. John Profumo, secretary of state for war, was exposed as having shared a mistress with a Russian naval attaché. The mixture of vice, corruption and Cold War intrigue forced the resignation of Profumo and questions were raised over Macmillan's handling of the case. Macmillan was struck down by ill health and resigned as prime minister on 18 Oct. 1963.

Later Life

Macmillan resigned as an MP the following year to return to publishing and to write his memoirs. He also served as Chancellor of Oxford University. He

initially rejected a peerage but entered the House of Lords in 1984 as 1st Earl of Stockton, Viscount Macmillan of Oventen. He had retained his skills as a politician and was highly critical of the Thatcherite policy of privatization, likening it to selling the family silver. He died on 29 Dec. 1986 in Birch Grove, Sussex.

Mádl, Ferenc (Hungary)

Introduction

Ferenc Mádl was elected Hungary's non-partisan president in Aug. 2000. His role was largely ceremonial. He stood down in 2005.

Early Life

Mádl was born in 1931. Having graduated in law he became a professor, counting previous prime minister Viktor Orbán among his students. Between 1990–94, in Hungary's first post-communist government, Mádl held several ministerial posts. He unsuccessfully stood for the presidency as a centre-right candidate in 1995.

In 2000 the governing coalition of Viktor Orbán selected Mádl as its presidential candidate. He also won support from the opposition Socialist and Free Democrats, despite having called them a 'communist coalition' before the parliamentary elections of 1998. At the presidential election of 2000 Mádl convincingly defeated his one opponent, Istvan Csurka of the extreme right Hungarian Truth and Life Party.

Career Peak

The presidency inherited by Mádl had evolved under Goncz into a figurehead role with particular emphasis on social issues. Some opponents of Mádl suggested he was too closely associated with members of the government for such a role. He voiced support for ethnic minorities within Hungary while calling for equal rights for ethnic Hungarians abroad. In Oct. 2002 Hungary was invited to join the EU in 2004. Membership won 84% approval in a referendum held in April 2003. Mádl died aged 80 on 29 May 2011.

Maduro, Ricardo (Honduras)

Introduction

In Jan. 2002 Ricardo Maduro was sworn in as the sixth democratically elected president since the end of military rule in 1981. He stood down from office in Jan. 2006. A conservative economist fluent in English, Maduro sought to improve relations with the USA and other regional neighbours. His predecessor, Carlos Flores complicated Maduro's diplomatic programme by re-establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba just hours before Maduro's inauguration.

Early Life

Ricardo Maduro Joest was born on 20 April 1946 to a Panamanian father and a Honduran mother. His primary education took place in Tegucigalpa before he attended high school in Pennsylvania, USA. He graduated from Stanford University with a BA in Economics in 1969. Maduro's career began in business. He was general manager of Xerox in Honduras before becoming executive director of Inversiones La Paz, an investment holding company, in 1976.

His involvement in politics began as an activist for the Partido Nacional (PNH). He was a founder member of the 'Unity and Change' movement, which tried to reform the party. Maduro managed two presidential election campaigns for Rafael Leonardo Callejas in 1985 and 1989, the latter resulting in victory. He was rewarded with the chair of the Central Bank in 1991, where he remained until 1994, also serving as coordinator of the Economic Cabinet.

He played a major role in the restructuring of the Honduran economy, including the liberalization of the financial and foreign trade sectors and the renegotiation of debt repayment with the IMF.

In 1994 Maduro withdrew from public life. The murder of his son, Ricardo Ernesto, in a kidnapping attempt in 1997, focused national attention on violent crime, encouraging a hard line government policy. The Ricardo Ernesto Maduro Andreu Foundation (FEREMA) was set up in his memory. In 1999 Maduro decided to re-enter politics by running for the PNH presidential candidacy.

Career Peak

Maduro ran for office on an anti-crime platform. His 'zero-tolerance' policy towards violent crime and street gangs was part of a wider programme designed to clean up Honduran politics and governance. The suggestion of police involvement in serious crime and the murder of thousands of street children throughout the 1990s and into the millennium provoked outrage from Hondurans and the international community. Despite introducing harsher sentences for gang members and undertaking economic reforms in return for international aid, Honduras remained stricken by poverty and violent crime when he left office in Jan. 2006, with the PNH having lost the presidency to Manuel Zelaya of the Liberal Party of Honduras at the elections of Nov. 2005.

Maga, Hubert Coutoucou (Benin)

Introduction

Hubert Coutoucou Maga was instrumental in Benin's (previously called Dahomey to 1975) transition from French rule to independence and was the first president of Independent Benin from 1960–63. He served again between 1970–72 before, in an increasingly turbulent political climate, he was imprisoned and forced into exile.

Early Life

Born in Aug. 1916, in Parakou, Maga graduated from the Teachers Training College in Senegal. After teaching for 10 years, he became involved in politics. He was elected into the French parliament in 1951. He served as junior minister of labour in the French cabinet from 1957–58. A strong supporter of independence, Maga worked in the peaceful transition from colonial rule between 1958, when independence was proclaimed until his election as the first president of Independent Benin in 1960.

Career Peak

In celebration of the new country, Maga commissioned developmental schemes including the construction of the Presidential Palace, the Court of Justice and the Palace of Congress.

Despite the peaceful transition, Benin soon encountered economic difficulties and consequential political and public unrest. In 1963, in an attempt to stave off economic crisis, Maga cut public sector salaries by 10%. Strikes and demonstrations ensued, and the armed forces under the control of General Christophe Soglo took the opportunity to depose Maga in a coup. Benin then suffered a period of severe instability and several coups. In 1970, with presidential elections unworkable, a presidential council took control run by Maga, Justin Ahomadegbé-Tomêtin and Sourou Migan Apithy. He passed on the reins to Ahomadegbé in 1972, but that same year Mathieu Kérékou led another coup and the whole council was jailed. Maga was released in 1981 and sent to exile while Kérékou turned Benin into a Marxist state.

Later Life

After the Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives de la Nation (National Conference of Live Forces) in Feb. 1990, an amnesty was granted to all political exiles. On his return, Maga was able once again to involve himself in political life. He sat on the High Council of the Republic from 1990–93 and on the Constitutional Court from 1993–98. He died from a heart attack in office on the 7 May 2000.

Mahama, John Dramani (Ghana)

Introduction

John Dramani Mahama became president in July 2012 after the death of John Atta Mills. In line with the constitution, Mahama as vice-president succeeded Mills, also replacing him as leader of the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Early Life

Mahama was born on 29 Nov. 1958, in Damongo, in the Northern region of Ghana. His father was the first member of parliament for the West Gonja constituency. Mahama graduated in history from the University of Ghana in 1981 and completed a postgraduate degree in communication studies 5 years later. He then undertook studies in social psychology at the Institute of Social Sciences in Moscow.

Mahama taught history at secondary school level before working in the information, culture and research office of the Japanese embassy in Accra from 1991 until 1995. From 1995–96 he was the international relations, sponsorship, communications and grants manager at the anti-poverty non-governmental organization, Plan International.

Mahama was elected to parliament in 1996 for the Bole/Bamboi constituency. In April 1997 he was appointed deputy minister of communications, becoming minister the following year. He held the position until 2001, when the NDC handed power to the New Patriotic Party. Mahama nonetheless twice retained his parliamentary seat.

From 2003–11 he was a member of the Pan-African Parliament based in Pretoria, South Africa, continuing a keen interest in international affairs. In 2005 he was appointed the minority spokesman for foreign affairs. The NDC regained power in 2008 but in 2009 he gave up his seat in parliament to become vice-president to John Atta Mills.

Career Peak

Following Atta Mills' death, Mahama broadly continued his predecessor's policies. Confronted by a large budget deficit and a tarnished global image, he championed a stimulus package to boost the economy and pledged his commitment to Atta Mills' Better Ghana Agenda, aimed at improving economic health, environmental, educational and employment provision.

Mahama has campaigned to counter the problem of plastic pollution in Africa. He keenly supports the use of information and communication technology to stimulate economic transformation and has sought to improve agricultural productivity and to encourage young people to see farming as a viable business. In the presidential election held on 7–8 Dec. 2012 Mahama secured a further term with 50.7% of the vote. He was sworn in on 7 Jan. 2013, although the main opposition New Patriotic Party appealed to the Supreme Court unsuccessfully to overturn the result, citing voting irregularities.

In July 2014 there were opposition protests against deteriorating living standards and alleged economic mismanagement. A month later the government sought IMF assistance in the face of a mounting budget deficit. A formal agreement with the Fund was reached in April 2015, although public resentment at the poor performance of the economy continued to simmer. Towards the end of the year the government suspended numerous members of the judiciary implicated in allegations of bribery.

Mahama participated in the 2016 presidential elections but failed to be re-elected. He conceded defeat to Nana Akufo-Addo, who succeeded him in Jan. 2017.

Major, John (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

John Roy Major was the Conservative British prime minister between 1990 and 1997. From inauspicious beginnings he had a meteoric rise through the

Conservative party ranks, but once he had succeeded Margaret Thatcher his tenure was fraught with difficulties and ended with the Labour Party returning to power for the first time in 18 years.

Early Life

Major was born on 29 March 1943 in Carshalton in southeast London to Gwen and Tom, whose employment included circus performer and gnome maker. Much of Major's childhood was spent in Brixton, a working-class and racially-mixed area of south London. He left school when he was 16 years of age and held a number of jobs before embarking on a successful career in banking when in his 20s. In 1968 he was voted on to Lambeth Borough Council and, after two unsuccessful attempts during 1974, he entered the House of Commons as the member for Huntingdonshire in 1979. Huntingdonshire was to evolve into the constituency of Huntingdon in 1983 and Major remained its MP until he retired from parliament.

From an early stage he was a favourite of Margaret Thatcher and between 1981 and 1987 he held various junior ministerial posts. In the summer of 1987 he was appointed chief secretary to the treasury and in the same year he also became a privy counsellor. In July of 1989 he was given the post of foreign secretary, one he did not relish at the time, but he was to be there for only 3 months before he became chancellor of the exchequer. He had been an enthusiastic supporter of Thatcher but her support within the party was waning, notably over her anti-European stance. In Nov. 1990 Michael Heseltine challenged her for the party leadership and though she won, it was by only a small margin. She tendered her resignation, paving the way for both Major and foreign secretary Douglas Hurd to enter the race. A second ballot was held on 27 Nov. with Major receiving 185 out of 372 votes. He duly became prime minister and, at 47 years of age, was the youngest person to hold the office in the twentieth century before Tony Blair.

Career Peak

Major's honeymoon period was short. He was lauded for his performance during the Gulf War and he abolished Thatcher's widely disliked poll tax, but from the outset he was lampooned by the media as a grey and weak figure constantly under the shadow of Thatcher. Britain was also deep in one of the century's worst recessions, from which it did not emerge until 1993. Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in Feb. 1992 confirming closer European ties brought internal Tory conflict into focus. However, following a campaign characterized by his populist, soap box oratory, Major won what for many was a surprise victory against Neil Kinnock's Labour in the election of April 1992. There was to be little let up for Major, though. On 16 Sept. 1992, Black Wednesday, Chancellor Norman Lamont had to withdraw Britain from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism and sterling went into freefall, losing 15% of its value against the Deutschmark. As the City bet against the pound throughout the day, the country lost billions. Relations between Major and Lamont soured and the chancellor was sacked the following May. He fired a parting shot at the Major administration in a speech in the Commons, commenting that 'we give the impression of being in office but not in power'. Whether justified or not, it was an allegation that Major never truly overcame.

From the mid-1990s onwards there were definite signs of an economic recovery. Interest rates, inflation and unemployment were all falling while industrial production was increasing. In addition, Major was making more headway in his attempts to bring peace to Northern Ireland than any of his predecessors, with the IRA calling a ceasefire which paved the way for 1998's Good Friday Agreement. But the question of European Union and Britain's role within it provoked numerous rebellions within the party and undermined notions of Conservative unity. Angered by constant challenges to his leadership, Major took the unusual and risky step of resigning the Conservative leadership in June 1995, challenging his opponents to 'put up or shut up'. He entered into a leadership battle with the Welsh secretary, John Redwood, on the understanding that if Major lost he would resign and if he won he would resume the leadership unchallenged through to the next election. Major defeated Redwood by 218 votes to 89.

The question of Europe never went away and the last years of his term were also plagued by allegations of 'sleaze', as the media exposed various sex and corruption scandals involving prominent figures like David Mellor, Neil Hamilton and Jonathan Aitken. Major's approval ratings were dipping below 20% at times and it was little surprise when the Labour Party, rejuvenated under John Smith and then Tony Blair, won a landslide victory in the election of 1 May 1997. Major resigned the party leadership immediately and was replaced by William Hague.

Later Life

Major remained an MP until the 2001 election and published his memoirs to wide acclaim in 1999. He won the *Spectator Parliamentarian of the Year Award* in 1999 before settling into retirement with his wife Norma. His resignation speech after the 1997 election defeat serves as a fitting tribute to his personal style when he asked the media throng to excuse him as he hoped 'Norma and I will be able, with the children, to get to the Oval in time for lunch and for some cricket this afternoon'. In 2002 Major's reputation was dented when it came to light that he had been conducting a 4 year extra-marital affair with a fellow MP before he entered cabinet. He received a knighthood in 2005.

Makarios III (Cyprus)

Introduction

Archbishop Makarios was Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church from 1950 and first President of the independent Republic of Cyprus from Dec. 1959 until his death in 1977. Initially a leading figure in the movement for Enosis (the union of Cyprus with Greece), he was exiled by the British in 1956–57 for alleged involvement in a terrorist campaign by the guerrilla movement EOKA. Having returned to Cyprus in 1959, he was elected to the presidency later that year. Although deposed by a military coup in Aug. 1974, Makarios was reinstated the following year and continued in office until his death.

Early Life

Born on 13 Aug. 1913, Makarios was educated locally before attending the University of Athens and later the School of Theology at Boston University in the USA. He was ordained as a priest in 1946, elected Bishop of Kition in 1948 and was made Archbishop of the Orthodox Church in Cyprus in 1950. He became involved in politics as a supporter of Enosis, opposing British proposals for Cypriot independence within the Commonwealth and Turkish Cypriot demands for separation. Following a wave of terrorism and unrest in the mid-1950s, Makarios was arrested by the British on suspicion of collaboration with EOKA and exiled to the Seychelles until 1957, when he was permitted to move to Athens.

Career Peak

In March 1959 he was returned to Cyprus as the chief Greek-Cypriot Minister in a new Greek-Turkish provisional government to negotiate an agreement with the UK on power-sharing independence rather than union with Greece. On 13 Dec. he was elected president, and Cyprus became an independent republic on 16 Aug. 1960. Distancing himself from the extremes of the Enosis movement, Makarios attempted to make the power sharing agreement work with the Turkish Cypriot minority. However, serious problems arose over the interpretation and implementation of the constitution, including the formation of a national army, taxation issues and the system of separate municipalities. The Turkish Cypriots withdrew from the central government in Dec. 1963. In response to the subsequent outbreak of violence, the United Nations deployed a peacekeeping force from 1964. The Turkish Cypriot community meanwhile set up its own political structures.

Re-elected in 1968 (and again in 1973), Makarios came under increasing pressure from EOKA to accept greater Greek influence in Cypriot affairs. In July 1974, despite having tried to purge EOKA sympathisers from the police, civil service and armed forces, Makarios was deposed by a military coup, sponsored apparently by the ruling junta in Greece. After several months in exile, first in Malta and then in the UK, he returned to Cyprus in Dec. 1974 following the collapse of the Greek junta. However, he resumed the presidency of a truncated state. Turkey had occupied a third of the island in Aug. to prevent Greece imposing Enosis and had proclaimed a separate state in the north.

Makarios died of a heart attack on 3 Aug. 1977 and was buried on a hilltop tomb close to the Kykkos Monastery.

Makuza, Bernard (Rwanda)

Introduction

Bernard Makuza served as prime minister of Rwanda from March 2000 to Oct. 2011.

Early Life

Bernard Makuza was born in 1961 and served as an ambassador to Burundi and then Germany. In March 2000 Makuza returned to Rwanda to take up the post of prime minister, replacing Pierre-Celéstin Rwigema, who had resigned amidst corruption allegations. Makuza was a former head of the predominantly Hutu Republican Democratic Movement (MDR) but ceased to be a member of a political party before his appointment as prime minister.

Career Peak

While the power of government resides with the president, the prime minister has a strong public image. In Jan. 2003 Makuza headed a national ceremony to mark the opening of rehabilitation centres for those who admitted taking part in the 1994 genocide. In Sept. 2004, alongside the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo's president, Joseph Kabila, Makuza was part of a UN-backed body created to resolve the civil unrest on the border between Rwanda and the DRC. In Oct. 2005 he opened the 6th African Congress on Savings and Credit Co-operatives; a 2 day conference held in Kigali, it discussed the reduction of poverty in Africa via the management of co-operatives. During his time in office Makuza aimed to improve political, economic and trade relations with foreign countries and forged a strong partnership with China.

He remained as the head of a new government named in March 2008 and, despite some speculation that he might be replaced, was reappointed to the post in Sept. 2010. However, in Oct. 2011 President Kagame appointed Pierre-Damien Habumuremyi as the new prime minister of Rwanda. After more than 10 years as premier, Makuza was appointed to the Senate in Oct. 2011.

Malan, Daniel François (South Africa)

Introduction

DF Malan served as South Africa's prime minister from 1948–54. His government is remembered as the instigator of the racial separation laws that came to be known as apartheid.

Early Life

Malan was born on 22 May 1874 near Riebeeck West. He was educated at Victoria College in Stellenbosch, and subsequently went to the Netherlands to study for a doctorate in divinity at the University of Utrecht. He graduated in 1905. He then returned to South Africa to pursue a career as a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church. After the outbreak of World War I he abandoned the pulpit in favour of editing a Cape Town based Afrikaner newspaper called *Die Burger* which supported J.B.M. Herzog's National Party. Malan was to remain committed to the cause of the Afrikaner population and their language for the rest of his life.

Malan's political career began in 1918 when he entered parliament as a National Party representative for Cape Province. He quickly developed a reputation as a gifted statesman and orator, and in 1924 he was appointed interior minister. He went on to hold successive ministerial portfolios in the departments of public health and education from 1924–33. During this era he secured official recognition of the Afrikaans language, as well as establishing a distinctive South African nationality. In 1934 Hertzog merged the National Party with the South African Party of Jan Smuts. Disillusioned, Malan led a splinter group which became the new Purified Nationalist Party.

Career Peak

Both Hertzog and Malan supported neutrality in World War II, a joint policy that restored their friendship and, in 1939, led to the reunification of the National Party. However, Malan and his followers rejected Hertzog's policy of equal rights for British South Africans and Afrikaners. As a result Hertzog retired from politics in 1940 and Malan became the new party leader. In the 1943 elections his party did moderately well, securing 43 seats in the House of Assembly. In 1948 the Nationalists achieved a slim majority after a campaign in which they appealed to the race-related concerns of the white population. Victory in 1948 meant that for the first time in the country's history, parliament was exclusively controlled by Afrikaners. This gave Malan the opportunity to enact segregationist legislation designed to enhance the power of white, Afrikaner citizens.

The Supreme Court questioned the legitimacy of his efforts to remove coloured people from official electoral rolls, thereby prohibiting them from voting. This constitutional crisis was short-lived, since Malan called fresh elections in 1953 which extended the National Party's majority, and hence allowed it to overrule the judiciary. Having overseen the first steps towards the implementation of the apartheid system, Malan retired from political life in 1954. He died 5 years later.

Malietoa Tanumafili II (Samoa)

Introduction

Malietoa Tanumafili II served as head of state from 1962–2007. At his death he was the third longest serving monarch in the world, after King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand and Queen Elizabeth II.

Early Life

Malietoa Tanumafili II was born on 4 Jan. 1913 and was educated in Samoa at the government-run Le ifi ifi School before studying in New Zealand at St. Stephen's College, Auckland, and Wesley College in Pukekohe. Upon the death of his father (Malietoa Tanumafili I) he succeeded to the title of Malietoa, one of Samoa's four paramount chiefs.

In 1940 Malietoa became a Fautua, or adviser to the New Zealand colonial administration, and represented Samoan interests at the UN in 1958. In 1959 he was appointed joint chairman of the working committee on independence and the constitutional convention, which helped pave Samoa's way to independence from New Zealand.

On Samoa gaining independence in 1962, Malietoa became joint O le Ao o le Malo (head of state) with Tupua Tamasese Meaole, a role they shared for 16 months. When Tupua died in 1963, Malietoa continued in the role alone.

Career Peak

Malietoa travelled widely, making state visits to China, South Korea, Japan and the UK, and was considered a stabilising influence on his country. He died on 11 May 2007, at 94 years old the then oldest head of state in the world. Under the constitution, his successor, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi, was elected by the legislative assembly for a 5 year term.

Mamadou, Tandja (Niger)

Introduction

Both head of state and of government, Tandja Mamadou, became president in Dec. 1999 and was re-elected in Dec. 2004. He was leader of the National Movement for the Development Society (MNSD) from 1991 until his election. A referendum in Aug. 2009 approved the extension of his presidential term of office but he was overthrown following a military coup in Feb. 2010.

Early Life

Tandja Mamadou was born in 1938. A former lieutenant-colonel, he began his career in politics after taking part in a coup to overthrow Niger's first elected president, Diori Hamani. As minister of the interior, he was responsible for policing, national security and immigration.

In 1993 Mamadou ran for president but lost to Mahamane Ousmane. He ran again in 1996 but lost after a coup put Ibrahim Barré Maïnassara in power. In 1999 Maïnassara was assassinated, signalling a return to military government. Democracy was restored within the year and elections were held in Oct.–Nov. Mamadou was sworn in on 22 Dec. 1999, having defeated former prime minister Mahamadou Issoufou in the presidential poll.

Career Peak

When Mamadou took office Niger was heavily in debt, foreign aid having been cut following the Maïnassara coup. His priorities have since been to promote economic development, secure foreign investment and reduce government spending.

After drawing attention to environmental threats including soil erosion, deforestation and poaching, hunting was banned. In Oct. 2000 Mamadou gave support to the ECOWAS public health initiative aiming to immunize 70 m. children against polio. In 2001 students of the University of Niamey staged violent protests against reductions in their government grants. Aug. 2002 saw soldiers mutiny in protest at non-payment of wages and poor conditions.

In Jan. 2003 US President George W. Bush claimed to have documentary evidence that Iraq had attempted to buy uranium from Niger to use in the production of nuclear weapons. However, in March the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) declared the documents forgeries and an apology was issued.

In Nov.–Dec. 2004 Mamadou again beat Issoufou for the presidency and his party won the largest number of parliamentary seats. Earlier in the year Niger held its first municipal elections, with parties backing the president winning the most seats.

Niger remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with high levels of unemployment and large foreign debt. Although Mamadou was praised for restoring stability, he faced internal hostility. This intensified in 2005 after the government cancelled a ceremony to release 7,000 slaves, claiming that slavery had ceased to exist since 2003. During 2005 there were widespread protests at tax increases, and in Aug. Mamadou was criticized for denying that the country was gripped by famine. In 2006 there was further agitation against his government in protest against the high cost of living, and aid agencies continued to warn of dwindling food supplies. A new rebel group, the Niger Movement for Justice (MNJ), based in the north of the country emerged in 2007. Demanding greater autonomy for the Tuareg people and a fairer share of the country's oil, uranium and gold wealth, the MNJ launched attacks on army targets and kidnapped dozens of soldiers. In response Mamadou dispatched 4,000 troops to the northern region of Agadez and declared a state of alert in Aug. 2007.

In elections in Oct. 2009, Mamadou's MNSD claimed 76 of the 113 National Assembly seats but the outcome was rejected by ECOWAS following a disputed referendum in Aug. to extend the president's term of office.

On 18 Feb. 2010 the government was deposed in a military coup launched by rebel soldiers. A group calling themselves the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy led by Salou Djibo seized power.

Mandela, Nelson (South Africa)

Introduction

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela served as president of Southern Africa from 1994–99, having dedicated his early life to opposing apartheid. His commitment to multiracial democracy was at the cost of 27 years in prison, but eventually earned him world recognition and a Nobel Peace Prize. He remained a globally respected figure with a high international profile.

Early Life

Mandela was born on 18 July 1918 in the village of Mveso. He was the son of Chief Henry Mandela of the Xhosa speaking Tembu tribe. He was educated at a local mission school before being sent to Healdtown to attend a Wesleyan secondary school. Mandela attended the University College of Fort Hare where he studied for a BA, but was suspended for joining in student protests. He moved to Johannesburg where he qualified in Law in 1942. In the same year Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC).

In Sept. 1944 Mandela helped set up the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL). His commitment to the emancipation of black Southern Africans made a strong impression and in 1950 he was elected to the National Executive Committee.

As an active member of the ANCYL and as National Volunteer in Chief, Mandela attracted the attention of the white government and in 1952 he was convicted of contravening the Suppression of Communism Act. He received a suspended sentence and was denied participation in any form of political activity.

In 1952 Mandela was elected president of the ANCYL and the Transvaal region of the ANC. This secured for him the position of deputy president of the ANC. Throughout the 1950s he suffered many arrests and detentions. In 1960 the police opened fire on a rally at Sharpeville killing 69 demonstrators and wounding dozens more. The massacre provoked Mandela to abandon non-violent resistance to apartheid. Instead he formed Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the ANC.

Returning from a tour of central and eastern African nations, Mandela was arrested and convicted of leaving the country unlawfully. While serving 5 years imprisonment he was charged, along with several others, with sabotage, treason and violent conspiracy. His closing statement in the Rivona Trial entered the history books as one of the great appeals for liberty.

'I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal that I hope to live for and to achieve. But, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die'.

In 1964 Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment and was taken to the maximum security Robben Island Prison, 7 km off the coast from Cape Town. In 1984 he was transferred to Pollsmoor Prison. 4 years later, when he was suffering from tuberculosis, he was moved again, this time to Victor Verster Prison.

Mandela's plight became an international cause célèbre. His release on 11 Feb. 1990 by the government of FW de Klerk was world news.

Mandela immediately resumed his campaign for 'freedom for all in our country'. He was elected to the presidency of the ANC at the first national conference of the newly legalized party whilst co-operating with the reformist president de Klerk. Together they established a programme that would ease South Africa into a new era of democracy.

Career Peak

In 1993 Mandela and de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1994 Mandela was voted president of the new democratic Republic of Southern Africa in the country's first free multiracial elections. The ANC won 252 of 400 seats in the national assembly. Mandela initially refused the presidency insisting that he was too old for the role but was persuaded to reconsider. Once elected president, the government of National Unity was formed, the Commonwealth restored South Africa's membership and international sanctions were lifted. South Africa was able to take part in the UN General Assembly, after an absence of 20 years and in 1995 South Africa hosted and won the rugby world cup.

Mandela's government consisted of many new and inexperienced ministers and on occasion he made unilateral decisions. Forceful in foreign policy, he pressed the Commonwealth to suspend Nigeria over the execution of opposition leader Ken Saro-Wiwa. In talks with President Clinton aimed at improving trade ties between South Africa and the US, Mandela refused to cut his country's links with Libya.

In 1998 Mandela's party was found by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to have perpetrated human rights abuses during apartheid. His presidency also witnessed a steep rise in crime and unemployment. However, he achieved a measure of cohesion between disparate tribal, ethnic and religious interests. On 14 June 1999 Mandela was succeeded by his deputy Thabo Mbeki.

Later Life

In July 2002 Mandela's ex-wife Winnie Madikizela Mandela, who had been active in the ANC and had shared Mandela's high profile, was charged with 85 counts of fraud.

Since his resignation, Mandela has maintained a busy schedule of lectures and public appearances. In March 2001 he attended a meeting with South Korea's democratizing leader, Kim Dae-jung. Mandela has spoken out on the African Aids epidemic as well as the abuse of power by African leaders. He also headed negotiations between the warring factions in Burundi. In Sept. 2002 he condemned US President Bush's position on Iraq as a 'threat to world peace'. In 2004 Mandela announced he would be taking a less active public role owing to his declining health. Despite this, he founded 'The Elders' in 2007, a group of former political leaders including Kofi Annan, Jimmy Carter and Desmond Tutu to act as 'a fiercely independent and robust force for good'. He celebrated his 90th birthday on 18 July 2008 and in Nov. 2009 the UN declared the date would be annually celebrated as Mandela Day.

Mandela made his last public appearance in July 2010, at the football World Cup held in South Africa. After being plagued by a long illness, Mandela died in his home in the suburbs of Johannesburg on 5 Dec. 2013 aged 95. South Africans gathered across the country and globally to pay tribute to his life and work.

Manley, Michael (Jamaica)

Introduction

Michael Manley served three terms as Jamaican prime minister (1972–80 and 1989–92), and was the dominant figure in post-independence Caribbean politics, championing Third World issues and challenging US hegemony.

Early Life

Michel Norman Manley was born in Kingston on 10 Dec. 1924 to upper-class parents of mixed race. He was the son of Norman Manley, Jamaica's first Prime Minister, founder of the People's National Party (PNP), and a Jamaican National Hero. His mother was a noted sculptor.

After Jamaica College and service as a pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II, Manley attended the London School of Economics, where he was influenced by his socialist professor, Harold Laski. Manley worked as a journalist in London (for the BBC and freelance), before returning to Jamaica in 1951 to write for the left-wing weekly *Public Opinion*. He became an active and senior trade-unionist, known for his skills as a negotiator and orator. In 1962 he was appointed to the Jamaican senate, and in 1967 the House of Representatives.

In 1969 Manley succeeded his father to the presidency of the PNP and, in 1972, he became prime minister.

Career Peak

Manley saw himself as a 'democratic socialist'. He tried to encourage economic self-reliance and became a champion of the less-developed nations. Once in office, he nationalized the country's bauxite mines, announced free tuition at secondary school and university level, and in 1973 helped found the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). He forged close ties with Cuba and eastern socialist countries, visiting Cuba in 1976 and receiving Fidel Castro the following year.

Although Manley was re-elected in 1976, partly thanks to Bob Marley's support, his economic strategy had failed disastrously. The 1973 rise in oil prices hit Jamaica hard, and Marley had his requests for financial aid turned down by the IMF. The rift caused by his anti-Americanism, his friendship with Fidel Castro, and his activism in the developing nations' Non-Aligned Movement did nothing to endear him to Washington, and the IMF was unwilling to discuss any long-term solution. Manley was initially defiant but was soon forced to return to the IMF to plead for help.

During this turbulent decade, the two main political parties (Manley's PNP and the Jamaica Labour Party) armed and supported their own street gangs to intimidate voters. It is believed that this was the beginning of the 'yardie' culture that still plagues the country. Matters came to a head in the 1980 election campaign, during which over 800 people were killed in the

space of 2 weeks, most of them on election day itself. Manley lost the election to his bitter rival, the conservative Edward Seaga.

In 1989 Manley won back his premiership with a more moderate centrist programme, despite still claiming to be a socialist. This time he encouraged foreign investment and pursued free-market policies. In 1992 Manley was forced to resign owing to poor health. He died in Kingston on 6 March, 1997.

Manning, Patrick (Trinidad and Tobago)

Introduction

Patrick Augustus Mervyn Manning became prime minister for the second time in Dec. 2001, having previously held the post from 1991–95. The elections of Dec. 2001 returned a hung parliament but Manning's People's National Movement (PNM) gained a majority at elections held in Oct. 2002. He then retained the premiership as a result of the PNM's re-election in Nov. 2007. Manning sought to develop the country's oil, gas and tourism sectors, and achieved impressive economic growth rates on the back of new foreign investment and high energy prices. He left office in May 2010 after the PNM were defeated in snap parliamentary elections. Manning died in July 2016.

Early Life

Patrick Manning was born on 17 Aug. 1946 in San Fernando, Trinidad. He graduated from the town's Presentation College in 1965 and worked for a year as an oil refinery operator before studying geology at the University of the West Indies (Jamaica) from 1966–69. He was then employed as a geologist for the Texaco oil company until 1971.

In that year Manning joined parliament as the member for San Fernando East and was appointed parliamentary secretary at the ministry of petroleum and mines. Between 1973–78 he served as parliamentary secretary at the prime minister's office and at the ministries of planning and development, industry and commerce, and works, transport and communications. In 1978 he joined the finance ministry with responsibility for the maintenance portfolio and later the public service portfolio. He was then appointed minister of information in the prime minister's office. In 1981 he was named minister of information and minister of industry and commerce, and from 1981–86 served as minister of energy and natural resources.

In 1986 the PNM lost its first general election since independence in 1962. Manning succeeded George Chambers as party leader on an interim basis in Dec. 1986. He was confirmed in the job the following year and led the party to victory at the elections of Dec. 1991.

Career Peak

During his first tenure Manning set about making the economy more competitive. His government floated the Trinidad and Tobago dollar in a bid to encourage investment. In 1995 he attempted to dismiss the speaker of the House of Representatives, Occah Seapaul, over a scandal regarding testimony that Seapaul had given in a court trial. She refused to leave and suspended several government members. The PNM, already suffering a weakened majority after by-election losses the previous year, was thrown into crisis. Manning declared a state of emergency and put Seapaul under house arrest. He called early elections for Nov. 1995, hoping to take advantage of an improved economic outlook to bolster his government. However, the PNM lost to the United National Congress (UNC) and Manning was succeeded as prime minister by Basdeo Panday.

Panday won a second term in Dec. 2000 but at new elections 12 months later, following a split in the government, the UNC and PNM tied with 18 seats each. The two parties agreed a deal by which President Robinson would elect the prime minister. Panday withdrew from the pact when Manning was selected and demanded new elections. Without cross party co-operation Manning was unable to form a workable government. Parliament was suspended in April 2002, and at elections held in Oct. the PNM won a majority, claiming 20 of the 36 available seats.

To reform the economy, Manning proposed reductions in income and corporation tax. He also aimed to exploit the country's tourism sector while

continuing to develop the oil and gas industries. In foreign policy, he sought a more prominent role for Trinidad and Tobago within CARICOM. In April 2005 the Caribbean Court of Justice, a final court of appeal intended to replace the British Privy Council, was inaugurated in Trinidad. Manning was, however, criticized for failing to bring the growing crime problem under control. In Oct. 2005 at least 10,000 people took part in a protest, named the Death March, against the level of violent crime, and in Jan. 2007 businesses and schools shut down in a mass demonstration against a spate of kidnappings. Also in Jan., the government announced that the country's long-established sugar industry could no longer be sustained because of cuts in European subsidies.

In Nov. 2007 Manning and the PNM retained power in elections, winning 26 of the 41 parliamentary seats. However, Manning's third term was marred by accusations of extravagant government spending after the nation hosted two international summits and the administration was criticized for neglecting healthcare provision and failing to curb rising crime rates. In April 2010 faced with a forthcoming parliamentary no-confidence vote, he called snap parliamentary elections which the PNM subsequently lost to the People's Partnership Coalition. Manning was succeeded as prime minister by Kamla Persad-Bissessar of the UNC on 26 May and also stood down as leader of the PNM.

Later Life

Manning died aged 69 on 2 July 2016, having been diagnosed with cancer 2 days earlier.

Mansour, Adly (Egypt)

Introduction

Adly Mansour became interim president in July 2013 following the ousting of President Morsi by the armed forces. A career lawyer and judge, Mansour announced in Nov. 2013 that he would not contest the presidential election, which were subsequently held on 26–28 May.

Early Life

Mansour was born in Cairo on 23 Dec. 1945 and graduated in law from Cairo University in 1967. He earned master's degrees in 1969 and 1970, in law and management science, respectively. He also studied at the École Nationale d'Administration in France, graduating in 1977.

He began his legal career as an assistant prosecutor in the state council, rising to become a judge in 1984. In this capacity he served in civil and state courts, and he also sat in religious courts where he ruled on Islamic observance. After working as a legal adviser to the Saudi Arabian ministry of trade from 1983–90, Mansour was appointed deputy chief justice of Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) in 1992.

In 2011, following the overthrow of President Mubarak, Mansour continued to serve on the SCC under newly-appointed chief justice, Maher el-Beheiry. The SCC ruled that the elections that brought Mohamed Morsi to power in June 2012 were flawed, a decision that opened the way for the armed forces to challenge Morsi's rule. From June 2012–July 2013 the SCC repeatedly came into conflict with Morsi's government. In May 2013 Mansour was appointed chief justice of the SCC by Morsi, taking office on 30 June. Two days later, when the armed forces deposed Morsi, Mansour was appointed interim president and was sworn in on 4 July.

Career Peak

In his early months in office Mansour faced widespread political unrest from Morsi supporters and the Muslim Brotherhood, with violent clashes resulting in a number of deaths. In Nov. 2013 his government introduced controversial restrictions on the right to demonstrate. Criticized by some for lack of progress in implementing human rights, he oversaw the drafting of a new constitution, which was approved by referendum in Jan. 2014. He faced the formidable challenge of managing the country's political and sectarian divisions while winning the confidence and economic support of international partners.

On 24 Feb. 2014 Prime Minister Hazem el-Beblawi and his government unexpectedly resigned to be replaced the following day by a new

administration, headed by Ibrahim Mahlab, ahead of pending presidential elections. Army chief and deputy prime minister Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi became the first candidate to present his credentials to the election committee.

Mansour was succeeded as president on 8 June 2014 by al-Sisi, who had won elections held in May.

Mao Zedong (China)

Introduction

Mao Zedong was the founder of Communist China: he proclaimed the People's Republic on 1 Oct. 1949. He was leader of the Chinese Communist Party (1935–76) and head of state (1949–59). Mao reworked Communism in his own image and his political theories were among the most influential of the twentieth century. But his radical Cultural Revolution proved destructive and set back China's development.

Mao was born on 26 Dec. 1893 in Hunan province. The son of a relatively prosperous farmer, Mao received only a basic education at the local village school before he was obliged to work on the family farm aged 13. Resenting the end of his education, Mao left home to continue studies at a local town and then attended a secondary school in Changsha. When military action reached Changsha, upon the overthrow of the imperial system in the revolution of 1911, Mao joined the revolutionary forces. In uniform for less than a year, Mao returned to his education which he did not complete until 1918.

Early Life

Mao's political career began in 1917 when he helped set up student organizations. In 1918 he went to Beijing where he briefly worked in the university library. There he met Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu who were to lead the student protests in the radical May Fourth Movement. Chen and Li went on to found the Chinese Communist Party. Back in Changsha, Mao founded a revolutionary movement for students and workers, and by 1921 had become a Marxist and a teacher.

Mao was active in socialist politics in the early 1920s and, when other radicals joined the Nationalist Party, he too co-operated. A visit back to his home village led Mao to begin organizing political associations for peasants, but his political activities meant that he had to flee the authorities. Mao remained active in the Nationalist Party until Chiang Kai-shek (Chiang Chieh-shih) turned on the Communists in 1926–27. While Chiang's forces were massacring Communists in Shanghai, Mao was encouraging a peasant revolt in Hunan. When it became dangerous to remain, he led the survivors into the south-west of China.

For the next 4 years he led a guerrilla existence with the fledgling Communist People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the countryside. When a Chinese Soviet Republic was set up in Jiangxi province the Communists had a base to operate from. Between 1931–34 the Communist republic withstood attacks by Chiang's Nationalists. By Oct. 1934 the Communists were under threat and most of the PLA set off on the Long March to safety across China. During the Long March Mao became leader of the Communist Party. From 1936 to 1940 Mao wrote several important works on political philosophy as well as an account of his revolutionary struggles.

The 1937 invasion by Japan forced a reconciliation between Nationalists and Communists. Mao was initially pragmatic in his dealings with the Nationalists but, during the war, his anti-imperialist rhetoric strengthened. By 1938 Mao saw the necessity to adapt Soviet-style Marxism to Chinese conditions. This led to a power struggle with a pro-Soviet faction in the party. Mao's supporters won this Rectification campaign in 1943 and elements thought to be disloyal to Mao were purged. He now had control of the party. Soon he also had control of the country. When the Communists won the civil war against the Nationalists (1946–49), Mao proclaimed a new nation—the People's Republic of China—in Beijing on 1 Oct. 1949.

Career Peak

As the founding father of modern China, Mao exercised supreme power as head of state and leader of the Communist Party. Mao journeyed to Moscow to seal a pact with the Soviet Union, but, as a consequence, was soon dragged

into the Korean War on the side of the Communist North (1950). Communist China initially depended upon Soviet assistance for economic development. A Soviet-style 5-year plan was put into action in 1953, but the relationship between Moscow was already showing signs of strain.

Mao introduced rapid collectivisation of farms in 1955. The countryside was to take the lead in implementing Communist economics. Mao's idea was not met with universal approval in the party but its implementation demonstrated his complete authority over the fortunes of the nation. He again ignored the opinions of senior colleagues when he launched the doctrine of letting a "hundred flowers bloom" in 1956—this freedom to express different views was a reaction to the legacy of Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union. The new freedoms took a turn Mao did not expect and the role of the party was questioned by some intellectuals. Strict controls were reimposed and free-thinkers were sent to work in the countryside to be "re-educated".

In May 1958 Mao launched another ill-fated policy, the Great Leap Forward. To promote rapid industrialisation and socialism, the collectives were reorganized into larger units. Neither the resources nor trained personnel were available for this huge task. Backyard blast furnaces were set up to increase production of iron and steel. The results were predictably disappointing. When another member of the Central Committee, Peng Duhuai, criticised the Great Leap as poorly thought-out he was arrested and detained until his death. Peng was not alone in his beliefs in the leadership—others held their tongues.

By the early 1960s the Great Leap Forward was in trouble. Soviet advice against the project was ignored and a complete rift in relations with Moscow came in 1963 and Soviet assistance was withdrawn. Within China Mao was establishing an alternative power base in the PLA, under Defence Minister Lin Biao. Pragmatists, including Liu Shaoqi (who succeeded Mao as head of state in 1959) and Deng Xiaoping, wanted to reintroduce personal incentives and diminish the role of the collectives. Mao hesitated. These reforms might have been a way out of the economic chaos. But Mao had begun to believe in his own propaganda and placed the "class struggle" against the economic well-being of ordinary Chinese. He became the centre of a personality cult that almost took on the aura of a state religion. Mao's 'Thoughts' were published in the 'Little Red Book' and proclaimed to be invincible.

By 1964 Mao had determined that Liu and other pragmatists had to be purged. He set the Cultural Revolution in motion. Militant students were organized into groups of Red Guards to attack the existing party hierarchy. Anyone perceived to lack enthusiasm for Mao Zedong Thought was denounced. Thousands died as the students went out of control and the Army was eventually called in to restore order. Once again, Mao's enthusiasm for continuing revolution had ended in disaster.

Liu Shaoqi and other more moderate leaders had been purged. The skilled negotiator Zhou Enlai survived the storm and was able to engineer a temporary compromise between revolutionary rhetoric and economic necessity in 1971–72. Yet this cease-fire did not last long and the revolution continued to consume its own. In 1971 Mao's presumed heir, Lin Biao, vanished, apparently killed in an air crash while fleeing the country after an attempt to assassinate Mao. By 1976 Mao was again emphasizing dogma at the expense of order. Zhou's death early in 1976 seemed to open the way for further excesses, but Mao himself died on 9 Sept. in the same year. The radical Gang of Four, whose members included Mao's third wife—the former actress Jiang Qing—unsuccessfully attempted to seize power.

Mao's legacy was a superpower, Communist China, reunited—except for Taiwan where the Nationalists continued to rule—and largely freed from the corruption that had played such a major role in bringing pre-war China to its knees. Yet Mao's revolutionary enthusiasm had several times wrecked his country's economy and threatened public order. His political ideas were to prove an inspiration to a generation of left-wing radicals throughout the world. His memory is still officially revered in China, although Communist China's 'socialist market economy' pays little more than lip service to the Thoughts of Chairman Mao.

Marcinkiewicz, Kazimierz (Poland)

Introduction

Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz was elected Poland's prime minister in Oct. 2005. The teacher-turned-economist held conservative and nationalist views and

was a close ally of President Lech Kaczyński. He resigned in July 2006 following a split with his party chairman.

Early Life

Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz was born on 20 Dec. 1959 in Gorzów Wielkopolski, northwest Poland. He graduated in physics from Wrocław University before completing a post-graduate course in administration at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Returning to Gorzów Wielkopolski, he worked as a teacher and in 1983 he joined *Solidarność* (Solidarity), the self-governing trade union. He edited and published an independent educational periodical, *Pokolenie*, and the Catholic magazine, *Aspekty*. In Sept. 1989, amid the death throes of the ruling Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) and the creation of a multi-party system, Marcinkiewicz became a founder-member of the Christian–National Union party (ZChN).

A conservative and nationalist party, ZChN performed well in the Oct. 1991 elections and its representative, Jan Olszewski, became prime minister. Marcinkiewicz, who had been head of the board of education in Gorzów Wielkopolski, was appointed deputy minister of national education in 1992 in the short-lived government of Hanna Suchoka. From 1994 he was a member of both the ZChN's main board and its regional administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski. The party was excluded from the Sejm from 1993–97 and was wracked by infighting but was nevertheless one of the key groupings within Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS). Marcinkiewicz served as deputy chairman of the Sejm education, science and youth commission and from 1999–2000 was head of the political cabinet under Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek (AWS). The AWS–UW (Freedom Union) coalition government was credited with implementing reforms to local government, health, pensions and education.

In Feb. 2001 Marcinkiewicz founded the Right-Wing Alliance party, which later became part of the Law and Justice party (PiS), founded by the twins Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński. He subsequently served as chairman of the Sejm state treasury commission and gained plaudits for his economic competence. Following the PiS' victory in the parliamentary elections of 25 Sept. 2005, Marcinkiewicz was nominated as their candidate for the premiership, with the blessing of PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński. Marcinkiewicz was expected to form a coalition with the Citizen's Platform (PO), the pro-market party which came second in the elections, but talks collapsed and the PiS formed a minority government supported by the populist Samoobrona, the right-wing League of Polish Families (LPR) and the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL).

Career Peak

The PiS campaigned to defend traditionalist Catholic values by maintaining state benefits for the poor, cracking down on crime and corruption and overhauling security structures. Marcinkiewicz also pledged to tackle high unemployment, bring down the budget deficit and place the economy on a sounder footing.

Rumours abounded of a rift between Marcinkiewicz and Jarosław Kaczyński, the PiS chairman and twin brother of the president. Marcinkiewicz tendered his resignation on 7 July 2006 and was succeeded by Kaczyński a week later. Marcinkiewicz was subsequently appointed acting president (mayor) of Warsaw.

After graduating in law at the University of the Philippines, Marcos was tried and convicted in 1939 for the murder of Julio Nalundasan in 1933, a political opponent of his father. President Quezon offered the young Marcos an eleventh-hour pardon, which he declined. Marcos went to Laoag jail for 6 months where he spent much of his time writing an 800-page appeal. Marcos defended himself in an appeal in the supreme court and was acquitted of the crime in 1940.

After World War II, in which Marcos was an officer with the Philippine armed forces, President Manuel A. Roxas persuaded him to leave law and enter politics. He was duly elected as congressman of Ilocos Norte and served three consecutive terms. With his election, Marcos became the youngest member of the house of representatives. Between 1946–47 Marcos was technical assistant to President Roxas. He became a member of the senate in 1959 and served as senate president between 1963–65.

In 1964 Marcos left the Liberal party and won the Nacionalista party nomination for the presidential candidacy. In 1965, with the assistance of his former beauty queen wife, Imelda, and unofficial CIA sanctioning, Marcos was elected sixth president of the Third Republic of the Philippines, beating his Liberal party adversary and incumbent, Diosdado Macapagal.

Career Peak

Despite success with agricultural, education and economic policies, Marcos' leadership was dogged by student demonstrations and insurgent guerrilla activities by communists and Muslim separatists. On 21 Sept. 1972 Marcos declared martial law and suspended the 1938 constitution that would have denied him a third term. Marcos jailed many political opponents, including the influential and popular Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. Aquino was allowed to leave the Philippines to undergo heart surgery in the USA in 1980. Marcos suspended martial law in Jan. 1981 but continued a dictatorial grip upon the country.

Returning from exile in 1983, Benigno Aquino was assassinated at Manila International Airport (Now known as Ninoy [Benigno] Aquino International Airport) as he left his aeroplane. Marcos was assumed to be responsible for the crime which led to widespread condemnation. To compound his problems the Philippine economy began to disintegrate and guerrilla activities intensified.

To reassert his authority Marcos called a snap election in 1986. Opposition united behind the assassinated Aquino's widow, Corazon Aquino.

After a much-disputed election, Marcos was heralded as the unlikely winner by the government led commission on elections. Inspired by the defection of the Philippine military and Corazon Aquino's call for a campaign of civil disobedience, over a million Filipinos gathered on the Epifanio de los Santos Avenue to stage their protest. This became known as the 'People Power' or 'EDSA' revolution.

Later Life

After his brief inauguration at Malacañang Palace, Ferdinand Marcos and his family were helicoptered, with US assistance, to Clark airbase and from there to Hawaii. Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos were indicted for embezzlement of US\$270 m. but Ferdinand was considered too ill to leave Honolulu, having developed pneumonia. Ferdinand Marcos died of a heart attack in Hawaii on 28 Sept. 1989, aged 72.

Marcos, Ferdinand Edralin (Philippines)

Introduction

Ferdinand Edralin Marcos was president of the Philippines between 1965 and 1986. Despite early economic success, he inspired opposition from students, communists and Muslim separatists. Accused of rigging the 1986 presidential elections, popular protest caused him to flee the country.

Early Life

Ferdinand Marcos was born in Sarrat, Ilocos Norte, on 11 Sept. 1917. He was the eldest son of Mariano Marcos (a teacher, lawyer and congressman for Ilocos Norte) and Josefa Quetelio Edralin, a teacher.

Marović, Svetozar (Serbia)

Introduction

Svetozar Marović became the first president of the newly-constituted nation of Serbia and Montenegro in March 2003. A Montenegrin, he was deputy leader of the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) which advocated Montenegrin independence. On his election by the federal parliament, Marović pushed for increased integration into Europe and the European Union and promised greater co-operation with the UN War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague investigating atrocities in the Balkan wars of the 1990s. He supported Montenegrin independence in a referendum held in May 2006, when 55.5% came out in support of loosening ties with Serbia. Marović resigned from office in June 2006, bringing to an end the post of president of Serbia and Montenegro.

Early Life

Marović was born on 31 March 1955 in Kotor on Montenegro's Adriatic coast. He graduated in law from the University of Podgorica and entered Montenegro's parliament in 1990 as a representative of the DPS. He later became a member of the Montenegrin presidency, parliamentary speaker, chairman of the foreign policy and international relations committee and member of the federal parliament. He was voted DPS vice-president, deputy to Montenegro's Prime Minister Milo Djukanović. He was also the founder of Budva's annual summer theatre festival.

In March 2002 the parliaments of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro agreed to replace the federation of Yugoslavia with the more loosely affiliated Serbia and Montenegro. Vojislav Koštunica gave up his position as head of state to stand for the Serbian presidency. Serbia and Montenegro officially came into being in Feb. 2003. It was agreed that the new entity's first president would be from Montenegro and Marović was the only candidate. He was approved by parliament in March 2003.

Career Peak

Marović's term of office was scheduled to last at least 3 years, at which point either republic could call a referendum on full independence. He was expected to pursue closer ties with the EU and NATO and promised to work with the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. Towards this aim he stated his ambition to place the army and police under more transparent civilian control. Within days of Marović's selection by parliament, Serbia and Montenegro faced political unrest following the assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić.

Marović promised to improve living standards throughout the country. He also suggested that he could favour a change in the status of Kosovo—the Albanian-dominated province which saw some of the heaviest fighting during the break-up of Yugoslavia during the 1990s—paving the way for eventual Albanian self-determination but with safeguards for the rights of Serbian and other minorities in the province. In June 2003 the government agreed to talks with the authorities in Kosovo, the first since 1999, to discuss practical issues including infrastructure and communications.

In Oct. 2005 Serbia and Montenegro began talks on a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU. In May 2006 Montenegro held a referendum on independence, with a majority voting to dissolve the state union of Serbia and Montenegro. Marović resigned as head of the soon-to-be defunct country in early June 2006.

Career Peak

Despite voter turnout of only 25%, his defeated opponent, the conservative former first lady Mirlande Manigat, did not challenge the result. The incumbent prime minister, Jean-Max Bellerive, resigned on 15 May 2011 to allow Martelly to choose his own premier. However, Martelly's first two nominations for premier, entrepreneur Daniel Rouzier and former justice minister Bernard Gousse, were rejected by parliament in June and Aug. 2011 respectively. Bellerive remained in a caretaker capacity until the appointment of Garry Conille as prime minister in Oct. 2011.

Martelly pledged to improve the faltering post-earthquake reconstruction programme. In Aug. 2011 he announced plans to reinstate the military, which had been disbanded by former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In Sept. 2011 he created an advisory board aimed at improving the economy and in Dec. 2011 he announced voting reforms.

Martelly has been criticized for his handling of the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti. From Sept. 2010 there were popular anti-UN protests in the capital after a serious and prolonged outbreak of cholera was blamed on UN staff. The Senate in response passed a resolution for UN withdrawal, although the mission remains in operation.

Martelly's tenure hit further problems when Conille resigned on 24 Feb. 2012 after challenging Martelly's refusal to co-operate with an investigation into whether some government officials held dual nationality in contravention of the constitution. Martelly's nomination as Conille's successor was the foreign minister, Laurent Lamothe, who was confirmed in the post on 4 May 2012. In Sept. and Oct. that year protesters in Port-au-Prince called for the president's resignation, citing his failure to tackle poverty, the high cost of living and alleged corruption. Further anti-government protests in the capital in early 2014 amid anger over delayed elections and other issues prompted a major cabinet reshuffle in April, and there was more unrest in Dec. during which Lamothe and several other ministers resigned their posts.

From Sept. 2013 Haiti's relations with the Dominican Republic were severely strained after a ruling by the latter's constitutional court restricted citizenship rights and potentially rendered many residents of Haitian descent stateless. However, in May 2014 the Dominican president signed legislation overturning the court ruling and reinstated the citizenship of children born in the Republic to immigrant parents, which eased tensions with Haiti.

On 7 Feb. 2016 Martelly stepped down as president at the end of his term, leaving Haiti without a head of state. A presidential election run-off to appoint a successor has been postponed from Dec. 2015 to April 2016 amid allegations of fraud and fears of violence.

Martelly, Michel (Haiti)

Introduction

Michel Martelly was elected president of Haiti in March 2011. One of Haiti's most popular performers of Haitian dance music, he had strong support among younger voters. However, anti-government protests gained momentum during his tenure. He stood down upon the completion of his term in Feb. 2016 with no successor in place.

Early Life

Born on 12 Feb. 1961 in Port-au-Prince, Martelly is the son of an oil company executive. Educated at a Roman Catholic school in Port-au-Prince, he attended junior colleges in the USA but never graduated. After briefly working for a US construction company, Martelly enlisted at the Haitian Military Academy. In 1986 he embarked upon a musical career as a keyboardist and singer, playing Haitian *compas* dance music in Port-au-Prince. He was known by the stage name 'sweet Micky'.

Haiti's election of Nov. 2010 was its first since the devastating Jan. 2010 earthquake and was characterized by disorganization, voter intimidation and fraud according to foreign observers. Initially, Martelly was not included in the run-off poll but took his place when Jude Célestin, the candidate for the ruling Unity party, withdrew.

Despite his lack of a political background, voters bought into Martelly's vision of change for a country ravaged by poverty and political instability. He won 68% of the vote in the March run-off and was sworn into office on 14 May 2011.

Martens, Wilfried (Belgium)

Introduction

Wilfried Martens served two terms as prime minister, from April 1979–April 1981 and again from Dec. 1981–March 1992. As Belgium's longest-serving premier since the Second World War, he led nine coalition governments. He later became president of the centre-right European People's Party grouping in the European Parliament. His two terms as Belgian premier were characterized by austere economic reforms and ongoing conflict between the country's French- and Flemish-speaking factions.

Early Life

Martens was born on 19 April 1936 in the East Flanders town of Sleidinge. He studied at the University of Leuven, attaining a doctorate of law and a degree in Thomistic philosophy. Having joined the Christian People's Party (CVP) in 1962, he quickly rose through its ranks and served as adviser to two prime ministers, Pierre Harmel and Paul Vanden Boeynants, from 1965–66. Martens became party chairman in 1972. He then won a seat in parliament in 1974 and, despite no ministerial experience, was invited in 1979 by King Baudouin to form a government following the resignation of Prime Minister Leo Tindemans.

Career Peak

At the beginning of the 1980s, the Belgian economy was in recession, undermined by high oil market prices and dwindling international demand

for the country's traditional heavy industrial production. Martens' early years as prime minister were spent shepherding the country through this crisis via a controversial economic recovery plan, which involved devaluing the Belgian franc to increase export competitiveness. The economy steadily recovered, with unemployment rates receding and GDP growth peaking at 4.7% in 1988.

Martens also spearheaded reforms that led to Belgium's transformation into a fully federalized state in 1993. In 1980 the historically-distinct Flemish and French regions had become official Communities, with each assuming greater political autonomy. As part of further state reforms in 1989, his administration created a third region—the Brussels-Capital region.

Later Life

After leaving the national government in 1992, Martens focused on wider European Union politics, serving as chair (from 1990–2013) and leader (from 1994–99) of the European People's Party (which he had co-founded in 1976). He remained active in EU and Belgian political affairs up until his death in Oct. 2013.

Martin, Paul (Canada)

Introduction

Paul Martin succeeded his Liberal Party colleague, Jean Chrétien, as prime minister in Dec. 2003. He had previously served as finance minister between 1993 and 2002, during which time he recorded budget surpluses and reduced the national debt. As prime minister, his tenure has been undermined by the repercussions of a scandal involving the misuse by the previous Liberal government of public funds, although a judicial report on the affair published at the end of Oct. 2005 exonerated him personally of any blame. Martin's term as prime minister ended in Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Paul Martin was born in Windsor, Ontario on 28 Aug. 1938. His father, Paul Martin Sr, was a cabinet minister in four Liberal governments. Paul Jr studied philosophy and law at the University of Toronto and was called to the bar in Ontario in 1966. He subsequently took up senior positions with the Power Corporation of Canada and Canada Steamship Lines.

In 1988 Martin was elected to the House of Commons, representing the LaSalle-Emard riding in Quebec. Two years later he was defeated by Jean Chrétien in the race for the Liberal leadership. When the Liberals came to power in 1993, Martin was made minister of finance and was responsible for Quebec regional development (until 1996). As finance minister, he oversaw five consecutive budget surpluses, reduced public debt by \$36 bn. CDN and granted large-scale tax cuts.

In June 2002 he left Chrétien's cabinet after the two fell out, ostensibly over Martin's campaigning for the party leadership. With Chrétien's decision to retire from the premiership, Martin was chosen as his successor as Liberal leader in Nov. 2003, winning 94% of the vote at a party convention. He was sworn in as prime minister on 12 Dec. 2003.

Career Peak

Martin announced plans to restructure government practices in a bid to combat perceived public apathy. A leading aspect of his foreign policy was expected to be improving ties with the USA. Relations became strained after Canada's refusal to support the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, but there were signs of a thaw in Jan. 2004 when President George W. Bush announced that Canadian businesses would be eligible to bid on Iraqi reconstruction projects.

In Feb. 2004 a report by the auditor-general criticized the misuse of \$100 m. CDN of public funds. The money, part of a scheme to promote federal unity in Quebec following the province's narrow decision in the mid-1990s to remain within Canada, went to several public relations firms with ties to the Liberal Party. Martin ordered an enquiry amid confusion as to whether the allocation of finance had been decided by civil servants or members of the previous prime minister's office.

Although the Liberal term of office was not scheduled to finish for a further 2 years, Martin hoped to improve his position by calling elections for

28 June 2004. However, while the Liberals remained the largest party taking 135 of 308 seats, they lost their overall majority. Martin nevertheless formed a minority government and narrowly survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote in May 2005. Despite his earlier reputation for fiscal prudence, he has been accused of profligacy with the public finances since the elections by the Conservative opposition. In early Nov. 2005 the New Democratic Party withdrew support for Martin's minority government, increasing the likelihood of early elections.

In Jan. 2006 Martin called a general election which resulted in a Conservative Party victory. The day after the elections Martin announced his intention to resign as leader of the Liberal Party. On 6 Feb. 2006 he tendered his resignation and was succeeded by Stephen Harper.

Later Life

Martin stepped down as Liberal Party leader in March 2006 but remained in parliament. At the Oct. 2008 election he did not run for re-election.

Martinelli Berrocal, Ricardo (Panama)

Introduction

Businessman Ricardo Martinelli became president in May 2009. He led the Democratic Change party to a landslide victory, ending 40 years of bipartisan government.

Early Life

Ricardo Martinelli was born in March 1952 in Panama City to parents of Italian and Spanish descent. He was schooled in Panama City before attending Staunton Military Academy in Virginia, USA. In 1973 he graduated in business administration from Arkansas University and subsequently obtained a master's degree in the same subject from the Central American Institute of Business Administration in Costa Rica.

He returned to Panama to embark on a business career, first at Citibank before joining the retail company Almacén 99 in 1981. By 1985 he had set up the Super 99 supermarket chain and variously headed the Panamanian Chamber of Commerce, the Italian-Panamanian Chamber of Commerce and the governing association of retail companies. In 1991 he set up the Ricardo Martinelli Foundation, which grants scholarships to several thousand poor students each year. From 1993–96 Martinelli was involved with the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) and was briefly head of the National Social Security Institute (CSS).

After 2 years out of the political spotlight, Martinelli established his own party in 1998, called Democratic Change (CD). In 1999 he allied himself with Mireya Moscoso in a conservative coalition against the PRD. When Moscoso went on to win the presidency, CD was rewarded with the ministry for the Panama Canal, just as management of the Canal was being handed over to Panama by the USA. Martinelli was a strong advocate for expansion of the Canal but progress was slow and in 2003 he resigned to stand for the presidency in 2004.

Although his 2004 campaign was unsuccessful, it positioned him in the public eye ahead of his second run in 2009. He stood as the candidate for the CD-led Alliance for Change coalition campaigning on a platform of change and fighting corruption. He won with over 60% of the vote.

Career Peak

Martinelli's election bucked the left-leaning trend in neighbouring El Salvador and Nicaragua. Among the policies he advocated were Panama's exit from the Central American Parliament (Parlacen), increased police wages, a monthly stipend of 100 balboas for the unpensioned elderly and the eradication of corruption. In 2009 he appointed the ex-military Gustavo Pérez as head of police and pledged to tackle the 'wild capitalism' of Panama. Martinelli also planned to reform the tax system and to overhaul Panama City's transport system with the construction of a metro network, which opened in 2014.

Panama maintained an impressive annual rate of economic growth during Martinelli's premiership. However, much of the country's wealth continued to stem from the nationally-administered Canal, ports and Colón free trade zone,

while extreme poverty, although reduced, remains a problem. In Oct. 2011 Martinelli welcomed the ratification of a free trade agreement with the USA, which had been stalled since 2007.

Martinelli was criticized for political bullying and clashed with his vice-president, who accused him of corruption. He was ineligible to stand in the May 2014 presidential elections but stayed in office until Juan Carlos Varela was sworn into office as his successor in July.

Later Life

In Dec. 2015 Panama's supreme court ordered the arrest of Martinelli, who had been accused of using public funds to spy illegally on political opponents. Since May 2017 he has also been the subject of an Interpol warrant on the same charges.

Marzouki, Moncef (Tunisia)

Introduction

Moncef Marzouki was elected interim president in Dec. 2011, a year on from the start of the revolution that ignited the Arab Spring. A French-trained physician, human rights activist and leader of a secular, left-wing political party, he was a long-standing critic of the autocratic Ben Ali regime and spent many years in exile in France.

Early Life

Mohamed Moncef ben-Bedoui Marzouki was born in Grombalia in the northeast of the French Protectorate of Tunisia on 7 July 1945, the son of a magistrate. He attended Sadiki College in Tunis and then the Lycée Regnault in Tangier after his family moved to Morocco in 1956 amid the upheaval of Tunisia's independence.

In 1973 he graduated in medicine from Strasbourg University in France, specializing in neurology and practising in Alsace. Returning to Tunisia in 1979, he settled in Sousse and became a professor of community medicine at the city's university and a member of the Tunisian League for Human Rights (LTDH). Elected leader of the LTDH in 1989, he was an increasingly vocal critic of President Zine-Al Abidine Ben Ali, particularly in the wake of the government's violent crackdown on the Islamist Ennahda movement in 1991.

Marzouki failed in an attempt to contest the presidential election of March 1994, in which Ben Ali was the only official candidate. Marzouki was subsequently jailed and only released after an international outcry and the intervention of Nelson Mandela. In the 1990s he campaigned on behalf of Amnesty International and the Cairo-based Arab Organization for Human Rights.

In July 2001 he formed the Congress for the Republic (CPR), a centre-left, secular political party that was declared illegal. Having been forced out of the University of Sousse, Marzouki left Tunisia in 2002 for France, where he worked as a doctor in the suburbs of Paris. He published books and articles on community medicine, human rights and politics, cautioning against the 'Arab malaise' of societies caught 'between dictatorship and religious fundamentalism'.

Marzouki returned to Tunisia on 18 Jan. 2011 during a popular uprising fired by high unemployment, rising prices, corruption and lack of civil freedoms, which culminated in the overthrow of Ben Ali. The CPR came second behind the moderate Islamist Ennahda party in elections for the constituent assembly on 23 Oct. 2011. After the parties reached a coalition deal, Marzouki was elected interim president. He took office on 13 Dec. 2011.

Career Peak

Marzouki's mandate was to oversee the drafting of a new constitution and preparations for fresh elections. He was expected to direct foreign policy and to serve as commander in chief of the armed forces, although key decisions would require consultation with the prime minister.

Religious tensions sparked protests and some violence in 2012. Extreme Islamists staged a number of demonstrations demanding the incorporation of Sharia law into the new constitution, and in June 2012 the government imposed a curfew in some areas in response to riots. In Aug. that year there were also protests against constitutional provisions that some feared could limit sexual equality and women's rights.

In June 2012 the exiled former president, Ben Ali, received a life sentence *in absentia* for the deaths of demonstrators in the 2011 revolution.

In Feb. 2013 Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali resigned after failing to obtain backing from his Ennahda party to form a new coalition of technocrats. This was in response to the murder of a prominent left-wing anti-Islamist figure, Chokri Belaïd, for which the secular opposition blamed Ennahda. Marzouki appointed the interior minister, Ali Larayedh, to replace him. Larayedh formed a coalition with the CPR, Ettakatol and independents.

The assassination of another opposition politician, Mohammed Brahmi, in July 2013 provoked more violence as protesters took to the streets to demand a non-partisan caretaker administration until a new constitution was approved and new elections held. Although radical Salafists were blamed for the killing, the opposition accused Ennahda of being too weak to deal with militant Islamists. In Oct. 2013 Ennahda agreed to step aside in favour of a caretaker government that would pave the way for fresh elections in 2014. In turn, Mehdi Jomaa, perceived as a politically neutral figure, was appointed by Marzouki as interim prime minister in early Jan. 2014 and asked to form a new cabinet. Later that month the Constituent Assembly approved a new constitution, marking a significant step to full democracy.

Marzouki's term as interim president came to an end on 31 Dec. 2014 when he was replaced by Beji Caid Essebsi, the winner of elections held in Nov. and Dec.

Masire, Quett (Botswana)

Introduction

Sir Quett Masire was Botswana's second president, holding office from 1980 until 1998. Leader of the Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP), he succeeded the nation's founding president, Sir Seretse Khama, upon Khama's death. Masire furthered the economic development and democratic reforms instigated by his predecessor, cementing Botswana's reputation as a model for stable African government.

Early Life

Sir Quett Ketumile Joni Masire was born on 23 July 1925 in Kanye, the capital of the Bangwaketse Reserve, in what was then known as Bechuanaland. His humble background was in contrast to that of his future political ally Seretse Khama, a nobleman educated at boarding school and Oxford University. Masire distinguished himself academically, graduating top of his class and winning a scholarship to Tiger Kloof Institute in South Africa.

In 1950 Masire co-founded Seepapitso Secondary School in the Bangwaketse Reserve, serving as teacher and headmaster until 1955. He subsequently established himself amongst the region's leading agriculturists. In both sectors Masire clashed with prominent figures in the colonial administration and gained a reputation for his eloquent criticism of the existing political system. After working in journalism and sitting on the Bangwaketse tribal council, Masire joined Seretse Khama in co-founding the Bechuanaland Democratic Party in 1962.

Masire served as the party's secretary-general and was its chief organizer and activist, as well as a foil to the party's charismatic leader. In 1965 the Bechuanaland Democratic Party won all but three of the Legislative Assembly's 31 seats. With the party's demand for the end of colonial rule thus strengthened, independence followed in 1966. Masire was named vice-president under Seretse Khama, a position he retained until Khama's death in 1980.

Career Peak

By the time he took over the presidency, Masire was recognized as a talented technocrat responsible for the nation's steady development since independence. His mandate was reinforced by overwhelming victories in the 1984 and 1989 general elections. Botswana's impressive post-independence economic growth continued throughout the 1980s, founded upon the country's extensive diamond reserves. Masire used diamond revenues to develop infrastructure and expand public services, though his free-market policies were unable to prevent the widening gap between the poor and the emergent middle-class.

Masire continued the policy of non-alignment practised by Khama, which led to some tensions with neighbouring South Africa in the apartheid era. Despite consistently advocated majority rule in South Africa, Botswana would not allow its territory to be used as a base for attacks against the country. Nonetheless, the 1980s were punctuated by acts of aggression against Botswana by South Africa.

Masire was re-elected for a final term in 1994, during which he faced the enduring challenges of combating hunger and improving social welfare. Evidence of economic stability was demonstrated by the withdrawal of the Agency for International Development in 1995. A rapprochement with South Africa was also achieved. Masire stepped down from power in 1998 to be replaced by his vice-president, Festus Mogae.

Later Life

Masire published an autobiography detailing his life in government and for many years continued to play an active role in Botswana and African public life. He died on 22 June 2017 at the age of 91.

Mbeki, Thabo (South Africa)

Introduction

A leading anti-apartheid campaigner and prominent member of the ANC, Thabo Mbeki was chosen in 1997 to replace Nelson Mandela as party leader. Two years later he led the ANC to electoral victory and succeeded Mandela as president. He was credited with improving South Africa's economy but was criticized for doubting the link between HIV and AIDS (which had reached epidemic proportions in South Africa) and for his ambivalence towards the extremist rule of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe. He resigned in Sept. 2008 under pressure from the ANC's National Executive.

Early Life

Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki was born in Idutywa, Transkei on 24 June 1942. Both his parents were teachers and anti-apartheid activists. Mbeki became politically active at the age of 14 when he enlisted in the ANC Youth League. Whilst studying for his A-levels he was elected secretary of the African Students' Association.

In 1962 his father was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment. Mbeki went to the UK where he studied economics at Sussex University. He was employed in the ANC's London office by Oliver Tambo and in 1970 was sent to the USSR for military training. He then moved to Lusaka in Zambia where he was appointed assistant secretary of the Revolutionary Council. For the next 5 years Mbeki worked for the ANC in Swaziland, Botswana, Zambia and Nigeria. In 1978 he served as a political secretary to Tambo and subsequently became director of information and publicity. This role allowed him to increase international awareness of the plight of black South Africans and to enlist the support of many white South Africans who opposed apartheid. In 1989 Mbeki was chosen to head the ANC's department of international affairs, a position which involved him in the negotiations that ended apartheid. In 1993 he was appointed as the party's national chairman.

After the elections of April 1994 Mbeki was made deputy president of the government of national unity. He was chosen to succeed Mandela in Dec. 1997. In the June 1999 election his party won 66% votes and Mbeki replaced Mandela as president.

Career Peak

Mbeki's first months in office were dogged by speculation that he was introducing a more autocratic, less democratic style of government. This was largely brought on by his decision to replace several provincial premiers with nominees of his choosing. He made clear his intentions to change the segregated 'two nations' character of South Africa and in order to achieve this he acknowledged that his government would have to reduce crime, corruption and unemployment. His international reputation suffered when, despite overwhelming evidence, he refused to admit a link between the HIV virus and full-blown AIDS, claiming instead that the primary cause of the disease was poverty. This view attracted sharp criticism not just from his political opponents but from allies within the trade union movement, nurses, doctors, gay

rights groups and even Mandela himself. He was further criticized for failing to condemn the extremist rule of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe.

Within the party Mbeki's biggest problem was to secure agreement with ANC's leftwing partners—the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Communist Party—on countering social and racial inequalities, while privatizing some state industries. A two-day strike was mounted by COSATU in Oct. 2002. In the same month white right-wing extremists began a terrorist bombing campaign in an attempt to overthrow the government. Nonetheless, Mbeki and the ANC retained a strong powerbase. At the 2002 ANC conference, as the sole candidate Mbeki was re-elected party chairman for a further 5 years, thus making him ANC candidate for the 2004 presidential elections.

Mbeki was one of the first leaders to respond to the USA's action against Iraq. Although he was not overtly critical, he made clear his wish for greater involvement by the United Nations.

Following the defection of two MPs in March 2003 the ANC gained control of the Western Cape province. South Africa's main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, and the Inkatha Freedom Party formed a coalition in Nov. 2003 to strengthen their chances against the ANC in forthcoming elections.

The ANC were successful in the parliamentary elections of 14 April 2004, winning 279 of the 400 seats in the National Assembly with 69.7% of votes cast. The Democratic Alliance won 50 seats and Inkatha 28. Mbeki was unanimously voted president for another 5-year term. In June 2005 he sacked his vice-president, Jacob Zuma, after he was linked with a corruption scandal and replaced him with Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, formerly the minister for minerals and energy. Corruption (and also rape) charges against Zuma were dismissed in 2006, boosting his chances of contesting the presidential elections scheduled for 2009. Under Mbeki's presidency, South Africa gained a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the first time in Oct. 2006 and also became the first African country to legalize same-sex marriages the following month. In Dec. the government signalled a change of attitude towards the AIDS pandemic with the announcement of a new plan to fight the crisis.

In early 2007 demonstrators marched in some of the country's main cities in protest at the high levels of violent crime. Then, in June, thousands of public-sector workers took part in the biggest strike since the end of apartheid, lasting for four weeks and disrupting schools, hospitals and public transport. The action reflected trade union resistance to privatization, which was also opposed by the left wing of the ANC that viewed it as transferring state assets to the white and new 'black elite' business sector.

In Dec. 2007 Mbeki was defeated by Zuma in party elections for the ANC leadership, placing Zuma in prime position to become the next president. Subsequently, however, prosecutors brought new corruption charges against Zuma concerning a controversial arms deal.

In Jan. 2008 South Africa suffered a severe power crisis, with the government coming under fire for its failure to heed warnings of impending energy shortages. In May Mbeki called on the military to break up riots following attacks on immigrants fleeing the economic collapse of Zimbabwe. In Sept. 2008 Zuma was acquitted of all corruption charges amid allegations of political interference in the judicial process from, among others, Mbeki. The national executive of the ANC withdrew its support from Mbeki and on 21 Sept. he announced his resignation, effective from 25 Sept. Kgalema Mptlanthe, the party's deputy leader, succeeded him ahead of the 2009 presidential election.

McAleese, Mary (Ireland)

Introduction

Mary McAleese became Ireland's president in 1997, the first person from Northern Ireland to fill the post. A lawyer by profession, she is a devout Catholic with a conservative stance on social issues. Her campaign for the presidency was dogged by claims that she was a supporter of the nationalist Sinn Féin movement, allegations she strongly refuted. Having served the maximum two terms as president, McAleese stood down as president in Nov. 2011.

Early Life

Mary McAleese (*née* Leneghan) was born in Belfast on 27 June 1951. Her father was a pub landlord in Catholic West Belfast. The outbreak of sectarian violence in the late 1960s resulted in the family moving to County Down.

In 1973 she graduated in law from Queen's University, Belfast, and was called to the Bar the following year. In 1975 she took up a law professorship at Trinity College Dublin. She stayed in this position until 1987, although between 1979 and 1981 she worked as a television broadcaster and journalist.

In 1987 she unsuccessfully stood as a Fianna Fáil candidate for a Dublin seat at the general election. In 1994 she was appointed pro-vice chancellor of Queen's University, the first female to hold the post. Three years later she was selected by Fianna Fáil to stand in the presidential elections, defeating former prime minister Albert Reynolds for the candidacy. Unpopular with many unionists, she was accused of having links to Sinn Féin, the political arm of the paramilitary Irish Republican Army (IRA). Having denied the accusations, she presented herself as a 'builder of bridges' and won an overwhelming majority at the polls.

Career Peak

McAleese was inaugurated as president on 11 Nov. 1997. Her role was largely ceremonial and non-partisan. A practising Catholic, she opposed abortion and aligned herself with the Vatican on such issues as divorce and contraception. Nevertheless, she held liberal views regarding homosexuality and women priests. Describing the theme of her presidency as 'building bridges', McAleese voiced support for peace-making in Northern Ireland and for continued cross-border co-operation. She was a regular visitor to Northern Ireland and, with the help of her husband, she publicly reached out to unionists who would traditionally have been hostile to Irish political figures. In Oct. 2004 she was appointed unopposed for a second presidential term. McAleese proved to be a popular figure and Queen Elizabeth II's visit in March 2011, the first state visit by a British monarch to the Republic of Ireland, was deemed one of the high points of her presidency. She left office on 10 Nov. 2011 and was succeeded by Michael D. Higgins.

Mebazaa, Foued (Tunisia)

Introduction

A career civil servant, diplomat and politician, Foued Mebazaa had been a senior figure in Tunisia's political firmament since independence. As leader of the lower house of parliament, he became interim president in mid-Jan. 2011 following a month-long popular uprising that led to the ousting of the incumbent, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and ignited revolutions across North Africa and the Middle East.

Early Life

Foued Mebazaa was born in on 15 June 1933 in Tunis. He attended the city's Sadiki College and studied law and economics in Paris. Having joined the Constitutional Youth political grouping in 1947, he was elected a member of the Aix-Marseille unit of the socialist Neo Destour (New Constitution) Party in 1954, which played a key role in securing Tunisian independence in 1957. A senior administrator of the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET) from 1957–59, Mebazaa entered mainstream politics under President Habib Bourguiba in 1961.

When the ruling Neo Destour evolved into the Parti Socialiste Destourien (PSD) in 1964 Mebazaa was elected to its central committee. He was the mayor of Tunis for 4 years from 1969–73, when he became a government minister. Between 1981 and 1986 he was Tunisia's permanent representative to the UN and then briefly ambassador in Morocco. He returned to government in 1987 as minister of youth and sport in the government of Gen. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Mebazaa retained his position following a coup on 7 Nov. 1987 which resulted in Bourguiba being impeached and replaced by Ben Ali. The following year, amid sweeping economic reforms, the PSD was renamed the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) and Mebazaa was elected to its central committee. He served as mayor of Carthage for 3 years

from 1995 and in 1997 he was elected leader of the lower house of parliament, winning re-election in 2004 and 2009.

President Ben Ali proved unable to quell increasingly violent unrest over rising food prices, unemployment and corruption that began in the city of Sidi Bouzid on 17 Dec. 2010. He was forced to flee the country on 14 Jan. after 23 years of autocratic rule. The prime minister, Mohammed Ghannouchi, initially took over his duties but the constitutional council declared the president's departure permanent and gave Mebazaa, as leader of the house and as stipulated by the constitution, 60 days to organize new elections. He was sworn in as interim president on 15 Jan. 2011.

Career Peak

Despite Mebazaa's pledge to create a unity government including the long-ignored opposition, violent protests continued. Following the resignation of Ghannouchi and six other ministers in late Feb., Mebazaa appointed Béji Caïd Essebsi as premier. Sebsi unveiled a cabinet of technocrats, none of whom had served in previous governments under Ben Ali, to guide the country through to constituent assembly elections scheduled for 24 July 2011. Mebazaa said he would continue in office beyond his official 60-day term, arguing that the current constitution no longer had any credibility.

On 12 Dec. 2011 Moncef Marzouki was elected interim president by the constituent assembly and replaced Mebazaa in office the following day.

Mečiar, Vladimír (Slovakia)

Introduction

Vladimír Mečiar was three-times Prime Minister of Slovakia (June 1990–April 1991, June 1992–March 1994 and Dec. 1994–Oct. 1998). During his second period in office he oversaw the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the Slovak Republic. He was criticised for his authoritarian style, his treatment of ethnic minorities and his reluctance to instigate economic reform. Refused entry into NATO and the EU, he nonetheless remains an iconic figure to many Slovaks who support his strident nationalist sentiments.

Early Life

Mečiar was born on 26 July 1942 in Zvolen, Central Slovakia. He joined the Union of Czecho-Slovak Youth, a communist based organization. A talented amateur boxer, he held several administrative posts within the communist infrastructure. His support for the Dubček-led Prague Spring led to his sacking from the civil service and removal from the party in 1970. After working as a furnaceman, he studied law at Comenius University in Bratislava, qualified in 1974 and worked as a commercial lawyer.

In 1989, as the movement for reform gained pace throughout the Eastern Bloc, Mečiar was a leading figure in Slovakia's anti-communist Public Against Violence (PAV) movement. PAV advocated increased Slovakian autonomy and conservative reform of the economy. He was appointed Minister of the Interior in Czechoslovakia's first post-Velvet Revolution government and when PAV made a strong showing in the elections of June 1990, he became Slovakia's Prime Minister.

Career Peak

With Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus promoting speedy and extensive economic reforms, relations between the two men were strained. Further damaged by allegations that he had collaborated with the communist secret police before the revolution of 1989, Mečiar lost the Slovak premiership in April 1991. He immediately broke with PAV and set up the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS).

His opposition to the Prague-driven reforms and his belief in Slovak nationalism struck a chord with a Slovak electorate who felt like junior partners in the Czechoslovak federation. The HZDS made a strong showing at elections in June 1992 and Mečiar was re-elected Prime Minister. Having criticized the rapid pace of Klaus' reforms, the two prime ministers entered into negotiations for the dissolution of the federation. On 1 Jan. 1993 the two republics split and Slovakia became an independent sovereign state.

Tensions increased between Slovaks and the country's Hungarian and gypsy populations. In addition, the economy needed overhauling to reduce the dependence on heavy industry. Mečiar did little to encourage foreign investment, preferring to keep tight control over the economy, and unemployment spiralled. In March 1994 several of his cabinet resigned and Mečiar was forced out of office. He was replaced by Jozef Moravcik but following another strong election showing in Sept. Mečiar regained the premiership in Dec.

Mečiar's growing authoritarianism, manipulation of electoral law and domination of the Slovakian media, allied with allegations of government impropriety in business deals, blighted his reputation abroad. His relationship with Slovak President Michal Kováč, who advocated a more liberal regime, was strained and further weakened his position. In 1997 the EU rejected Slovakia's membership application, citing institutional corruption and ethnic problems as mitigating circumstances. NATO took a similar line. At elections in Sept. 1998 Mečiar's coalition was defeated and he resigned as prime minister the following month.

Later Life

In April 1999 he stood for the presidency, having held the position on an interim basis twice before, but was defeated in a run-off by Rudolf Schuster. In May 2000 Mečiar was arrested on charges of having made illegal payments to ministers between 1992–98, as well as for his alleged involvement in the 1995 kidnapping of President Kováč's son. Mečiar is married to Margita, with whom he has four children.

Medgyessy, Péter (Hungary)

Introduction

Péter Medgyessy became prime minister in May 2002, having led the Socialists to election victory. He headed a coalition with the Liberal Alliance of Free Democrats and took Hungary into the EU in May 2004.

Early Life

Medgyessy was born in Budapest in 1942 and graduated from the city's University of Economics. Joining the ministry of finance in 1966, he worked in the departments of economy, prices and international finance. He then headed the department of state budget and was deputy minister of finance before taking over the finance portfolio in 1987.

As deputy prime minister with responsibility for economics from 1988 until 1989 he laid the groundwork for the liberalization of the Hungarian economy. Chairman of Magyar Paribas from 1990 until 1994, he moved to the Hungarian Bank for Investment and Development where he stayed until 1996. He was then reappointed finance minister until 1998 when he took over as chairman of Inter-Europa Bank. A non-partisan, in June 2001 he was chosen by the Socialist party to stand for the premiership.

In the elections of April 2002, the Socialists won 178 seats to become the biggest party and Medgyessy formed a coalition with the Free Democrats.

Career Peak

Medgyessy's principle aim was to ensure Hungary's entry into the EU in 2004, with entry into the single currency 3 years later. In Oct. 2002 Hungary was confirmed as one of the ten nations scheduled to join the EU in 2004. Membership won 84% approval in a referendum held in April 2003.

He pledged financial support to low-income families and young couples, promised that the minimum wage would be untaxed and that key public sector workers would receive 50% pay increases. In June 2002 he came under pressure to resign after he admitted he had worked as a counter-intelligence agent for the communist regime. He defended himself, claiming his activities were solely to ensure Hungarian entry to the IMF. Having seen Hungary join the European Union in May 2004 he resigned in Aug. 2004 after the ruling Socialist Party withdrew its support.

Later Life

Medgyessy continued to serve as a member of parliament following his resignation, and was appointed 'travelling ambassador' by the then prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsány—a position he held until 2008.

Megawati Sukarnoputri (Indonesia)

Introduction

Megawati Sukarnoputri is the daughter of Sukarno, the country's first president following Indonesia's independence from the Dutch after World War II. (Sukarnoputri means 'daughter of Sukarno'). Megawati was elected president in July 2001. Since her family was removed from power in 1965 it had remained part of Jakarta's political and economic elite. Unlike Sukarno, she rarely gave interviews or spoke in public and there was much debate about her political positioning. During her time in power, she oversaw the partial stabilization of Indonesia's political scene but those who expected her to initiate major reforms were disappointed.

Early Life

Megawati was born on 23 Jan. 1947 in Jakarta. She studied agriculture and psychology at university but did not take a degree. In 1987 she was elected to the national parliament and in 1993 she became the opposition leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), which originated as a nationalist party created by her father in the 1920s. In 1996 President Suharto tried to remove her as party leader. An attack on the PDI's headquarters led to the worst riots in 20 years. Megawati became a national heroine but was banned from contesting the May 1997 general election. Following Suharto's fall in 1998, Megawati formed her own party, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP). In the country's first free elections in 1999, the PDIP won 34% of the votes, the best return of any of the parties. However, Abdurrahman Wahid won the presidency, backed by an alliance of Muslim parties opposed to a female president. Megawati was elected vice president by the People's Consultative Assembly. In 2001 Wahid was removed from office and replaced by Megawati. The popularity of the Sukarno name and her resistance to Suharto's regime attracted popular support.

Career Peak

Megawati was criticized for lacking leadership skills and her father's charisma. Her quiet persona led to confusion about her politics. She won praise for defusing some of the political tension that had led to long-term instability, but failed to initiate fundamental reforms of political and economic life. Although committed to the IMF's plans for economic reform, she appeared unclear on restructuring the banking system and fighting corruption, while her approach to political and judicial reform was conservative. Her refusal to publicly support presidential elections scheduled for 2004 caused consternation among both her supporters and opponents.

Although Megawati earlier supported a hardline against the Aceh separatist guerrillas, the government and the Free Aceh Movement signed a peace deal in Dec. 2002 granting Aceh autonomy and self-government from 2004 in exchange for disarmament. However, fighting resumed in Aceh in May 2003 following the collapse of peace talks and Megawati declared martial law. In 2002 Megawati toured Asia, visiting China, India and North and South Korea. Following the Bali nightclub bombing in Oct. 2002, in which around 200 people died, Megawati authorized new anti-terrorist measures.

With unemployment rising and corruption still endemic, parliamentary elections were held in April 2004 and Megawati's PDIP was soundly beaten into second place. The first round of the country's first direct presidential elections were held in July 2004. In a run-off in Sept., Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of the Democratic Party won 33.6% of the vote against 26.2% for Megawati. Megawati at first refused to concede defeat but Yudhoyono was sworn in as president on 20 Oct. 2004.

Meir, Golda (Israel)

Introduction

A leading figure in the Labour movement and a signatory of Israel's independence declaration in 1948, Golda Meir served as foreign minister from 1956–66 and prime minister from 1969 until her resignation in 1974. She died on 8 Dec. 1978.

Early Life

Golda Meir (née Mabovitch) was born in Kiev in Ukraine in May 1898. Her family emigrated to Milwaukee in the United States when she was 8 years old. Having married in 1917 and settled in Palestine in 1921, she took up social work and became active in the Histadrut (General Federation of Jewish Labour). A prominent advocate of the Zionist cause, she was appointed ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1948 after the proclamation of the state of Israel. The following year she was elected to the Knesset and appointed minister of labour and national insurance in Ben-Gurion's socialist government, a post she held until 1956. A supporter of unrestricted Jewish immigration to Israel, she was responsible for major housing and construction programmes.

Career Peak

Meir became foreign minister in 1956, the year of the Suez crisis, retaining that post until 1966. Subsequently, as secretary general of the Mapai Party, she helped forge a union with two smaller parties to establish the Labour Party in 1968. In March 1969 she succeeded Eshkol Levi as prime minister. Arab-Israeli relations polarised further during her premiership as Israel maintained its occupation of Arab territories overrun during the Six Day War of 1967. Arab resentment resulted in another war in Oct. 1973 as Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a surprise offensive on Yom Kippur, a Jewish holy day. The three-week campaign restored a degree of Arab military pride and had a profoundly disturbing effect on Israeli public opinion. Dissatisfaction with Meir's government over Israel's lack of readiness was reflected in the Dec. 1973 elections and she subsequently resigned. She was succeeded in June 1974 by Yitzhak Rabin.

Meles Zenawi (Ethiopia)

Introduction

Meles Zenawi headed Ethiopia's transitional government from 1991–95. He was then appointed prime minister, the most important executive position in the country. He had to cope with one of the world's weakest economies threatened by famine. His tenure witnessed a border war with Eritrea, which officially ended in 2000 but remains a source of contention. Relations with Sudan improved under Meles' guidance, but he remained troubled by separatist fighters in western Ethiopia. In late 2006 he launched a military offensive by Ethiopian forces to oust hostile Islamist militias that had taken control of much of neighbouring Somalia. Continuing insecurity prevented an early military withdrawal until late 2008 when, amid rising casualties and financial costs, Meles' government announced its decision to leave Somalia. He died while still in office in Aug. 2012.

Early Life

Meles Zenawi Asres was born in Adwa, in Ethiopia's Tigre region in 1955. He attended school in Adwa and Addis Ababa. In 1972 he began studying medicine at Addis Ababa University but left 2 years later to join the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) to fight against the Dergue military government of Lieut. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam. He served on the organization's central committee between 1979 and 1983 and sat on the executive council from 1983 until 1989. In 1989 he was elected chairman of the TPLF

and of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance formed that year between the TPLF and the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement.

Career Peak

Alongside his role as EPRDF chair, Meles was president of Ethiopia's transitional government, established after the overthrow of the Mengistu regime, from 1991 until 1995. During this period he oversaw the secession of Eritrea and the drafting of a new constitution which divided Ethiopia into ethnic regions. In 1995 the EPRDF-dominated elections were boycotted by the major opposition groups. In Aug. 1995 Meles was elected prime minister of the newly established Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, while Negasso Gidada took the largely ceremonial role of president. Meles was also voted chairman of the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) for 1995–96.

In 2000 the EPRDF again dominated parliamentary elections and Meles was confirmed as prime minister. Despite the liberalization of the media and a move away from the human rights abuses of the Mengistu years, there remained opposition to Meles' government, and in 2001 there were mass protests in the capital against police brutality and political and academic oppression. In May 2005 Meles won a third term of office in further elections that were bitterly contested. Following allegations of fraud, there were violent protests and elections were rerun in some constituencies in Aug. In Sept. the Election Board confirmed the final results giving the EPRDF and its affiliates a solid parliamentary majority. Meanwhile, however, opposition parties and demonstrators continued to contest the outcome, clashing in June with security forces in Addis Ababa where 36 people were killed. In Nov. at least 46 more protesters died during renewed violence. In May 2006 anti-Meles political parties and armed groups formed an opposition Alliance for Freedom and Democracy at a meeting in the Netherlands. In July 2007 Meles pardoned 38 opposition figures who had earlier been sentenced to life imprisonment on charges relating to the protests that followed the 2005 elections. In Jan. 2009 legislation was passed banning foreign agencies from work related to human rights or conflict resolution in Ethiopia in an apparent move to deter outside interference. The EPRDF won a further landslide victory in parliamentary elections in May 2010, handing Meles a fourth term as premier, but the poll was criticized by international observers and the results were again contested by the opposition.

On the economic front, Meles—formerly an advocate of Marxist-Leninism—adopted free market reforms that have generated considerable growth, although the country remains among the world's poorest. In 2002 an Economic Commission for Africa report highlighted excessive bureaucracy and the HIV/AIDS pandemic as major obstacles to sustained development.

In 1999 border fighting between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces escalated into a full-scale war, which cost 70,000 lives. A ceasefire was agreed in June 2000, with Ethiopia withdrawing its forces under UN supervision. A formal peace treaty was signed in Dec. 2000. Tensions remained, particularly concerning the control of the small border settlement of Badame. In May 2001 the countries agreed to abide by the decision of an international boundary commission. The commission awarded Badame to Eritrea, but Meles refused to accept the decision. Fears of a renewed conflict mounted in late 2005, after Eritrea expelled UN observers policing the militarized border region, and again in the autumn of 2006 as Eritrea moved troops into the buffer zone on the Ethiopian border in violation of the ceasefire. In Nov. 2007 Eritrea accepted a border demarcation proposal by an independent boundary commission but Ethiopia rejected it. In Jan. 2008 the UN Security Council extended the mandate of its peacekeeping mission on the border for a further 6 months (despite Eritrean opposition), but brought it to a close at the end of July. Relations deteriorated again in March–April 2011 as the Ethiopian government accused Eritrea of terrorist infiltration and then declared that it would support rebel forces aiming to overthrow Eritrea's President Afewerki.

Tensions with neighbouring Somalia took a new turn in Dec. 2006. Ethiopian troops launched an offensive in support of the weak, but internationally-recognized, transitional Somali administration (established in 2004) against Islamist militias that had seized control of the capital, Mogadishu, and much of the south of the country from clan warlords earlier in the year. Meles was determined not to allow an enemy Islamic state on Ethiopia's borders. The Islamist forces were initially defeated and dispersed by Jan. 2007, and nominal authority was restored to the transitional government. However, insecurity continued and in Nov. 2008, embroiled in a stalemate situation, the Ethiopian government announced that its troops would leave Somalia at the end of the year, raising the spectre of a renewed

takeover of the country by Islamist groups. The troop withdrawal was completed in Jan. 2009, although the government disclosed in the middle of the year that it was maintaining reconnaissance operations in Somalia.

In 2011 Ethiopia was again threatened by mass hunger as the worst drought in several decades led the United Nations to declare a famine across the Horn of Africa and to appeal in July for emergency aid.

For several weeks in 2012 Meles was not seen in public and speculation about his health increased. He died at the age of 57 on 20 Aug. after contracting an infection.

Melo de Menezes, Fradique Bandeira (São Tomé and Príncipe)

Introduction

First elected president in Sept. 2001 and re-elected in July 2006, Fradique de Menezes weathered numerous political storms. During his two terms tensions mounted over the discovery of large offshore oil reserves.

Early Life

Fradique Bandeira Melo de Menezes was born in Madalena on the island of São Tomé in 1942, the son of a Portuguese father and a São Toméan mother. He attended school in both São Tomé and Portugal, before studying education and psychology at the Free University of Brussels, Belgium. De Menezes then completed postgraduate studies in international trade in the USA. In 1967 he took up work at Marconi Radio in Lisbon, before working for various US companies in Brussels.

He returned to São Tomé and Príncipe following the country's independence from Portugal in July 1975 and taught at the National High School. In the late 1970s he worked at the ministry of agriculture, under the Marxist-inspired Liberation Movement of São Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP). De Menezes relocated to London in 1981, where he was director of São Tomé and Príncipe's Commercial Center. From 1983–86 he served as his country's ambassador to the European Community. When de Menezes returned to São Tomé in 1986 the MLSTP had begun to embrace economic and political reforms. He was appointed minister of foreign affairs but left politics to pursue business interests, establishing companies involved in shipping, agriculture (cocoa) and investment.

Following constitutional reform in 1990 and the country's first multi-party elections in Jan. 1991, de Menezes was elected to parliament. In the July 2001 presidential election, as the candidate of the centrist Independent Democratic Action (which had been founded in 1992), he ran against the former president, Manuel Pinto da Costa, and won in the first round with 56.3% of the vote. He was sworn in as president on 3 Sept. 2001.

Career Peak

Following his electoral success, de Menezes and his supporters set up a new party—the Force for Change Democratic Movement (MDFM). He promised to reverse the country's crippling economic crisis, but progress was slow. The discovery of substantial oil deposits offshore brought optimism but also raised the political temperature. While de Menezes was visiting Nigeria in July 2003 his government was toppled briefly in a military coup. International intervention led to an agreement with the coup leaders and he was reinstated on 23 July 2003. As political infighting continued, de Menezes dismissed the prime minister and appointed a new cabinet after a corruption scandal in Sept. 2004. There were further reshuffles in June 2005 and again in April 2006 following the resignation of the prime minister. Meanwhile, in Feb. 2005, São Tomé and Príncipe signed (jointly with Nigeria) its first offshore oil exploration and production-sharing agreement with international oil companies. In elections to the National Assembly in March 2006 the MDFM was returned as the largest party, and in July de Menezes was re-elected to the presidency as the MDFM representative.

Criticism of worsening economic conditions and the government's handling of dissent among police officers led de Menezes to replace several ministers in late 2007. In Feb. 2008 he appointed Patrice Trovoada of the

ADI as prime minister. However, Trovoada's coalition government collapsed after only 3 months, having lost a parliamentary vote of confidence, and de Menezes turned in June to the MLSTP-PSD leader Rafael Branco to form a new administration. In Feb. 2009 it was reported that the authorities had foiled an attempted coup plot against Menezes and that over 30 people had been arrested. At the National Assembly elections in Aug. 2010, the opposition ADI won the most seats and de Menezes again nominated Patrice Trovoada as the new prime minister.

After two terms in power, de Menezes was obliged to step down. He was succeeded in Sept. 2011 by former president Manuel Pinto da Costa.

Menderes, Adnan (Turkey)

Introduction

Adnan Menderes served as the prime minister from 1950–60 under the presidency of Celal Bayar. Like Bayar he initially favoured a state-directed economy, but came to endorse private enterprise.

Early Life

Menderes was born in 1899 in Aydin, southwest Turkey. The son of a wealthy landowner, he was educated at an American College in Izmir (then Smyrna). He went on to study at the Faculty of Law in Ankara. His political career began in 1930 when he was elected to parliament as a member of Atatürk's Republican People's Party (RPP). At this time the RPP, as the sole parliamentary party, had instigated a state-run economy, a policy which Menderes and others began to question. As a result he was expelled from the party in 1945, and along with Bayar, Fuad Köprülü and Refik Koraltan he helped to establish the Democrat Party, the first legal opposition to the RPP.

Career Peak

In the 1950 elections the new party won a landslide victory, Bayar was elected president and chose Menderes to be his prime minister. Whilst in power Menderes continued to adopt the pro-Western foreign policy stance of the RPP, but he was more sensitive to the needs of the rural and traditional elements within Turkish society, and sought closer links with neighbouring Muslim countries.

He dispensed with the planned economy that had been installed by the RPP, and supported the development of private enterprise. In order to boost manufacturing and commerce, the government imported foreign goods and technology. These purchases improved the living standards of the average Turk, but they resulted in economic instability. Despite these fiscal difficulties the Democrat Party was re-elected twice, and Menderes retained his popularity with the rural poor.

Growing criticism caused Menderes to become increasingly intolerant of his opponents. He censored the press, authorized the arrests of numerous reporters and was aid to have fixed a number of local elections. As a consequence, General Cemal Gürsel led a successful military *coup d'état* against the government in 1960. Menderes and many other leading figures within his party were arrested. He was later tried for violating the Turkish constitution and sentenced to death. Before his execution he attempted suicide, but failed. He was hanged on 17 Sept. 1961.

Menem, Carlos (Argentina)

Introduction

Carlos Raúl Menem was president of Argentina for two consecutive terms between 1989–99 representing the Peronist Partido Justicialista (Justicialist Party; PJ) of which he is still leader. During his presidency he implemented

hardline economic policies to counteract recession, accelerated privatization and promoted a free market economy.

Early Life

Menem was born on 2 July 1930 in Anillaco in the northwestern region of La Rioja. The son of Syrian immigrant parents he studied law at the Universidad de Córdoba. It was at this time that Menem became politically active, having met President Juan Perón on a school visit to Buenos Aires in 1950. After graduating in 1955 Menem returned to La Rioja to defend political prisoners of the military government of General Juan José Valle. The following year he was imprisoned for political activism. In 1957 Menem formed the Juventud Peronista (Peronist Youth) party in La Rioja. At this time Menem did legal work for the Confederación General del Trabajo (trade unions) in the same region.

In 1962 Menem was elected congressman for the Castro Barros department in his home region. This tenure was cut short by another military coup. In March 1973 he was elected governor of La Rioja. Three years later he was again arrested, this time by the military that had overthrown Isabelita Perón's civilian government, and remained in prison for nearly 5 years. In 1983 he was re-elected governor of La Rioja and again in 1987. During this time Menem gained a reputation for encouraging business with favourable taxes.

Career Peak

In 1988 Menem was chosen as the PJ's candidate for the 1989 presidential elections. Following his successful campaign, Menem was inaugurated as president 5 months early when departing president Raúl Alfonsín was forced to stand down. With Argentina suffering from a severe recession and four-figured inflation, supported by Domingo Cavallo, Menem adopted radical reforms including a reduction in state employment, union power and the welfare system in favour of private pension schemes, and full convertibility between the peso and the dollar. The national oil company YPF was privatized in 1993. Free market policies included joining Mercosur (Mercado Común del Sur; Southern Common Market) with Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay in 1991 (effective from 1995). The economy began to recover, but Menem came under criticism from his party who claimed he was departing from traditional Peronist principles. Towards the end of his first term, Menem amended the constitution to allow the president to stand for more than one term. He was re-elected in 1994 with 50% of votes.

Menem's second term also began with a recession. In 1995 unemployment rose to 18%. By 1997 the economy was in better shape and unemployment was down by 3%, but Menem's government was facing accusations of corruption. In 1997 the PJ was defeated in municipal elections by the centrist Unión Cívica Radical (Radical Civic Union; UCR) and the left-wing Frepaso. In 1998 Menem was invited to London, the first Argentine leader to visit the UK since the Falklands War soured relations (1982).

Menem sought to stand again for election, arguing he had technically only served one term after 1994. His request was rejected by parliament. The PJ candidate in the 1999 elections, Eduardo Duhalde was beaten by the UCR's Fernando de la Rúa. Duhalde openly blamed Menem for his defeat claiming corruption charges against Menem's administration had affected his chances. In 2001 Menem was preparing for the 2003 presidential elections, but on 7 June he was placed under house arrest in Chile. A month later he was indicted over illegal arms sales. Along with three of his former cabinet ministers, he was accused of profiting from the illegal sales of weapons to Croatia and Ecuador when Argentina was bound under an international embargo. However, the arrest warrants were cancelled in 2004 and Menem returned to Argentina.

Menem stood again for the presidency in the elections of April 2003. He emerged from the first round as the leading candidate with 24% and was scheduled to meet Nestor Kirchner in a run-off in May 2003. However, opposition to Menem rallied behind Kirchner and, facing a landslide defeat, Menem withdrew from the race.

Later Life

In June 2013 Menem was sentenced to 7 years in prison following a renewed investigation into sales of weapons to Croatia and Ecuador between 1991 and 1995.

Menzies, Robert (Australia)

Introduction

Robert Gordon Menzies served as Australian Prime Minister between 1939–41—as leader of the United Australia Party—and between 1949–66—as leader of the Liberal Party. He was the longest continually-serving prime minister in Australian history and oversaw a period of Australian growth and economic boom. A fervent anti-Communist, he improved relations with the USA while maintaining the importance of Australia's role in the British Commonwealth.

Early Life

Menzies was born on 20 Dec. 1894 in Jeparit, Victoria to James Menzies, a store owner and later member of the Victorian parliament, and Kate Sampson. A gifted student, he studied law at the University of Melbourne before qualifying as a barrister in 1918. Two years later he married Pattie Maie Leckie, with whom he had three children. In 1929 he was made a King's Counsel, a year after he had entered the Upper House of the Victoria parliament as a Nationalist. By 1932 he was Victoria's deputy prime minister, railways minister and attorney general and 2 years later he entered federal government as the United Australia Party (UAP) member for Kooyong, Victoria. A UAP-Country Party coalition was in power under the UAP's Joe Lyons, with Menzies serving as attorney general and deputy leader of the party. He unsuccessfully challenged Lyons for the leadership in 1938, the year he earned the name 'Pig Iron Bob' for his part in selling pig iron to Japan, which many believed was being used to build armaments. When Lyons died suddenly the following year Menzies was chosen as his successor as both party leader and prime minister, taking office on 26 April. In Sept. 1939 Menzies announced Australia's entry into the Second World War, a decision taken without recourse to cabinet. It reflected his strong attachment to Britain as well as his sometimes autocratic style of leadership. A growing swell of dissatisfaction with his leadership from within his own party led to Menzies' resignation in 1941. In 1944 he became one of the co-founders of the Liberal party and, although he lost the election of 1946, he came to power once again 3 years later and would go on to win the elections of 1951, 1954, 1955, 1958, 1961 and 1963.

Career Peak

By 1949 Australia was entering upon a boom period as wool exports and mineral reserves boosted the economy. Menzies oversaw the introduction of protectionist policies for the farming and manufacturing sectors. He also embarked upon a crusade against communism, beginning in 1950 when he sent troops to support the Malayan government against communist rebels. In the same year he supplied troops to aid South Korea against the communist North and in 1951 he attempted to pass a bill outlawing the Australian Communist Party, an action which was deemed unconstitutional by the High Court. He pushed hard for Australian intervention in the Vietnam War and assisted Malaysia in the conflict with communist Indonesia during the 1960s. Domestically, Menzies' tenure came to be seen by many as a golden era for Australia. Throughout the 1950s there was virtually full employment, industry and foreign investment grew, incomes increased and a policy supporting immigration boosted population. In addition, there was an overhaul of the health and education systems, notably the higher education sector and support for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). As national capital, Canberra was greatly developed. Though Menzies had to adopt stringent financial measures to control growing inflation in the early 1960s, he was still able to claim two further election victories against a divided Labor opposition. Menzies' allegiance to Britain (his support during the 1956 Suez Crisis was controversial) was balanced by a close relationship with the United States and the non-communist countries of Southeast Asia. He signed up to the Australia, New Zealand and United States (ANZUS) Security Alliance in 1951 and to the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) 3 years later.

Later Life

Knighted in 1963 and succeeding Winston Churchill in the honorary role of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1965, Menzies resigned from political life

in 1966. He was replaced as Liberal leader and prime minister on 26 Jan. by Harold Holt. Menzies went on to be chancellor of the University of Melbourne and in 1976 became the first to be awarded the honour of Knight of the Order of Australia. He died in Melbourne on 16 May 1978.

Meri, Lennart (Estonia)

Introduction

An ethnographer, writer and documentary film-maker, Lennart Meri was one of the leaders of Estonia's independence movement and the country's first post-Soviet president, serving from 1992 until 2001.

Early Life

Meri was born in Tallinn on 29 March 1929, the son of a diplomat. His father's postings took the family abroad and Lennart was educated in Berlin and Paris. At the time of the Soviet invasion in 1940 the Meris were in Tallinn. They were deported to Siberia and his father was sent to a labour camp while the 12-year-old Lennart undertook manual work to support the family. In 1946 they were reunited in Estonia and in 1953 Lennart graduated in history from Tartu University. Banned from working as an historian, he became a playwright for the theatre and radio.

While exiled in Siberia, Meri had developed a strong interest in Finno-Ugric language and ethnography, a theme he regularly explored in subsequent writings and documentary films (many of which were banned in the Soviet Union). In 1988 he founded the non-governmental Estonian Institute to promote cultural contact with the West. Its representations in Copenhagen, Stockholm, London, Bonn, Paris and Helsinki acted as *de facto* Estonian embassies until independence.

He was also an outspoken environmental campaigner, leading protests against Soviet plans to mine phosphate in Estonia. These protests evolved into a broader anti-Soviet movement that initially suffered violent suppression but helped achieve Estonian independence in 1991. Meri was initially appointed of the new nation and on 6 Oct. 1992 became its president.

Career Peak

Although the 1992 constitution granted the president limited powers, Meri was nonetheless highly influential in navigating the country through a volatile period of post-Soviet politics. He steered Estonia towards greater integration with Western Europe and sought membership of NATO. He also used his diplomatic skills to defuse tensions with Moscow over laws affecting the citizenship rights of Estonia's Russian community. In 1994 he negotiated the withdrawal of Russia's remaining troops from Estonian territory. He was elected president for a second term in 1996, serving until 2001 when he handed power to his long-time rival, Arnold Rüütel.

Later Life

Meri died on 14 March 2006 after a long period of failing health.

Mesić, Stipe (Croatia)

Introduction

Stipe Mesić became Croatian president in Feb. 2000, having previously been prime minister and the Croatian representative for the revolving Yugoslav presidency. Occupying the political centre, he advocated Croatian integration into NATO and the EU and received international support for his co-operation with the UN War Crimes Tribunal. He was re-elected in 2005.

Early Life

Mesić was born on 24 Dec. 1934 in Orahovica. He graduated in law from Zagreb University in 1961, where he was active in student politics. He entered

the Croatian parliament in the early 1970s but served a year-long prison sentence for his role in the anti-Tito Croatian Spring of 1971.

As a member of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), he served as Croatia's prime minister from 30 May–24 Aug. 1990 and was president of the collective Yugoslav presidency from July–Oct. 1991, resigning a few weeks before Croatia declared independence. From 1992–94 he was speaker of the Croatian parliament, but resigned his office and his membership of the HDZ in 1994. Unhappy with HDZ policy, especially concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina, he founded the Independent Croatian Democrats (HND). Three years later he moved to the Croatian People's Party (HNS), becoming its vice-president.

Following Franco Tudjman's death in Dec. 1999, he stood for the Croatian presidency and his progressive agenda and personal charisma proved popular with voters. In a run-off Mesić defeated Dražen Budiša of the Croatian Social Liberal Party and was sworn into office on 18 Feb. 2000.

Career Peak

Mesić resigned his party membership on assuming office. He promised to prune back presidential powers in a bid to avert the autocratic style epitomized by Tudjman, and vowed to clamp down on corruption. He also pressed the government to institute the necessary reforms to achieve membership of NATO and the EU. To this end he encouraged co-operation with the UN War Crimes Tribunal, although the decision to allow extradition met with considerable hostility, particularly from war veterans. In addition, Mesić made known his willingness to testify for the prosecution at the trial of Slobodan Milošević.

Mesić made headway in improving relations with neighbouring countries. After meetings with his then Serbian counterpart, Vojislav Koštunica, the two leaders agreed to improve diplomatic ties between their countries following the downgrading of relations during the 1999 Kosovo conflict. Mesić indicated that ethnic Serbs displaced during the 1990s would be accepted back into Croatia. Agreements to improve relations with Bosnia and Slovenia were also signed.

In Jan. 2005 Mesić was re-elected as president with 66% of the vote in a run-off poll against Jadranka Kosor of the HDZ. Following the inconclusive parliamentary elections in Nov. 2007, Mesić asked the incumbent prime minister Ivo Sanader to form a new coalition government which was subsequently approved by parliament in Jan. 2008.

Having served two successive terms, Mesić was not eligible to stand for re-election in Dec. 2009. He was succeeded by Ivo Josipović of the Social Democratic Party of Croatia on 18 Feb. 2010.

Michel, James (Seychelles)

Introduction

Former Vice-President James Michel came to power in April 2004, handpicked by then President France-Albert René to succeed to the presidency on René's retirement after 27 years in power. Michel had been vice-president since 1996 and had previously held a variety of ministerial positions. He was elected to the post in July 2006 and re-elected in May 2011 and Dec. 2015.

Early Life

James Alix Michel was born in the Seychelles on 18 Aug. 1944. He was a teacher before deciding to pursue a career in politics. His profile rose in the mid-1970s because of his involvement in the country's booming tourism industry.

In 1976, just before independence, he joined René's left-of-centre Seychelles People's United Party (SPUP)—renamed the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) in 1978. He was a member of the SPUP's central committee when the party staged a bloodless coup in 1977, overthrowing the country's first president, James Mancham, and replacing him with René. There followed a 16-year one-party socialist dictatorship, during which time Michel held a series of important ruling party and ministerial positions. For several periods he was in charge of the highly-regulated Seychellois economy. On René's retirement in April 2004, Michel was sworn in as president.

Career Peak

Despite his allegiance to René, Michel was under pressure to speed up the country's democratization process, which had begun with multi-party elections in 1993. He also pledged to introduce more open political dialogue, particularly over matters concerning the Seychellois economy, and to develop the private sector. In Jan. 2005 Michel granted the Emirates Group the rights to operate non-stop flights three times a week between the Seychelles and Dubai in order to enhance the tourism industry and to increase trade for the business and cargo communities.

In March 2005 Michel detailed his foreign policy, underpinned by a desire to cement stronger regional ties in the Indian Ocean region—particularly in light of the Seychelles' exit in July 2004 from the Southern African Development Community, ostensibly because of high membership fees. He particularly focused on strengthening relations with Mauritius, working alongside the then Mauritian prime minister, Paul Bérenger, to strengthen the Indian Ocean Commission. Michel has favoured increased promotion of the Seychelles as a high-quality and safe tourist resort, and sought to make the country a leader in environmental issues.

In June 2005 Michel announced plans for a new national pension fund and a scheme to set-up a savings account of R1,000 for every Seychellois child, both of which came into effect in Jan. 2006.

After a close electoral contest in July 2006 he retained the presidency, defeating his Seychelles National Party rival. In the May 2007 parliamentary elections the SPPF retained its majority. Michel brought the poll forward after opposition MPs had boycotted parliamentary proceedings over moves to ban political parties (and also religious groups) from owning radio stations.

Confronted by a balance of payments and public debt crisis in 2008, Michel launched an economic reform programme with the help of the International Monetary Fund, which approved a 2-year US\$26 m. support arrangement in Nov. As part of the programme, the government floated the currency and lifted foreign exchange controls. In Jan. 2009 he appealed for debt relief from international creditors as the Seychelles economy was hit by reduced tourist traffic and the effects of the global financial crisis. In Nov. that year the World Bank agreed a US\$9 m. loan to help restore economic stability.

In response to the expansion of Somali piracy in the Indian Ocean, the Seychelles government entered into agreements with European Union countries and the USA to enhance naval and air patrol and surveillance to deter attacks on international shipping.

In Aug. 2010 the Seychelles ratified the statute establishing the International Criminal Court.

Michel was re-elected for a further term in May 2011 and his party won all 31 seats in parliamentary polling in Sept.–Oct. following an opposition boycott. He was re-elected again in Dec. 2015, with opposition figures claiming multiple irregularities in the polling.

Michel resigned in Sept. 2016 after his People's Party lost its parliamentary majority at elections held that same month. Incumbent vice-president Danny Faure was sworn in as the new president in Oct. 2016.

Mikati, Najib (Lebanon)

Introduction

Najib Mikati was sworn into office on 13 June 2011 having formed a government at the invitation of President Michel Suleiman following the collapse of Saad al-Hariri's government on 12 Jan. 2011. Mikati's centrist politics appealed to the country's major political groups, despite some critics labelling him pro-Syrian after he secured Hizbollah backing. However, his government resigned amid further political tensions in March 2013. He continued in office in a caretaker capacity until Feb. 2014 when Tammam Salam succeeded him as prime minister.

Early Life

Najib Azmi Mikati was born in Tripoli, Lebanon, on 24 Nov. 1955 to a Sunni family. He was educated at the American University of Beirut, earning a bachelor's degree and then an MBA. He also studied at the INSEAD business school in France and at Harvard University in the USA. While in education, Mikati co-founded a construction company, M1 Group, with his brother. In

1982, at the height of the civil war, the brothers saw the potential of the emerging telecommunications market and set up Investcom.

In 1998 Mikati was made minister of public works and transport, retaining both portfolios until 2004. He was elected to the National Assembly in 2000 but decided not to run against Rafiq al-Hariri for the premiership. Following al-Hariri's death in Feb. 2005, Mikati was invited to form a government. His assurances that he would remove the country's security commanders and oversee new elections won him the support of the anti-Syrian opposition. He subsequently stood down as prime minister after the June 2005 polls.

In June 2006 Investcom was sold to South Africa's MTN Group, although Mikati's M1 Group remained the second largest shareholder of MTN. Mikati was re-elected to parliament in June 2009 but did not join the government of Saad al-Hariri. After al-Hariri's coalition collapsed in Jan. 2011, Mikati was appointed prime minister designate after 68 parliamentarians approved his Hizbollah-backed nomination.

Career Peak

Mikati was sworn into office in June 2011 and, after months of negotiating, his government (with a pro-Hizbollah majority) won parliamentary approval in July. He was faced with forging a workable policy towards the disputed Special Tribunal for Lebanon investigating the 2005 assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri.

At the same time the conflict in neighbouring Syria and the subsequent refugee crisis threatened to destabilize Lebanon's fragile political and sectarian balance, particularly following the assassination in Beirut in Oct. 2012 of the head of police intelligence, a critic of Syria's President Assad.

Amid rising tensions and disagreements over the organization of parliamentary elections (scheduled in June 2013 but postponed until Nov. 2014), Mikati resigned on 22 March 2013. However, he remained in office until a new government was formed. During the transitional period there was a resurgence of sectarian violence in Lebanon fuelled by the continuing crisis in Syria. Car-bomb attacks on two mosques in Tripoli in Aug. killed about 50 people and two suicide bombings by suspected Sunni Muslims on the Iranian embassy compound in southern Beirut killed over 20 more. In Dec. a former Sunni Lebanese finance minister and critic of the Syrian regime was assassinated in central Beirut.

Mikati finally left office on 15 Feb. 2014 when a new government was formed by Tammam Salam.

Milanović, Zoran (Croatia)

Introduction

Zoran Milanović became prime minister in Dec. 2011. A lawyer and diplomat, he promised sweeping reforms after leading a centre-left bloc to a landslide victory in parliamentary elections. However, the economy remained in recession and in Jan. 2014 European Union finance ministers launched proceedings to force his government to reduce the budget deficit to within EU permitted limits.

Early Life

Zoran Milanović was born on 30 Oct. 1966 in Zagreb and graduated in law from Zagreb University in 1991. He trained in the city's commercial court for 2 years before joining independent Croatia's ministry of foreign affairs. He then served on a UN mission to the disputed former Soviet territory of Nagorno-Karabakh before moving to Brussels in 1996 to serve on Croatia's mission to the EU and NATO.

Returning to Croatia in 1999, which was then under a right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) government, Milanović joined the opposition Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP). Following the party's victory (in coalition with the Croatian Social Liberal Party and four minor parties) at the Jan. 2000 election, Milanović worked in various diplomatic roles. After the ruling coalition lost at elections in Nov. 2003, he joined the SDP's executive in 2004.

When Ivica Račan resigned as SDP leader in early 2007, Milanović ran for the party leadership and unexpectedly won, defeating more experienced candidates. The closely fought parliamentary elections of Nov. 2007

eventually resulted in an HDZ-led coalition, with Milanović leading the opposition. He was re-elected president of the SDP at the party's convention in May 2008.

Milanović led a centre-left opposition bloc known as Kukuriku to victory in the legislative elections of 4 Dec. 2011, securing 81 seats in the 151-member parliament and ousting the HDZ, which had presided over a series of corruption scandals, a stagnating economy and soaring unemployment.

Career Peak

Milanović pursued minor reforms and public spending cuts to deter downgrading by international credit rating agencies ahead of Croatia's accession to the EU, which took place on 1 July 2013. The previous April, Croatia had elected its first members of the European Parliament in anticipation of entry. Milanović's SDP won five of the 12 seats while the HDZ secured six. Croatia's first months of EU membership were marred by a dispute over an extradition and arrest law that critics claimed could shield suspected war criminals. Under threat of financial sanctions, the government agreed in Oct. to amend the legislation. By the end of his term as prime minister, Milanović succeeded in lifting the economy out of recession.

The majority of voters in a constitutional referendum in Dec. 2013 supported the imposition of a ban on same-sex marriages.

Milanović's term as prime minister ended in Jan. 2016 following the elections of Nov. 2015 which were won by the HDZ. He was replaced by Tihomir Orešković, who led a HDZ–Most unity government.

Miliband, Ed (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Ed Miliband became leader of the Labour Party on 25 Sept. 2010 in the aftermath of its May 2010 general election defeat. He identified himself as part of a 'new generation' and distanced himself from specific policies of the previous administration, notably the decision to go to war in Iraq. Criticising the Conservative government's package of 25% cuts in public services over 4 years as damaging to growth, he promised to formulate a deficit reduction plan while protecting the 'squeezed middle' of society as well as the poorest sections. Miliband resigned as Labour Party leader following the party's defeat at the 2015 general election.

Early Life

Edward Samuel Miliband was born on 24 Dec. 1969 in London, the son of academics. He grew up in London and was educated at Haverstock School, Camden, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he was active in student politics. In 1990 he graduated with a degree in politics, philosophy and economics, then gained an MSc in economics from the London School of Economics. After working briefly in television, he became researcher to Harriet Harman, shadow chief secretary to the Treasury, in 1993. In 1994 he was appointed speech writer and researcher to Gordon Brown, who was then shadow chancellor of the exchequer.

After Labour came to power in 1997 under Tony Blair, Miliband became Brown's special adviser at the Treasury. He worked closely with Brown throughout the first 8 years of the Labour administration and helped devise the Scottish Labour Party's strategy in advance of the 1999 Scottish Parliament elections. In 2002 he went to the USA to teach at Harvard University, returning in Jan. 2004 when he was appointed chairman of the Treasury's council of economic advisers, formulating long-term strategy. He entered parliament as the Labour MP for Doncaster North in 2005 and served as minister for the third sector (dealing with charities and volunteer work) in 2006–07. In June 2007, when Brown replaced Blair as Labour leader and prime minister, Miliband was appointed minister for the cabinet office, coordinating policy between departments.

From 2008–10 he served as secretary of state for energy and climate change, overseeing the passage of the Climate Change Act in 2008, which set annual targets for reductions in carbon emissions until 2050. In Dec. 2009 he

earned praise from environmental campaigners for salvaging an agreement, albeit limited, at the Copenhagen climate change summit. Against the background of the global economic crisis, he devised Labour's 2010 general election manifesto which promised to halve the public spending deficit over 4 years, introduce a bank levy and tighten controls on the financial conduct of MPs.

Following Labour's election defeat and Brown's resignation, Miliband stood as a candidate for the party leadership. Initially seen as an outside chance in the five-horse race, he long trailed his brother and former foreign secretary David Miliband but steadily gained support over the 5 month campaign. He argued that the party should acknowledge that it had lost touch with voters and needed to renew itself. In particular he distanced himself from the decision to go to war in Iraq, opening up a clear divide with his brother. He also signalled that he might soften the timetable on deficit reduction. On 25 Sept. 2010 he won the leadership by a narrow margin of 1.3% over David.

Career Peak

Miliband began his leadership by promising to consider when forming policy the well-being of middle earners, whom he called 'the squeezed middle'. He criticized the government's programme of deep funding cuts and advocated practical measures to support jobs and growth. With his brother David having chosen not to serve in the shadow cabinet, Miliband appointed Alan Johnson as shadow chancellor, Yvette Cooper as shadow foreign secretary and Ed Balls as shadow home secretary. However, following Johnson's resignation for personal reasons in 2011, Balls became shadow chancellor, Cooper shadow home secretary and Douglas Alexander shadow foreign secretary.

After mixed results in the 2011 local elections, Labour's 2012 campaign proved more successful. The Labour gains across England, Scotland and Wales strengthened Miliband's leadership. When in Jan. 2013 David Cameron proposed holding a referendum on EU membership after the next general election Miliband opposed the idea, insisting the UK's national interest lies in remaining in the EU and that holding a referendum in 2017 would result in 'four years of uncertainty' for British businesses.

Ahead of the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, he also argued that Scotland and the rest of the UK would be best served by Scotland remaining within the Union. At the vote in Sept. that year, 55% of participants rejected Scottish independence. Although Labour made further gains in local elections and retained its seats in several parliamentary by-elections in both 2013 and 2014, Miliband continued to register low personal approval and credibility ratings among voters.

Despite polls predicting a close race which would require the formation of another coalition government or a minority government, the Labour Party took only 30.4% of the vote and 232 seats in a landslide win for the Conservatives. A number of high-ranking members, including Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls, unexpectedly lost their seats, and incumbent Prime Minister David Cameron was able to form a majority government. Miliband resigned as leader of the Labour Party on 8 May 2015.

Miller, Leszek (Poland)

Introduction

Leszek Miller, leader of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), became Polish prime minister in Oct. 2001. A former communist, he remoulded himself as a social democrat. His key aim was to prepare Poland for entry into the EU and in late-2002 Poland was included in enlargement plans for 2004. Facing a deteriorating economy, he bid to cut the national debt by increases in taxation and spending cuts. His coalition lost its parliamentary majority in March 2003 when he dismissed the Peasant Party following a disagreement over government policy. Amid plummeting opinion poll ratings, Miller resigned on 2 May 2004, the day after EU accession.

Early Life

Miller was born on 3 July 1946 in Żyrardów. He graduated in political science and took a job in a linen factory, where he became involved in trade union politics. He joined the Polish United Workers' Party in 1969 and was

secretary of its political bureau in the last years of the communist era. He played an instrumental role in organizing the Round Table talks of the late 1980s that paved the way for democratic elections.

He was a founding member of Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland in 1991, chairing the party from the end of 1997 until he became leader of the newly-constituted SLD in Dec. 1999. After the collapse of the communist regime he sat in the Sejm as the deputy for Łódź. He was minister of labour and social policy between 1993–96 and briefly held the post of minister-chief of the office of the council of ministers before taking up the interior portfolio in 1997.

With Poland's economy in crisis, Miller led the SLD to victory at the elections of Oct. 2001, forming a coalition with the Polish Peasants' Party and the Labour Union.

Career Peak

On being sworn in Miller pledged to stabilize the national economy and agreed to a budget cut of US\$2 bn. He froze ministers' and central government workers' salaries. In June 2002 relations with Germany were strained when Miller refused to open a debate on re-admitting Germans expelled from Poland after the Second World War.

In Oct. 2002 Poland was one of ten countries included in plans for EU enlargement scheduled for 2004. Membership was a stated aim of Miller's coalition, although the Peasant Party was troubled by proposed EU curbs on agricultural subsidies. Membership won 77% backing in a national referendum in June 2003. In March 2003 Miller dismissed the Peasant Party from the coalition after it failed to back his plans for a tax levy to improve the country's road infrastructure. The government, comprising only the SLD and the Labour Union, lost its parliamentary majority but remained in power.

Miller stepped down as SLD leader in Feb. 2004. With opinion polls in early 2004 indicating less than 10% support for his party and the defection of 27 MPs from the SLD, he announced his intention to resign after Poland's accession to the EU. A string of corruption and fraud allegations severely damaged the government's popularity, including a media law bribery scandal—Miller was exonerated for this in April 2004. He resigned on 2 May.

Mills, John Atta (Ghana)

Introduction

John Atta Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) became president after winning a tight run-off in Dec. 2008. The peaceful transfer of power was considered a triumph for Ghana's relatively stable democracy. Atta Mills had previously served as deputy to President Jerry Rawlings from 1997–2001.

Early Life

John Evans Atta Mills was born on 21 July 1944 in Tarkwa in the country's Western Region. In 1967 he graduated in Law from the University of Ghana, Legon, before continuing his studies at London's School of Oriental and African Studies and as a Fulbright scholar at the Stanford Law School in the USA. Having gained his PhD in 1971, he returned to Ghana to teach at the Law faculty of his alma mater. He continued to work in academia, publishing twelve scholarly titles.

In 1988 President Rawlings, leader of the NDC, appointed Atta Mills as commissioner of the internal revenue service. Nine years later Rawlings invited him to be his vice-president. In 2000 Rawlings, who had served the maximum two terms of office, nominated Atta Mills as the NDC candidate in the election of that year. Atta Mills lost the presidential race, and again in 2004, to John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

Nonetheless, his party re-selected him, ahead of three rivals, to fight a third election in Dec. 2008. With Kufuor constitutionally banned from seeking another term, the NPP's Nana Akufo-Addo emerged from the first round of elections in the lead, though just short of the overall majority required to claim victory. The second round was dogged by claims of electoral malpractice on both sides but, after a re-run of voting in one rural constituency, Atta Mills received 50.2% of the vote, beating his opponent by less than 0.5%.

Career Peak

Atta Mills presented himself as a social democrat and vowed to work towards national unity. He attempted to distance himself from earlier pronouncements that as president he would consult with Rawlings, a highly divisive figure in Ghanaian politics. In July 2009 Ghana secured a US\$600m. 3-year loan from the International Monetary Fund, and a further economic boost was anticipated from offshore oil production which began in Dec. 2010. In July 2011 Atta Mills was again selected as the NDC candidate for presidential elections scheduled to take place in late 2012, but in July 2012 he died suddenly. He had been suffering from throat cancer although his illness was never officially confirmed.

Milošević, Slobodan (Serbia)

Introduction

Slobodan Milošević was President of the Serbian League of Communists (1986–88), President of Serbia (1988–97) and President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1997–2000). He capitalized on the rapid growth in Serbian nationalism during the late 1980s, advocating policies that hastened the collapse of the Yugoslav state during the early 1990s. His ambition to create an enlarged Serbian state led to conflict throughout the Balkans and provoked military action by NATO. After attempting to keep a grasp on power following rigged elections, he resigned in late 2000.

Early Life

Milošević was born on 29 Aug. 1941 in Požarevac, near Belgrade. His parents both committed suicide, his father in 1962 and his mother in 1972. Milošević joined the Yugoslavian Communist Party (later the League of Communists of Yugoslavia/LCY) around 1959. He studied law at the University of Belgrade, where he met his wife-to-be and closest political ally, Mirjana Marković. Following university he went into business, rising to be director of a state gas company from 1973–78 and then president of Serbia's most important bank.

In 1983 he joined the Central Committee of the Communist League of Serbia (CLS), and a year later he succeeded his mentor, Ivan Stambolić, as head of the Belgrade communist organization. In 1986 he again replaced Stambolić, this time as President of the CLS. Until 1987 Milošević was not regarded as particularly radical. Instead he stood for moderate liberalizing of the economy and stronger federal government. However in 1987 he made a visit to Kosovo where he witnessed mass demonstrations by the province's Serbian minority complaining about conditions under the Albanian majority and protesting at heavy-handed treatment by Albanian police. Milošević told the crowd that 'no-one will ever beat you again'. and from then on became a nationalist hero for many Serbs.

Career Peak

As leader of the CLS, Milošević established new party regimes in Kosovo and Vojvodina and packed them with his supporters. The following year, after Stambolić had been ousted by Serbia's parliament, he became President of Serbia. In 1990 he pushed through a new constitution that strengthened Serbia's power at the expense of the other provinces. But demands for increased autonomy forced Milošević to agree to multi-party elections and he thus established the Socialist Party of Serbia. Non-communist governments came to power in Croatia and Slovenia in Dec. 1990 but in Serbia Milošević's Socialist Party was returned in a landslide. Two years later he was re-selected to the Serbian presidency.

In 1991 Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia became independent states. Bosnia and Herzegovina voted to go the same way in 1992. Milošević responded by backing Serbian forces within Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina who were opposed to secession. The UN imposed crippling trade sanctions on Yugoslavia but the war continued for another 3 years and included 'ethnic cleansing'. in which the regions' Muslims were systematically forced into exile. However, by 1995 Croatian forces had gained the upper hand and Milošević was forced to agree to the Dayton Accord, a peace treaty brokered in the USA.

Milošević's popularity waned throughout 1996 and 1997 as the economy went into freefall and Serbs came to terms with the failure of these military campaigns. Widespread protests followed municipal elections in late 1996 when Milošević refused to accept defeat. He did eventually concede but retained his hold on power by repression and the abuse of the media. Constitutionally unable to serve a third term as Serbian President, he persuaded the federal parliament to appoint him as President of Yugoslavia on 23 July 1997.

Having imposed Serbian direct rule on Kosovo in 1988, relations between the Serbs and Kosovan Albanians worsened. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) had long undertaken guerrilla campaigns but in 1999 the conflict descended into open warfare between the KLA and Serb forces. Again, Milošević pursued a policy of 'ethnic cleansing' in which some 850,000 Albanians were forced to flee to neighbouring countries. NATO responded with an aerial bombardment that lasted for 78 days while Milošević took the opportunity to re-mould himself as the Serbian hero struggling against the combined forces of the oppressor West. However, he was ultimately forced to agree to the withdrawal of his Serbian troops from Kosovo.

Serbia reeled from the combined effects of another military defeat, and the damage inflicted upon the national infrastructure by air strikes and continuing sanctions. In 1999 the UN International Court of Justice indicted Milošević on war crimes relating to events in Kosovo. He was the first head of state to face such charges since the end of World War II. Public discontent mounted and when presidential elections were held in Sept. 2000 Milošević was defeated by the nationalist democrat Vojislav Koštunica. Milošević at first claimed the result had been so close that a run-off was required but faced with popular protests in Belgrade and international pressure he resigned the presidency, to be replaced by Koštunica on 7 Oct. 2000.

Later Life

Despite Koštunica's initial reluctance to co-operate with the UN war crimes tribunal based in The Hague, Milošević was arrested by Yugoslav forces in April 2001 and handed over to the tribunal. He was charged with 60 counts of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity during the break-up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Milošević refused to acknowledge the legality of the court, choosing to conduct his own defence. He said he had 'no intention of appointing a counsel for a non-existent court'. His trial started in Feb. 2002 and in July 2002 there were re-newed concerns for his health. Milošević defended himself at the trial which saw 295 witnesses testify in the 466 days of hearings. He was found dead in his cell on 11 March 2006 having suffered a heart attack. The funeral was held in Milošević's home town of Požarevac, after tens of thousands of supporters attended a farewell ceremony in Belgrade.

Mintoff, Dom (Malta)

Introduction

Dom Mintoff was twice prime minister, between 1955–58 and 1971–84. With Malta having been granted independence in 1964, Mintoff pursued a strong nationalist agenda during his second tenure. He positioned Malta within the non-aligned movement and developed close relations with leading Communist states and Libya.

Early Life

Dominic Mintoff was born in Cospicua on 6 Aug. 1916. He graduated from the University of Malta in 1937 before taking up a Rhodes scholarship and graduating with a master's in engineering from the University of Oxford.

Mintoff was general secretary of the Malta Labour Party (MLP) from 1936–37 and in 1945 he was elected to the Council of Government and Executive Council. Standing for the MLP, he entered parliament in 1947 and was named deputy prime minister and minister for works and reconstruction until his resignation 2 years later.

Career Peak

In 1949 Mintoff became leader of the MLP and was prime minister between 1955–58. He gave up the premiership in order to head the Maltese

Liberation Movement, which played a leading role in establishing Malta as an independent state within the Commonwealth in 1964. From 1962 Mintoff was leader of the opposition but became prime minister again in June 1971.

Among Mintoff's first acts during his second tenure was to seek talks with the UK about the dismantling of its Maltese military base. Difficult negotiations carried on into 1972 and a 7-year defence agreement was agreed with Britain and NATO on condition that the base would not be utilized against Arab nations. The Maltese government was given an annual payment for use of the base and also won several sympathetically-termed loans. Elsewhere, Mintoff signed a treaty of amicability and economic co-operation with China and forged close relations with Soviet bloc countries as well as Algeria and Libya, who had offered significant economic support to Mintoff during his dispute with the British. By 1973 he had positioned Malta in the non-aligned movement.

In 1974 Mintoff declared Malta a republic, though remaining within the Commonwealth, and set about vigorously asserting sovereignty. Large numbers of British businessmen and journalists were expelled and in 1979 the UK and NATO left their military positions on the island after Malta refused to renew the defence agreement. Mintoff then formally framed Malta's policy of non-aligned neutrality.

During the 1980s relations with Libya took a knock over a disagreement about the positioning of the continental shelf boundary. At the national elections of 1981 Mintoff's Labour Party lost the popular vote but retained a working majority. In Sept. 1983 he took responsibility for the interior ministry but resigned from government in Dec. 1984. He was employed as a consultant to the new government of Prime Minister Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici.

Later Life

During the 1990s the Labour party began moderating many of its policies to secure middle class appeal. On taking power in 1996 under Alfred Sant it introduced taxes and utility charges that proved unpopular with sections of the party including Mintoff, who had retained his parliamentary seat. In 1998 the government, which had a wafer-thin majority, proposed the controversial sale of harbour facilities to a US interest. Mintoff voted against the motion thus bringing down the government. He died at the age of 96 on 20 Aug. 2012.

Mitterrand, François (France)

Introduction

François Maurice Marie Mitterrand was French president for 14 years between 1981–95, representing the Parti Socialiste (Socialist party; PS), although he soon came to adopt more centrist policies. During his two terms he reduced France's traditional polarized political spectrum and advanced France's European stance, including orchestrating the Maastricht treaty.

Early Life

Mitterrand was born on 26 Oct. 1916 in Jarnac, Southwest France. The fifth of eight children, his father was a stationmaster before inheriting a vinegar distillery. From 1934 he was educated at the Paris University, gaining a degree in law and political science. At this time Mitterrand was involved in right-wing politics, a popular student trend at the time, and took part in marches and demonstrations. Conscripted into the army he was wounded and captured in 1940. Eighteen months later, and after two failed attempts, Mitterrand escaped and returned to France. He allied himself to the Vichy government and worked for Pétain in the intelligence service, being decorated with Vichy's Francisque medal in 1942. By 1943, however, he was working for the Resistance and met de Gaulle in Algiers where he was again decorated, this time for opposing Vichy.

After the War he was a member of de Gaulle's provisional government. In 1946 he was elected deputy for Nièvre representing the centrist party, the Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance. In 1947 he became a cabinet minister and served under ten successive governments over 11 years.

He was secretary of state for information from 1948–49, minister for overseas territories between 1950–51, minister of state from 1952–53, minister of the interior between 1954–55 and minister for justice from 1955–57.

In Oct. 1958, when he was out of office, Mitterrand survived an assassination attempt when shots were fired at his car. It was suggested that the attack had been staged by Mitterrand himself for publicity purposes, although this was strongly refuted. In 1959 he was elected mayor of Château-Chinon (Nièvre). His first attempt at the presidency was in 1965 representing the *Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste* (Democratic and Socialist Left; FGDS). His second attempt was during the May 1968 student-worker uprising. When it appeared strikes and protests would force out de Gaulle's government, Mitterrand offered to set up a provisional government to lead negotiations between strikers and the state. The offer was premature and de Gaulle's government survived the crisis. After de Gaulle resigned in 1969, Mitterrand did not stand for election.

Career Peak

Mitterrand was elected secretary of the PS in 1971. At this time the party was disorganized, extreme and unelectable. Mitterrand set about consolidating the differing factions and forming the PS into an electable party. Reorganization and co-operation with the *Parti Communiste Français* (Communist Party; PCF) made the PS the largest opposition party. In the general elections of 1974 Mitterrand gained 49.2% of the vote. In May 1981 Mitterrand defeated the president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, gaining 51.7% of the vote and ending the Gaullist's dominance of the Fifth Republic. He dissolved the assembly and in the subsequent elections secured a majority for the left, allowing him to introduce radical reforms. He nationalized many financial institutions, including 36 banks, and some industries, increased the *smic* (minimum wage), paid out more in welfare benefits and imposed a wealth tax. The working week was reduced to 39 h, and retirement to 60. He also abolished the death penalty. The state's grip on radio and television was loosened.

But a year into his presidency, inflation had risen to 14%, unemployment was rising, as was the trade deficit. It took a devaluation of the franc to bring the economy back into line. Mitterrand moved away from left wing policies to pursue more conservative aims and in 1984 the PCF dissolved their alliance with the PS in protest. But the PCF's influence had waned and Mitterrand no longer needed their co-operation. In 1986 the PCF vote had fallen to 10%.

In 1986 the PS lost its majority in the Assembly and Mitterrand was forced to accept Jacques Chirac as a right-wing prime minister. In the presidential elections of 1988, Chirac, representing *Rassemblement pour la République* (Rally for the Republic; RPR), stood against Mitterrand. Mitterrand was elected with an 8% majority. Chirac was succeeded by the socialist Michel Rocard and then by Edith Cresson. The first female prime minister in France, Cresson's short term in office was unsuccessful. Ineffectual compared with Rocard, Cresson was also carelessly outspoken and Mitterrand was forced to replace her with the finance minister Pierre Bérégovoy. Rising unemployment coupled with party scandals deprived the PS of its Assembly majority and Mitterrand was forced into another *cohabitation* with a right wing prime minister, Edouard Balladur.

Mitterrand favoured a united Europe. He had a strong alliance with Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor and much of his term was spent promoting European integration. A lasting image was Mitterrand and Kohl holding hands at the 1984 memorial service for victims of both World Wars. In 1986 Mitterrand and Margaret Thatcher announced plans for the Channel tunnel. In 1987 he signed the Single European Act, and was instrumental in negotiating the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The treaty prepared the way for a single European currency and the free movement of people and trade.

Among the grand cultural projects sponsored by Mitterrand were the Bastille Opera House, the Louvre pyramid, La Villette science complex and L'Arche at La Défence.

Towards the end of his period in office, there were revelations about Mitterrand's activities in the Vichy government. In 1994 it was revealed Mitterrand had housed a mistress and daughter at the Elysée at the taxpayers expense. The following year when he was 78, Mitterrand retired at the end of his second term. Scandals associated with the PSF coupled with over 4 m. unemployed led to a crushing defeat for the party in the 1995 elections. Jacques Chirac representing the RPR was elected president.

Mitterrand died from prostate cancer on 8 Jan. 1996.

Mkapa, Benjamin (Tanzania)

Introduction

Benjamin William Mkapa became president of Tanzania in 1995 and won re-election in 2000. He instituted large-scale free market and anti-corruption reforms which were welcomed by the international community and led to an increase in foreign aid and investment. The on-going question of Zanzibar's secession from Tanzania continued to attract attention throughout his presidency, as did the national AIDS epidemic.

Early Life

Mkapa was born on 12 Nov. 1938 in Ndanda, Masai in what was then Tanganyika. He graduated in English from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda in 1962 before beginning work as a district administrator in Dodoma and Dar es Salaam. The following year he took a post with the foreign service and went on to take a master's degree at New York's Columbia University.

He joined the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and in 1966 became editor of the party newspaper. He went on to work on several other press titles before becoming President Nyerere's press secretary in 1974. Two years later he was named high commissioner to Nigeria and in 1977 he entered parliament and became minister for foreign affairs, a post he held until 1980 and again between 1984 and 1990. From 1980 until 1983 he was minister of information and culture and then became high commissioner to Canada and then ambassador to the US. From 1990 until 1992 he was minister of information and broadcasting, before taking over the science, technology and higher education portfolio until 1995.

He was elected to the national assembly in 1985 as the representative for Nanyumbu, Masai and in 1995 he was chosen as the presidential candidate for Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the party formed by Julius Nyerere. Mkapa contested the election of Oct. 1995, the country's first multi-party elections, with the blessing of Nyerere. However, the poll was blighted by claims of inefficiency and corruption. Several areas, including Dar es Salaam, were ordered to re-schedule voting, which was then boycotted by all opposition parties. Mkapa was victorious with 61.8% of the vote.

Career Peak

The dubious legitimacy of Mkapa's victory led to concern among Western nations upon whose aid and investment Tanzania relied. However, Mkapa continued the free market economic reforms begun by his predecessor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, and won support from the IMF and World Bank. In 1997 he established a commission to investigate domestic corruption. 1,500 civil servants were dismissed within a few months. In 2000 Mkapa, who remained personally untainted by corruption charges levelled against his party, won re-election with increased support.

The question of Zanzibar's secession came increasingly under focus during his second term. There were widespread allegations of corruption in Zanzibar's 2000 elections, which saw the re-election of Sheikh Abeid Karume, who has received international condemnation for the brutality of his regime. However, Mkapa positioned himself against any move for more independent parliaments for Zanzibar and the mainland.

The exploitation of Tanzania's rich mineral reserves was key to Mkapa's long-term economic plans. Several large new gold mining operations were opened or commissioned during his tenure and Tanzania is now Africa's third largest gold producer. In Nov. 2001 Mkapa and his counterparts in Uganda and Kenya founded a regional parliament and court of justice based in Arusha to focus on issues including immigration and trade. In early 2001 Tanzania received over 100,000 refugees fleeing fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In his first months in office Mkapa oversaw the final stages of repatriation of 500,000 refugees from Rwanda and Burundi who had entered Tanzania in late-1994/early-1995.

Mkapa worked with the US to find the 1998 bombers of the US embassy in Dar es Salaam, which was linked to Osama bin Laden and killed 260. In 2001 Mkapa appealed to pharmaceutical companies to support him in the fight against AIDS. Tanzania is estimated to have 3 m. sufferers, with treatment costing US\$1 bn. per year. In Aug. 2002 he attracted criticism from opposition parties and the World Bank for commissioning a presidential

jet costing US\$20 m. Despite his personal reputation remaining intact, the government is dogged by allegations of corruption under his rule.

Benjamin Mkapa retired on 21 Dec. 2005, aged 67. He was succeeded by former foreign minister and ruling CCM candidate Jakaya Kikwete.

Mobutu Sese Seko (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Introduction

Mobutu Sese Seko ruled the country he named Zaïre for 32 years. His ruthless autocratic style involved, amongst other things, bribing or executing political opponents, building a gigantic pink marble palace for himself in the heart of the jungle, and siphoning off an estimated £300 m. per year of his nation's mineral wealth to add to his personal fortune. His three decades in power were catastrophic for the country which had been considered one of the most promising post-colonial African states with huge reserves of copper and cobalt as well as gold, bauxite, diamonds and zinc.

Mobutu began his rule with the endorsement of the West after proclaiming his anti-Communist credentials. By the time his regime had crumbled, his country had become one of the poorest in the world, with a national debt conservatively estimated at US\$8 bn.—a figure that corresponds to one estimate of Mobutu's personal fortune.

Early Life

He was born Joseph Désiré Mobutu on 14 Oct. 1930. The son of a Roman Catholic mission cook he was educated at a number of local Catholic schools in what was then called the Belgian Congo. He was expelled at school aged 20 for throwing ink at his teacher. As a punitive measure he was drafted into the army, but his slight physique meant that he spent his 7 years there as a military clerk. He also worked as a journalist and became editor of the weekly publication *Actualités Africaines*. Having earned a reputation there he was transferred to Brussels for further studies.

During this time he became involved in politics, joining Patrice Lumumba's *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC), and eventually ascending, courtesy of Lumumba's patronage, to the rank of chief of staff. With characteristic acumen Mobutu seized the opportunity to turn this position of power to his advantage, amassing a considerable following within the armed forces. Mobutu resolved the parliamentary deadlock caused by the conflict between President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba by suspending all political institutions. He effectively took charge of the country and began to turn against his former patron—Lumumba's life ended violently in captivity. However, Mobutu was to endure another conflict between the new prime minister, Moïse Tshombe, and President Kasavubu, before leading the *coup d'état* that was to secure total control of the country for himself. He consolidated his position in 1966 by publicly hanging four of his political rivals.

Career Peak

Once installed in power he broke off all diplomatic ties with the USSR, encouraged US investment and was successful in requesting the Israelis to turn his personal military force into highly trained commandos. Despite growing rich on Western investment, Mobutu favoured what he termed 'a return to African authenticity'. He bought a prodigious quantity of leopard-skin hats from a Parisian furrier, and announced that he was henceforth to be known as Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga, which translates as 'the all powerful warrior who by endurance and determination will go from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake'. Mobutu's major achievement in power was to bind together, through a combination of guile, bribery and brute force, the many disparate elements within his nation. The state was composed of over 200 warring tribes, and it is to Mobutu's credit that civil war was avoided until it spilled over the borders from Rwanda in 1994.

Mobutu's regime was not without its opponents. He dealt ruthlessly with a series of insurgencies in the 1970s, but it finally began to collapse after ethnic conflicts between the Hutu and the Tutsi inhabitants within the region initiated some of the worst incidents of genocide in modern history. Mobutu allowed fleeing Hutu refugees to enter Zaïre and gave them control of refugee

camps and arms. This provoked the formation of a rebel faction made up of Tutsi fighters and groups opposed to Mobutu's rule.

In Oct. 1996 the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre, under the command of Laurent-Désiré Kabila launched an offensive whilst Mobutu was out of the country undergoing surgery for prostate cancer. His absence was to prove a decisive factor in his deposition. On 15 May the following year the dictator was offered the choice of surrendering power or being deposed by force. He fled, initially to Gbadolite, his 'jungle Versailles' and later to Morocco having been refused asylum in Togo and France. To mark his succession to power, Kabila renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Later Life

Mobutu died in exile of cancer a few months later. He left a country in ruins, and a vast estate which included chateaux in Belgium and France and a Spanish palace. A French journalist whilst observing Mobutu in his heyday, cruising down the Congo in a dilapidated steamer and pausing only to lavish trinkets on bewildered villagers, was reminded of the trader Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's classic novel *The Heart of Darkness*, 'His intelligence was perfectly lucid, but his soul was mad'.

Mogae, Festus (Botswana)

Introduction

Mogae succeeded Sir Ketumile Masire as president in 1998 and served for the maximum period allowed by the constitution before stepping down in 2008. Mogae remains popular and well-respected in Botswana and abroad. His high-profile campaigning against the spread of HIV/AIDS is frequently contrasted with the attitude of contemporary South African President Thabo Mbeki, who has questioned the exclusivity of HIV as the cause of AIDS. Mogae also stands out for his criticism of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, with whom few leaders in Southern Africa have broken ranks.

Early Life

Gontebanye Mogae was born at Serowe, Central District, on 21 Aug. 1939. He was educated at Moeng College in Botswana. Mogae then studied economics at Northwest London Polytechnic and the University of Oxford and in 1970 gained an MA in development economics from the University of Sussex. In 1968 he returned to Botswana and joined the ministry of finance and development planning, becoming permanent secretary in 1975. During this period he was also involved with the IMF, African Development Bank and World Bank.

As permanent secretary to the president, he served on various parastatal boards, including the Housing Corporation and the Meat Commission. Mogae also held the position of director and later chairman of the Botswana Development Corporation and director of the De Beers Botswana Mining Company (diamond mining company). From 1978–80 he was executive director of the IMF for Anglophone Africa in Washington, D.C.

Mogae returned to Botswana in 1980 as governor of the Bank of Botswana before taking up the combined roles of permanent secretary to the president, secretary to the cabinet and supervisor of elections, which he held for most of the following decade. In 1989 he took up his first political position in government as minister of finance and development planning. President Ketumile Masire appointed him vice-president in 1992. From 1992–96 he held the chair of the Council of Ministers of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In 1994 he was elected to the National Assembly for Palapye constituency. In Nov. 1997 Masire announced his retirement and designated Mogae as his successor until elections scheduled for 1999. Pressure had been mounting within the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) for a change of leadership.

Career Peak

Mogae was sworn in as president of Botswana on 1 April 1998. His cabinet included as vice-president Lieut.-Gen. (ret'd) Ian Khama, the son of Botswana's first president, Sir Seretse Khama. Ian Khama, who had made

his career in the army, was seen as a reluctant politician, included in the government to boost support for Mogae's BDP.

Foreign policy took a prominent position in Mogae's agenda from the start. Botswana troops were sent to Lesotho in Sept. 1998 as part of a SADC mission to restore order in the kingdom. Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe have guaranteed to protect democratic government in Lesotho and were responding to an uprising after the 1998 elections. Botswana troops finally left in May 1999. A dispute over water resources with Namibia in 1998 caused tense relations which further deteriorated in 1999 over Botswana's acceptance of refugees from the Caprivi Strip in northeast Namibia. The Caprivi separatist movement was suppressed by Namibian armed forces in Oct. 1998. Mogae encouraged voluntary repatriation but most were granted asylum.

Elections to the National Assembly on 16 Oct. 1999 were the eighth democratic and free elections in Botswana and the first to use written ballot papers. Mogae was criticized in the run-up for having to resort to a state of emergency to sort out a crisis in voter registration. The BDP won a landslide victory, securing 33 of the 40 elected seats and affirming Mogae's mandate as president. The opposition had fragmented, giving the ruling party a seat in the capital for the first time in 15 years. Mogae was inaugurated on 20 Oct. 1999. In Dec. he announced that his deputy, Khama, was to take a year-long sabbatical. No explanation was given.

The dominant theme of Mogae's presidency was the threat of HIV/AIDS. By 2002 Botswana had a prevalence rate of 36%, the highest in the world, according to the UN. This had a dramatic effect on life expectancy, which fell from 65 years in 1993 to 36 in 2003. Mogae led a vocal campaign for openness, discussion and education—uncommon among Southern African leaders—devoting approximately 13% of government expenditure in 2000 to the AIDS programme. While his efforts as president were praised by AIDS organizations, human rights groups have criticized what they see as potential infringements of privacy. His suggestion that AIDS represents a 'threat of annihilation' of the Botswana nation also received a mixed response.

Mogae's government, like that of his predecessor, was praised by international organizations for its transparency and moderation. In 2002 Transparency International, a Berlin-based anti-corruption organization of which Mogae was a member, placed Botswana as the 24th least corrupt nation in the world and the leader in transparency in Africa. However, in May 2001 the news director at Botswana's national television station resigned having accused the government of trying to control the content of broadcasting, after banning a documentary on the case of Mariette Bosch, a white South African executed in Botswana for murder.

Botswana's economy is heavily dependent on the export of diamonds. Mogae promoted Botswana diamonds as 'diamonds for development', as opposed to 'conflict diamonds' used to finance civil wars in many parts of Africa. He also encouraged economic diversification, especially in manufacturing, tourism and services, and encouraged increased productivity in the agricultural sector (which accounts for less than 5% of GDP but involves 80% of the population).

Mogae viewed the land seizures in Zimbabwe more critically than most African leaders. In 2001 he stated that: 'the region cannot afford to have its second largest economy [Zimbabwe] sinking because of this situation. While we support land reform in Zimbabwe completely, we feel the implementation of the strategy is incorrect.' However, in 2002 he admitted that there was little he could do to arrest developments in Botswana's much more populous neighbour.

Social unrest within Botswana during Mogae's presidency focused on the rights of 'Bushmen', or San. These indigenous inhabitants of the Kalahari Desert have resisted efforts to evict them from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and took the government to court in March 2002. Although as few as 60 Bushmen still live in the area, the international media followed the progress of their legal battle closely and some accused the government of being motivated by diamond mining potential. In Dec. 2006 the Bushmen won their case for their ancestral rights.

The BDP won another landslide victory in parliamentary elections on 30 Oct. 2004, taking 44 of the 57 seats in the National Assembly. Limited by the constitution to 10 years in office, Mogae stepped down as president on 31 March 2008.

Later Life

Mogae's dignified retirement as president according to the terms of the constitution was widely lauded by the international community. The smooth

succession to vice-president Lieut.-Gen. (ret'd) Ian Khama stood in stark contrast to the political turbulence engulfing fellow African nations including Zimbabwe and Kenya. After leaving office Mogae announced plans for the formation of a pan-African Elder's Council in collaboration with prominent public figures including Archbishop Desmond Tutu and former president of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano. The Council proposes to work with regional leaders on the issue of HIV/AIDS.

Mohamud, Hassan Sheikh (Somalia)

Introduction

President from Sept. 2012 to Feb. 2017, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was a relative newcomer to frontline politics but experienced in building civil institutions.

Early Life

Born on 29 Nov. 1955 in Jalalaqsi, Mohamud graduated in technology from Somalia National University in Mogadishu in 1981. From 1981–84 he worked as a secondary school teacher and from 1984–86 as a lecturer in teacher training. In 1988 he completed a master's degree in technical education at Bhopal University in India. Returning to Somalia the same year, he worked with UNESCO on a project to expand technical and vocational training.

Following the toppling of the Siyad Barre regime, Mohamud became an education officer for UNICEF in 1993, focusing on rebuilding educational services. From 1995–97 he worked with civic organizations to establish communication between rival factions and was subsequently key to negotiating the dismantling of the 'Green Line' that had divided Mogadishu since the outbreak of fighting in the early 1990s.

Mohamud co-founded the Somali Institute of Management and Administration Development in 1999 and worked for the Center for Research and Development from 2001, where he oversaw the establishment of the Somalia Civil Society Forum, an umbrella group of activists and organizations engaged in rebuilding civil society. From 2007 he was consultant to a number of international and local NGOs, working on projects to rebuild Somali society.

From 2007–09, in the period of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), he was a consultant at the ministry of planning and international co-operation, overseeing aid management. In 2011 he co-founded the Peace and Development Party (PDP) and was elected its leader in April that year. In Sept. 2012 a presidential vote was held by parliament, with Mohamud achieving a surprise victory. He defeated the former president, Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, in a run-off, claiming 190 votes to 79.

Career Peak

Mohamud took office on 10 Sept. 2012 facing major challenges—a continuing insurgency, clan rivalries, widespread poverty and piracy. He pledged to tackle corruption and combat the radical Islamic al-Shabab militia, and also promised to develop education and provide jobs for young people. In Jan. 2013 the USA recognized the Mogadishu government for the first time in over 20 years and the EU agreed to negotiate a support agreement. In Sept. 2013 international donors pledged US\$2.4 bn. in reconstruction aid.

In April 2013 the UN Security Council approved a partial lifting of its arms embargo, allowing the Somali government to strengthen its security forces against continuing al-Shabab attacks, particularly in Mogadishu. However, in Sept. that year al-Shabab claimed responsibility for a major assault on a shopping mall in neighbouring Kenya in apparent retaliation for Kenyan military assistance to the Somali government. Clan-based divisions and militant attacks on public targets, such as hotels, and on pro-government forces have since continued, reinforcing Somalia's unenviable reputation as a failed state.

In Dec. 2013 the prime minister, Abdi Farah Shirdon, who had been sworn in Oct. 2012, lost a confidence vote in parliament following disagreements with the president. He was replaced by Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed, who announced his cabinet in Jan. 2014. However, he was similarly ousted by parliament in Dec. that year following a political power struggle with

Mohamud, who replaced him with Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, a former premier. In July 2015 Mohamud ruled out the possibility of holding national elections in 2016 because of the lack of security stemming from the al-Shabab insurgency. On 8 Feb. 2017, however, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed was sworn in as Somalia's president after being elected by the parliament.

Moi, Daniel T. Arap (Kenya)

Introduction

Daniel Toroitich arap Moi was president of Kenya from 1978–2002, succeeding Kenya's first post-independence president Jomo Kenyatta. He also took Kenyatta's role of leader of the Kenyan African National Union (KANU). His 24-year long rule ended when he was constitutionally obliged to stand down at the end of 2002. His chosen successor Uhuru Kenyatta was decisively defeated by Mwai Kibaki, the candidate for the opposition coalition National Rainbow Coalition (Narc). Moi's rule was tarnished by accusations of endemic corruption and economic difficulty, which eventually ended KANU's 39 years in power.

Early Life

Moi was born on 2 Sept. 1924 in Kuieng'wo village in the Baringo District of the North Rift Valley Province. His father died when Moi was young and he was raised by his mother. Educated in Missionary schools Moi joined the Teacher Training College in Kapsabet on leaving school in 1945. Between 1945 and 1955 Moi held numerous teaching posts before being promoted to assistant principal at Tambach Teacher Training College in Kabamet from 1950 to 1955.

In 1955 Moi went into politics. The same year he was elected member of the Legislative Council for the Rift Valley. In 1960, together with a number of other political activists, he established the Kenyan African Democratic Union (KADU) in opposition to Kenyatta's KANU to represent the minority tribes. Moi remained chairman of KADU until it was dissolved and merged with the KANU in 1963 following the general election.

Kenya gained independence from Britain in 1963 and Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta became president the following year. In the period between 1961 and 1966 Moi held the following portfolios: education minister (1961), minister for local government (1962–64) and minister for home affairs (1964–67). In 1967 he became vice president of Kenya and went on to succeed Kenyatta when he died in 1978. Pledging to rule in Kenyatta's footsteps, Moi acquired the nickname Nyayo (footsteps).

Career Peak

In 1981 Moi was elected chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). On the 1 Aug. 1982 a coup attempt by junior officers of the Kenya Air Force was quashed by the Kenyan Army. Moi's response to the coup was to turn Kenya into a de jure one-party state. In reaction the World Bank and the IMF froze aid to Kenya. In 1986 Moi's book *Kenyan African Nationalism* attempted to explain his Nyayo philosophy.

Throughout the early 1990s Kenyan civil society as well as the diplomatic community joined forces in pressuring Moi to opt for multiparty elections. In 1992 the first freely contested multiparty elections were held. Moi was re-elected president thanks to the opposition being split along tribal lines. Following the 1992 election there were accusations of vote rigging. Similar allegations accompanied his re-election in Dec. 1997. Opposition parties demanded changes to the electoral rules, freedom of speech and more civil liberties.

Moi's refusal to pass anti-corruption measures led to a freeze in international aid in 1997. In 2001 the IMF refused a US\$40 m. loan to Kenya. The country was also accused of obstructing independent anti-corruption commissions. Kenya's economy declined towards the end of Moi's rule and the country entered its worst recession since independence as foreign investment was withdrawn.

There was much speculation as to whether Moi would stand down at the end of 2002, as constitutionally obliged, and in 2000 ministers began a campaign to extend his term. However, in July 2002 Moi named Uhuru

Kenyatta, son of his predecessor, as his chosen successor. The announcement divided KANU and led some to openly criticize his choice. In response, Moi sacked his vice president George Saitoti, who defected to the opposition along with around 30 party members, including a junior minister, Peter Odoyo. As tension increased towards the Dec. 2002 elections, six ministers resigned. Much of the opposition united to form the National Rainbow Coalition with the former vice president Mwai Kibaki as its candidate. In a landslide win, Kibaki beat Kenyatta by 62.2% votes to 31.3% thus ending nearly 40 years of KANU rule. After 23 years as president Moi finally stood down.

Later Life

Since leaving office, Moi has concentrated on the administration of Kabarak University, which he chartered in 2002. He has also set up the Moi Foundation as a negotiating body for regional peace initiatives. In Sept. 2003 Moi stood down as chairman of KANU after a 24-year tenure. He surprised the party by failing to name Kenyatta, one of the vice-chairmen, as his successor.

Moisiu, Alfred (Albania)

Introduction

Alfred Moisiu was chosen as Albania's president by parliament in June 2002. A non-partisan, military professional, he won praise for his ability to find common ground among rival factions across the political spectrum. He was pro-Western and a prominent advocate of Albanian accession to NATO. Moisiu left office in July 2007.

Early Life

Moisiu was born on 1 Dec. 1929 in Shkodër, northern Albania. He went to school in Tirana and from 1943–45 was active in the war against the occupying German forces. In 1946 he began studying at the Military Engineering School in St Petersburg, Russia, leaving 2 years later and becoming a platoon commander at the Joint Officers' School in Tirana. Between 1949–51 he was an instructor at the Skanderbeg Military Academy in Tirana.

From 1952–58 he went to the Academy of Military Engineering in Moscow. Returning to Albania, he worked in the engineering directory of the ministry of defence until 1966. He then assumed command of the Pontoon Brigade at Kavajë until 1971, meanwhile undertaking a year-long course for senior general staff at Tirana's Defence Academy.

In 1971 he was appointed head of the office of engineering and fortifications at the ministry of defence. He held that post until 1981 (acquiring a PhD in military sciences in 1979) and then became vice minister of defence until Oct. 1982. After heading an engineering company in Burrel in the northwest of the country, he retired from 1985 until 1991 when he was appointed defence minister in Vilson Ahmeti's interim 'government of experts' that ruled from the collapse of communism until the democratic elections held in March 1992.

Moisiu worked as a defence adviser from 1992–94 before becoming vice minister of defence again in the government of Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi. In this role he advised on the reconstruction of the armed services and supported preparations for NATO membership. In 1994 he also became chairman of the Albanian Atlantic Association (a post he held until his election as state president). He left government office in 1997 following the electoral victory of the Socialist Party, but maintained a prominent role in international conferences concerned with regional defence and peace issues.

When Rexhep Meidani left the state presidency in 2002, Moisiu emerged as an acceptable candidate to both the Socialist and Democratic parties. Following a poll in the national assembly (in which he received 97 votes, with 19 against and 14 abstentions), he was sworn into office on 24 July 2002.

Career Peak

On assuming office, Moisiu pledged to keep his distance from party political issues. Nevertheless, he was critical of the then Socialist Prime Minister Fatos Nano for the slow pace of political reform. Following the parliamentary

elections in July 2005, he asked Democratic Party leader Sali Berisha to form a government, which was sworn in on 11 Sept. 2005. Moisiu's foreign policy aims included working towards lasting peace in the Balkans and Albania's accession to NATO.

Moisiu's 5-year term ended in July 2007. Parliament elected Bamir Topi his successor after four rounds of voting.

Monti, Mario (Italy)

Introduction

Mario Monti became prime minister on 12 Nov. 2011 when he was invited by President Giorgio Napolitano to form a government following Silvio Berlusconi's resignation.

Early Life

Mario Monti was born in Varese, Lombardy on 19 March 1943. He graduated in economics from Bocconi University, Milan in 1965 before undertaking post-graduate studies at Yale University in the USA. He took up a teaching post at the University of Turin in 1970 and returned to Bocconi University in 1985, serving as rector from 1989–94. In 1994 he was appointed university president, a post he has held ever since.

That same year Monti was appointed to the Jacques Santer-led European Commission by the first Silvio Berlusconi cabinet. He worked in the office for the internal market and services and was nominated for a second term by Massimo D'Alema in 1999, with Monti becoming commissioner for competition. In this role he blocked a proposed merger between General Electric and Honeywell, battled Germany's powerful regional banks and launched an anti-trust case against Microsoft. He also oversaw reforms to the EU's anti-trust regulations and worked with the US authorities to create the International Competition Network. However, in 2004 the new Berlusconi administration refused to support Monti's seat on the Commission for a third term.

In 2005, shortly after leaving the Commission, Monti co-founded Bruegel, a Brussels-based think tank focusing on economic issues. He became a member of the Bilderberg Group and an international adviser to Goldman Sachs and Coca-Cola. From 2007–08 he was appointed by President Nicolas Sarkozy to the French government's Attali Commission, set up to stimulate economic growth.

Monti was key to brokering an electricity-sharing agreement between France and Spain in 2008 and in 2010 he was asked by the president of the EU Commission, Manuel Barroso, to draft proposals for the future of the EU's single market. The completed report made 12 recommendations intended to bring new stimulus to the European economy and was adopted by the EU on 13 April 2011.

On 9 Nov. 2011 Monti was made 'senator for life' by Napolitano against the backdrop of uncertainty over the future of the Berlusconi government. The appointment raised speculation that Napolitano was grooming Monti to succeed Berlusconi. Monti was formally asked to form a new government on 12 Nov. 2011 and was sworn into office 4 days later. His initial cabinet consisted mainly of former bankers and technocrats, with Monti himself heading the ministry of economy and finance.

Career Peak

On 4 Dec. 2011 Monti introduced a €30 bn. austerity package aimed at cutting spending, raising taxes and reforming pensions. Although challenged by the unions and the opposition, the package was approved by the lower house of parliament on 16 Dec. 2011 by 495 to 88 votes and by the upper house on 22 Dec. 2011 by 257 to 41 votes. The reforms were welcomed by the EU.

On 20 Jan. 2012 Monti's government introduced a second wave of measures to boost growth, including legislation to end restrictive practices and open up competition in various sectors of the economy. Within 4 months of taking office, Monti had overseen a fall in Italy's 10-year borrowing rate from 7% to 6%.

Monti fulfilled his promise to step down following the passage of the 2013 budget in Dec. 2012. He contested the Feb. 2013 election as the leader of the Civic Choice coalition, but failed to retain his position as prime minister.

Morgan, Rhodri (Wales, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Rhodri Morgan became first minister of the Welsh national assembly in Feb. 2000 and is leader of the Welsh group of Labour MP's. He was controversially defeated in elections for the premiership in the previous year by Alun Michael, widely recognized as the favoured candidate of Tony Blair.

Early Life

Morgan was born on 29 Sept. 1939 in Cardiff. He studied at St John's College, Oxford and Harvard before undertaking a career in the civil service. He sat on South Glamorgan County Council between 1974 and 1980 and headed the European Community office in Wales from 1980 until 1987, when he became the member of parliament for Cardiff West. In his parliamentary career he was opposition front bench spokesman on energy (1988–92) and Welsh affairs (1992–97). He married Julie Morgan (a fellow Labour MP) with whom he had three children.

In the Feb. 1999 election for the first minister of the assembly, Morgan was regarded as the 'grass roots' favourite. His chief opponent was Alun Michael, seen by Downing Street as the safer pair of hands. A tempestuous campaign followed in which Morgan accused the Michael camp of dirty tricks. Michael was elected to the post on the back of block union votes.

Michael was threatened with a vote of no confidence from Plaid Cymru members in Feb. 2000 and shortly before the vote was due he resigned. Morgan was appointed his successor in a caretaker capacity on 9 Feb. On 15 Feb. he was elected permanent successor unchallenged.

Career Peak

Among Morgan's first actions was a declaration of support for Tony Blair's leadership. In a cabinet reshuffle Morgan appointed himself secretary of economic development and entered a dialogue with Corus (formerly British Steel), one of the principle employers in the region, now engaged in major restructuring. In Nov. 2001 he urged that the National Assembly for Wales be given the more 'friendly' name of the Welsh Assembly Government.

In Feb. 2002 Morgan appointed Andrew Davies as his successor as economic development minister. In April 2002 Morgan identified NHS improvement as a major priority and later the same month he made an outspoken attack on the structural flaws of the Welsh rugby union. At assembly elections in May 2003, Labour won half of the seats, allowing the party to govern without the support of the Liberal Democrats. Morgan sought to encourage investment in the Welsh economy and tourist industry through a number of grants schemes, particularly focusing on aiding the recovery of the mining industry. In 2005 his government lost a vote on the introduction of 'top-up' university fees, subsequently agreeing to a deal that exempted Welsh students.

In the run-up to assembly elections in 2007 Morgan's failure to openly condemn the Iraq war was seized upon by the press and opposition parties. Labour suffered heavy losses in the elections and Morgan was controversially forced to enter a coalition with Plaid Cymru, the nationalist party, in July 2007. The deal was criticized by some Labour assembly members who fear that Plaid Cymru will push for a referendum on independence.

Morgan was hospitalized with heart problems later in July, with the deputy first minister Ieuan Wyn Jones standing in for him. On 8 Dec. 2009 Morgan resigned owing to his health problems. Carwyn Jones succeeded him. On 17 May 2017 he collapsed and died while cycling.

Mori, Emanuel (Micronesia)

Introduction

Emanuel 'Manny' Mori became the seventh president of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) on 11 May 2007. He was the second president to come

from the state of Chuuk. The president, who is both head of state and of the unicameral government, serves for a 4-year term.

Early Life

Mori was born on 25 Dec. 1948 in Sapore on the island of Fefan, Chuuk. He spent his childhood in Fefan and attended the Xavier High School in Chuuk's capital, Weno. From 1969–73 he studied at the University of Guam, graduating in business management. He joined Citycorp Credit as a management intern, becoming assistant manager at the Saipan branch.

Mori returned to the FSM in 1976 and joined the Trust Territory social security office. In 1979 he became responsible for Chuuk's tax and revenue office. From 1981–83 he served as comptroller of the Development Bank of the FSM before being appointed its president and CEO. He held the post until Feb. 1997, when the bank's board ousted him in an attempt to encourage reform. He was subsequently named vice-president.

Mori's political career began in July 1999 when he was elected a Chuuk congressman. He held several positions including chair of the ways and means committee and vice-chair of the committee on judiciary and government operation. He also sat on the committees for resource and development and for health and social affairs. In 2003 he was elected senator-at-large for Chuuk for a 4-year term. In this capacity Mori served on the task force for national government restructuring and on the planning council of the College of Micronesia. He also served as a CEO of the Chuuk Public Utility Corporation and on the board of the Pacific Island Development Bank.

In May 2007 parliament selected Mori to replace Joseph Urusemal as president. Alik L. Alik was chosen as vice-president.

Career Peak

Under a Compact of Free Association Micronesia is guaranteed US aid until 2023. Chief among Mori's challenges has been to prepare for economic self-reliance and to reinvigorate the stagnant private sector. He was re-elected for a second term in May 2011.

Peter M. Christian was elected to succeed Mori as president on 11 May 2015.

Moro, Aldo (Italy)

Introduction

Aldo Moro was a lawyer and politician who served as Italy's prime minister on five occasions between 1963 and 1976. In office he was influential in uniting several of the disparate strands of Italian centre-left politics. However, his kidnapping and execution by left-wing extremists has left more of an impact on the national consciousness than his policies.

Early Life

Moro was active in Italian politics as a student at the University of Bari. He took a law degree and went on to become a professor of law. He also became president of the Federation of Italian University Catholics, and of the Movement of Catholic Graduates. Both these organizations had a political agenda. In 1946 Moro was elected to the Constituent Assembly and assisted in the drafting of a new Italian constitution. He also became a member of the legislature for the Christian Democrat Party. He was later appointed to a series of cabinet posts including under secretary of foreign affairs (Dec. 1947–May 1948). From 1953–55 he was the head of the Christian Democrats in the chamber of deputies. He was then made minister of justice, a post he held for 2 years before becoming the minister of public instruction. In 1959 he took on the role of party secretary at a time of conflict between the centrist and conservative wings of the Christian Democrats. Moro was centrist in inclination and formed an alliance with the Socialist party in order to oust the conservative Fernando Tambroni from power in July 1960.

Career Peak

Invited to form a government in Dec. 1963, Moro included several Socialists in his cabinet, thus granting the left-wing an influence it had not secured for over a decade. He resigned following the defeat of a budget proposal in July

the following year, but almost immediately returned to power with a barely altered cabinet. Moro strengthened Italy's links with NATO and the UN, but efforts at introducing a reformist programme at home were hampered by spiralling inflation. This failure angered his Socialist coalition partners who brought about Moro's defeat in Jan. 1966. He returned to power a month later but stepped down after the 1968 elections. He went on to be foreign minister (1970–72). Two years later he became premier once more, this time heading a coalition with the Republican party. This tenure ended in Jan. 1976, and Moro led the country for the last time from Feb–Apr 1976.

Later Life

In Oct. 1976 Moro was elected president of the Christian Democrat Party, a job which enabled him to exert influence without holding public office. He was widely regarded as a president in the making but on 16 March 1978 he was kidnapped by activists of the Brigate Rosse (Red Brigades), an extremist left-wing terrorist organization. The terrorists demanded the release of several imprisoned members of their organization in exchange for Moro's life. After 2 months of negotiations, attempts to reach a settlement failed, and, despite international appeals and efforts, Moro was found executed on 9 May.

Morsi, Mohamed (Egypt)

Introduction

Mohamed Morsi became Egypt's first democratically elected president on 30 June 2012. He succeeded Hosni Mubarak, who resigned on 11 Feb. 2011 in the wake of a popular uprising. A Sunni Muslim, Morsi previously served as chairman of the Freedom and Justice Party, a nominally independent Islamist party with strong ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. However, he was ousted from power after only just over a year in power, and was later sentenced to death for his role in inciting violence during the 2011 revolution.

Early Life

Mohamed Morsi was born on 20 Aug. 1951 in the northern Sharkia governorate. He received a master's degree in engineering from Cairo University in 1978. 4 years later he completed a PhD at the University of Southern California, staying in the USA to work as a professor at the University of North Ridge, California. The eldest two of his five children were born in Los Angeles and hold American citizenship. Morsi returned to Egypt in 1985 to head the engineering faculty at Zagazig University, a post he held until 2010.

He was elected to the Egyptian People's Assembly in 2000. Although nominally an independent because the Muslim Brotherhood was barred from parliament under Mubarak, he was a member of the Brotherhood's executive office and spokesperson for the parliamentary bloc that aligned itself with the organization's Islamist policies. He failed to win re-election in 2005, a loss that the Muslim Brotherhood attributed to electoral fraud. Prominent in opposing state interference with the judiciary, Morsi spent 7 months in jail in 2006. He was detained again in Jan. 2011 as protests against Mubarak swept the country.

In the wake of this uprising, the Muslim Brotherhood founded the Freedom and Justice Party on 30 April 2011, with Morsi as chairman. He was nominated as the party's presidential candidate after its first choice, Khairat al-Shater, was disqualified by the electoral commission. In the second round of presidential elections on 16–17 June 2012, Morsi took 51.7% of the vote, defeating the former prime minister, Ahmed Shafik. Morsi immediately resigned from the Muslim Brotherhood and the Freedom and Justice Party to take up the presidency.

Career Peak

Previously an outspoken critic of Israel, Morsi helped mediate a ceasefire with Hamas after Israel's incursion into Gaza in Nov. 2012. In the same month his tenure came under the international spotlight when he issued a constitutional declaration that effectively granted him unlimited legislative power. After mass protests, Morsi annulled the decree on 8 Dec. 2012.

On 30 June 2013 mass protests took place across Egypt calling for Morsi's resignation. Morsi publicly rejected the Egyptian Army's 48 h ultimatum to meet the demands of the Egyptian people and on 3 July he was declared

unseated and placed under house arrest. Mansour Adly, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court, was sworn in the following day as the interim leader. New elections were called, the constitution suspended and the parliament dissolved. Clashes between Morsi's opponents and loyalists demanding his reinstatement resulted in a wave of violence in major cities.

Later Life

Following his overthrow, Morsi faced charges relating to the 2011 Wadi el-Natrun prison breakout during the revolution and alleged conspiracy with foreign militant groups including Hamas. In May 2015 and after numerous delays, Egyptian prosecutors judged Morsi guilty of both charges, and he was handed the death penalty. Morsi repeatedly rejected the authority of the courts trying him and claimed still to be the rightful president of Egypt. The Court of Cassation reversed his death sentence in Nov. 2016 and ordered a retrial.

Moscoso Rodriguez, Mireya Elisa (Panama)

Introduction

Mireya Elisa Moscoso Rodriguez was president of Panama from 1999 to 2004, representing the Partido Arnulfista (PA), of which she is co-founder. Elected in 1999, her main challenges were to oversee the US handover of the Panama Canal and to stave off recession while keeping her promise of helping the poor with social security initiatives.

Early Life

Moscoso was born on 1 July 1946 in Panama City. The daughter of a poor schoolteacher, she spent her early years in the rural family home at Pedasi. Following secondary education, she worked as a secretary until she met her husband, the politician and thrice president Arnulfo Arias Madrid. She worked on his third successful electoral campaign. When Arias was deposed in a coup led by Omar Torrijos Herrera in 1968, the couple went into exile in Miami where Moscoso studied interior design. In 1969 at the age of 22 she married the 67-year-old Arias. During the 1980s Moscoso held various minor governmental posts.

In 1990 Moscoso co-founded the PA with a group of members from her (then late) husband's Partido Panameñista Auténtico. The following year she became party leader. For the 1994 elections she was chosen as the candidate for a coalition of the PA and the Alianza Democrática. She came second with 29% of votes, beaten by the Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) leader Ernesto Pérez Balladares. In 1999, when Balladares was constitutionally prevented from standing for re-election, she stood against the PRD's candidate Martin Torrijos, son of Omar Torrijos. Moscoso campaigned on a populist manifesto, pledging to help the poor. Both candidates had similar policies, although Moscoso courted the populist vote, exploiting her poor rural background, while Torrijos concentrated on the business sector. Torrijos was the favourite to win until the PRD's chances were hampered by corruption charges. In the second democratic elections since the 1989 US military intervention overthrew the military regime led by Manuel Noriega, Moscoso won with 44.9% of votes to Torrijos' 38%, to become the first female leader of a Central American country.

Career Peak

Moscoso's biggest challenge was overseeing the handover of the Panama Canal 3 months into her presidency and providing a successful strategy of Panamanian management devoid of party politics. The handover was in accordance with a 1977 treaty signed between the US president Jimmy Carter and Torrijos. Moscoso called for a complete withdrawal of US military from the former US owned Panama Canal Zone.

There was scepticism about Moscoso's ability to govern successfully because of her lack of advanced education. Nevertheless, she outlined plans to tackle poverty, concentrating on the 14 neediest regions, including a social programme of improved health, primary education and housing. Agrarian policy included aid for small farmers and a stimulation of agricultural exports. She also announced plans to encourage technology, especially information

technology. Her populist policies were combined with a pledge to slow down the privatization begun by her predecessor whose neo-liberal economic policies had been popular with the International Development Bank but unpopular with the public. 1999 was the second successive year of economic slowdown and increasing fiscal deficit. Furthermore, Panamanian exports suffered when Colombia, its biggest customer, got into economic difficulties. By 2000 Panama had gained an IMF agreement which imposed welfare and tax reforms and a limit to government employment.

In 2000 Moscoso successfully hosted a summit of 19 Latin American countries, although she was criticized by human rights' organizations for welcoming former Peruvian intelligence chief, Vladimiro Montesinos, who was wanted on corruption charges. But despite US pressure, Montesinos' application for asylum was rejected.

Later Life

Since leaving office, Moscoso has been investigated on corruption charges along with members of her former cabinet.

Mosisili, Pakalitha Bethuel (Lesotho)

Introduction

Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, leader of the Democratic Congress (DC), began a new term as premier in March 2015, having previously served from May 1998 until June 2012. He succeeded Tom Thabane, who had replaced Mosisili in 2012. However, he lost a parliamentary vote of confidence in March 2017 prompting early elections scheduled for 3 June, during which time he continued in office in a caretaker capacity.

Early Life

Mosisili was born on 14 March 1945 in the Qacha's Nek District in Lesotho. He attended the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) from 1966–70, gaining a BA and a teaching qualification. He studied for an MA at the University of Wisconsin in the USA from 1975–76, before claiming a further BA from the University of South Africa (1977–78). In 1982 he gained a master's degree in education from the Simon Fraser University in Canada.

In 1967, whilst at UBLS, Mosisili joined the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) and was an active member of its youth league. In 1970 he was detained under emergency regulations and sent to a maximum-security prison for 16 months.

Mosisili's political career began in 1993 when he was elected to parliament representing Qacha's Nek. He was appointed minister of education and training, sports, culture and youth affairs. In Feb. 1995 he became deputy prime minister following the death of Selometsi Baholo the previous year. He took responsibility for the home affairs and local government portfolios, roles he retained until the 1998 elections. In Feb. 1998 he succeeded Prime Minister Dr Ntsu Mokhehle as leader of the LCD.

Career Peak

The victory of the LCD at the elections of May 1998 led to opposition accusations of vote rigging. Mass rioting culminated in protesters seizing the palace grounds. Mosisili called on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for military assistance to prevent a coup and troops remained in Lesotho until May 1999. In 2001 the government charged 33 protest leaders with treason. The SADC continued to provide military support and was again called in following more opposition allegations of electoral fraud after the LCD's re-election in 2002. In 2004 the first local elections since independence were held, but were boycotted by the opposition.

Mosisili pledged to tackle Lesotho's severe food shortages, high unemployment rates and rapidly escalating HIV/AIDS problem. However, poverty remained far-reaching and food output was affected by deaths of farmers from AIDS and by long periods of drought. In Feb. 2004 Mosisili declared a state of emergency and requested international food aid. In March 2004 the first phase of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project was opened, with the long-term aim of supplying water to large areas of southern Africa.

Mosisili aimed to address unemployment by encouraging foreign investment, emphasizing Lesotho's low corporate tax rates and eager workforce. However, thousands were left jobless when the textile industry collapsed after the World Trade Organization scrapped the global textile quota system in 2005. He also sought to diversify the economy, focusing on mining, electronics and industrial equipment manufactures. In 2005 his government opted to privatize the electricity system, having earlier done the same to telecommunications in 2000.

In Nov. 2006 Mosisili dissolved parliament following a split in the ruling LCD in which 18 parliamentary deputies left the party to form an opposition All Basotho Convention (ABC). The LCD won the election of Feb. 2007, although with a smaller majority than in 2002. In April 2009 he survived an apparent assassination attempt by gunmen in the capital, Maseru, for which seven suspected mercenaries were charged in April 2010. Prior to the parliamentary elections in May 2012 the LCD split again and Mosisili formed the new Democratic Congress, but he relinquished the premiership after the polls to Tom Thabane of the ABC.

Thabane's tenure was marred by internal security fears, especially after political divisions led to clashes between military and police personnel in 2014. Thabane fled the country, claiming the military was plotting a coup. Early elections were called in Feb. 2015, and although no outright winner emerged Mosisili was able to form a DC-led coalition. He was sworn in on 17 March, facing the challenge of restoring calm and stability to the nation. However, political instability persisted and the DC was undermined by increasing factionalism and ministerial dismissals and resignations over coalition differences. At the beginning of March 2017 Mosisili lost a confidence vote in parliament and a general election was called, 3 years ahead of schedule, for 3 June. He resisted opposition pressure to stand down in the intervening period but on 16 June 2017 he was replaced as prime minister by Tom Thabane, who had previously held the position between 2012 and 2015.

Mossadeq, Mohammad (Iran)

Introduction

Mohammad Mossadeq was prime minister from 1951 until his overthrow in a foreign-orchestrated coup in 1953. A symbol of Iranian nationalism, he was known internationally for his efforts to block overseas exploitation of Iranian oil reserves.

Early Life

Mohammed Mossadeq was born into a prominent family in Tehran on 16 June 1882. He studied in France before receiving a law doctorate from the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, in 1913.

On his return to Iran, he joined the ministry of finance but relocated to Switzerland in protest at the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1919 that granted British rights to Iranian oil fields via the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The following year he returned to Iran and was appointed governor of the Fars province. He then served as minister of justice and minister of foreign affairs, as well as governor of the Azerbaijan province. Following the overthrow of the ruling Qajar dynasty in 1925, Mossadeq was a vocal critic of the new Shah, Reza Khan, before retreating from politics.

Mossadeq was imprisoned for several months in 1940 on the orders of the Shah but when the Shah was forced to abdicate in favour of his son, Mohammad Reza Shah, the following year. Mossadeq was released and returned to politics. Representing Tehran in the Majlis, he campaigned for an economically independent Iran, viewing oil as the country's 'life, hope, freedom.' He sought a renegotiation of terms with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which hitherto saw Iran receive only 16% of oil earnings. He also opposed attempts to grant the Soviets oil rights and ultimately devised a plan to nationalize the oil industry. His proposals won widespread popular support and parliament elected him prime minister in April 1951, a month after his oil nationalization bill was passed.

Career Peak

Britain responded to the nationalization by imposing an economic blockade, withdrawing technical personnel and threatening possible military action.

Petroleum production came to a virtual standstill, causing significant hardship to the general population. The case was referred to the UN Security Council, which found in favour of Iran. Mossadeq's administration also introduced a swathe of social reforms including unemployment and sickness benefits and improved rights for peasants. However, he attracted the ire of the Shah and much of the ruling elite. After unsuccessfully attempting to depose Mossadeq in Aug. 1953, the Shah was briefly forced into exile but returned within a few days and, with support from Washington and London, engineered protests that forced Mossadeq from office on 20 Aug. 1953. He was succeeded as prime minister by Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi, who quickly signed accords with UK and US oil companies.

Later Life

Following the end of Mossadeq's tenure, many of his supporters were arrested and executed. Mossadeq himself was convicted of treason and spent 3 years in solitary confinement before being allowed to return to his home village. He remained under house arrest until his death on 5 March 1967.

Mubarak, Muhammad Hosni (Egypt)

Introduction

Following a career in the Air Force, Hosni Mubarak was appointed vice-president of Egypt in April 1975 and then became president in Oct. 1981 shortly after the assassination of Anwar Sadat by militant Islamic fundamentalists. He was re-elected as president on four occasions—in 1987, 1993, 1999 and 2005—and served as chairman of the National Democratic Party (NDP). Mubarak kept faith with most of his predecessor's policies, in particular reconciliation with the Western powers (after Gamal Abdel Nasser's pro-Soviet stance) and Egypt's controversial peace accord with Israel. However, he also sought to re-establish links with Arab states. He took a hard line with Muslim extremists and was the target of several assassination plots. In early 2011, after weeks of protests, he was forced to step down.

Early Life

Born in Kafr al Musailha on 4 May 1928, Mubarak attended high school and graduated from the military academy in Cairo before joining the Egyptian Air Force in 1950. He was promoted successively to squadron leader, base commander, director of the Air Force Academy (1967–69) and chief of staff (1969–72), before his appointment as commander of the Air Force and deputy minister for military affairs in 1972. In the 1973 war with Israel he was acclaimed for his command of Egyptian air operations. Two years later, in April 1975, Sadat made Mubarak his vice-president.

Career Peak

Following Sadat's assassination, Mubarak was inaugurated as president and prime minister on 14 Oct. 1981 (although he relinquished the latter post in Jan. 1982). Under his presidency, Egypt's isolation in the Arab world in the wake of Sadat's peace treaty with Israel came to an end. By the end of the 1980s the country had resumed a leading role in regional politics. Mubarak supported UN sanctions against Iraq after its occupation of Kuwait in 1990, and Egypt participated in the Gulf War of 1991 in support of the Western-led coalition against the Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. Thereafter, Egypt's foreign policy focused on a comprehensive settlement between Israel and other neighbouring Arab states, with particular emphasis on resolving Palestinian grievances. This policy, however, was undermined by the outbreak from Sept. 2000 of the Palestinian intifada in opposition to Israeli occupation.

Domestically Mubarak maintained the political status quo, albeit with a measure of liberalization. However, his economic reforms struggled to keep pace with inflation and rapid population growth, and he alienated poorer sections of society. There was a resurgence of violent Islamic fundamentalism in the 1990s, targeted in particular at foreign tourists, a major source of revenue. Mubarak narrowly survived an assassination attempt by Egyptian militants in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in June 1995. His NDP government

responded with a security crackdown on activists. In 1997, 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians were gunned down by extremists in Luxor.

Following the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks on the USA, Mubarak became a key supporter of the US campaign against terrorism. Mubarak hosted summits on the Middle East peace process in 2000–03, and worked with Israel and the Palestinian Authority during 2004–05 to facilitate stability following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza.

In early 2005 political reformers and opposition activists mounted a series of anti-government demonstrations. In Feb. Mubarak proposed amending the constitution to allow for the country's first multi-candidate presidential elections. That amendment was approved in a referendum in May, albeit with restrictions including a 5-year registration for parties wanting to nominate candidates. In July 2005 Islamist extremists bombed the resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, killing 88 and injuring over 200. The previous year, 34 people had died when the towns of Taba Nuweiba were bombed.

As expected, Mubarak was re-elected for a fifth consecutive term in Sept. with 88.6% of the vote. However, only 23% of the eligible electorate turned out and there were allegations of vote buying and intimidation. In Dec. 2005 parliamentary elections ended with clashes between police and opposition supporters. Although the NDP retained its parliamentary majority, the Muslim Brotherhood won a record number of seats.

Following three bomb explosions in the resort town of Dahab on the Red Sea coast in April 2006, killing over 20 people, Mubarak extended controversial emergency legislation giving the security forces broad powers of arrest and detention. He had earlier promised to abolish the emergency regime during his campaign for re-election in 2005, but then claimed that it was necessary to combat Islamist terrorism. Despite opposition scepticism, he promised during an address to parliament in Nov. 2006 that he would introduce democratic and constitutional reform. A referendum was subsequently held in March 2007, in which amendments to the constitution, including controversial judicial and security provisions and a formal ban on religious parties, were approved by 76% of voters. Opponents of Mubarak's government, however, rejected the measures as a 'constitutional coup'.

Elections to the Shura Council (upper house of parliament) in June 2007 were dominated by the NDP as most Muslim Brotherhood candidates were barred from running and none won a seat. In April 2008, in the run-up to elections for local councils, the government imposed a further crackdown on the Brotherhood, sentencing 25 members to stiff prison terms and arresting about 800 others. In response, the Brotherhood boycotted the polls.

In April 2009 the Egyptian authorities accused Hizbollah—Lebanon's radical Shia militia aligned with Syria, Iran and the Palestinian Hamas Islamist movement in an anti-Israeli front—of espionage activities aimed against Mubarak's regime. Around 50 people were arrested in connection with the charges.

Speculation about Mubarak's prospective successors escalated as rumours of the ageing president's ill-health spread. Moreover, the return to Egypt in Feb. 2010 of Mohamed ElBaradei—a Nobel Peace Prize winner, former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency and a respected advocate of political change—provided a focus for opposition opinion ahead of presidential elections scheduled for 2011. Following popular protests in Tunisia that forced President Ben Ali into exile, Mubarak faced similar calls to stand down in Jan. and Feb. 2011. Amid growing tensions, he resigned and handed control to the Armed Forces Supreme Council on 11 Feb. 2011.

In Aug. 2011 Mubarak, along with his two sons Ala'a and Gamal, as well as former interior minister Habib el-Adly and six former police officials, stood trial for charges of profiteering, illegal business-dealing involving Israeli gas exports and the unlawful killing of protesters (a charge that carries the death penalty). Despite reportedly suffering from illness, Mubarak attended the trial in Cairo and pleaded not guilty.

On 2 June 2012, Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison by an Egyptian court for complicity in the killing of demonstrators. Shortly after, he suffered a series of health complications and fell into a coma. Mubarak was moved from prison to a military hospital. He appealed against the sentence and in April 2013 was ordered back to prison. He was retried on charges of killing protesters during the 2011 revolution in Aug. 2013, but was eventually found not guilty by an Egyptian court in Nov. 2014. Mubarak was, however, still serving a 3-year sentence on a separate embezzlement charge handed down in May 2014, and so remained incarcerated. He was released from a military hospital in March 2017 after he was cleared of the final murder charges against him.

Mugabe, Robert (Zimbabwe)

Introduction

Robert Mugabe came to power as newly independent Zimbabwe's (formerly Rhodesia) first prime minister in 1980, becoming president in 1987. Although initially hailed as a democratic reformer, his economic mismanagement of the country, violent electoral campaigns and controversial programme of land seizures have tarnished his image at home and abroad. He has defended his land reform programme as the conclusion of the process of decolonization, but his policies have been widely perceived as short-term political expediency for the maintenance of personal power. In the wake of the disputed presidential elections in 2008, Mugabe conceded to power-sharing with the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) after protracted negotiations. He nevertheless maintained his autocratic grip on the country and was re-elected in July 2013. He resigned the presidency in Nov. 2017.

Early Life

The son of a carpenter, Robert Gabriel Mugabe was born 21 Feb. 1924 at Kutama mission, northwest of Harare. After an early education at a Roman Catholic mission school, he studied at the University College of Fort Hare, South Africa, marking the beginning of an academic career boasting seven university degrees, three of which he completed during imprisonment. He worked as a primary school teacher in Ghana from 1956–60 when he returned to Rhodesia and joined Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). In 1963 he became a founding member of the breakaway Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) with Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole. A year later Mugabe was arrested for subversion and imprisoned, without trial, for 10 years. Despite imprisonment, he remained politically active and was able to orchestrate, in 1974, a coup against Sithole to become party leader. In 1975, freed from prison, Mugabe joined Nkomo as joint leader of the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe which waged a guerrilla war against Ian Smith's white Rhodesian Front government. In 1980 independence was achieved and parliamentary elections took place in which Mugabe, at the head of ZANU, won a landslide victory to become prime minister.

Career Peak

In office Mugabe appeared set to usher in a bright new era for the country. Having built a coalition government with ZAPU, he adopted a conciliatory stance towards the white, landowning minority. He introduced higher wages, credit programmes and food subsidies for poor farmers, a better infrastructure and equal land rights for women. Reform in the education system saw primary school enrolment trebled and secondary school enrolment increased fivefold during the first 10 years of his rule (with Zimbabwe laying claim to the highest literacy rate of any African nation).

Troubles began in 1982 when ethnic turmoil between the Shona majority (represented by ZANU) and the Ndebele minority (represented by ZAPU) broke out after Mugabe dismissed Nkomo and ZAPU from government. The ensuing violence prompted much of the white population to emigrate, in turn creating an economic downturn. Centred in Matabeleland, the conflict drew international attention after the discovery of mass graves and alleged atrocities.

In 1987 Mugabe won the presidential elections and set about bringing ZAPU back into government. A unity agreement was signed and Nkomo became senior minister in a newly formed Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government. Mugabe was again re-elected in 1990 (in polling marred by violence) and 1996, but throughout the 1990s he adopted a series of unpopular policies. His military support for President Kabila's beleaguered government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo led to strikes within his own country. An announcement of pay increases for himself and his party officials in 1998 prompted rioting, coming as it did amidst a growing economic crisis. Plans to raise food and fuel prices and to introduce a tax to support war veterans from the 1970s were blocked by trades unions and further diminished his popularity.

In Feb. 2000 Mugabe lost a referendum in which he sought to increase his presidential powers. Blaming the white minority for the defeat, he then targeted the issue of land ownership. A programme of violent land seizure followed, with black settlers taking over white-owned farms. A court order to

halt the seizures was ignored and Mugabe subsequently replaced high court judges with political allies. In June 2000 parliamentary elections were held. Mugabe won the elections, but only by a narrow margin and after a campaign of intimidation which led to more than 30 deaths.

Mugabe was re-elected president in March 2002. Final results gave him 56.2% of the vote against 42.0% for opposition rival, Morgan Tsvangirai, the leader of the MDC. However, the elections failed to meet international democratic standards. They were preceded by violence against opposition supporters, the passing of a law limiting press freedom, the withdrawal of the European Union monitoring team and the arrest of Mugabe's main political rival on charges of treason. As a result, Zimbabwe was suspended from the Commonwealth and a range of targeted sanctions from the UK, the USA and the EU were placed on Mugabe and his cabinet. In March 2003 the USA froze Zimbabwean assets and forbade US citizens from undertaking economic dealings with Mugabe and his government colleagues.

The state of political uncertainty and violence following the 2000 referendum damaged investor confidence, causing export prices to decline and unemployment and food shortages to rise. Coupled with this, severe drought in early 2002 raised the threat of mass starvation. In April 2002 Mugabe declared a state of disaster, allowing him the temporary use of 'extraordinary measures' to cope with the situation. Although little was done in practical terms to relieve the threat of famine, Mugabe pushed ahead with the land redistribution programme. In June 2002 he ordered almost 3,000 white farmers to leave their land within 45 days, or face imprisonment. In Sept. 2002 new legislation was passed allowing farmers only a week's notice after receiving an eviction order. In March 2003 Amnesty International reported that up to 500 people had been arrested following a general strike, with members of the MDC especially targeted. In the same month the Commonwealth extended Zimbabwe's suspension until at least Dec. 2003. In June 2003 police detained Tsvangirai, who had called for mass popular protests against Mugabe's government, and in Jan. 2004 he went on trial for treason. Although he was acquitted in Oct. 2004 of charges relating to an assassination plot against Mugabe, he still faced a separate treason charge. Meanwhile, relations with the international community worsened. In Dec. 2003 the Commonwealth (despite South African disapproval) again extended Zimbabwe's suspension, prompting Mugabe's withdrawal from the organization.

At the parliamentary elections in March 2005, ZANU-PF took 78 of 150 seats. The MDC claimed that there had been widespread vote rigging and intimidation. Then, in May, Mugabe's government launched a demolition of urban slum dwellings and illegal settlements, including business premises, around the country without compensation. The policy drew international condemnation as an estimated 700,000 people (according to the UN) lost their homes, or source of livelihood, or both. In Aug. 2005 parliament approved amendments to the constitution, including the reintroduction of the Senate, which had been abolished in 1990. Other changes provided for the government to confiscate passports of those deemed to pose a threat to national security and to strengthen control over land redistribution with no right of appeal. Also in Aug., the authorities dropped the remaining treason charge against Tsvangirai. ZANU-PF won the Nov. 2005 elections to the new Senate, securing an overwhelming majority of 66 seats amid low voter turnout and opposition calls for a boycott.

Repression of the MDC and wider opposition intensified from 2006, particularly in March 2007 when Tsvangirai was beaten by security forces and hospitalized after his arrest at a political rally. A meeting of regional leaders subsequently invited South Africa's president, Thabo Mbeki, to mediate in Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis. In Dec. 2007 Mugabe's presence at the EU-Africa summit in Lisbon provoked criticism of his regime's abuse of human rights.

Mugabe was endorsed as the ZANU-PF candidate for the March 2008 presidential (and parliamentary) elections. After a relatively peaceful campaign the MDC made a strong showing and ZANU-PF lost its legislative majority. Tsvangirai also claimed outright victory in the presidential race but Mugabe challenged the results. Despite international pressure, the electoral commission delayed the publication of results and a second round run-off was scheduled. There followed an orchestrated campaign of brutality against supporters of the opposition, which led to the withdrawal of Tsvangirai from the race in June. The international community was united in its condemnation of Mugabe's actions. The electoral crisis took place against a backdrop of economic meltdown.

Under international pressure, talks between Mugabe and Tsvangirai were brokered in Aug. 2008, which resulted in a deal the following month that saw Mugabe remain as president while Tsvangirai was to become executive prime

minister. However, implementation of the agreement then stalled for several months over the allocation of cabinet posts between ZANU-PF and the MDC. The political deadlock was further exacerbated by the collapse of the economy and of basic services, which contributed to a serious outbreak of the disease cholera in Nov. 2008. In Jan. 2009, after months of acrimony and pressure from neighbouring states, Mugabe agreed to put power-sharing into effect and on 11 Feb. Tsvangirai was sworn in as prime minister. However, the failure of Mugabe's military and security service chiefs to attend the inauguration ceremony and the controversial detention of an MDC ministerial nominee did not represent an auspicious start for the new unity government.

In Sept. 2009 the EU sent its first high-level delegation to Zimbabwe for several years but refused to lift targeted sanctions. Donors were also cautious about releasing aid money to the government, fearing that it could be misused. In Oct. Mugabe called for improved relations with the West but added that the lifting of sanctions, which he blamed for ruining the country's economy, was an essential prerequisite. Mugabe's supporters had meanwhile continued to harass MDC activists, leading in Oct. to a stand-off between Mugabe and Tsvangirai in which the latter led an MDC boycott of cabinet meetings. The boycott was called off, however, after the intervention of the Southern African Development Community, which insisted that all 'outstanding issues' in the power-sharing pact be finally settled.

In Dec. 2009 Mugabe was re-elected as ZANU-PF leader for a further 5 years at a party congress in Harare. From 2010 he became increasingly outspoken about the shortcomings of the power-sharing agreement. He was again endorsed at the ZANU-PF congress in Dec. 2010 as the party's candidate for presidential elections that were scheduled to be held in 2013. In Feb. 2011, and again in Feb. 2012, the EU eased some sanctions on Zimbabwe but expressed concern at ZANU-PF's continuing failure to honour the unity government pact and at the reported rise in political violence and intimidation directed against the MDC.

In March 2013 a new constitution, which limited future presidents to two terms in office, was approved in a referendum, paving the way for elections at the end of July. Mugabe retained the presidency to extend his 33-year rule while ZANU-PF claimed an overwhelming majority of parliamentary seats, so ending the MDC's involvement in power-sharing. The results were denounced by Tsvangirai as fraudulent and a sham, and in Sept. the MDC boycotted the opening of the new parliament.

In Dec. 2014 Mugabe dismissed Joyce Mujuru as vice president and also sacked seven cabinet ministers, accusing them of corruption and plotting to kill him. Mujuru was replaced by justice minister Emmerson Mnangagwa.

In Jan. 2015 Mugabe was selected to serve as chairman for a year of the African Union. For the rest of that year speculation mounted in Zimbabwe and abroad about a likely successor to the ailing president. Nevertheless, while social and economic disaffection with the ruling elite became increasingly evident during 2016, Mugabe was again endorsed in Dec. as ZANU-PF's presidential candidate for elections scheduled for 2018.

Amid a power struggle for the leadership of the ZANU-PF between Emmerson Mnangagwa and First Lady Grace Mugabe, President Mugabe dismissed Mnangagwa from the vice presidency on 6 Nov. 2017. The army then seized power on 15 Nov. and 4 days later ZANU-PF officially removed Robert Mugabe as the party's head. On 21 Nov. the parliament started impeachment proceedings, leading Mugabe to resign the presidency after 37 years of ruling Zimbabwe. Legally vice President Phelekezela Mphoko became acting president (although he was not in Zimbabwe at the time) until Emmerson Mnangagwa was sworn in as the new president on 24 Nov. 2017.

Muhammad, Ali Nasser (Yemen)

Introduction

Ali Nasser Muhammad was one of the most influential politicians in the Marxist government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the 1970s and first half of the 1980s. Prime Minister from 1971, he was named by the central committee of the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) as Chairman of the Presidium of the People's Supreme Assembly (and therefore head of state) and secretary-general of the party in April 1980. He retained the presidency until Jan. 1986, when mounting tensions between rival factions forced him into exile.

Early Life

Born in 1939, Muhammad was an active member of the National Liberation Front which took power in Southern Yemen in 1967 and declared independence after the withdrawal of the British. In 1968 he was placed at the head of the Second Governate and later that year became minister of local administration. In 1969 he was appointed minister of defence and, 2 years later, Prime Minister and a member of the Presidential Council.

Career Peak

Following the overthrow and killing in June 1978 of Salem Rubayyi Ali, the Chairman of the Presidential Council, Muhammad briefly assumed the chairmanship, making him head of state while retaining his duties as Prime Minister. However, in Dec. 1978 he was replaced as head of state by Abdul Fattah Ismail, a hard-line orthodox Marxist, who was elected chairman of the newly-created Presidium of the People's Supreme Assembly which superseded the Presidential Council. Muhammad remained Prime Minister and became the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium. Furthermore, he was a leading member of the ruling party, having in 1972 joined the political bureau of the National Front which in 1978 was reorganized to form the YSP.

On 21 April 1980 Ismail relinquished his responsibilities as Chairman of the Presidium and YSP secretary-general and was replaced by Muhammad. Western observers attributed Ismail's fall from office to a power struggle over policy differences. While maintaining South Yemen's close relations with the Soviet Union and its communist allies, Muhammad, unlike Ismail, favoured a reconciliation with moderate Arab states. In particular, he viewed improved relations with Saudi Arabia as necessary to further the proposed merger with the Yemen Arab Republic.

In Feb. 1985 Muhammad resigned his post as Prime Minister, but remained the head of state, YSP secretary-general and Presidium chairman. The rest of that year was marked by the re-emergence of former political rivalries, fuelled by the return from exile in Moscow of Abdul Fattah Ismail. This erupted into civil war in Jan. 1986. Muhammad tried to have his leading opponents killed in a pre-emptive strike. However, several of them survived and fierce factional fighting ensued. By the end of the month Muhammad had fled into exile in the Yemen Arab Republic.

Later Life

Muhammad was tried in absentia for treason, along with many of his senior supporters, by the new regime and sentenced to death in Dec. 1987.

Mujica, José (Uruguay)

Introduction

José Mujica took office on 1 March 2010 after winning a presidential run-off in Nov. 2009. A former leftist guerrilla, Mujica received 55% of the vote after campaigning on a platform of continued economic growth and policies to tackle crime and poverty.

Early Life

Mujica was born in Montevideo on 20 May 1935. He was a member of the centrist Partido Nacional (National Party) in his youth before joining the newly formed Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (popularly known as the Tupamaros) in the 1960s, an armed guerrilla movement inspired by the Cuban revolution.

In 1971 he was convicted by a military tribunal under the government of Jorge Pacheco Areco of killing a police officer. He escaped from Punta Carretas prison but was re-arrested in 1972. Following the 1973 military coup Mujica was transferred to a military prison where he was subjected to torture and solitary confinement. When the military dictatorship ended in 1985 he was freed under a general amnesty covering political crimes since 1962.

On his release and the restoration of democracy, Mujica steered the Tupamaros away from its guerrilla past and remodelled it into the Movimiento de Participación Popular (Movement of Popular Participation), a legitimate political party that later joined the left-wing Frente Amplio

(Broad Front) coalition. He was elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1994 and in 1999 won a seat in the Senate, gaining re-election 5 years later.

On 1 March 2005 he resigned from the Senate when he was appointed minister of livestock, agriculture and fisheries by then president, Tabaré Vázquez. During his tenure Mujica intervened to keep down the price of beef, a staple of the Uruguayan people, winning popular acclaim. In 2008 he returned to the Senate after losing his cabinet post in a reshuffle.

On 28 June 2009 Mujica became Frente Amplio's presidential candidate after winning the coalition's primary election. He pledged to maintain the policies of outgoing President Vázquez, whose term of office had seen prolonged economic growth and strong social interventions by the government. In the first round of elections held in Oct. 2009 Mujica received 48% of the vote and on 30 Nov. 2009 he was declared winner of a run-off against Luis Alberto Lacalle of the National Party, with 55% of the vote.

Career Peak

Mujica was expected to improve Uruguay's often strained relations with its neighbours, and he expressed his support for MERCOSUR, the regional economic bloc. His other priorities included the improvement of educational standards and the maintenance of energy supplies.

Mujica opposed a parliamentary bid to annul legislation giving officers immunity from prosecution for crimes committed during the years of military rule and, despite support in the Senate, the bill was rejected by the Chamber of Deputies in May 2011. The legislation was subsequently revoked in a further congressional vote in Oct. that year.

In Oct. 2012 Mujica signed into law a controversial bill legalizing abortion for all women during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, as Uruguay became only the second Latin American country after Cuba to decriminalize terminations. Further social legislation in April 2013 legalized same-sex marriage, while in Dec. Uruguay became the first country in the world to legalize and regulate the use and sale of marijuana. In the same month, Mujica appointed Central Bank governor Mario Bergara as economy and finance minister following the resignation of Fernando Lorenzo, amid corruption accusations.

In his Sept. 2013 speech to the UN General Assembly, Mujica highlighted environmental preservation and the need to limit economic fallout suffered by the poor as priorities for the international community.

Mujica was ineligible to stand for re-election in 2014 owing to the constitutional limit of 5 years for presidential terms. Tabaré Vázquez, also of the Broad Front and Mujica's immediate predecessor as president, won the elections of Oct. and Nov. 2014 and took office in March 2015.

Mukherjee, Pranab (India)

Introduction

A veteran politician with experience in previous administrations, Pranab Mukherjee was elected president in July 2012. He has a reputation as a skilled political broker with a track record in securing cross-party co-operation.

Early Life

Pranab Mukherjee was born on 11 Dec. 1935 in the village of Mirati in the Birbhum district of West Bengal. He studied law at Suri Vidyasagar College, affiliated to the University of Calcutta, where he also attained a master's degree in history and politics. He worked in teaching and journalism until 1969, when, with Indira Gandhi's support, he was elected to the upper house of parliament for the Indian National Congress party.

He rose rapidly, serving in a series of ministerial posts, covering industry (1973–74) and finance, revenue and banking (1975–77). He reached cabinet level in 1980 when he was appointed minister of commerce, steel and mines. Named finance minister in 1982, he resisted IMF pressure to implement austerity measures, instead pursuing a combination of tax reforms and government investment. His policies were claimed as a success when the economy recovered, allowing India to return part of an IMF loan.

Following Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, Mukherjee left government to head the West Bengal Pradesh Congress committee. In 1986 he formed the Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress (RSC) but after a lacklustre performance in the 1987 regional assembly elections, the RSC merged with

the Congress Party of Rajiv Gandhi in 1989. 2 years later Mukherjee became deputy chairman of the planning commission in Narasimha Rao's government, a post he held until 1996. He re-entered cabinet in 1993 as minister of commerce and served as foreign minister from 1995–96.

Following the Congress' electoral defeat in 1996, Mukherjee supported Sonia Gandhi's successful bid for party presidency. He served as general secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) from 1998–99 and as president of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress committee from 2000. He returned to government in 2004 in the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), becoming leader of the lower house. He served as defence minister from 2004–06 and as foreign minister from 2006–09.

In 2009 he was appointed finance minister and faced the task of tightening fiscal discipline while maintaining inclusive growth strategies. Reforms proved difficult to implement, largely owing to political deadlock. While he won praise early in his tenure, he was later criticized for lack of progress on tax reforms, cutting subsidies and opening markets to foreign investment. He resigned in June 2012 to stand as the Congress' presidential nominee.

Career Peak

Mukherjee took office in July 2012, having gained 69% of the electoral college vote to defeat his nearest rival, P. A. Sangma. While the role is largely ceremonial, Mukherjee was viewed as well-placed to broker political agreements. In May 2014 he swore in Narendra Modi as the new prime minister following the BJP's landslide victory in parliamentary elections. Having announced that he would not run for a second term in office, Mukherjee was succeeded by the winner of the July 2017 presidential election Ram Nath Kovind.

Muldoon, Robert (New Zealand)

Introduction

Born in Auckland on 25 Sept. 1921, Robert David Muldoon served in World War II before training, in New Zealand and England, as a cost accountant. Known as 'Piggy Muldoon' reputedly because of both his distinctive laugh and association as finance minister with piggy banks, the National leader for 10 years was celebrated and attacked in equal measure for his uncompromising economic reforms.

Early Life

Muldoon joined the National Party in 1947, and became chairman of the Young Nationals 2 years later. He entered parliament as member for Tamaki in 1960 after unsuccessfully contesting Mount Albert in the 1954 and 1957 elections, and held the seat until retiring 31 years later. Under Keith Holyoake's administration, Muldoon's first parliamentary appointment was undersecretary to the finance minister from 1963–6. He took up the financial portfolio in 1967, a year in which he also served as tourism minister, and oversaw the country's change to decimal currency. He remained finance minister for 5 years until election defeat in 1972. Following a leadership change to Jack Marshall in Feb. of that year, Muldoon was also deputy prime minister. During the party's term in opposition, a parliamentary group known as the Young Turks set about replacing Marshall with Muldoon. He was elevated from deputy to leader of the opposition in 1974. Vigorous television campaigning and strong support from farmers and the elderly, dubbed 'Rob's Mob' saw National under Muldoon returned to power on 12 Dec. 1975.

Career Peak

Muldoon served, often controversially, as both minister of finance and prime minister throughout his 9 years in office. His economics were interventionist but resolutely anti-communist, his rhetoric famously truculent. After fixing the currency value and introducing permits and tariffs for all international trading, Muldoon later froze wages and prices in an attempt to cut inflation. His early 1980s 'Think Big' scheme saw the government investing borrowed money in immense industrial projects such as the Synfuel plant and Clyde dam. Other strategies were highly popular. Shoring up the rural economy and vote, he introduced loans and minimum prices for farmers, which led to the government buying surplus livestock and reselling it as fertilizer. In 1977,

Muldoon established universal pension provision without means testing. The year also marked Muldoon's selection as a Companion of Honour, following his appointment to the Privy Council in 1976. He chaired the World Bank governors and IMF from 1979–80, and led the OECD ministerial council 2 years later. In Oct. 1980, Muldoon's position was unsuccessfully challenged by colleagues, including Jim Bolger, who wanted to replace him with deputy Brian Talboys. Key issues during the Muldoon administration were the Falklands conflict, in which he backed Britain, and the South African rugby tour of New Zealand, which Muldoon also supported. Anti-apartheid protests peaked on 12 Sept. 1981, with 10,000 protestors disrupting the game at Eden Park stadium. Green issues came to the fore under Muldoon's leadership. Following the 1979 oil crisis, each car had to stay off the road at least 1 day a week. At the same time, the government invested in alternative energy sources through the 'Think Big' scheme. Muldoon held office for three terms until calling and losing a snap election on 26 July 1984, the year of his knighthood.

Later Life

After a brief period as opposition leader in 1984, Muldoon was succeeded by Jim McLay. After leading the party for less than 2 years, McLay lost his position to Bolger, who appointed Muldoon shadow foreign affairs minister from 1986–91. During National's time in opposition, the former prime minister served as president of the national football association (1986–8), and chair of the Global Economic Action Institute (1988–91). After retiring from politics in 1991, Muldoon hosted a radio talk programme, and appeared as a narrator in the Rocky Horror stage show. He died in Auckland on 6 Aug. 1992.

Mulroney, Brian (Canada)

Introduction

Prime Minister of Canada from 1984 to 1993, Brian Mulroney was the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party from 1983 to 1993.

Born the son of an electrician in Baie-Comeau, Quebec in 1939, Mulroney grew up bilingual in English and French. After studying at Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, Mulroney studied law at Laval University, Quebec City. He began practising law in Montreal in 1965, specializing in Labour relations.

Early Life

He first came to prominence working on the Cliche Commission of Inquiry into the Quebec construction industry in 1974, which uncovered unprecedented corruption and violence in the industry.

He made his first bid for the leadership of the Conservatives in 1976 but having lost to Joe Clark on the third ballot, instead became president of the Iron Ore Company of Canada.

Mulroney finally won the party leadership in 1983 despite never having held public office, but as the only bilingual Quebec candidate, offered the Conservatives a wider electoral appeal. His leadership forged an alliance between Quebec nationalists and western conservatives, offering both national unity and recognition of Quebec's distinct status.

Career Peak

Leading the party to a landslide victory over the Liberals in 1984, the Conservatives won the greatest majority in Canadian history with 211 seats in the House of Commons. As Prime Minister, Mulroney sought closer co-operation with the United States on trade and environmental issues. The early period of his government saw strong economic growth and low inflation, with key industries deregulated and taxes reformed. He won a second term in 1988.

Trade was of primary importance for Mulroney, believing Canadian economic success could only be secured by maintaining access to foreign markets—in particular the United States. He oversaw two trade agreements with the United States with the 1988 Free Trade Agreement and later the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Mexico (signed in 1992).

Under his premiership, the Nunavut Agreement with the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic led to the creation of a third territory in Canada, and represented a major achievement in Aboriginal land settlement.

Endeavouring to achieve constitutional reform, Mulroney was one of the driving forces behind the Meech Lake accord, which attempted to end Quebec's boycott of the 1982 constitutional reform. However, the accord failed to become law when the Manitoba and Newfoundland legislatures refused to pass it. A second attempt with the Charlottetown accord of 1992 was defeated in a popular referendum.

Failing to heal the constitutional rift, Mulroney's popularity shrank and he announced his intention to retire from politics in 1993.

Later Life

Adverse criticism over arrangements made for some of his colleagues in the final months of his term of office led to Mulroney emerging from his retirement to bring a bitter libel suit.

Murekezi, Anastase (Rwanda)

Introduction

Anastase Murekezi, an ethnic Hutu and member of the Social Democratic Party, became prime minister on 24 July 2014. He was previously minister of public service and labour, and is an agricultural engineer by training.

Early Life

Born in 1952, Murekezi read agriculture at the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium. In 2004 he was appointed minister of state in charge of industry and investment. The following year he joined the cabinet as minister of agriculture, and from 2008–14 he held the civil service and labour portfolio. During his tenure he faced a parliamentary committee investigating irregularities in ministry-run departments. Nonetheless, President Paul Kagame appointed him premier in July 2014 after dismissing his predecessor in the post, Pierre Damien Habumuremyi, who had served since 2011.

Career Peak

While Kagame publicly gave no reason for sacking Habumuremyi, he appointed Murekezi after stating his desire to revitalize the cabinet. When Murekezi took office, he named five new cabinet ministers although the incumbents of key ministries including defence, foreign affairs, finance and internal security remained unchanged.

In Oct. 2014 Murekezi announced the launch of an Environment and Climate Change Fund (Fonerwa) to support sustainable development, backed by a number of international bilateral development agencies. Meanwhile, his opponents have exerted pressure on him to curb the government's increasingly hard-line approach to its critics. After the presidential election of Aug. 2017 Paul Kagame replaced him with Édoard Ngirente.

Musa, Said (Belize)

Introduction

Said Musa, leader of the People's United Party (PUP), became prime minister in 1998 and won a second term in March 2003. A leading figure in Belize's fight for independence, his tenure has been dominated by ongoing attempts to resolve territorial disputes with Guatemala. Musa was defeated in the elections on 7 Dec. 2007.

Early Life

Said Wilbert Musa was born on 19 March 1944 in San Ignacio in the Cayo District of what was then British Honduras. In 1966 he graduated in law from the University of Manchester in the UK and the following year was called to

the Bar at Gray's Inn. Musa returned to Belize and served as a circuit magistrate and a crown counsel for the office of public prosecutions. He was elected to the presidency of the public service union but in 1970 went into private legal practice. During this period he became involved with the United Black Association for Development and also co-founded the People's Action Committee and the Society for the Promotion of Education and Research.

He joined the PUP in 1974 but was defeated that year in his first bid for a parliamentary seat. Nonetheless, PUP Prime Minister George Price appointed him as a senator for a 5-year term of office. In 1979 Musa entered parliament as the representative for Fort George. In the new PUP government he served as Attorney General and education and sports minister, later adding the economic development portfolio.

Musa was a key figure in the negotiations with Britain and Guatemala which preceded full independence in 1981. He represented Belize at the UN, the Commonwealth and CARICOM, and played a leading role in the drafting of a national constitution. After independence Musa was named foreign minister and oversaw entry into the Organization of American States (OAS). He was in regular contact with the government of Guatemala, which claimed a large part of Belize's territory as its own, and helped smooth relations sufficiently that Guatemala recognized Belize's independent sovereignty in 1991.

In 1996 George Price, leader of Belize's independence movement since the 1950s, retired as leader of the PUP and was replaced by Musa. Musa led the PUP to a landslide victory at the elections of 1998 and was sworn in as prime minister.

Career Peak

Musa has had to contend with Guatemala's continuing claim on half of Belize's territory. In early 2000 the Guatemalan government announced its intention to work through the international courts. Following OAS-brokered talks the two sides reached a draft agreement in Sept. 2002 establishing a transition process, to be voted on in referenda in both countries. Musa's first term of office also saw Belize hit by two devastating hurricanes, Keith and Iris, in Oct. 2000 and Oct. 2001. In parliamentary elections on 5 March 2003 the PUP retained power with a slightly reduced majority. A new government was sworn in 2 days later. Countering the international illegal drugs trade and associated violent crime have continued to pose serious problems for the Musa government. In 2006 the US administration included Belize on a list of countries failing to do enough to tackle human trafficking.

Musa announced on the day of the Feb. 2008 presidential elections that it would be his last run in electoral politics. Less than a week later he announced that he would step down as party leader. Although he lost the presidential elections on 7 Feb. 2008 Musa won the Fort George seat in the general elections. Dean Barrow (United Democratic Party) succeeded Musa as prime minister on 8 Feb. 2008 ending his 10 years in office.

Musharraf, Pervez (Pakistan)

Introduction

Gen. Pervez Musharraf, president of Pakistan, took power in a bloodless coup in 1999, ousting the democratically-elected prime minister, Nawaz Sharif. It was the first time that a military leader had taken control of a nuclear power. Musharraf styled himself as a caretaker leader, responsible for safeguarding the country while corruption was dealt with, the economy revitalized and 'true' democratic elections held. His leadership was not recognized by the international community and drew sanctions from the USA. The war in neighbouring Afghanistan, however, allowed Musharraf to exploit Pakistan's strategic importance to the US military effort there and to re-establish political ties with Washington. He struggled to balance US pressure for action against Islamic extremism at home and a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan with widespread anti-Western opinion within Pakistan. His personal popularity plummeted, particularly in the wake of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's assassination in Dec. 2007. Under threat of impeachment from parliament, he resigned his office in Aug. 2008.

Early Life

Born in Delhi on 11 Aug. 1943, Pervez Musharraf's family migrated to newly-formed Pakistan in 1947. From the age of 6 to 13 he was brought up in Turkey where his father was a secretary of foreign affairs for the Pakistani government. He has frequently cited the Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, a secular modernizer who fought for Turkish independence, as his hero.

Following training in the command and staff college, Quetta, and in the UK, Musharraf was commissioned in the Pakistani artillery in 1964. He saw active service in the India-Pakistan war of 1965 when, as a Lieut.-Col., he had command of two artillery regiments. Following promotion to brigadier, he commanded an armoured division and an artillery and infantry brigade. In the second armed conflict with India he was in charge of a commando battalion of the Special Services Group. Further promotions in 1991 and 1995 took him to the ranks of Maj.-Gen. and Lieut.-Gen.

On 7 Oct. 1998 Nawaz Sharif, then prime minister of Pakistan, appointed Musharraf as Chief of Army Staff. At the time Musharraf was in command of the 1st Strike Corps based at Mangla, a key military element in Pakistani strategy in Kashmir. The appointment was widely interpreted as a move by Sharif to appoint a figure who would not pose a threat to his leadership. Musharraf's ethnic background (he was not a member of the Punjabi officer class) was seen as a block to his advancement.

In early 1999 the Joint Chief of Staff Committee (JCSC) was reorganized, giving it increased power in nuclear command and the promise that the chairman would always be from the military. Musharraf took on this additional role in April 1999, becoming the strategic commander of Pakistan's nuclear forces. During armed conflict in Kargil in 1999 between Indian and Pakistani forces, a growing gap between the increasingly powerful chief of army staff and the prime minister became obvious. As Sharif withdrew support, senior army officers became incensed at what they saw as a betrayal. Musharraf, meanwhile, raised his profile, frequently appearing on television to comment on the conflict.

The political crisis reached a climax on 12 Oct. 1999. While Musharraf was on a diplomatic trip to Sri Lanka, Sharif replaced him with Gen. Ziauddin. He then refused permission for Musharraf's plane to land at Karachi airport despite the plane being low on fuel. In a dramatic turn of events the army took power and placed Sharif under arrest. Musharraf declared himself Pakistan's Chief Executive.

Career Peak

The coup attracted international censure and led to sanctions from the USA. Within Pakistan itself, however, the response was ambivalent. To many, a determined military government appeared the last ditch solution to Pakistan's crippling economic and social problems.

Having announced a National Security Council to take over the administration of the country, Musharraf instituted a series of reforms. He created a juvenile justice ordinance protecting children's rights and a national commission on the status of women. His most highly publicized initiative was a National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to target defaulters on government loans. In its first few months repayments were estimated at US\$152 m. (although this was only 6% of the total target revenue). While the measure won him popularity for combating corruption, he exempted the judiciary and the military from prosecutions relating to the NAB. The Bureau was given wide-ranging authority to investigate the legitimacy of private wealth when it went beyond 'visible means of income'. After the deadline was reached for the repayment of loans, a list of outstanding defaulters was published and 21 arrests made on charges of corruption. Both Nawaz Sharif and the husband of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto were included in the list.

Despite Musharraf's insistence that he would make efforts to restore democracy, Pakistan was suspended from the Commonwealth in mid-Nov. 1999. Later that month Nawaz Sharif was formally charged with hijacking, kidnapping and conspiracy to murder. He was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment, subsequently leaving for exile in Saudi Arabia. Tough economic measures, avoided by Sharif's administration, were adopted by Musharraf. A 15% sales tax implemented in early 2000 provoked the longest strike in Pakistan's history.

On 12 May 2000 Pakistan's Supreme Court unanimously validated the Oct. 1999 coup and granted Musharraf executive and legislative authority for 3 years from the date of the coup. The security of his leadership was further strengthened in June 2001 when he unexpectedly declared himself president, dissolving the provisional and national assemblies and dismissing former head of state, Rafiq Tarar. Guaranteeing himself a future place in Pakistan's

administration, regardless of the outcome of democratic elections, the move was also an attempt to strengthen the legitimacy of his leadership before the Agra summit with India, which took place 1 month later. This first meeting between Musharraf and the then Indian prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was hailed as an important step for bilateral relations but failed to produce significant agreement, most notably over Kashmir. Musharraf's insistence on Kashmir as the core issue was met with an equal degree of insistence from India that Pakistani-funded cross-border terrorism was the central obstacle to improved relations.

The attacks of 11 Sept. 2001 in the USA brought Musharraf's leadership to greater prominence at the international level. As a neighbour of Afghanistan—home to al-Qaeda—and sharing strong political links with the Taliban (Afghanistan's de facto government), Pakistan became central to attempts to put diplomatic pressure on the regime to secure the surrender of chief suspect Osama bin Laden. Despite intense pressure from Muslims within his own country, Musharraf committed Pakistan to the international anti-terror coalition. Rioting in Quetta and Peshawar, on the Afghan border, followed the first US military strike on Afghanistan. Musharraf downplayed the public sentiment against the US campaign and gave his support for 'short... targeted' military action, stating that 'Pakistan [had taken] the decision of being part of the world community and a part of a coalition to fight terrorism'. Soon after, Musharraf ejected three senior ministers (all linked to the 1999 coup) who were seen to support hardline Islamic sentiment.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's relations with India remained fraught over terrorism in Kashmir. Musharraf denied giving financial backing to terrorists, admitting only to 'moral, diplomatic and political support' for the Kashmiri 'freedom-fighters'. However, a suicide attack on 1 Oct. 2001 in Srinagar (the administrative centre of Indian-controlled Kashmir) resulting in 38 deaths, and a further terrorist attack on the Indian parliament building in New Delhi on 13 Dec. 2001, forced the Pakistani president into action. Musharraf banned the two militant Islamic organizations linked to the attacks, the Jaish-e-Mohammed and the Lashkar-e-Taiba. Military tension across the Line of Control (the border between the Indian-occupied and Pakistani-occupied areas of Kashmir) increased throughout Dec. 2001 with a mass mobilization of troops on both sides. India produced a list of Pakistani terrorist suspects, demanding that they be handed over for trial. Although not meeting this demand, Musharraf ordered a series of arrests as part of a domestic clamp-down and gave a ground-breaking address in Jan. 2002 denouncing extremism and condemning terrorist actions related to Kashmir. Well received by the USA, the speech made less impact in India. An attack on an Indian army base in Indian-controlled Kashmir in May, killing 31, undermined the confidence which Musharraf sought to build. Although Musharraf gave a second speech denouncing terrorism, he also went ahead with a series of missile tests between 25–28 May, provoking international criticism.

In a referendum held on 30 April 2002, 97.7% of the votes cast were in favour of extending Musharraf's presidential rule by 5 years. Following the referendum, Musharraf reconstituted a National Security Council giving him, as chairman, power to override prime ministerial decisions once a new, democratically-elected government had been installed. Following parliamentary elections held in Oct. 2002, the pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) emerged as the largest party with 117 seats.

In March 2003 Pakistan and India both held tests of short-range nuclear-capable missiles. The tests followed soon after India had blamed Pakistan for a massacre of 24 Hindus in Kashmir. In the same month the USA granted US\$250 m. of aid to Pakistan, ending the last of its sanctions against the country implemented after Musharraf's seizure of power in 1999. The aid was perceived as key to Pakistan's further co-operation in the US-led war against terrorism. Relations with India showed signs of improving from early May 2003. Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee declared his intention of restoring full diplomatic links which Musharraf welcomed and promised to reciprocate. By late 2003 relations had improved greatly; both sides declared a ceasefire across the Kashmir Line of Control, transport and sporting links were restored, and from Jan. 2004 direct flights were resumed. Pakistan hosted a meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) in Jan. 2004, at which Musharraf met with Vajpayee and agreed to open direct talks on Kashmir. Musharraf's offer to drop demands for a Kashmiri referendum was welcomed by the international community and India. Following the election of a new Congress-led Indian government in May 2004, the two countries continued to engage in regular dialogue, and in April 2005 Musharraf visited New Delhi for informal talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Also in April, a bus service between Pakistani- and Indian-administered Kashmir (Muzaffarabad–Srinagar) began for the first time in nearly 60 years.

In Dec. 2003 Musharraf survived an assassination attempt in Islamabad, an attack he blamed on Islamic extremists. Despite internal opposition, he nevertheless consolidated his hold on political power during 2004. In April, parliament approved the new military-led National Security Council, thereby institutionalizing the role of the armed forces in civilian affairs. The following month, Pakistan was readmitted to the Commonwealth. Then in Dec. 2004, despite having promised to relinquish the role, Musharraf announced that he would continue as head of the Army.

In Oct. 2005, following a co-ordinated terrorist attack in the Indian capital of New Delhi by suspected Islamic militants, Musharraf condemned the atrocity and called for the demilitarization of Kashmir. In July 2006, terrorist bomb attacks on commuter trains and railway stations in Mumbai killed 200. The Indian government blamed Pakistan's intelligence services and diplomatic relations were frozen until a resumption of ministerial contacts in Jan. 2007.

Political opposition to Musharraf's regime intensified in 2007. In March the president suspended Pakistan's Chief Justice, Iftikhar Chaudhry, triggering widespread popular demonstrations and strikes. Then in July security forces stormed a mosque in Islamabad that was being occupied by radical anti-government students, resulting in around 100 deaths and fuelling Islamist anger across the country. Musharraf meanwhile continued to block the return of exiled opposition leaders Sharif and Bhutto (although he reportedly held secret negotiations with the latter in Abu Dhabi). In Oct. Musharraf was re-elected as president (although still head of the Army) by an electoral college comprising the national and provincial assemblies. Representatives of the Pakistan People's Party abstained in the election in response to Musharraf's agreement to grant an amnesty to PPP leader Bhutto. The following month Musharraf declared emergency rule, suspending the constitution and detaining opposition politicians and members of the judiciary. Pakistan was again suspended from the Commonwealth as a result. He then stood down as Army chief prior to his inauguration for a second presidential term and, in mid-Dec., lifted the state of emergency ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for Jan. 2008.

Bhutto had meanwhile returned to Pakistan, but was assassinated on 27 Dec. in a suicide attack at an election rally in Rawalpindi, sparking violence among her supporters across the country. Government complicity in the attack was suspected, although Musharraf blamed Islamist extremism. In the subsequent parliamentary elections (postponed until 18 Feb.), the pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) came third to the opposition PPP and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz Sharif). Sharif, who had previously returned from exile, and Asif Ali Zardari, husband of Bhutto and new PPP leader, reached an agreement in March to form a new coalition government.

In early Aug. 2008 Sahrif and Zardari formally appealed to Musharraf to leave office or face a parliament-led impeachment. On 16 Aug. the coalition leaders announced a 72-h deadline for him to stand down. Musharraf announced his resignation in a televised address to the nation on 18 Aug. 2008.

Later Life

His resignation was followed by a self-imposed exile in London. In Oct. 2010 Musharraf established a centre-right political party, the All Pakistan Muslim League (ALPM). Musharraf returned to Pakistan in March 2013 to seek the presidency in the election in July. However, the following month he was disqualified from running and since June 2013 has faced several charges in connection with the murder of Benazir Bhutto, for military operations conducted under his tenure and for treason.

In March 2014 Musharraf was charged with treason, having been accused of unlawfully suspending the constitution in 2007. He was permitted to leave the country in March 2016 to receive medical treatment but still faced the treason and Bhutto murder charges.

In Feb. 2017 Musharraf launched a new career as a political analyst on a television talk show.

Mwanawasa, Levy (Zambia)

Introduction

Representing the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), Levy Patrick Mwanawasa assumed the presidency in 2002, the chosen successor of his

predecessor Frederick Chiluba. Having won a disputed election in 2001 (legal challenges to which were not finally resolved until early 2005), his main challenges were tackling corruption and alleviating food shortages. He was re-elected for a second term in Sept. 2006 but died suddenly in Aug. 2008.

Early Life

Mwanawasa was born on 3 Sept. 1948 in Mfulira, the Copperbelt region, in what was Northern Rhodesia. He studied law at the University of Zambia, graduating in 1973. Politically active in student politics, he joined the protests against the remaining colonial powers in Southern Africa, becoming vice-president of his university student union. He set up his own law firm in 1978.

From 1982–83 he was vice-president of the Zambian law society. This led to his appointment as Zambian solicitor general in 1985, a position he held for a year. In 1989 he successfully defended several politicians accused of leading a coup against the then president Kenneth Kaunda. With an increased profile, he joined Chiluba's newly formed MMD opposition party, becoming party vice-chairman in 1991. In national elections of the same year, Chiluba took the presidency and Mwanawasa was appointed vice-president.

In Dec. 1991 he was involved in a car accident that saw him hospitalized for 3 months and left him with permanent side effects, including slurred speech. He remained vice-president, but citing rampant corruption within the government, resigned in 1994. 2 years later, he unsuccessfully challenged Chiluba for the party leadership, and subsequently left politics to continue his legal career.

Re-elected in 1996, President Chiluba attempted to change the constitution to allow him to stand for a third consecutive term. In protest, some MMD members left the party to form the Forum for Democracy and Development. When Chiluba failed in his bid to continue in office, the MMD was forced to look for a party candidate. Some were surprised when Mwanawasa, uninvolved in politics since his resignation in 1994, was chosen. Since Chiluba remained MMD leader, the opposition cast doubts on Mwanawasa's impartiality. In the elections of Dec. 2001 he secured the presidency but with only 28.8% of the vote.

Career Peak

The opposition claimed the election was rigged. All parties refused to attend Mwanawasa's inauguration and, although the High Court initially declined to investigate electoral fraud, three opposition parties mounted a legal challenge to the results. Revelations of corruption under Chiluba emerged in the trial. In an attempt to distance himself from Chiluba's legacy, Mwanawasa launched an anti-corruption campaign. In July 2002 parliament voted to remove the former president's immunity from prosecution. In Jan. 2003 Mwanawasa announced plans to appoint several opposition politicians to ministerial posts.

Following poor harvests in 2001, around 3 m. people needed food aid in Zambia, mirroring conditions across Southern Africa. In 2002 Mwanawasa appealed for international help, but became embroiled in a dispute over genetically-modified (GM) crops. In Oct. 2002 he rejected the use of GM crops as food aid, even if the grain was milled before use, as had been accepted in neighbouring countries. Despite growing criticism from his own people and the international community over delayed distribution, Mwanawasa requested a US\$50 m. World Bank loan to buy organic maize.

In Aug. 2003 the president survived a motion in parliament to impeach him for corruption and other violations of the constitution. In the same month there was a general strike involving 120,000 public sector workers and civil servants over pay and allowances. In early 2005 the Supreme Court finally rejected opposition legal action against the 2001 election results. In July Mwanawasa defeated a challenge to his leadership of the MMD at the party's convention from the former vice-president Enoch Kavindele.

In 2005, while drought again forced the government to appeal for international food aid, the World Bank approved a debt relief package writing off more than 50% of Zambia's debt. The economy received a further boost in Oct. 2006 when Mwanawasa announced that oil reserves had been discovered in the west of the country, and in Feb. 2007 when the visiting president of China inaugurated a mining investment project in Zambia's copperbelt.

Despite suffering a minor stroke in April 2006, Mwanawasa recovered sufficiently to run successfully for re-election the following Sept. International observers commended the overall conduct of the poll, despite opposition protests. He won widespread praise from the international community when he became one of the first African leaders to condemn the regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, describing its economy as 'a sinking Titanic'. He was expected to continue his criticism of the Zimbabwean government at a

meeting of the African Union in Egypt in June 2008. However, he suffered a stroke a few hours before the summit began and died on 19 Aug. 2008.

Nagy, Imre (Hungary)

Introduction

Imre Nagy was the Communist leader of Hungary between 1953 and 1955 and for the duration of the Hungarian uprising against the Soviets in Oct.–Nov. 1956. A reformer who desired Hungarian independence from the Soviet Union, he was arrested in the aftermath of the Hungarian uprising and executed 2 years later.

Early Life

Nagy was born on 7 June 1896 in Kaposvár, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He laboured as a locksmith's apprentice until he fought for the Austro-Hungarian army in World War I. He was captured by Russian troops, became a Bolshevik and served in the Red Army, and was briefly a member of Béla Kun's post-war Bolshevik government in Hungary. Following the collapse of Kun's regime, Nagy fled the country but returned in 1921 to assist in the organization of the illegal Hungarian Communist Party. However, following his arrest, he fled to Moscow in 1929 and remained there until 1944.

During his Russian exile, Nagy attended the Moscow Institute to study agriculture. By the time he returned to Hungary the country was under Soviet occupation and he became an important figure in the setting up of the post-war government. He was Minister of Agriculture, 1945–46, and oversaw a number of reforms that empowered the peasants at the expense of large landowners. Later on he held the positions of Minister of the Interior and Parliamentary Speaker but when Mátyás Rákosi came to power he fell out of favour and was excluded from the party in 1949. He returned to the Politburo 2 years later but only after publicly renouncing his earlier criticisms.

Career Peak

During Rákosi's tenure, Nagy rose to become Deputy Premier and, following Stalin's death and the succession of Georgii Malenkov in the Soviet Union, he found himself once again in favour and became Premier in 1953. Nagy instigated liberal reforms, notably the easing of agricultural collectivization. He also permitted greater freedom of movement for workers, dispensed with labour camps, oversaw the increase in the availability of consumer goods and reduced the more extreme police powers. He was fiercely independent in the face of Soviet intervention and, whilst popular in Moscow in the immediate aftermath of Stalin's reign of tyranny, he fell foul of political manoeuvrings in Russia in 1955. He was forced to resign the premiership, was again ejected from the party and took up a teaching position.

1956 saw popular discontent grow in Hungary, boosted by events in Poland including the emergence of the liberal Władysław Gomułka as leader. Student protests took place in Budapest in late Oct. and were violently suppressed by troops on 23 Oct. Nagy was installed as Premier on that evening in the hope that he could successfully mediate between Moscow and the protesters. Nagy went into action immediately, outlawing the one-party system and offering amnesty to the protesters. He also believed he had reached agreement for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungarian soil but, when Moscow reneged on the deal, he withdrew his country from the Warsaw Pact and proclaimed Hungarian neutrality.

On 4 Nov. 1956 Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest. Nagy made a radio broadcast pleading for Western assistance, saying that 'the whole world will see how the Russian armed forces, contrary to all treaties and conventions, are crushing the resistance of the Hungarian people'. The West, itself operating in a climate of mistrust following the Suez Crisis earlier in the year, did nothing. Nagy sought refuge in the Yugoslav Embassy but, having been promised safe passage, was kidnapped along with a group of fellow resisters. They were taken to Romania and then later returned to Hungary, where they were pressurised to accept the regime of János Kádár. Nagy refused and, following a secret trial, was executed in Budapest on 16 June 1958.

Exactly 31 years to the day after his death, as the Hungarian communist regime was in its final throes, Nagy's life was publicly celebrated in

Budapest's Heroes Square and he was given a martyr's burial. Since then a number of official Soviet documents have emerged that seem to confirm that Nagy acted as an agent for the KGB (the Soviet secret police) for a considerable part of his career though it has been argued that this was a far from unusual scenario among comparable figures in that era of Communism. He remains one of the great figures of the 1956 Hungarian uprising, admired for his liberalism and the challenge he presented to the Soviet authorities.

Nailatikau, Epeli (Fiji)

Introduction

Ratu Epeli Nailatikau was sworn into office on 5 Nov. 2009, having been acting president for the previous 3 months following the resignation of Ratu Josefa Iloilo on 30 July 2009.

Early Life

Nailatikau was born on 5 July 1941 to a family of politically powerful chieftains. After completing his education in Fiji, he joined the armed forces and was sent for training in New Zealand. In 1966 he was posted with the 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment to Sarawak, Malaysia during the Indonesia–Malaysia confrontation. On his return to Fiji, he joined the Fiji Infantry Regiment, rising steadily through the ranks. By 1987 he was a Brigadier-General and Commander of the Royal Fiji Military Forces but was ousted in a military coup headed by Sitiveni Rabuka.

Pursuing a new career in the diplomatic service, Nailatikau completed the foreign service programme at the University of Oxford and was appointed High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, a portfolio that also included Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Israel and the Holy See. He went on to become Roving Ambassador and High Commissioner to the member states of the South Pacific Forum and, in 1999, was appointed permanent secretary for foreign affairs and external trade.

Following a coup in 2000, which he had strongly opposed, Nailatikau was nominated as prime minister in the subsequent interim military government of Commodore Frank Bainimarama. However, within 24 h Nailatikau had withdrawn in favour of Laisenia Qarase, instead taking the posts of deputy prime minister and minister for Fijian affairs. At the 2001 general election he put himself forward as speaker of the House of Representatives, a post he held until 2006. On 14 June 2005, Nailatikau was appointed the UNAIDS (The United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS) Special Representative for the Pacific. Outspoken in his campaign to tackle the AIDS crisis, he attracted controversy when he called for a public endorsement of safe sex.

In Jan. 2007 Nailatikau joined Bainimarama's interim government, formed in the wake of another coup d'état in Dec. 2006. He served as minister of foreign affairs, international co-operation and civil aviation. On 10 April 2007 he was nominated as vice-president by the newly reinstalled President Iloilo but his appointment was rejected by the Grand Council of Chiefs. Nailatikau took over the portfolio for provincial development and multi-ethnic affairs from Prime Minister Bainimarama in Oct. 2008, with his previous duties reassigned to the premier.

Nailatikau became vice-president on 17 April 2009 following a constitutional crisis in which the appeal court ruled that the military regime formed in 2006 was illegal, prompting Iloilo to repeal the constitution and sack the appeal court judges. With Bainimarama restored to the premiership, Nailatikau took over the presidency on 30 July 2009 in an acting capacity, until 5 Nov. 2009 when he was sworn in as Iloilo's successor.

Career Peak

Nailatikau's appointment, made behind closed doors, signalled that the military would continue to play a pivotal role in Fijian politics. On 29 Jan. 2010 he signed an extension of the public emergency regulation, in place since April 2009 to give power to the authorities to stop events they deemed a threat to national security. He was reappointed as president for a further 3 years in Nov. 2012. A new constitution was signed into law by Nailatikau in Sept. 2013.

Nailatikau's presidential term ended on 12 Nov. 2015 when Jioji Konousi Konrote was sworn in as president, having been elected by parliament in Oct.

Najib Razak (Malaysia)

Introduction

Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak became prime minister on 3 April 2009, replacing Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi following the poor showing of the Barisan Nasional (National Front Coalition) at the general election of March 2008. Najib had replaced Badawi as head of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the senior party in the coalition, in March 2009. Although Najib won a further term in office in May 2013, the Barisan Nasional lost its majority at the following elections on 9 May 2018.

Early Life

Najib was born on 23 July 1953 in Kuala Lipis, Pahang, into a political family. His father was independent Malaysia's second prime minister and his uncle was its third. Najib was educated at St John's Institution, Kuala Lumpur, and at Malvern College in England before graduating from the University of Nottingham in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in industrial economics.

In 1976 he became Malaysia's youngest member of parliament when he stood uncontested for his late father's seat of Pekan. In his first year as an MP, Najib was appointed deputy minister of energy, telecommunications and posts. He was later appointed deputy minister of education and deputy minister of finance. In 1981 he joined UMNO's Supreme Council and the following year became the Menteri Besar (Chief Executive) of Pahang state.

Najib became vice president of UMNO Youth in 1982, a post he also held from 1987–93. Having lost his Pekan parliamentary seat, he regained it at the elections of 1986 and was appointed minister of culture, youth and sports. He went on to hold several other cabinet portfolios including defence and education. On 7 Jan. 2004 Najib was selected as Badawi's deputy and given the defence portfolio. In July 2004 he stood unopposed for the vice presidency of UMNO.

Although Barisan Nasional won the election of 2008, it was with a much reduced majority. Badawi named Najib as his likely successor and on 17 Sept. 2008 Najib was handed the finance portfolio as part of a gradual power transfer. On 26 March 2009 he stood unopposed for the UMNO presidency, ensuring him the post of prime minister when Badawi resigned on 2 April 2009.

Career Peak

In his first term Najib promised reform but was confronted with a severe economic downturn, a divided UMNO and the increasing unpopularity of a government accused by opponents of corruption and complacency. On the economic front he unveiled details in March 2010 of a new model intended to more than double per capita income by 2020, promote greater private-sector investment and revise a controversial ethnically-based affirmative action policy. However, he also generated controversies relating to allegations of an ongoing political conspiracy against former deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim (who was later jailed for 5 years in Feb. 2015), the murder of a Mongolian woman in which several associates (including his wife) were implicated, and problems with the national service programme that he devised and in which several conscripts died.

At the parliamentary election of 5 May 2013 Najib nonetheless led Barisan Nasional to victory again (but with less than 50% of the popular vote), winning 133 seats to the 89 of the People's Front coalition. He was sworn in for a second term as prime minister the following day.

Although Najib had promised in 2012 to repeal the long-standing Internal Security Act—legislation widely regarded as draconian—it remained in place, and in April and Dec. 2015 parliament approved further controversial anti-terrorism and arbitrary security measures.

Najib has also been implicated in a major financial scandal involving 1Malaysia Development Berhad, a state investment fund. In Jan. 2016 the attorney general controversially cleared him of any wrongdoing but he has continued to attract criticism both at home and abroad. In Nov. that year, undeterred by arrests of opposition activists and curbs on media sources, thousands of protesters marched in Kuala Lumpur demanding that Najib step down as prime minister.

Despite the growing hostility towards his government, which generated the formation of a new opposition coalition under the ageing former UMNO prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, Najib called an election for 9 May 2018. Barisan Nasional registered its worst-ever electoral performance, paving the way for Mahathir to assume the premiership on 10 May 2018.

Nano, Fatos (Albania)

Introduction

Fatos Nano was prime minister three times (1991, 1997–98, 2002–05). He was Socialist Party chairman from the party's creation in 1991. A liberal economist, he was a major force in post-communist Albanian politics. His career was marred by acrimonious relations with the founder of the Democratic Party, Sali Berisha.

Early Life

Nano was born in Tirana in 1952. He studied Political Economy at Tirana University where he remained as a professor for 10 years. In 1990 he was invited by the government to advise on the restructuring of the heavily centralized economy along free market lines. He was also involved in the transformation of the Labour Party, the only legal party from 1948 until 1990, which was renamed the Socialist Party of Albania (PSS). This new party, of which Nano was elected chairman in June 1991, declared its commitment to liberalization, allowing the opposition parties to contest the 1991 elections.

Career Peak

In Feb. 1991 President Ramiz Alia appointed Nano prime minister with the responsibility of preparing the first pluralist elections in March, which the PSS won. Nano's government embarked on a programme of privatization and political and economic reforms, most notably of the banking system. Diplomatic relations were established with the USA and the EC. However, change was too slow for public opinion and Nano's government was forced to resign in June amid widespread demonstrations and strikes. Elections were held in March 1992 and a landslide victory brought the Democratic Party (PDS) to power. The new president, Dr. Sali Berisha, accused Nano and the previous president, Ramiz Alia, of corruption and the 'appropriation of Italian aid'. Nano was sentenced to 13 years and imprisoned in March 1993.

The unrest resulting from the collapse of fraudulent pyramid investment schemes in 1997 forced the PDS government's resignation and Nano's release from prison. In June the PSS triumphed in elections, initiating Nano's second term in office. His attention turned abroad to the issue of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and he met Yugoslav President Milošević at the Crete Summit in Nov. 1997, provoking criticism at home and from Kosovan leaders. Nano was also criticised by European leaders for allowing the transit of arms for Kosovan Albanians.

Widespread violence and disorder in early 1998, centred in the northern town of Shkodër, led to the PDS boycott of Parliament and claims of opposition involvement. The murder of Azem Hajdari, a prominent PDS politician and anti-Communist activist, on 12 Sept. 1998 sparked violent demonstrations in Tirana and an attempted coup. The PDS claimed that Nano directly ordered the assassination as revenge for Hajdari's part in the ousting of the first Nano administration in 1991. Nano's disappearance on the 13–14 Sept. and his failure to show decisive leadership weakened his popular support. Allegations of heavy drinking hastened his departure on 29 Sept., after he failed to form a new cabinet.

The factionalism that threatened the survival of the Socialist Party came to a head in Jan. 1999 with the resignation of Nano as chairman but he was re-elected by a tight margin at the PSS congress in Oct., forcing the resignation of Pandeli Majko, his successor as prime minister.

Iler Meta, Majko's successor, was ousted in Jan. 2002, largely because of Nano's refusal to confirm cabinet appointments. Meta claimed the chairman was using an anti-corruption platform to further his own aspirations for the presidency. Under pressure from EU leaders, Nano came to an unexpected agreement with his main rival, Berisha, whereby neither stood for the presidency. The election of Alfred Moisiu in June allowed Nano to return as prime minister in July, promising to crack down on crime and corruption and

maintain the political consensus reached with the PDS leadership. Nano also managed to mend some of the divisions within his own party by appointing both previous prime ministers, Meta and Majko, as foreign and defence ministers respectively.

In Jan. 2003 Nano's government was rewarded with Stabilization and Association Agreement talks with the EU's Council of Foreign Ministers, seen as the first step towards EU membership.

Berisha attacked Nano's administration as corrupt and, with the economy struggling, Nano and his Socialists were defeated at the general elections of Sept. 2005.

Napolitano, Giorgio (Italy)

Introduction

In May 2006 Giorgio Napolitano became the first former communist to be elected president of Italy. Appointed senator for life by his predecessor, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, in Oct. 2005, Napolitano was Italy's 11th post-war president and held office until Jan. 2015.

Early Life

Giorgio Napolitano was born in Naples on 29 June 1925. In 1942 he enrolled at the University of Naples Federico II to study law. Whilst there, he founded an anti-fascist communist group which took part in the Italian Resistance Movement in 1943. In 1945 Napolitano became a member of the Italian Communist Party (PCI). He graduated from university in 1947.

In 1953 Napolitano was elected to the Chamber of Deputies. He was later elected to the national committee of the PCI but the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 prompted a split in the PCI, with the party leadership branding the Hungarian rebels as counter-revolutionaries, while the Italian General Confederation of Labour, dominated by communists, defended the uprising. Napolitano gradually increased his influence within the party, becoming secretary of the federation in Naples in the early 1960s and co-ordinator of the secretary's office from 1966–69. He held a variety of posts during the 1970s and 1980s, and was variously responsible for economic policies and internal relations within the party.

When the PCI disbanded in 1991 Napolitano joined the social democratic party, Democrats of the Left. He went on to serve as president of the Chamber of Deputies from 1992–94 and minister of the interior from 1996–98. Subsequently, Napolitano was a member of the European Parliament from 1999–2004, and in Oct. 2005 was appointed senator for life by then president Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

Career Peak

The centre-left experienced some hostility to its nomination of Napolitano for president, with former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi refusing to back him because of his communist past. Nonetheless, Napolitano was elected on 10 May 2006 after a fourth round of voting, taking 543 of a possible 1,009 votes. He was sworn in on 15 May 2006. In 2009 tensions arose between Napolitano and prime minister Berlusconi over the case of a coma patient whose family had obtained a court ruling to allow her life support to be removed after 17 years. Napolitano blocked an emergency decree issued by Berlusconi to prevent the alleged euthanasia from taking place claiming it would be unconstitutional to overrule the court's decision.

Napolitano was re-elected president on 20 April 2013, winning 738 votes to Stefano Rodotà's 217. In the process he became Italy's first ever second-term president. Faced with continued economic hardship and rising unemployment rates, Napolitano immediately began consultations with Italy's largest political parties and both parliamentary chambers in order to forge a government equipped to tackle these issues. Napolitano subsequently asked Enrico Letta of the Democratic Party to form a government, which was sworn in on 28 April 2013.

With Italy's economy recovering at slower than expected pace, Letta resigned in Feb. 2014 having faced criticism from within his own party—in particular from party secretary Matteo Renzi. Napolitano accepted Letta's resignation and swore in a new government led by Renzi on 22 Feb. 2014.

Napolitano stepped down as president on 14 Jan. 2015, citing old age. At his resignation, he was Italy's longest-serving head of state. Pietro Grasso became acting president, with Sergio Mattarella taking over from him on a permanent basis in Feb. 2015.

Narasimha Rao, P. V. (India)

Introduction

Pamulaparti Venkata (P. V.) Narasimha Rao was the leader of the Congress (I) Party and prime minister of India between 1991 and 1996. He introduced a series of reforms to pull the country from its economic decline and open it up to a free global market. Although these measures were effective, his period in office was dogged by rising nationalist and fundamentalist sentiment as well as accusations of corruption. He resigned as leader of the Congress (I) Party in Dec. 1996, following their electoral defeat in May, amidst allegations of bribery.

Early Life

Narasimha Rao was born in Karimnagar (Andhra Pradesh region) on 28 June 1921, to wealthy agrarian parents. Unlike many of his contemporaries and predecessors (including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajiv and Indira Gandhi), Rao received his education exclusively within India, studying at Osmania University in Hyderabad as well as universities in Pune and Nagpur.

Enthused by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings, he was an activist for the Indian National Congress Party in its struggle to gain independence. In 1951 he became a member of the All India Congress Committee (to which he was appointed General Secretary in 1975–76) later joining the Legislative Assembly for the Andhra Pradesh region in 1957. Appointed to the regional state government in 1962, he was successively Minister for Law and Endowments, Law and Information, Health and Medicine, and Education. He became Chief Minister for the state between 1971–73, during which time he was elected to the Indian Parliament (1972).

He held ministerial positions under the reigns of both Indira and Rajiv Gandhi though he later admitted to feeling resentment at his "subservience" during this period. As well as occupying the posts of Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Defense and Minister for Human Resource Development, Rao was Minister for External Affairs between 1980–84, and again between 1988–89.

India's role as chair to the Non Aligned Movement increased Rao's importance and in 1983 he led the Special Non Aligned Mission in its attempt to resolve the Palestinian liberation conflict.

Following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on 21 May 1991, Rao was unanimously elected to the leadership of the Congress (I) Party.

Career Peak

The Congress (I) Party formed a minority government in 1991. Rao continued the Nehruvian tradition of secular and democratic government though he undertook a more radical economic policy.

Rao inherited a weak economy, with India's foreign exchange reserves so low that the repayment of international loans was impossible. Under the instigation of the then Minister of Finance, Manmohan Singh, Rao engineered the privatisation of many state-run industries, abolished regulations which had inhibited foreign trade and investment, and set about encouraging joint foreign ventures.

The New Industrial Policy of 24 July 1991 allowed western companies to invest and set up branches within India without restrictions. Technological joint ventures were also encouraged by the policy changes, harnessing the highly educated elite of India's working force. Other initiatives included the development of Assam, the disinvestment of holdings in the public sector and attempts to create employment opportunities within the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Nevertheless, the Party was severely undermined during its reign by opposition from nationalist groups. Facing a motion of no confidence on 28 July 1993, Rao's government survived by 265 votes to 251. In Jan. 1996 Ravinder Kumar, president of the Rashtriya Mukti Morcha Party, claimed that

opposition members had been bribed to vote against the no confidence motion. Following investigations, charges were brought against members of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Party and the Janta Dal Party, as well as Rao himself and cabinet colleague, Buta Singh.

The elections in April and May 1996 brought an end to both Rao's tenure as prime minister and the reign of the Congress (I) Party. Later in the year he was accused for his involvement in cheating an expatriate businessman of US\$100,000.

Rao (allegedly at the suggestion of Congress president, Sitaram Kesri) gave up his post on 20 Dec. 1996.

Later Life

After his resignation, Rao set about refuting the accusations made against him. On 12 Oct. 2000 he was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment with an accompanying fine of US\$2,150 following a conviction for criminal conspiracy, bribery and corruption. Along with Buta Singh (who received a similar sentence), Rao was granted bail and did not serve time in prison. A renowned intellectual (and chairman of the Telugu Academy from 1968–74) Rao also published two politically-based novels. He died in Dec. 2004.

Nasheed, Mohamed (Maldives)

Introduction

Mohamed Nasheed, popularly known as 'Anni' became the Maldives' first democratically elected president in Oct. 2008. Anni, a former political prisoner, defeated incumbent Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who had held office for 30 years, on a reform platform. After 3 years in office he was forced to resign in Feb. 2012 amid protests.

Early Life

Mohamed Nasheed was born on 17 July 1967 in Malé. He went to school in Sri Lanka and England before graduating from Liverpool John Moores University with a degree in maritime studies in 1989.

In 1990 Anni became a journalist in the Maldives with a current affairs magazine, *Sandhaanu*, where he earned a reputation for anti-government commentaries at a time when such criticism was rare. *Sandhaanu* was banned the following year and Anni was arrested, the first of 13 detentions for his opposition to Gayoom's administration. Amnesty International declared him a prisoner of conscience.

He was elected to the Citizens' Majlis (Parliament) in 2000 as the member for Malé, which was to become his central power base. In 2001, 6 months after his election, he was arrested and sentenced to two-and-a-half-years imprisonment for the theft of unspecified 'government property'. His supporters claimed the charge was politically motivated. After his release in 2003 Anni went into exile, firstly in Sri Lanka and then in Britain where, in Nov. 2003, he formed the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) with Mohamed Latheef. Anni was granted political asylum by the British government in 2004 but returned to Malé in April 2005.

On 12 Aug. 2005 he was arrested during a protest to mark the first anniversary of Black Friday (when anti-government protests ended in violent conflict with security forces). Anni was charged under the Terrorism Act but released in Sept. 2006 without trial following a British-brokered deal between the government and the MDP. Anni had been named chairperson of the MDP in absentia on 20 Dec. 2005.

He resigned as chairperson in Feb. 2008 to make a successful run for the MDP presidential candidature in the party's primary elections. In the first round of the presidential election on 8 Oct. 2008 Anni was placed second behind Gayoom, with 25% of the vote. With the support of the four defeated candidates in the run-off on 28 Oct. 2008, he received 54% of the vote and was sworn into office on 11 Nov. 2008.

Career Peak

On taking office Anni committed US\$350 m. to improve the quality of life for Maldivians and to create a 'sovereign wealth fund' to buy a new homeland should the country disappear as sea levels rise. Anni's challenges have

included maintaining the lucrative tourist trade, ensuring a fairer distribution of wealth and tackling the youth drugs culture.

In multi-party elections in May 2009, Anni's MDP narrowly came second to the opposition DRP, taking 26 of 77 parliamentary seats. Subsequent alleged attempts by the opposition-controlled parliament to disrupt government business led to serious political and legal upheaval in the latter half of 2010, prompting claims that the parliament was hijacking executive powers and preventing Anni's cabinet from performing its legal obligations.

On 16 Jan. 2012 Anni ordered the military to arrest Abdulla Mohamed, the Chief Justice of the Criminal Court. The arrest sparked a series of protests led by supporters of the former president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Faced with the prospect of escalating violence, Anni resigned on 7 Feb. The president stated that he was forced to resign 'at gunpoint' by police and army officers in a coup. Vice president Mohamed Hassan Manik was sworn in as the new president on the same day but Anni urged Hassan to stand down and called for immediate elections.

After his resignation Anni faced charges of abuse of power. He was subsequently arrested for ignoring a court summons and a travel ban, but released shortly afterwards. In Feb. 2013, fearing arrest again over his non-appearance in a local court, he sought refuge in the Indian High Commission in Malé. After reports of a deal brokered by India, Nasheed left the Indian mission 10 days later.

Later Life

In March 2015 Nasheed was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment after being found guilty on terrorism charges stemming from the imprisonment of a state judge during his tenure as president. However, he received support from his party and retained the presidency of the MDP—a position that he had held since Aug. 2014. Institutions including Amnesty International and the United States Department of State expressed conviction over his conviction, which is widely regarded as being politically motivated.

Nasser, Gamal Abdel (Egypt)

Introduction

Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser was Prime Minister and then President of Egypt from 1954–70. A radical Arab nationalist and socialist, he was the power behind an army coup in 1952 that heralded the end of the Egyptian monarchy. His nationalization of the Suez Canal led to Israeli and Anglo-French military action against Egypt in 1956, while his ambitions for an Egyptian-led union of Arab states added to the regional tensions leading up to the Six-Day War with Israel in 1967. The Arab defeat led briefly to Nasser's resignation, but he resumed the presidency until his sudden death in 1970.

Early Life

Nasser was born on 15 Jan. 1918 to southern Egyptian parents in the Bacos suburb of Alexandria. After his secondary schooling, he attended a law college for a few months and then entered the military academy in Cairo. Having graduated in 1938, he joined the Egyptian army. Together with a group of colleagues (including Muhammad Anwar Sadat, who was to succeed him as president of the republic in 1970), he formed a secretive revolutionary (and anti-British) organization called the Free Officers. The bitter experience of Egyptian defeat in the first Arab-Israeli War of 1948–49, and dissatisfaction with the corruption of King Farouk's regime, led the Free Officers to stage an almost bloodless coup in July 1952. Although the coup was led nominally by Gen. Muhammad Neguib, a respected senior officer and figurehead, Nasser controlled the Revolutionary Command Council that took power.

Career Peak

In 1953 Egypt was declared a republic, with Neguib as its first president. However, increasing tension and suspicion between Nasser and Neguib culminated in Nasser's assumption of the premiership in April 1954 and of presidential powers in Nov. 1954 when Neguib was finally deposed. In Oct. of

that year Nasser survived an assassination attempt in Alexandria by a member of the extremist Muslim Brotherhood. The organization was outlawed and its members imprisoned.

In Jan. 1956 a new constitution proclaimed Egypt a socialist Arab state under a one-party political system, with Islam as the official religion. On 23 June 1956 Nasser was officially elected president of the republic. In the same month the last British troops were withdrawn from Egypt in accordance with a bilateral agreement in 1954. This recognized the international importance of the Suez Canal and expressed the determination of both parties to uphold the 1888 Constantinople Convention on free and open access. Nasser's next move—the expropriation of the Canal—led in Oct. 1956 to Israeli military action against Egypt, with British and French collusion and subsequent participation. However, the strength of opposition in the international community allowed Nasser to turn a military failure into a political victory. Britain, France and Israel withdrew, and he emerged from the Suez crisis with enhanced prestige throughout the Arab world.

In 1958 Egypt and Syria formed the United Arab Republic, which in turn entered into a loose association with Yemen. However, this was as far as Nasser's wider ambitions for pan-Arab unity progressed. Syria withdrew from the UAR (and Yemen's association was dissolved) in 1961. Meanwhile, Nasser's implacable opposition to Israel, his criticism of the Western powers, and his strengthening of ties with the Soviet Union further added to the volatility of Middle East politics. For Egypt, the Arab defeat in the Six-Day War of 1967 resulted principally in its loss of the Sinai Peninsula to Israeli occupation. The career of an Arab leader of lesser stature than Nasser would have been destroyed by such a disastrous outcome. He did indeed try to resign, but popular opinion demanded that he remain in power.

On the wider international stage, Nasser was a leading figure in the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1950s and 1960s, along with India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Indonesia's Sukarno and Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito. The movement's advocacy of positive neutrality gave Nasser the opportunity to be a power broker in the politics of the post-colonial, developing world.

In domestic affairs, he pursued a socialist agenda. This included agrarian reform and land redistribution in favour of the peasant majority, and the establishment of educational programmes and health services. He was also responsible for the construction of the Aswan High Dam (built with Soviet aid), enhancing Egypt's agricultural and industrial development potential. However, his rule was also marked by authoritarianism, political repression, media censorship and bureaucratic inefficiency.

His death on 28 Sept. 1970 from a heart attack had a major impact throughout the Arab world. Millions of Egyptian citizens followed his funeral procession through Cairo—a testament to the regard in which he was held by the nation.

Nastase, Adrian (Romania)

Introduction

As the centrist prime minister of Romania, Adrian Nastase took office in Dec. 2000. He spent his entire political career in the post-communist era. His main challenges were tackling a faltering economy and combatting a growth in nationalism in order to fulfil his aim of gaining entry to the EU.

Early Life

Nastase was born on 22 June 1950 in Bucharest. A student of the University of Bucharest, he graduated in law in 1973, was awarded a master's in sociology in 1978 and a PhD in international law in 1987. From 1973 until 1990 he worked as a researcher at the Institute for Law Research at the Romanian Academy, Bucharest.

In June 1990 Nastase was made foreign minister in the post-communist government of President Iliescu. He remained in the post until Oct. 1992 when he became president of the chamber of deputies, remaining there until the end of Iliescu's presidency in late 1996. Nastase then became vice president of the chamber. In 1994 he had been appointed associate professor of public international law at the Sorbonne in Paris and between 1993 and 1997 he was executive president of the executive board of the Romanian Social Democratic Party. Iliescu returned as president in Dec. 2000 and

Nastase was made prime minister. On 19 Jan. 2001 he was voted president of the Social Democratic Party.

Career Peak

Nastase was opposed by the extreme right wing Greater Romania Party, which advocates anti-Gypsy, anti-Jewish and anti-ethnic Hungarian policies. Forced to rely on the cooperation of weaker centrist groups in parliament, Nastase faced severe obstacles in forcing through much needed social and economic reforms. His relationship with the president was uneasy and he was also under increasing international pressure to accelerate reform. Both Iliescu and Nastase were united in pushing for a greater role in the international community, and particularly membership of the EU. In 2002 Romania was given a target date of 2007 for entry into the EU and was one of seven European countries invited to join NATO in 2004. Nastase was defeated in elections in Dec. 2004 by opposition leader Traian Băsescu.

Later Life

In Jan. 2012 Romania's highest court found Nastase guilty of corruption and sentenced the former prime minister to 2 years in prison. Nastase was the highest-ranking former official to face prison for graft. In June 2012 Nastase shot himself in the neck when police came to his home to take him to jail to begin a 2-year sentence for corruption. He underwent surgery at a Bucharest hospital.

Natuman, Joe (Vanuatu)

Introduction

Joe Natuman was appointed prime minister on 15 May 2014 after his predecessor, Moana Carcasses Kalosil, lost a parliamentary confidence vote. A member of the Party of Our Land (Vanua'aka Pati), Natuman was the third person to hold the office since the general election of 2012.

Early Life

Natuman was born on 24 Nov. 1952 on the island of Tanna. He graduated from the University of the South Pacific in the Fiji Islands in 1978. He then entered the civil service, working his way through the ranks to serve as first secretary to the prime minister's office from 1987 until 1991. On leaving the service, Natuman returned to the University of the South Pacific to work as a registrar.

In 1995 he successfully stood as the Vanua'aka candidate for Tanna, a constituency he has served ever since. He subsequently held several senior positions in government, including two stints as minister of education (in 1998 and 2004). In 2010 he became minister for foreign affairs, external trade and communications in the government of Edward Natapei, before returning to the opposition benches when Sato Kilman came to power in June 2011.

In May 2014 a surprise vote of no-confidence was brought by the opposition against Prime Minister Moana Carcasses Kalosil. It was carried by 35 votes against 11 abstentions. In the subsequent vote to determine Kalosil's successor, Natuman—who was at that time serving as leader of government business—was the only nominee. He was endorsed by 40 of 52 votes cast.

Career Peak

In an address to the United Nations General Assembly on 29 Sept. 2014, Natuman said that Vanuatu faced an 'existential threat' and urged the international community to unite to address the issue of climate change.

He appointed a diverse cabinet on coming to power, including two former prime ministers. Among them was Sato Kilman, who took the foreign affairs portfolio. Kilman and Natuman have previously disagreed over the prominent local issue of West Papuan independence, with the latter supporting the population's right to self-determination.

Natuman was ousted in June 2015 after losing a parliamentary vote of no confidence by 27 votes to 25. Sato Kilman took office for a fourth time on 11 June.

Natuman returned to government in Feb. 2016 as deputy prime minister following the election of Charlot Salwai to the premiership.

Ndayizeye, Domitien (Burundi)

Introduction

Domitien Ndayizeye, a Hutu, took over the presidency in April 2003 as part of the Tutsi-Hutu power-sharing agreement brokered by Nelson Mandela at Arusha in 2001. Tensions between Tutsis and Hutus remained high, with 5% of the population having died in ethnic fighting since 1993, and Ndayizeye's aim of national unity was frustrated by the refusal of the Palipehutu-FNL, a Hutu rebel group, to recognize the power-sharing agreement. He was succeeded by Pierre Nkurunziza in Aug. 2005.

Early Life

Ndayizeye was born on 2 May 1953 in Murago, Kayanza in the north of the country. He was studying at the Kamenge technical school in Bujumbura in 1972 when a wave of Tutsi-led massacres forced him into exile in Belgium. In 1981, while still in exile, he graduated in electronic engineering. During this period he joined the Hutu Diaspora Movement (HDM).

In 1981 he went to Rwanda, remaining active within the HDM until returning to Burundi in 1993. The HDM evolved into the Hutu Front for Democracy in Burundi (Frodebu) and because of his political activities Ndayizeye was imprisoned in 1995 and again the following year. In 1996 Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, seized power in a coup. He deposed Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Burundi's third Hutu prime minister since Melchior Ndadaye became its first in 1993.

Buyoya agreed to engage Frodebu in peace talks, brokered firstly by Tanzania's former president, Julius Nyerere and later South Africa's former president, Nelson Mandela. Negotiations made little progress until 2001 when Mandela proposed a power-sharing 3 year long interim government. Buyoya would hold the presidency for the first 18 months with a Hutu as his vice-president. Power would then transfer to the vice-president, who in turn would appoint a Tutsi deputy, until democratic elections 18 months later.

Ndayizeye was named Buyoya's vice-president. As his tenure approached its end Buyoya pressed for a parliamentary debate to secure a further term but on 31 April 2003 power was handed peacefully to Ndayizeye.

Career Peak

The peaceful transfer of power confounded the expectations of many observers. However, the power-share was seriously undermined by the refusal of the two main Hutu rebel groups—the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD), the largest Hutu group, and the Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu (Palipehutu) and its military wing, the Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL)—to recognize the government's legitimacy. In the days immediately after Ndayizeye's inauguration there was fighting between the army and rebels around Bujumbura. In July 2003 violence had spread across the country and the FNL attacked Bujumbura, prompting calls by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni for a UN peacekeeping force to support the already operational African Union (AU) force.

Ndayizeye met with the CNDD-FDD, negotiating a settlement in Dar es Salaam in Nov. 2003. However, the FNL's leader, Pasteur Habimana, refused to negotiate with the Hutu president, suggesting that power still lay with the Tutsi-dominated army. The CNDD-FDD leader, Pierre Nkurunziza, and three of his associates were invited to join the government and on 8 Jan. 2004 Ndayizeye established a 33-member joint military command, which included 13 CNDD-FDD representatives. Later that month the FNL agreed to meet Ndayizeye in Amsterdam during the president's European fund-raising tour, which amounted to a multilateral pledge of US\$1.03 bn. for reconstruction.

In May 2004 the government's request for an extension to the transitional period was rejected by the foreign mediation team, which insisted on keeping

to the deadline of 1 Nov. The UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB) finally assumed responsibility for peacekeeping in early June, succeeding the AU's mandate. Palipehutu-FNL's refusal to negotiate and continuing attacks on the capital led to condemnation and sanctions from the leaders of the Great Lakes, who issued a 3-month ultimatum on 9 June.

In early 2005 Ndayizeye attracted opposition criticism as he sought an extension to his tenure, delaying elections scheduled for April in which he was forbidden to stand. He was eventually granted an extra 4 months, with elections to be held by 19 Aug. A new power-sharing constitution won popular backing in a referendum in March 2005. In April 2005 the FDD temporarily withdrew from the government following a dispute with Ndayizeye over the appointment of a new interior minister. Pierre Nkurunziza of the FDD was elected president by both houses of parliament in Aug. 2005.

Ndong Sima, Raymond (Gabon)

Introduction

Raymond Ndong Sima, a former minister of agriculture, was prime minister from 2012–14. He was appointed by President Ali-Ben Bongo in Feb. 2012 following the victory of the ruling Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) in parliamentary elections. Ndong Sima had combined careers in politics and private enterprise and was regarded as a key figure in Bongo's plan to diversify the economy. He was the first person from Gabon's less developed northern region to become prime minister.

Early Life

Ndong Sima was born on 23 Jan. 1955 in Oyem in the province of Woleu-Ntem in the north of Gabon. He was educated in Oyem, at Bessieux College in Libreville and in Algeria. In 1981 he received a master's degree in economics from the University of Paris IX-Dauphine in France. Returning to Gabon later that year, he worked as a researcher for the department of the economy.

In 1986, during an economic crisis, Ndong Sima joined the cabinet as minister for economy and planning. From 1992–94 he served as director general of the economy, managing Gabon's negotiations with the IMF and the World Bank. He was director of Hévégab, the state-owned rubber company, from 1994–98 and in the late 1990s was made director of Gabon's state railway operator, CECFT, serving until 2001. In 2003 he founded a private bus company.

In 2009, following the victory of Ali-Ben Bongo in presidential elections after the death of his father, Ndong Sima was appointed minister of agriculture, livestock, fisheries and rural development. He oversaw the introduction of a US\$1.3 m. agricultural development programme, backed by the European Union and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. In Dec. 2011 he won a seat in parliament for the ruling PDG, representing the constituency of Kye in Woleu-Ntem province.

With the PDG retaining power at the legislative election, the incumbent prime minister, Paul Biyoghé Mba, stepped down. President Bongo appointed Ndong Sima as his successor on 27 Feb. 2012, citing Ndong Sima's combination of business expertise and administrative experience as key to the appointment.

Career Peak

On becoming prime minister Ndong Sima made substantial changes to the administration, bringing 14 newcomers into ministerial and deputy ministerial posts. One of his principal tasks was to implement Bongo's 'Emerging Gabon' project to diversify the economy away from oil and to build up the services, industrial and environmental sectors.

However, towards the end of his tenure as prime minister his position within the administration had been weakened by the government's failure to stop a national teachers' strike. Following regional elections in Dec. 2013, president Ali Bongo Ondimba replaced Ndong Sima as new prime minister with Daniel Ona Ondo.

Ne Win (Myanmar)

Introduction

Ne Win twice led Burma (now Myanmar), seizing power each time in military coups. He headed a ruling military council from 1958–60 and in 1962 deposed President U Nu, first heading a revolutionary council and then formally assuming the presidency. He created a one-party state, ruthlessly suppressed opposition and pursued a disastrous national socialist economic agenda. His eccentric authoritarianism and record of human rights abuses had resulted in Burma's international isolation by the time he resigned from office in 1988.

Early Life

Ne Win was born as Shu Maung on 24 May 1911 in Paungdale in what was then the British colony of Burma (now Myanmar). In 1929 he began studying medicine at the University of Rangoon (Yangon) but failed to complete his course and instead became a postal clerk. He became active in the pro-democracy movement during the 1930s and, after Japan invaded the colony in 1941, he was one of the Thirty Comrades who received specialist military training in Japan.

Having taken on the name of Ne Win (*Brilliant as the Sun*) during this period, he became commander of the Burma National Army (BNA), a puppet organization of the Japanese. Soon tiring of Japanese interference, he led the BNA in a guerrilla war against the invading power from late-1944, culminating in the return of British authority by Aug. 1945.

Ne Win co-operated with the British powers until Burma won independence in 1948. Under the government of U Nu, the new nation lacked stability and ethnic fighting divided the country. In Feb. 1945 Ne Win was appointed chief-of-staff of the army to restore discipline in the armed forces. From 1948 he was home defence minister. U Nu's government failed to resolve Burma's problems and in 1958 Ne Win headed an interim military administration. Having called elections in 1960, he stood down to be replaced by U Nu's re-elected parliamentary government. Ethnic violence again dominated political life and in 1962 Ne Win deposed U Nu in a military coup.

Career Peak

Ne Win promised a new form of government based on 'political and economic mysticism'. firstly under his Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma and, from 1964, under the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP). The army-led BSPP was the only permitted political party and Ne Win adopted an authoritarian style, in which opposition forces risked torture and murder.

The one-party state was formalized in a constitution promulgated in 1973 and the following year Ne Win assumed the presidency. His 'Burmese road to socialism' was based on the expulsion of foreign investors and the nationalization of private enterprise. Having been among the world's most important rice exporters when Ne Win seized power, Burma's economy went into freefall and the black market thrived. There were numerous uprisings and coup attempts throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1981 he gave up the post of president but, as chairman of the BSPP, remained the *de facto* head of state. While the economy continued its decline, Ne Win's belief in numerology resulted in several eccentric policy decisions. He twice withdrew the currency and re-introduced notes in denominations of 45 and 90 *kyats* because they were divisible by his favoured number, 9. In 1987 food shortages resulted in protests. In July 1988 Ne Win resigned and the BSPP remodelled itself as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

Later Life

Despite stepping down from office, many observers considered Ne Win to be a major force behind SLORC, and the pro-democracy movement which gained momentum following his resignation was brutally suppressed a few months later. However, his influence waned during the 1990s.

He suffered a heart attack in Sept. 2001, while living with his daughter, Sander Win. In early 2002 Sander Win, her husband and their three children were arrested on charges of plotting a military coup. The husband and children each received death sentences. Ne Win, though not formally implicated with the charges, was put under house arrest along with his daughter. He died on 5 Dec. 2002.

Nečas, Petr (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Petr Nečas, leader of the Civic Democratic Party, was sworn in as prime minister on 13 July 2010 at the head of a coalition government. He had previously served as deputy minister for defence and deputy prime minister.

Early Life

Nečas was born in Nov. 1964 in Uherské Hradiště in the southeast of the country, near the current Slovak border. From 1983 he studied physics at the University of Brno, undertaking post-graduate studies in natural sciences. In 1988 he became an engineering researcher for Tesla Rožnov, an electronics manufacturer.

In 1992 he joined Václav Klaus' recently formed Civic Democratic Party (ODS), serving on committees for defence, intelligence and foreign/EU relations. His first government post came in 1995 when Klaus appointed him deputy minister of defence. In 2006, after a series of electoral defeats for the party, Mirek Topolánek defeated Nečas in the race to succeed Klaus as ODS leader. Topolánek formed a minority government in which Nečas served as his deputy prime minister.

Topolánek's government collapsed after a confidence vote in 2009. He resigned as ODS chairman in 2010 and Nečas was elected in his place. Despite the ODS suffering a 15% drop in support at the May 2010 elections, Nečas was able to negotiate a centre-right conservative coalition with the Public Affairs party (VV) and TOP 09 to form a government in July 2010.

Career Peak

Having campaigned on a platform of reforming social benefit and fighting corruption, Nečas aimed for fiscal consolidation to reduce the public deficit and fulfil the criteria necessary to join the eurozone. He undertook a programme of austerity measures, including cutting public salaries by 10% and reducing expenditure on the health sector and pensions, and sought to save money by streamlining defence procurement procedures. In Dec. 2010 he also joined in criticism, led by the UK, of EU plans to raise its own budget. The coalition has since become more fractious, undermined by a corruption scandal that led to a split in Public Affairs (VV) and by popular discontent over the austerity measures. Nevertheless, Nečas' government narrowly survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote in April 2012 and formed a new coalition with TOP 09 and LIDEM-Liberal Democrats, which was founded in May 2012 by former members of VV.

In June 2013 the government became embroiled in yet another scandal involving allegations of corruption and abuse of power. Nečas opted to resign as it had become clear that the coalition would not survive a parliamentary no-confidence vote. He stayed on as the caretaker prime minister until Jiří Rusnok succeeded him.

Nehru, Jawaharlal (India)

Introduction

The first prime minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru laid the foundations for the modern country's infrastructure, economy and government. Imprisoned for his activities within the Indian National Congress during the fight for independence, Jawaharlal was a close friend of Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948), sharing many of the latter's ideals. He saw the future success of India as dependent on the maintenance of a secular, pluralistic democracy, with a foreign policy that would keep India free from external influences, founding, along with leaders from 28 other developing countries, the Non-Aligned Movement. His daughter, Indira, became prime minister after his death.

Early Life

Jawaharlal Nehru was born in Allahabad on 14 Nov. 1889 into the family of Motilal Nehru, a prosperous and politically influential Brahman lawyer. Educated in England, the young Nehru studied at Trinity College, Cambridge before joining the Inner Temple, London. He returned to India in 1912 and joined the Allahabad High Court Bar.

In 1916 Nehru married Kamala Kaul and in the following year Indira was born. After meeting Mahatma Gandhi in Lucknow at the 1916 session of Congress, Nehru joined Gandhi's Satyagraha Sabha (non-violent movement).

In 1920 he was appointed to the Allahabad municipal assembly. His importance within Congress grew and between 1924–25 he was appointed General Secretary of the AICC. A year in Europe in 1926 shaped his socialist ideals.

In 1929 Nehru was elected President of the AICC. In 1942 he took over from Gandhi as the leader of the Congress Party. In the same year he was arrested for his participation in the Quit India Movement. As the British withdrew, Nehru became Prime Minister of an interim government and acted as chief negotiator of the Congress for the transfer of power. When India was granted independence on 15 Aug. 1947, he was sworn in as the country's first prime minister.

Career Peak

Jawaharlal Nehru's intention was to create a pluralistic and secular democracy that would incorporate the nation's many languages and religious minorities.

With independence came the dispute over the contested region of Jammu and Kashmir, and subsequently the first of many conflicts between India and the newly formed Pakistan. But Nehru succeeded in absorbing the many regal states although in the case of Hyderabad this required military force.

Following the pattern of Soviet government, he introduced a series of 5 year plans, beginning a process of industrialisation and investment in the public sector. Somewhat neglecting the advancement of agriculture (the premise of Gandhi's vision), Nehru had to fall back on food aid from the US.

Realising the dangers posed by the Cold War, Nehru co-founded, with leaders Nasser and Tito, the Non-Aligned Movement. By this means India was able to receive aid from the Russian and American power blocs, whilst remaining free from creating military alliances.

In 1961 Nehru oversaw the acquisition of Goa from the Portuguese. The following year saw the eruption of further territorial disputes in the Indo-Chinese War. Border incursions by Chinese troops in the region of Arunachal Pradesh provoked a series of skirmishes in Sept. 1962. Announcing a ceasefire on 21 Nov., the Chinese drew back their forces, but only after the death of around 1000 Indian soldiers. Nehru was blamed for this disaster. It was said that his impetuosity in ordering the Chinese to "be thrown out" prompted pre-emptive measures by the neighbouring country. The 2 years between the Indo-Chinese War and Jawaharlal's death on 27 May 1964, saw the extensive re-building of India's armed forces.

Nehru was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was able, following the military revisions made in the last stage of Nehru's leadership, to successfully combat the Pakistanis in the second Indo-Pakistani War of 1965.

India's first Prime Minister has come under heavy criticism since his death, perhaps most obviously for the rigid trade restrictions which held up foreign investment. He was, however, a popular leader, voted in successively by large majorities.

Nepal, Madhav Kumar (Nepal)

Introduction

Madhav Kumar Nepal became prime minister on 25 May 2009 when he was elected by parliament to replace Pushpa Kamal Dahal, who had resigned. The former general secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal/Unified Marxist-Leninist, Madhav Nepal headed a 22-party coalition.

Early Life

Madhav Nepal was born on 6 March 1953 in the southern Nepalese district of Rautahat. He studied at Sitamarhi in Bihar and graduated in commerce from Tribhuvan University in 1973. He joined the underground Marxist Leninist

communist movement in 1969, and in 1971 became a district committee member of the Nepal Revolutionary Coordinating Committee (Marxist Leninist), otherwise known as the ANCRCC (ML). He pursued a career in banking and then in the civil service before taking up politics full-time.

In 1978 the ANCRCC (ML) legitimized itself as the Communist Party of Nepal/Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML), with Madhav Nepal elected to its politburo. From 1991–99 he was the CPN-UML leader of the opposition and served as deputy prime minister in the CPN-UML minority government of 1994–95. He argued against mobilizing the army during the civil war and in 2005 he campaigned against the king's usurpation of executive powers. At the 2008 election Madhav Nepal lost the Kathmandu seat and his home town seat of Rautahat to Maoist candidates, prompting him to resign as party general secretary.

In May 2009 the Maoist premier, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, resigned in protest at the president's refusal to accept his dismissal of the army chief. Madhav Nepal was chosen by parliament to replace Dahal in an unopposed poll, boycotted by the opposition.

Career Peak

After becoming prime minister, he all but officially revoked the previous government's dismissal of the army chief. Attempts to pass the budget were obstructed by opposition parties unhappy with Madhav Nepal's lack of commitment to spending on agriculture and infrastructure. Meanwhile, he agreed to negotiations towards some level of independence for the Madhesi region in the south of the country. The premier succeeded in clearing Kathmandu of much of its street rubbish problem and he instigated plans to erect a monument to the republic.

He faced three key challenges: to establish a new constitution; to reintegrate and resettle ex-Maoist combatants (19,000 of whom were in UN-monitored cantonments in early 2010); and to ensure adherence to the comprehensive peace accord. In March 2010 the Maoist opposition showed signs that it would not co-operate with the government and there was speculation that a motion of no confidence was under preparation. Madhav Nepal tendered his resignation on 30 June saying he hoped it would 'pave the way for a political resolution and consensus that will complete the peace process and the new constitution'.

Neto, Agostinho (Angola)

Introduction

Doctor, poet and vociferous opponent of Portuguese colonial rule, Agostinho Neto was president of Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA). He led the fight for independence during the 1960s and 70s and was the first president of independent Angola in 1975, but he failed to resolve the subsequent civil war before his death in 1979.

Early Life

Born the son of a Methodist minister in Bengo, Angola, Neto trained as a doctor in Portugal. He first emerged on the political scene as a result of the publication of a volume of poems which vehemently opposed the colonial rule of the Portuguese and celebrated indigenous Angolan culture. He was imprisoned from 1955–57 in Portugal, and upon his release returned to Angola and began to practise as a doctor. Because of his increasingly militant opposition to Portuguese rule he was arrested again in 1960. On this occasion Neto's patients protested in support of him, with the result that his captors opened fire on them, killing several and wounding 200.

Neto was confined to prisons in Portugal and Cape Verde for a further 2 years, but managed to escape to Morocco where he enlisted in the Angolan liberation movement.

Career Peak

By the end of 1962 Neto was voted president of the MPLA, a party he was to head until his death. The MPLA was one of several groups to fight against Portuguese occupation throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, winning independence in 1975. However the various factions began to turn against each other and civil war broke out. With the aid of Cuba and the USSR, Neto was

able to gain control of the central part of the country which included Luanda the capital. He was proclaimed the official President of Angola, but he was unable to bring an end to the conflict, and died in Moscow on 10 Sept. 1979 as war continued to blight his country.

Nguyen Minh Triet (Vietnam)

Introduction

Nguyen Minh Triet was elected president in 2006 and served until 2011.

Early Life

Nguyen Minh Triet was born on 8 Oct. 1942 into a farming family of the Phu An commune, Ben Cat district in the province of Binh Duong. He graduated in mathematics and political science before teaching mathematics in Saigon. Active in the leftist student movement Triet was admitted to the Communist Party in March 1965, becoming a full party member a year later.

He was appointed party chief of southern Song Be province in 1992, focusing on the economic development of the largely agricultural province. Ascending to the Politburo in 1997, Triet was appointed party head of Ho Chi Minh City in 2000. In this role he launched a crackdown against organized crime and corruption, overseeing the high-profile arrest and execution of underworld kingpin Truong Van Cam (also known as Nam Cam). Triet was elected national president by the National Assembly on 27 June 2006.

Career Peak

Triet's presidency focused on economic growth and development, and he did much to attract foreign investors. Under Triet, the USA, the country's historic enemy, was its single largest trading partner with bilateral trade valued at US\$7.8 bn. in 2005. George Bush made a state visit in 2006, reciprocated by Triet's visit to the USA in 2007, with both leaders keen to nurture future investment. While Vietnam's executive power predominantly resides with the party's general secretary, Triet's ceremonial duties were supplemented by his role as head of a judicial reform committee, seen as key to Vietnam's continuing development.

In July 2011, Triet's term expired and the National Assembly elected Senior Politburo member Truong Tan Sang as his successor.

Nguyen Tan Dung (Vietnam)

Introduction

Nguyen Tan Dung was appointed prime minister in June 2006. Seen as part of the new generation aspiring to leadership of Vietnam's single-party government, he has been a proponent of economic reform and liberalization. He was reappointed for a second term in Jan. 2011, but in Jan. 2016 he failed to secure a seat on the new central committee at the Communist Party's five-yearly congress, forcing him out of government on the expiry of his prime ministerial term in April that year.

Early Life

Nguyen Tan Dung was born in Ca Mau in the south of Vietnam on 17 Nov. 1949. While serving in the army he joined the Communist Party in 1967, and then enrolled in the elite Nguyen Ai Quoc Party School in 1981 to study political theory.

Dung advanced rapidly within the party, serving on influential committees and supporting Vietnam's 'doi moi' programme of economic reform to move the country towards a market economy. In Jan. 1995 he became deputy minister for home affairs and in May the following year he became the youngest person ever to be appointed to the politburo. Tipped as a future party leader, he was appointed deputy prime minister and also director of the

central committee's economic commission in charge of the party's finances in 1997. The following year he took over as governor of the state bank.

From 1998–2006 Dung was groomed for leadership by the then prime minister Phan Van Khai, a fellow modernizer. Appointed to a range of key party posts during that time, he oversaw the continuing liberalization of Vietnam's economy. Dung expanded foreign trade relations and prepared Vietnam's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). He was also given responsibility for tackling domestic corruption and organized crime. When Khai resigned the premiership, Dung was confirmed as prime minister by the National Assembly on 27 June 2006.

Career Peak

Dung reiterated his intention to proceed with economic and social reform. His first action was to replace several government figures who had been implicated in corruption. He sought to strengthen commercial links internationally, notably with the European Union. In Nov. 2006 Vietnam was approved for membership of the WTO and also hosted the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation meeting.

However, the economy remained in a malaise. In Nov. 2009 the government devalued the Vietnamese currency (for the third time since June 2008) by about 5% against the US dollar, at the same time increasing interest rates in a bid to dampen rising inflation. Vietnam also experienced a sharp decline in exports in 2009 and in Dec. that year the World Bank approved a loan worth US\$500 m. By 2011 the country was facing further increases in inflation, a weakening currency (devalued twice in 2010) and uncertainty over the country's financing that resulted in a credit rating downgrade in 2010.

During an official visit to Moscow in Dec. 2009, Dung announced multi-billion dollar contracts to buy submarines, fighter jets and other military hardware from Russia, as well as agreements on co-operation relating to oil and gas, mining and financial services.

Dung had been closely associated with the communist regime's strategy of building up large state-run conglomerates and he faced criticism in the National Assembly in 2010 over the financial collapse of Vinashin, the giant state-owned shipbuilder. Dung conceded that his administration was partly responsible for the inadequate supervision of the company's management. Despite speculation that his opponents would use the failure as a way of removing him from office, in Jan. 2011 the Communist Party congress gave him a second term as prime minister. However, against a background of continuing scandals in state-owned enterprises, the Communist Party secretary general's acknowledgment in Oct. 2012 that the government had failed to address corruption in its top ranks was widely viewed as an indictment of Dung's premiership.

In 2013 the government came under international scrutiny after issuing a decree banning internet users from discussing current affairs. In Oct. 2014 the USA partially eased its long-standing embargo on arms sales to Vietnam, reflecting the gradual improvement in bilateral ties since the mid-1990s.

At the Communist Party congress in Jan. 2016, Dung was unsuccessful in his attempt to replace Nguyen Phu Trong as secretary general, heralding an end to his political career on the expiry of his premiership in April.

Nikolić, Tomislav (Serbia)

Introduction

Tomislav Nikolić was elected president in May 2012. Once an ultra-nationalist, he reinvented himself as a moderate supporting Serbian EU membership while maintaining Serbian claims over Kosovo. He was due to leave office in late May 2017 following the election in April of Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić to be his successor.

Early Life

Born on 15 Dec. 1952 in Kragujevac, Nikolić was educated there and in Novi Sad. He worked in building construction from 1971–78 before taking up an investment and management role with a company in Kragujevac.

A member of the National Radical Party, in Feb. 1991 he oversaw its merger with the Serb National Renewal Party to form the ultra-nationalist Serb Radical Party (SRS). In the same year he became party vice-president under the leadership of Vojislav Šešelj and was elected to the National Assembly.

The SRS formed periodic alliances with the governments of Slobodan Milošević in the 1990s, endorsing military action in Bosnia and Kosovo and advocating the formation of a 'Greater Serbia'. Nikolić served as deputy prime minister of Serbia from March 1998–Nov. 1999 and deputy premier of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1999–2000. In 2000, 2003 and 2004 he launched unsuccessful bids for the national presidency, each time unsuccessfully.

In Feb. 2003 Nikolić took over the leadership of the SRS after Šešelj was indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). In 2007 he was briefly speaker of the National Assembly and in 2008 again stood for the presidency, losing narrowly to the incumbent Boris Tadić. In Sept. 2008 Nikolić broke with the SRS and formed the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) following Šešelj's accusations that he had betrayed SRS ideology by expressing support for EU accession rather than looking towards Russia as Šešelj advocated. Nonetheless, Nikolić did not abandon the nationalist agenda, arguing that Kosovo remained an integral part of Serbia and rejecting its declaration of independence in Feb. 2008.

In April 2011 Nikolić led an unsuccessful bid to bring about early elections amid growing public frustration at rampant corruption and the country's grave economic situation. He contested his fifth presidential election in 2012 and won despite controversy over his political and educational track records. He defeated Tadić in a second round of voting on 20 May 2012 and resigned the leadership of the SNS.

Career Peak

Nikolić was sworn into office on 31 May 2012 and had to contend with a struggling economy and high unemployment. He also faced opposition to Serbia's EU membership application, notably over the refusal to recognize Kosovo's independence. However, in April 2013 an EU-brokered agreement was reached whereby Serbia recognized Kosovan government authority over the province in return for a measure of autonomy for Serbs living in the territory. Consequently, formal talks on Serbia's EU accession bid were able to begin in Brussels in Jan. 2014. In April that year, following parliamentary elections, Nikolić designated SNS leader Aleksandar Vučić as the new prime minister. Following the April 2017 presidential election, Vučić succeeded him as president the following month.

Nishani, Bujar (Albania)

Introduction

Bujar Nishani was elected president by the Albanian parliament in June 2012, although the then main opposition Socialist Party (PS) boycotted the vote. He had previously served as a justice and interior minister in the Democratic Party of Albania (PD)-led coalition government under prime minister Sali Berisha.

Early Life

Bujar Nishani was born in Durrës on 29 Sept. 1966. He attended the Skënderbej Military Academy in Tirana, taking a teaching post there in 1988. In 1991 he joined the newly established centre-right PD, headed by Sali Berisha, who led his party to victory in the country's first free parliamentary election in March 1992.

The following year Nishani served as director of foreign affairs in the ministry of defence. While the PD made progress in opening up the economy, reforming institutions and promoting foreign investment, the administration became embroiled in allegations of corruption while much of the country remained in poverty. The collapse of government pyramid investment schemes in 1997 led to violent protests, almost sparking civil war in the south. The government resigned and a snap election was won comfortably by a Socialist-led coalition.

Nishani took a law degree at Tirana University before turning to municipal politics. In 2001 he was elected secretary of the PD's Tirana branch and 2 years later he was elected to the capital's municipal council. At the 2005 parliamentary election, he won a seat in Tirana as the PD returned to power.

Appointed interior minister in March 2007, he sought to modernize the country's institutions and championed an electronic ID card scheme. As

justice minister from Sept. 2009, after the PD had secured re-election in July that year, he attempted to tackle corruption in the justice system against a political backdrop of discontent fuelled by allegations of electoral fraud.

In April 2011 Nishani was reappointed minister of the interior, a post he kept until June 2012 when he was elected to replace Bamir Topi as president. Nishani was the only candidate put forward by the ruling coalition led by Berisha, with the Socialists boycotting the vote after several failures to agree an opposition candidate.

Career Peak

On taking office, Nishani prioritized reforming the justice system, public administration and the functioning of parliament as prerequisites for attaining EU candidate member status for Albania, which was subsequently granted in June 2014.

Following a majority victory at parliamentary elections in June 2013 by the leftist Alliance for a European Albania, headed by the Socialists, Nishani asked PS leader Edi Rama to form a coalition government that took office in Sept. that year.

On 24 July 2017 Ilir Meta succeeded him as president following the election 3 months earlier.

Nixon, Richard M. (United States of America)

Introduction

Richard Milhous Nixon was the 37th President of the United States. He served from Jan. 1969 until Aug. 1974. Nixon remains best known for his part in the Watergate scandal and is the only US president ever to resign. However, he also ended American involvement in the Vietnam War.

Early Life

Nixon was born on 9 Jan. 1913 in Yorba Linda, California to Francis A. and Hannah Milhous Nixon. Raised as a Quaker, Nixon won a scholarship to Duke University Law School in Durham, North Carolina after graduating from Whittier College in 1934. He then returned to Whittier and joined the town's oldest legal firm. Through his hobby of amateur dramatics he met a local schoolteacher, Thelma Patricia Ryan, whom he married in 1940.

In World War II, Nixon worked in a tire-rationing section before joining the navy. After the end of the war he was endorsed by the Republican Party as a candidate for Congress. He was elected in 1946, defeating his Democratic rival Jerry Voorhis.

Nixon served in the House for 4 years, sitting on the Committee on Education and Labor as well as a special committee that visited Europe to examine the effects of war on economy. He also served on the House Committee investigating Un-American Activities. In 1950 he won the Republican nomination to run for the Senate in California. Labelling his opponent, Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas, the 'pink lady' Nixon claimed the choice for the electorate was 'between freedom and state socialism'. Many disapproved of his campaign tactics, but Nixon won the election and became a senator in Dec. 1950.

Nixon quickly won a reputation as a fine orator and caught the attention of former Presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey, who was helping run Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidential campaign. It was Dewey who advised Eisenhower to make Nixon his running mate. Eisenhower and Nixon easily defeated the Democratic team of Adlai E. Stevenson and John J. Sparkman and in 1953 the 39-year-old Nixon was sworn in as the second youngest vice-president in history. He won re-election to the post, running alongside Eisenhower once again, in the 1956 presidential election.

During his two terms as vice-president, Nixon assumed some of Eisenhower's executive and ceremonial duties when the President suffered a heart attack in 1955, an operation in 1956 and a stroke in 1957. He also made trips abroad, visiting 56 countries in total. Nixon was the overwhelming choice for the Republican presidential nomination in 1960, but his bid to win office was thwarted by John F. Kennedy who defeated him by just over 100,000 votes and by 303 electoral college votes to 219. Nixon withdrew

from politics for 2 years before returning in a bid to secure the governorship of California in 1962. However he was defeated by Governor Edmund G. Brown and seemed to have renounced any future political ambitions when he famously remarked to the press that 'you won't have Nixon to kick around anymore'.

Career Peak

Nixon returned to practicing law and soon reconsidered his decision to step out of politics. He campaigned for Barry Goldwater in 1964 and then won the Republican nomination for himself in 1968. In the presidential election Nixon narrowly defeated Hubert H. Humphrey in the popular vote by 43.4% to 42.7% but overwhelmingly won the electoral college vote by 301 to 191.

Nixon's first term in office was dominated by foreign affairs. Disengagement was the centrepiece of his policy. The number of US troops stationed in Vietnam fell from 555,000 in 1969 to around 30,000 by 1972. Nixon also authorized military operations in North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the hope of forcing North Vietnam to the negotiating table, although some saw it as a dangerous expansion of hostilities.

Nixon managed to improve the USA's relations with the Soviet Union and China. From 1969, the United States and the Soviet Union opened talks on limiting strategic weapons. Nixon's visit to Moscow in May 1972 coincided with the successful conclusion of the talks and the two countries signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) and a deal to sell American grain to the Soviets. Nixon relaxed trade restrictions against China and was received by Chairman Mao Zedong in Feb. 1972. Talks between the leaders led to the opening of a semi-formal relationship between the two countries.

Domestically, Nixon's first term in office was characterized by the fight against inflation and unemployment. In 1971 he introduced a temporary wage freeze, announced that the US would no longer convert foreign-held dollars into gold and cut federal spending. American goods became cheaper abroad and unemployment fell, although some prices continued to rise sharply. More federal funds were made available to municipalities and states. However he frequently came into conflict with Congress. He vetoed several measures that would have increased spending and in reply Congress blocked two of his appointments to the Supreme Court. Frustrated, Nixon created a Domestic Council in an attempt to limit Congress' influence.

In the 1972 presidential election Nixon easily overcame his Democratic rival George McGovern, polling 47 m. votes to 29 m. and losing just two states. He was re-inaugurated on 20 Jan. 1973 along with vice-president Spiro T. Agnew. Days later Nixon was able to announce a ceasefire in the conflict with North Vietnam and a framework for American withdrawal from South Vietnam. Part of the terms of the agreement, which Nixon called 'peace with honour' led to the release of nearly 600 American prisoners of war.

Nine months later vice-president Agnew resigned after charges of income tax evasion. The incident foreshadowed Nixon's own fall from power. In the summer of 1972 a break-in had occurred at the Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate complex, Washington, D.C. Rumours of White House involvement grew steadily throughout 1973 and one of the two men who was convicted of the break-in claimed that advisors in the White House had prior knowledge of the incident. On 5 Aug. 1974 the White House released taped transcripts in which Nixon was implicated in authorizing a cover-up of the affair. After realising that he did not have enough support in Congress to avoid impeachment Nixon announced his resignation on 8 Aug. in a televised address to the nation. His resignation took effect the next day when vice-president Gerald R. Ford was sworn in.

Later Life

One of Ford's first acts as president was to grant his predecessor a full pardon. Nixon retired from politics to write his memoirs and several other books. He died in New York on 22 April 1994.

Niyazov, Saparmurad (Turkmenistan)

Introduction

Saparmurad Niyazov was chairman of the Turkmenistan Supreme Soviet and became effective head of state when Turkmenistan claimed sovereignty in

1990. He oversaw the nation's declaration of independence in 1991 and was head of state and government until his death in Dec. 2006. Styling himself 'Turkmenbashi', he was constitutionally promised his position for life. His autocratic rule was characterized by eccentric lawmaking and overspending on public projects. He was also severely criticized internationally for human rights abuses and the absence of an organized political opposition.

Early Life

Saparmurad Niyazov was born on 18 Feb. 1940 in Ashgabat. According to official biographies, his father died during World War II and the rest of his family perished in the 1948 Ashgabat earthquake. In 1962 Niyazov joined the Communist Party and 4 years later graduated in engineering from the Lenin-grad Polytechnical Institute. He worked in the mining and energy industries and rose through the Communist ranks. In 1985 he was appointed president of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Turkmenistan and, later, first secretary of the central committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan.

In early 1990 he became chairman of the Republic's Supreme Soviet. In Oct. 1990 the Supreme Soviet proclaimed its political and economic sovereignty, Niyazov therefore becoming its effective head of state. He supported the unsuccessful coup attempt against the president of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, in 1991. Shortly before the collapse of the USSR at the end of that year, he declared Turkmenistan's independence and took the country into the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States.

Career Peak

In 1992 Niyazov was elected unopposed as president, heading a new Democratic Party (DP) the policies of which did not differ greatly from those of the Communist Party he had earlier banned. Also in 1992 a new constitution was promulgated, enhancing Niyazov's position as both head of state and government, as well as supreme commander of the armed forces.

In a referendum in Jan. 1994 his period of office was extended to 2002, and in Dec. 1999 the parliament, made up exclusively of DP members, proclaimed him head of state for life. In 2001 he announced he would step down by 2010. His time in office was dominated by the construction of a personality cult. Modelling himself as 'Turkmenbashi' (leader of all Turkmen), his drive for the 'complete and universal' introduction of the national language in public life compelled officials to speak Turkmen or lose their positions, while foreign languages were removed from the school curriculum. He also introduced a development programme which was to produce a fully democratic society by 2010 but which would require the continuation of the one-party state in the interim.

In Aug. 2002 Niyazov revised the calendar, naming the months after himself, his mother and Rukhname, a spiritual guide written by him which was added to the school curriculum in Sept. 2002. He also redefined the ages of man, stating that adolescence lasts until 25 years of age and old age begins at 85. He had earlier banned smoking in public as a result of himself suffering a smoking-related heart complaint. Niyazov's government exercised firm control over the Turkmen media, and in 2000 Niyazov launched a television station named 'The Epoch of Turkmenbashi'.

His attempts to boost the economy included the legalization of private landownership and the encouragement of foreign investment, particularly in the country's oil- and gas-rich regions. However, he received international criticism for his lavish spending on projects such as the Palace of Congress and a fountain complex in Ashgabat while poverty remained widespread. In 2000 he set out plans for a 2,000 km² man-made lake in the Karakum desert to ensure year-round availability of water, but environmentalists believe any such construction would devastate the region's ecosystem. In 2004 he ordered the construction of a giant ice palace in the Turkmen desert. Nonetheless, Turkmenistan's large oil and gas reserves ensured him a degree of leverage on the global stage. In late 2004 he met with Jean Chrétien, Canada's prime minister, to discuss a major oil contract. In 2006, having agreed to a 'human rights dialogue' with the EU, Turkmenistan was awarded most favoured trading status with the EU.

In mid-2002 an opposition alliance-in-exile, the Turkmen Democratic Opposition, was formed in Vienna, consisting of members of banned parties and social movements. In Nov. 2002 there was a coup attempt against Niyazov. He blamed exiled opponents who in turn accused him of fabricating the attempt in order to crack down further on domestic opposition. A new wave of repression and imprisonment followed the incident, including the detention of a former foreign minister Boris Shikhmuradov who was considered to be the leader of the exiled activists. Surveillance cameras were

installed on main streets in Ashgabat after the failed coup. Parliamentary elections in Dec. 2004 and Jan. 2005 returned presidential supporters to all seats.

Under Niyazov, Turkmenistan has an uneasy relationship with its neighbours, preferring to avoid regional co-operation. In 2003 Niyazov issued a decree cancelling the 1993 dual citizenship agreement with Russia. Those holding dual citizenship were given 2 months in which to decide which passport to retain, causing a diplomatic row with Moscow. Russians were reported to fear being trapped in a country widely criticized for human rights abuses and with severe restrictions on foreign travel for its citizens. Relations with Uzbekistan worsened after Niyazov's government accused the Uzbek government in 2002 of shielding opposition leaders. However, the two presidents later signed a friendship declaration and an agreement on water resources in 2004.

Niyazov died of heart failure on 21 Dec. 2006. In the immediate aftermath of his death there were fears of a power vacuum. Kurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, the deputy prime minister, was named interim head of state until a meeting of the country's highest representative body appointed a permanent successor.

Nkrumah, Kwame (Ghana)

Introduction

Kwame Nkrumah led Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast) to independence in 1957 and won an international reputation for his vision of Pan-African unity. Serving as prime minister and then president from 1957 until 1966, his rule became increasingly authoritarian and, after an initial period of growth, led to the collapse of the Ghanaian economy. He was removed from power in a coup and forced into exile.

Early Life

Nkrumah was born in Sept. 1909 in Nkroful, in the Gold Coast. Raised a Roman Catholic, he became a primary school teacher. In 1935 he moved to the USA and studied at Lincoln University and Pennsylvania University, before studying law in London. During this period he took a senior position in the West African Students' Union and organized the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester.

Returning to the Gold Coast in 1947, Nkrumah was appointed general secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), which was pushing for self-government. Nkrumah encouraged a campaign of peaceful 'positive action' but he was arrested by the British following riots in 1948. He resigned from the UGCC in 1949 and established the Convention People's Party. With Nkrumah again arrested for his political activities in 1950, the CPP coasted to victory at its first elections the following year. Nkrumah was subsequently released. He was named leader of government business, becoming the Gold Coast's *de facto* prime minister and officially assuming that title the following year.

Career Peak

The Gold Coast and British Togoland achieved independence within the Commonwealth in March 1957, taking the name Ghana. Nkrumah was elected prime minister. The early years of his tenure were marked by popular spending programmes, improving the country's health, education and travel infrastructures. He adopted an autocratic stance from the outset, and in 1958 a law was passed allowing individuals identified as national security risks to be imprisoned without trial.

1960 saw Nkrumah become president of the newly constituted Republic of Ghana. The economy went into rapid decline, prompted by the collapse of world cocoa prices. Foreign debt and unemployment spiralled out of control and popular discontent led to a general strike in late 1961. Nkrumah spent more time abroad, advocating his vision of pan-African unity and developing relations with communist states.

Nkrumah survived an assassination attempt in Aug. 1962 and several other attacks in the following years. In 1964 he banned political opposition and named himself head of state and the CPP for life. He was increasingly

absent from public life in Ghana, and developed and encouraged a cult to grow around his self-styled alter-ego, Osagyefo (The Redeemer).

Ghana's economic climate continued to deteriorate and there were food shortages in some areas. Nkrumah raised taxes and imprisoned political enemies. He pushed through legislation reducing the power of traditional chiefs. In Jan. 1966 he made one of his last public appearances at the opening of the vast Volta Dam. He travelled on to Burma and China and on 24 Feb. 1966, in his absence, the army and police seized power in Accra.

Later Life

Exiled, Nkrumah sought refuge in Guinea, where President Sekou Toure named him 'co-president.' He continued to find a large audience for his vision of a 'United States of Africa' until his death from cancer in Bucharest on 27 April 1972.

Noboa Bejarano, Gustavo (Ecuador)

Introduction

Gustavo Noboa Bejarano became president of Ecuador in Jan. 2000 after a bloodless coup deposed President Jamil Mahuad Witt. The interim junta ruled for just 5 h before ceding power to Noboa, Mahuad's vice president. During his short presidency, Noboa, who represented no political party, sought to resolve economic crises, pacify the indigenous Ecuadorians (both catalysts in the coup) and stabilize a country which had seen six presidents in 4 years.

Early Life

Noboa was born on 21 Aug. 1937 in Ecuador's second city, Guayaquil. He studied political and social science at the Universidad Católica de Guayaquil before completing a doctorate in law there in 1965. He pursued a successful academic career before his appointment as head of a private industrial agricultural company. He then began working for the government in an advisory role and represented Ecuador in negotiations with Brazil and Peru over contentious border disputes. Independent of all political parties, he was nonetheless politically active and became an independent governor for his native Guayas state in 1983.

Under the presidency of Sixto Durán Ballén (1992–96) Noboa rejected offers to become a minister or vice president. Instead in 1995 he ran an education commission evaluating the country's higher education system and worked within the foreign ministry. Despite his apolitical stance, in 1998 Noboa accepted the role of vice president under the presidency of the centrist Democracia Popular member, Mahuad. The president's inability to stop recession and hyperinflation coupled with his proposal to introduce dollarization at the expense of the sucre caused widespread discontent. In Jan. 2000 protesters marched on the capital and surrounded the presidential palace calling for Mahuad's resignation. Demonstrations spread to Guayaquil and Porto Viejo and the president was soon deposed.

The junta comprised the army leader Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez and the Quechua leader and president of the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de Ecuador (CONAIE), Antonio Vargas Huatatoa. On 21 Jan. 2000 the junta established themselves as the country's leaders. Vargas' presence gained widespread support for the junta, but international bodies were unhappy with military rule. In protest the US threatened to stop aid and block investment. Additional pressure from the UN, the OAS and neighbouring countries, including a joint statement from MERCOSUR, forced the junta to hand over power to a civilian leader. Thus, with the backing of the military and parliament, Noboa was chosen to replace Mahuad 5 h after he had been deposed, and to see out his term until 2003.

Career Peak

On his appointment, Noboa promised to restore stability and implement measures to combat the recession. A surprise television address by Mahuad pledged his support to Noboa, although he took the opportunity to condemn the coup. The CONAIE members and other indigenous supporters were angry at Noboa's appointment, seeing it as a betrayal. Noboa implemented a modified version of Mahuad's dollarization policy, pegging the sucre to the dollar.

By Aug. 2000 foreign exchange had stabilized, although inflation remained high. Attracted by the high price of oil, foreign investment increased. Noboa managed to renegotiate Ecuador's foreign debt and IMF targets were met. Despite the improvements, disagreements with congress over the appointment of a speaker split the politicians into rival camps. Public discontent continued. At the beginning of 2001 Noboa's proposed austerity measures including a 100% increase in domestic fuel and a 75% increase in transport costs provoked mass protests. After imposing a state of emergency, the protesters were dispersed. In Aug. 2001 Noboa proposed a 2% tax increase to help meet IMF targets, but was forced to back down when it was rejected by the constitutional tribunal. Noboa's struggles to save Ecuador's precarious economy continued until the end of his term.

He was defeated in presidential elections by Gutiérrez in Nov. 2002.

Later Life

In July 2003 Noboa applied for political asylum in the Dominican Republic having been prevented from flying to Miami, Florida. He claimed that political persecution had made remaining in Ecuador impossible. Investigations into Noboa's management of Ecuador's foreign debt repayments were instigated after he left office by ex-president Febres Cordero.

Noda, Yoshihiko (Japan)

Introduction

Yoshihiko Noda became prime minister in Sept. 2011, following the resignation of Naoto Kan. Regarded as a fiscal conservative and a reformer, he favoured raising taxes and reining in public spending. As well as addressing Japan's deficit, he faced the challenges of reconstruction after the devastation caused by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Early Life

Yoshihiko Noda was born on 20 May 1957 in Funabashi, Chiba Prefecture. The son of a paratrooper, he graduated from the school of political science and economics at Waseda University in 1980. After postgraduate studies at the Matsushita School of Government and Management, he entered local politics and in 1987 was elected to the assembly of the Chiba Prefecture.

He was a founder member of the centre-left Japan New Party (JNP) in 1992 and the following year he was elected to the Diet. In 1999 he joined the newly formed Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), serving as shadow minister for administrative and regulatory reform in 2001 and as shadow finance minister in 2004. Following the DPJ's victory in the Sept. 2009 general election, Noda became senior vice finance minister until June 2010, when he succeeded newly elected prime minister Naoto Kan as finance minister.

He argued for fiscal discipline to control Japan's mounting public debt and called for ministries to cut their budgets by 10% in 2011–12. Although the government budget was passed, its implementation was impeded by opposition control of the upper house. Sovereign debt crises overseas caused the yen to rise, threatening Japan's ability to export, and in Jan. 2011 Noda made the first of several interventions in international finance markets in a bid to stabilize the currency.

In March 2011 an earthquake and tsunami struck eastern Japan, causing the Fukushima nuclear plant disaster and confronting the government with an estimated 20–25trn. yen of reconstruction costs, as well as producing a humanitarian crisis and energy shortages. Noda backed Kan's proposals to continue cutting the deficit while rebuilding but when concerted opposition forced Kan's resignation, Noda successfully contested the DPJ leadership, winning in the second round by 215 votes to 177. He took office on 2 Sept. 2011.

Career Peak

Noda argued for sustained fiscal tightening and proposed an increase in consumption tax to pay for social security and reconstruction. This provoked opposition within the DPJ and in Jan. 2012 nine MPs left to form the Kizuna Party. In response, Noda reshuffled his cabinet and called for cross-party discussions on implementing reforms. Besides having to win opposition

support in the upper house, he continued to be hampered by divisions within the DPJ and a financial scandal involving a veteran former minister.

Internationally, Noda emphasized the importance of Japan's relationship with the USA, while maintaining co-operation with China. Relations with China remained sensitive, especially over issues of national identity. In Nov. 2011 Noda committed Japan to negotiations on joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a regional free trade agreement. This had popular support but was opposed by most opposition parties and by some within the DPJ because of its potential impact on Japan's rice farmers.

Later Life

Following the DPJ's loss in the Dec. 2012 general election Noda resigned as the leader of the Democratic Party of Japan.

Nong Duc Manh (Vietnam)

Introduction

Nong Duc Manh was elected secretary general of the ruling Communist Party in 2001 and so became Vietnam's effective centre of power. Regarded as a modernizer, he set out to accelerate industrialization and encourage foreign investment, which enabled Vietnam to join the World Trade Organization as its 150th member in Jan. 2007.

Early Life

Nong Duc Manh was born on 11 Sept. 1940 into the Tay ethnic group in Hung Cuong commune, Na Ri district in the then-province of Bach Thai. From 1958–65 he worked as an engineer with the provincial forestry service and during this period joined the Communist Party. In 1966 he was appointed to the board of the forestry service. From the mid-1970s he ascended the party structure, sitting as a member of the Bach Thai executive committee. In 1986 he was made an alternate member of the Communist central committee and was elected to full membership 3 years later. In the same year he became deputy chairman of the National Assembly. He was chosen as chairman in Sept. 1992 and re-elected to the post in 1997. He was elected secretary general of the Communist Party in April 2001.

Career Peak

Manh set out his plans to modernize Vietnam's political and legal systems, reducing corruption and streamlining bureaucracy. However, Vietnam has remained a one-party state with tight Communist control over the media, and critics suggest political suppression is widespread. He continued the economic liberalization that began in the 1980s and under Manh growth rates were strong as foreign investment and aid increased. Nevertheless, there remained a large gap in wealth between the richer urban and struggling rural populations. Manh's crackdown on organized crime was exemplified by the trial in 2003 of over 150 gangsters, particularly Nam Cam (a Ho Chi Minh City criminal), who was executed in 2004.

On the international stage, Manh pursued closer relations with the USA. Trade relations were normalized in Dec. 2001 and the USA became Vietnam's chief export destination. Commercial flights from the USA resumed in 2004 for the first time since the end of the Vietnam war. In June 2005 the then prime minister, Phan Van Khai, travelled to the USA for a meeting with President George W. Bush, the first post-war meeting between leaders from the two countries. In May 2002 Russia relinquished control of the Cam Ranh Bay naval base, previously the biggest Soviet-operated base outside of the Warsaw Pact countries.

Manh was reappointed for a further 5-year term in April 2006, although 2 months later the prime minister, president and National Assembly chairman were replaced by younger political leaders. In 2007 there were several high-profile arrests and trials of political activists. This refocused international attention on Vietnam's human rights record, particularly in June during President Nguyen Minh Triet's first visit by a Vietnamese head of state to the USA since the end of the Vietnam War.

Despite a broad amnesty in Jan. 2009 in which more than 15,000 prisoners were granted early release, there had been no easing of policy towards political dissent, particularly with regard to the media and the internet. In Jan.

2009 two pro-reform newspaper editors were convicted for their reporting of a high-level corruption trial, in Sept. the government restricted the right to conduct research on the Communist Party, in Dec. another dissident was jailed for allegedly posting pro-democracy articles on the internet and in Jan. 2010 four activists, including a human rights lawyer and an internet entrepreneur, were jailed for advocating multi-party democracy.

After 10 years as secretary general Manh decided to retire. Nguyen Phu Trong was appointed his successor in Jan. 2011.

Noriega, Manuel (Panama)

Introduction

As head of the armed forces, Gen. Noriega was Panama's *de facto* head of state between 1983 and 1989. From the 1960s he worked closely with US intelligence services, providing contact with and intelligence from Central and South America. However, evidence of involvement in illegal arms and drugs dealing and suspicions that he was selling on US intelligence led to a collapse in the relationship with the US. American forces invaded Panama in 1989 and arrested him. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison by an American court.

Early Life

Manuel Antonio Noriega Morena was born into a poor background in Panama City in 1934. After finishing school he won a scholarship to Peru's Chorrillos military school. Back in Panama he joined the army as a sub-lieutenant and began a rapid rise through the ranks. In 1968 he was promoted to first lieutenant and supported captain Omar Torrijos, who deposed the civilian government of Arnulfo Arias. After Noriega defeated a counter-coup he won promotion to lieutenant colonel and was given command of military intelligence.

Noriega developed a reputation for the brutal treatment of political enemies via his role with the intelligence services. He also established a profitable relationship with the US, to whom he provided intelligence and assistance in dealing with several regimes including Castro's Cuba. In 1981 Torrijos was killed in a plane crash and was succeeded by General Paredes, head of the national guard. When Paredes relinquished his military post in order to stand in the presidential elections of Aug. 1983, Noriega took control of the military. He undermined Paredes' candidature by refusing to publicly back him and Paredes left the race the following month. Noriega then restructured the national guard into the Panama Defence Forces (PDF), with the president as its nominal head but with Noriega holding executive power.

Career Peak

Able to rely on the support of the military, Noriega became Panama's most effective powerbroker. The presidential elections of May 1984 were beset by accusations of vote rigging and procedural irregularity. Ardito Barletta, a candidate favourable to Noriega at the time, was declared victor by a narrow majority after several days of violence. In 1985 Dr. Hugo Spadafora, one of Noriega's most outspoken critics, was murdered after claiming to have evidence of the General's involvement in arms and drugs dealing. Shortly after Barletta announced an investigation into the murder, Noriega came out in opposition to him, accusing Barletta's government of incompetence. Barletta resigned shortly afterwards.

By the mid-1980s tensions between the US and Panama were high as the two administrations negotiated the future of the Panama Canal. The cumulative effect of the Spadafora murder, Barletta's subsequent demise, increasing evidence of Noriega's role in laundering arms and drugs money and accusations that he was selling US intelligence to hostile regimes caused the relationship to deteriorate further. In 1988 the US indicted Noriega on drugs charges and imposed economic sanctions but he maintained his grip on power.

In 1989 Noriega cancelled scheduled presidential elections and made himself head of state. In Oct. of that year a US-backed coup attempt failed and on 15 Dec. 1989 Gen. Noriega declared a 'state of war' with the USA. On

20 Dec., on the orders of President George Bush, the USA invaded. After a short siege in Panama City, Noriega surrendered to the US on 3 Jan. 1990. He was replaced by Guillermo Endara.

Later Life

In 1992 Noriega was convicted in Miami on eight charges linked to racketeering, drug smuggling and money laundering. He was sentenced to 40 years in jail, reduced to 30 years on appeal. In 1999 he was convicted in France *in absentia* to 10 years for laundering drugs money. He was extradited to France in April 2010 where he was sentenced to 7 years in jail. Noriega died on 29 May 2017 aged 83 following brain surgery in March.

Ntoutoume-Emane, Jean-François (Gabon)

Introduction

Jean-François Ntoutoume-Emane was prime minister from 1999–2006. The French-educated politician is a member of the ruling Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) and was a close ally of the president, Omar Bongo, who ruled the country from 1967 until his death in 2009.

Early Life

Jean-François Ntoutoume-Emane was born on 6 Oct. 1939 in Libreville, Gabon, then part of the federation of French Equatorial Africa. He attended the city's Ecole Montfort and College Bessieux, graduating in 1960, the year of Gabon's independence. He subsequently studied law, economics and history at the universities of Rennes and Paris during the early to mid 1960s, completing a doctorate in political science in 1968. Returning to Gabon, Ntoutoume-Emane entered the civil service, working in the departments of finance, banking and transportation. He also lectured in law, sociology and political science at the National University of Gabon. From 1972 Ntoutoume-Emane edited *Dialogue*, the newspaper of the ruling PDG, the country's sole political party from 1968 to 1990.

In 1975 he became advisor to President Bongo and from 1976–87 held ministerial posts in economic and financial affairs, against a backdrop of rapidly growing prosperity, principally from the export of oil. He served as minister of commerce from 1987–89. Following the restoration of multi-party politics and Bongo's resignation as head of the PDG, elections for the national assembly were held in Sept. 1990. Ntoutoume-Emane was elected as the PDG representative for Estuary province. He served as minister of planning and housing from 1997 and organised Bongo's successful presidential election campaign in Dec. 1998. When Prime Minister Obame-Nguema resigned, Ntoutoume-Emane was appointed to the post and took office on 23 Jan. 1999.

Career Peak

Ntoutoume-Emane led a PDG-dominated government, although power remained effectively in the hands of President Bongo, who was re-elected for a further 7 year term in Nov. 2005. Ntoutoume-Emane's administration promised to distribute the country's oil wealth more equitably and to diversify the economy but progress was slow. When Omar Bongo was sworn in again on 20 Jan. 2006, Ntoutoume-Emane was replaced as prime minister by fellow PDG member Jean Eyeghe Ndong.

Nujoma, Sam (Namibia)

Introduction

Sam Nujoma became Namibia's first post-independence president in 1990. Since 1960 he was leader of the South West African People's Organization

(SWAPO), which won UN recognition as the only legitimate representative body of the Namibian people in 1973. A moderate reformer, he was accused of authoritarianism.

Early Life

Samuel Shafihuma Nujoma was born on 12 May 1929 in the Owamboland region of South West Africa (now Namibia) into a rural family. He received his early education from missionaries and courses at night school. He began working on the railways when he was 16, where he unsuccessfully tried to establish a trade union. He was later employed as a shop worker and in administrative posts.

Married in 1956, he became increasingly involved in nationalist politics and in 1959 was elected leader of the Owambo People's Organization, which evolved into SWAPO. SWAPO regularly made appeals to the UN demanding the removal of South African forces from Namibia. Nujoma was forced into exile in 1960 but returned briefly in 1966 and led the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) in an armed campaign. The war prompted renewed international attention and in 1973 SWAPO was recognized by the UN as the only truly representative voice of the Namibian people. Nujoma led SWAPO at UN-hosted talks in 1977 and the following year plans for Namibia's independence were proposed. However, it was 10 years before a ceasefire was called and the resolution implemented.

Nujoma returned from exile in Sept. 1989 and led SWAPO to victory in Namibia's first democratic elections 2 months later. On 21 March 1990 Namibia achieved independence and Nujoma was appointed president.

Career Peak

Having dropped his support of a Marxist single party state, the early years of Nujoma's tenure were marked by moderate social democratic reforms. He won re-election in 1994, and in 1998 the constitution was changed to allow him to stand for a third term.

In 1998 the government cracked down on a separatist movement in the Caprivi Strip, causing hundreds to flee to Botswana. A state of emergency was declared the following year after an upsurge in separatist activities. Elsewhere, Nujoma sent troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo in support of the regime of Laurent Kabila. In 2001 it was revealed that several members of Nujoma's government profited from diamond mining under the Kabila regime, although the president denied any personal interest. In 1999 the World Court ruled against Namibia in its dispute with Botswana over the island of Sedudu in the Chobe River. In late 1999 Nujoma secured his third term of office.

Nujoma had been accused of becoming increasingly autocratic. In 2001 he forbade government departments to purchase *The Namibian*, a national newspaper critical of his leadership. In Aug. 2002 he sacked his prime minister of 12 years, Hage Geingob, replacing him with foreign minister Theo-Ben Gurirab. At the sustainable development summit in Johannesburg, he defended President Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe. Nujoma attacked Western interference in African affairs and pledged to continue his policy of 'willing seller-willing buyer', whereby the government has first refusal on farmland offered for sale by white farmers which it then redistributes among the landless population. In addition, he outlined plans to confiscate 192 farms belonging to foreign absentee landlords. Nujoma was unable to run for a fourth term in Nov. 2004 and was replaced by Hifikepunye Pohamba as the SWAPO candidate for the presidency. Pohamba was sworn in as president on 21 March 2005.

Nyerere, Julius (Tanzania)

Introduction

Julius Nyerere was Tanzania's president from its creation in 1964 until his resignation in 1985. He had previously been prime minister and president of newly-independent Tanganyika. Despite the failure of his socialist economic reforms, he was internationally respected for overseeing Tanzania's peaceful transition to independence. A leading figure in the pan-African movement, he co-founded the Organization of African Unity (OAU). He was the first post-independence African leader to voluntarily relinquish power.

Early Life

Julius Kambarage Nyerere was born on 13 April 1922 in Butiama in the northwest of what was then Tanganyika, governed by the UK under League of Nations mandate. The son of a Zanaki tribal leader, Nyerere received schooling from Roman Catholic priests and converted to Roman Catholicism. He qualified as a teacher from the Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda and taught at several Catholic schools before graduating with a master's degree in history and economics from Edinburgh University in 1952.

He returned to Tanganyika to resume teaching and became active in politics. Tanganyika was now under a UN trusteeship and a pro-independence movement was gaining momentum. Nyerere joined the Tanganyika African Association, winning its presidency in 1953. Over the following year the Association was reformed into the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Aiming for a peaceful transition to independence, Nyerere addressed the UN in 1955 and began preliminary negotiations with the British government. He entered the Tanganyika legislative council but resigned in 1957 when he felt negotiations were stalling. In 1958 he led TANU to significant gains in the council and by 1960 TANU held all but one of the 71 seats.

After successful negotiations with the British governor, Sir Richard Turnbull, Tanganyika was granted self-government in Sept. 1960, with Nyerere as chief minister. In May of the following year he became prime minister and by the end of 1961 Tanganyika had won full independence. In 1962 it became a republic with Nyerere elected its first president.

Career Peak

In 1963 Nyerere was one of the key figures in the founding of the OAU (now called the African Union). The following year he oversaw the union of Tanganyika with Zanzibar to form the new state of Tanzania and in 1965 he won re-election to the presidency, despite a mutiny by the Tanganyika army in 1964. The union with Zanzibar meant Nyerere was forced into a close relationship with Zanzibar's president, Sheikh Abeid Karume, who was internationally condemned for the brutality of his regime.

Nyerere's 1967 Arusha declaration set out his domestic agenda, outlining his vision of a socialist state for Africa, which was to be based on *ujamaa* (familyhood). He introduced programmes of universal education and a greatly improved health service. However, the corner stone of his plans, collectivized agriculture, caused widespread resentment and was an economic failure. Industrial growth lacked the necessary infrastructures. Nervous of any political instability, he developed Tanzania as a one-party state, in which only his own Chama Cha Mapinduzi was tolerated.

Nyerere's greater success came as an international figurehead of the Pan-African movement. As well as his leading role in the OAU, he was chief among those campaigning for majority rule throughout the continent, and notably in South Africa, Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe), South West Africa (later Namibia), Angola, Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia. Relations with the UK were strained when Nyerere criticized the UK government for failing to act against Ian Smith after he made a unilateral declaration of independence in Rhodesia in 1965. Tanzania's relationship with the US also deteriorated as Nyerere pursued closer ties with communist China. He was critical of the despotic rule of Idi Amin in neighbouring Uganda and in 1979 authorized the use of Tanzanian troops in the coup that saw Amin replaced by Milton Obote.

Whilst Nyerere retained international respect as a moderate who campaigned for an African identity unblighted by ethnic in-fighting, the failure of his domestic economic strategies were apparent by the 1980s. The inefficiencies of agricultural collectivization resulted in over-reliance on foreign aid and the nation's transport and industrial infrastructures were inadequate. Nonetheless, he secured a level of political stability which compared well with the rest of post-colonial Africa and his education reforms ensured Tanzania had one of the continent's highest literacy rates.

Later Life

Despite resigning the presidency Nyerere remained head of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi until 1990. He remained politically active, notably in international affairs. He was chair of the Intergovernmental South Centre which sought to reduce the gap between living standards in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. In 1996 he was chief mediator in the ultimately unsuccessful talks to end the Burundi conflict. He died of leukaemia in London on 14 Oct. 1999.

O'Neil, Terence (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Terence O'Neill, leader of the Ulster Unionists, served as prime minister from 1963–69. He attempted to reduce sectarianism by promoting closer relations with the Republic of Ireland and introducing civil rights reforms. A controversial figure in his own party, he resigned amid rising sectarian violence but his reforms helped pave the way for eventual power-sharing.

Early Life

Terence Marne O'Neill was born in London on 10 Sept. 1914 to an aristocratic Anglo-Irish family with roots in Randalstown, Northern Ireland. He was educated at Eton College and the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, before serving with the Irish Guards during the Second World War. In 1945 he moved with his family to County Antrim and in 1946 entered the Stormont as Ulster Unionist MP for the Bannside constituency.

O'Neill served as parliamentary secretary in the ministry of health and local government from Feb. 1948–Nov. 1953. He then became chairman of ways and means and deputy speaker of the House of Commons. In April 1956 he was appointed minister of home affairs and in Oct. 1956 became minister for finance. During a period of industrial decline, he gained a reputation as a modernizer and in March 1963 succeeded Lord Brookeborough as prime minister.

Career Peak

O'Neill promoted cooperation between Protestants and Catholics as a means of developing the economy. In 1965 he held trade relations talks with the Republic's Taoiseach and in 1966 declared the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) illegal. He was vigorously opposed by some Ulster Unionists, including Ian Paisley who formed the breakaway Protestant Unionist Party.

In 1967 the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) started campaigning to end anti-Catholic discrimination in housing, employment and voting practices. O'Neill was in favour of making concessions but was opposed by leading figures within his party. In Oct. 1968, after violent police action against NICRA marches prompted international protests, O'Neill sacked his hardline home affairs minister, William Craig, and agreed a five point reform programme. Its concessions infuriated many Protestants while falling short of meeting Catholic demands for 'one man-one vote'. Further violence against marchers in Jan. 1969 led to riots and O'Neill's deputy resigned in protest at his decision to hold an enquiry. O'Neill called a surprise election in Feb. 1969 in a bid to re-establish his authority but won only a narrow victory. He remained in office for 3 months, reforming the local council franchise to 'one man one vote' before resigning as prime minister and leader of the Ulster Unionists on 28 April 1969.

Later Life

In 1969 O'Neill published a book, *Ulster at the Crossroads*. In 1970 he resigned his seat at Stormont and was made a life peer as Baron O'Neill of the Maine, of Ahoghill in the County of Antrim. He took up his seat in the House of Lords as a crossbencher and published his autobiography in 1972. He died on 12 June 1990.

Obama, Barack (United States of America)

Introduction

Barack Obama became the 44th president of the USA in Jan. 2009 and the first African American to hold the office. Having secured the Democratic candidacy, he contested the presidential election in Nov. 2008 against a

background of deepening economic crisis. Viewed as on the centre-liberal wing of his party, Obama's principal electoral pledges included the introduction of a national health insurance plan and a scaling down of the US troop presence in Iraq. He also sought to counter the economic crisis with stimulus measures, while his Republican opponent advocated a curb on spending. On foreign policy, Obama confirmed the USA's military commitment to the campaign against terrorism, while seeking to promote compliance with international law and the adoption of democratic values across the world political stage. He was re-elected for a second and final term on 6 Nov. 2012 and was inaugurated in Jan. 2013. In his final annual state-of-the-union address in Jan. 2016, he defended his domestic record but lamented the congressional partisan divisions that increasingly hampered the progress of his presidency and its legacy.

Early Life

Barack Hussein Obama was born on 4 Aug. 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii, to a Kenyan father and white American mother. His parents divorced and, following his mother's remarriage in 1967, the family moved to Indonesia, where Obama was educated until the age of 10. He attended Punahou School in Honolulu and Occidental College, Los Angeles, before graduating from Columbia University, New York, in 1983 with a BA in political science. From 1983–85 he worked at Business International Corporation and at the New York Public Interest Research Group, then moved to Chicago to become director of the church-based Developing Communities Project (DCP). From 1985–88 he led the DCP, expanding its staff and budget and establishing new projects. He attended Harvard Law School from 1988–91 and was elected president of the *Harvard Law Review* in 1990.

Following his graduation Obama took up a fellowship with the University of Chicago Law School, where he taught constitutional law from 1992–2004. In 1992 he directed 'Illinois Project Vote!', a campaign to register African Americans to vote, and from 1992–2002 he served on the boards of various community organizations and foundations, including the Joyce Foundation and Public Allies. In 1993 he joined law firm Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, practising first as an associate then as a counsel. In 1995 he published a memoir, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*.

In 1996 Obama was elected senator for the 13th District of Illinois, subsequently winning re-election in 1998 and 2002. As senator he supported health care and welfare reforms, sponsored a law to increase tax credits for low paid workers and promoted tighter regulation of the mortgage industry. In 2003, in co-operation with Republican senators, he led legislation to monitor police procedures in the state of Illinois, requiring police to profile the ethnicity of motorists they stopped and making it compulsory to videotape interrogations of homicide suspects.

After an unsuccessful run for the House of Representatives in 2000, Obama mounted a campaign for the 2004 US Senate elections. He attracted national attention at that year's National Democratic Convention when he gave a keynote speech, 'The Audacity of Hope', in which he spoke of the shared aspirations and efforts of American citizens and set out government's obligations towards them. In Nov. 2004 Obama was elected to the US Senate with 70% of the vote, the largest winning margin in Illinois state history. In office he supported legislation to reduce carbon emissions, voted for robust border controls and immigration reform, and campaigned for controls on political financing, in particular gifts and funding provided by lobbyists.

Having opposed military action against Iraq in 2003, he continued to criticize the conduct of the war. As a member of the Senate's foreign relations committee, he explored ways of reducing the threat from conventional weapons and, with Republican Senator Richard G. Lugar, co-authored a law extending US co-operation in identifying and disposing of stockpiled weapons. He supported successive bills calling for international intervention in Sudan and in 2006 voted for a no-fly zone over Darfur. Obama also served on the health, education, labour and pensions committees, the committee on veterans' affairs and the committee on homeland security and governmental affairs. In these areas he supported moves to expand early years schooling, to increase financial help for low-income high school and college students and to provide funding for veterans to attend college.

In Feb. 2007 Obama announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination. Campaigning on the themes of change and unity, he promised to address the key issues of Iraq, health care and the USA's dependence on oil. Obama fought a vigorous contest with main rival Hillary Clinton throughout 2007 and early 2008, gaining praise for his oratory while defending himself against charges of inexperience. In May 2007 he pledged a

national health insurance plan open to all. Criticized by environmentalists for supporting liquefied coal, he subsequently modified his position. On the Iraq War, he argued for the phased redeployment of US forces and the withdrawal of combat troops, as proposed in his Iraq War De-Escalation Act of 2007.

By June 2008 Obama had secured the support of a majority of Democratic Party delegates and was confirmed at the Democratic National Convention of Aug. 2008. He selected Joe Biden, the long-serving senator of Delaware, as his running mate. During the early weeks of campaigning, polls showed a close contest between Obama and Republican candidate John McCain, with Obama being seen as inexperienced in foreign affairs. However, the failure of key US financial institutions in late 2008 focused attention on the economy, prompting a spike in Obama's support as he called for regulatory reforms and a bipartisan approach to tackling the crisis. Obama won the election on 4 Nov. 2008 with 53% of the vote to McCain's 46% and by 365 electoral college votes to 173.

In the transition between his election and inauguration, Obama appointed Rahm Emanuel as chief of staff and former election rival, Hillary Clinton, as secretary of state. Both appointments were seen as an indication that he would tap the experience of long-serving politicians and officials and retain much of the previous administration's foreign policy. He also gathered an economic team and began preparing a stimulus plan to aid economic recovery through investment.

Career Peak

Obama was inaugurated on 20 Jan. 2009. Because of a minor misreading of the oath of office on the part of Chief Justice John Roberts, which caused Obama to make a similar error, he took the oath for a second time on 21 Jan. 2009. Among his first presidential aims was the fulfilment of an election pledge that the administration would run down and eventually close the detention facility for terrorist suspects at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay. However, this aspiration proved elusive throughout his terms of office. Other early measures included tightening restrictions on lobbyists joining the administration, introducing stricter curbs on fuel emissions, enacting equal pay legislation and expanding children's health care.

Obama sought bipartisan support for a \$825 bn. stimulus package, which aimed to boost economic recovery through sustained investment programmes. However, most Republicans opposed the package, arguing for less direct government spending and for tax reductions. After Republicans forced substantial amendments, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed on 13 Feb. 2009, relying almost exclusively on Democrat support. Worth a slightly reduced \$787 bn., it detailed plans for unprecedented levels of investment in education, healthcare, infrastructure, the environment, employment and tax reduction.

On foreign policy, Obama's early months saw a move away from the hawkish tone of the previous administration. In Feb. 2009 he announced that most US troops would be withdrawn from Iraq by 31 Aug. 2010, with residual forces leaving by the end of 2011. He also signalled a change of approach on Afghanistan, indicating that, although troop numbers would initially be increased in an echo of the 'surge' tactics employed in Iraq, he was reviewing strategy and did not believe the region could be stabilized by military means alone. Obama also changed the tone of the USA's dealings with the Middle East, sending envoys to Syria in March 2009 and expressing a willingness to talk to Iran's leaders, subject to their compliance with UN directives on nuclear development. He was similarly cautious on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, reaffirming the USA's commitment to pursuing a two-state solution while maintaining the previous administration's stance of refusing to talk to the militant Hamas leadership in Gaza. He gave moderate encouragement to the idea of closer dialogue between the USA and China and opened up the possibility of negotiations between the USA and Russia on cutting nuclear stockpiles and on curbing the development of new weapons.

However, 1 year on from his inauguration Obama had yet to secure any major policy objectives and his personal approval rating among voters had slipped markedly according to opinion polls. Despite the significant injections of borrowed money to stimulate demand and boost the economy, job creation proved slow and unemployment rose to 10% in 2009. Economic weakness in turn further undermined the country's fiscal position.

Obama's radical health care reform plan to extend insurance cover to all Americans proved particularly contentious. Legislation was passed in March 2010, by 56–43 votes in the Senate and by 220–207 in the House of Representatives, and it was hoped that under its terms coverage would extend to a further 32 m. Americans. However, it was the subject of fierce congressional division and continued to be widely challenged as unconstitutional

before its validity was upheld by a majority vote of the Supreme Court in June 2012. Implementation of the system, from 1 Oct. 2013, was also plagued by operational shortcomings and remained a focus of public discontent.

In Sept. 2009 Obama eased friction with Russia as he announced the abandonment of a missile defence deployment in the Czech Republic and Poland. In March 2010 the two countries agreed a treaty to replace the START Treaty on nuclear arms reduction. Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oct. 2009 for his efforts to create 'a new international atmosphere'. Relations with China, however, worsened over trade and currency policy, US weapons sales to Taiwan and, in Feb. 2010, the president's meeting with the Dalai Lama of Tibet.

In April 2010 an explosion in the Gulf of Mexico led to the biggest oil spill in US history, causing huge damage to local communities and the economy. The political fallout, together with the rise in support for the conservative libertarian Tea Party movement, again hit Obama's approval ratings. In mid-term congressional elections in Nov. that year, the Republicans made sweeping gains to regain control of the House of Representatives, heralding a legislative gridlock with the Democratic majority in the Senate.

Obama's pressure on the Israeli government to stop settlement building on Palestinian land in the Middle East was (and would continue to be) resisted by Prime Minister Netanyahu, undermining US efforts to broker further talks between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities. Although critical of Israeli policy, the US government did, however, oppose the UN General Assembly's recognition in Nov. 2012 of Palestine's enhanced status as a non-member observer state. After some progress in improving relations with Syria, with a US ambassador appointed in Feb. 2010 after a 5-year gap, President Assad's violent response to domestic dissent and the country's subsequent descent into civil war from 2011 ruptured US–Syrian ties and led to threats of US military intervention. In March 2011 Obama committed the USA to join the NATO military intervention in Libya to protect civilians against the Gaddafi regime, stating that Americans could not brush aside 'responsibilities to our fellow human beings'. Meanwhile, there was a potential thaw in long-standing US–Iranian enmity from the second half of 2013. In Sept. a telephone conversation between Obama and new Iranian president Hassan Rouhani marked the first direct communication between leaders of the two countries since 1979, and in July 2015 Iran reached a historic agreement with the major Western countries, Russia and China to limit its controversial nuclear development programme in return for an easing of economic sanctions.

In Afghanistan Obama initially intensified the war, announcing further troop deployments during 2009 to fight the Taliban insurgency. There was a subsequent scaling down of foreign involvement in the country and NATO combat forces (including US troops) were finally withdrawn by the end of 2014, apart from residual personnel to help train and advise the Afghan army. However, in March 2015 Obama announced that the US withdrawal would be postponed and in Oct. he proposed to keep some 5,000 US troops in the country to help with counter-terrorism operations.

In May 2011 US special forces killed Osama bin Laden, having traced him to a compound in Abbottabad in northwestern Pakistan. Bin Laden, the leader of the al-Qaeda movement responsible for the 11 Sept. attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. in 2001, had been in hiding for almost 10 years. Obama commented that 'his demise should be welcomed by all who believe in peace and human dignity'. The operation strained already uneasy relations between the USA and Pakistan.

Following his re-election on 6 Nov. 2012 Obama was again embroiled in congressional discord over US debt and federal expenditure. Earlier, in 2011, the government had reached its legal federal debt ceiling, heralding several months of political wrangling before a last-minute cross-party debt-reduction agreement in Aug. to raise the ceiling and stave off the risk of a default. At the same time, Standard & Poor's international rating agency downgraded the USA's triple-A credit rating for the first time. In Oct. 2013 the federal government shut down non-essential operations for over 2 weeks after Congress failed to approve a spending bill for the next financial year. A damaging default was avoided when Democrats and Republicans reached another cross-party deal to end the stand-off. In Feb. 2014 Congress passed legislation to raise the debt ceiling for another year and in Dec. reached a \$1 trn. budget agreement to fund the federal government until Sept. 2015. The following month Obama and the outgoing Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives—to the surprise of many commentators—reached a new agreement to suspend the debt ceiling and settle spending for 2016 and 2017. Earlier, in Oct. 2014 the Federal Reserve Board had announced that it was ending its quantitative easing programme launched 6 years previously to support the US economy through the global financial crisis.

US diplomatic integrity was seriously compromised in 2013 by leaked revelations about the worldwide covert electronic surveillance activities of its National Security Agency, including the monitoring of close allies. In response, Obama proposed reforms in Jan. 2014 to include curbs on warrantless intrusion and the retention of data. US-Russian relations deteriorated sharply from March 2014 as Russia annexed the Ukrainian territory of Crimea in response to a separatist rebellion in the east of that country, and the US government imposed punitive sanctions on the Kremlin. Meanwhile, the rapid rise that year of the militant Islamic State (IS) jihadist movement across swathes of Iraq and Syria prompted ongoing US-led military air strikes against IS targets, with support from some Arab and Western nations, from Sept. However, Russia's subsequent large-scale intervention in the Syrian civil war from Sept. 2015, with air operations in support of President Assad's government forces, led to accusations that Obama had surrendered the military initiative in the region to Moscow. On a more positive note, in Dec. 2014 Obama and Cuba's president, Raúl Castro, reached an historic agreement to normalize relations between their countries after decades of enmity. In July 2015 Cuban and US embassies reopened in the respective capitals of Washington, D.C. and Havana.

In Nov. 2014, reflecting continuing voter dissatisfaction with Obama and the Democrats, the Republican Party won its biggest majority in the House of Representatives in over 60 years and also regained control of the Senate at the mid-term congressional elections. In the same month, Obama courted controversy when he said that he would use his executive powers to allow millions of illegal immigrants to apply for work permits and avoid the threat of deportation, further straining congressional bipartisan co-operation. Meanwhile, reacting to the catalogue of fatal shooting incidents and mass casualties including children during his presidency, Obama also sought to introduce limited gun control in the USA, but his attempts were resisted by the influential National Rifle Association lobby group. In Jan. 2016, against the background of continuing friction between the White House and Congress, Obama called on the American people in his last state-of-the-union address to 'fix our politics' and break through the rancour of partisan differences. However, by Nov. the depth of voter disaffection with the political status quo manifested itself in the surprise election of Donald Trump, a populist and controversial Republican businessman with no government experience, as president.

In Sept. 2016, as his tenure was drawing to a close, Obama ratified—jointly with the Chinese president—a landmark international climate change agreement that had been reached in Dec. 2015 at a United Nations summit in Paris, France, and later took executive environmental action to protect coastal waters off Alaska and parts of the Atlantic seaboard from future oil and gas exploration. A nadir in his relationship with the Israeli and Russian leaders was then reached in Dec. by his administration's unprecedented refusal to veto a UN Security Council resolution demanding an end to Israeli settlement building in the Palestinian West Bank and by his expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats in response to Moscow's alleged cyber hacking interference in the US presidential election campaign.

He relinquished the presidency on 20 Jan. 2017.

Obasanjo, Olusegun (Nigeria)

Introduction

Olusegun Obasanjo became president again in 1999, having previously held the office from 1976–79. During his first tenure he guided the country through the transition from military dictatorship to civilian government. In May 2006 the Senate rejected proposed constitutional changes permitting him to seek election in 2007 for another presidential term.

Early Life

Olusegun Obasanjo was born on 5 March 1937 in Abeokuta, in southwest Nigeria. He joined the army in 1958 and received military training both in Nigeria and abroad. During his military career, he served with UN peace-keeping forces and led an army commando division in the 1967–70 Biafran civil war. Obasanjo became chief of staff to Gen. Muhammad who led a military coup in June 1975, deposing Yakubu Gowon and promising to return Nigeria to civilian rule by Oct. 1979.

Career Peak

When Muhammed was assassinated in 1976, Obasanjo took over as head of state, paving the way for democratic elections and civilian rule, as well as tightening links with the USA.

During Obasanjo's first presidential term Abuja was made the new capital. A new constitution, published in 1978, lifted the ban on political activity and the formation of political parties. In line with his determination to return to civilian government, elections were held in 1979. Obasanjo, who chose not to stand, handed power to Alhaji Shehu Shagari, a northerner from the National Party of Nigeria (NPN).

In Oct. 2002 Obasanjo was at the centre of a territorial dispute when the International Court of Justice (ICJ) awarded Cameroon ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula in the Gulf of Guinea and ordered Nigeria to withdraw from the oil-rich area. The decision was based on a 1917 agreement between Britain and Germany, then the colonial powers. Obasanjo denied the validity of territorial treaties made before independence but was later reported to have accepted the court's decision.

The build-up to the presidential elections of April 2003, when 19 candidates stood, was marked by rising tensions. Obasanjo claimed victory with 62% of the vote, with Muhammadu Buhari, candidate for the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), winning 32%. However, Buhari rejected the result and international monitors reported major voting irregularities. Nevertheless, Obasanjo received international recognition. Despite the region's oil wealth, poverty and high unemployment among the indigenous population remain high, which provoked increasing attacks in 2006 by militants on the operations of foreign oil companies and the kidnapping of foreign workers.

Obasanjo was not eligible to stand for re-election in the presidential elections held in April 2007. However, his supporters proposed an amendment to the constitution which would allow him to run for a third term in office. Following widespread debate the amendment was defeated and Obasanjo stepped down as president after the elections, which were won by his chosen successor Umaru Yar'Adua.

Later Life

In 2008 then United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon appointed Obasanjo special envoy on the Great Lakes region in the wake of the ongoing conflict in North Kivu.

Obote, Milton (Uganda)

Introduction

Apollo Milton Obote led Uganda to independence in 1962 but was removed from power in a coup by Idi Amin in 1971. Obote returned as president from 1980 to 1985. Both his tenures were overshadowed by ethnic fighting, economic failure and authoritarian rule.

Early Life

Obote was born on 28 Dec. 1925 in the village of Akoroko, in the Lango region of Uganda, then under British sovereignty. He began studies at Kampala's Makerere College in 1948 but was expelled the following year for his anti-colonial activities and forbidden from taking up offers of international scholarships. He went to Kenya in 1950, holding a succession of temporary jobs while becoming active in the pro-independence Kenyan African Union.

Returning to Uganda in 1957, he joined the Uganda National Congress Party (UNCP) and the following year entered the national legislative council. He took an anti-colonialist line and, following the collapse of the UNCP, formed the Uganda People's Congress (UPC). Political life was based on regional differences, with the UPC broadly representing the northern groups (including Obote's own Lango people and the Acholi) against the Kebaka Yeka party (KYP) representing Mutesa II's Buganda kingdom in the south.

Uganda achieved independence in 1962, shortly after Obote had been elected prime minister.

Career Peak

In 1962 a new constitution gave federal status to five kingdoms, including that of Mutesa, who was appointed president in 1963. Relations between prime minister and president, and between their respective peoples, remained tense. In 1964 Obote fended off an attempted coup by the military. In 1966 he was accused, along with his army and air force chief Idi Amin, of supporting rebels in Congo in return for gold and ivory. Before an official investigation could get underway Obote purged the government of his accusers. Mutesa responded by demanding that national government personnel leave Buganda. Obote ordered a military attack on Mutesa, who fled the country. Obote withdrew the federal status of the kingdoms and appointed himself president.

In 1969 Obote instigated socialist economic reforms known as the 'Move to the Left'. Businesses were nationalized and foreign investment drained out of the country. The middle class was alienated and dissatisfaction with the one-party state grew. Increasingly reliant on police and military enforcement of his rule, Obote allowed Idi Amin's power to grow unchecked as relations between the two deteriorated. In 1970 Obote put Amin under house arrest but in Jan. 1971, when Obote was on a visit to Singapore, Amin staged a coup.

Obote went into exile in Tanzania and led an unsuccessful counter-coup the following year. He remained in Tanzania and nurtured an army of exiles which he put under the command of Tito Okello. Sponsored by the Tanzanian authorities the army invaded and deposed Amin in 1979. Obote returned to Uganda the following year to successfully contest the presidential elections, although many observers questioned the legitimacy of his victory. With the country ravaged by Amin's rule, Obote looked to kickstart the economy with foreign money. However, ethnic fighting continued, with the army itself responsible for a number of atrocities in the south and in Amin's homeland in the northwest. Corruption, economic decline and human rights abuses caused domestic and international unrest. Yoweri Museveni headed the National Resistance Army and waged an efficient guerrilla war against Obote. In 1985 Okello staged a coup in which he removed Obote and appointed himself head of a ruling military council.

Later Life

Obote went into exile in Zambia. In 1999 Museveni, by now president of Uganda, said Obote would not be prevented from returning to Uganda. He died on 10 Oct. 2005.

Oddsson, Davíð (Iceland)

Introduction

Davíð Oddsson served as prime minister of Iceland between 1991 and 2004, having made his name in Reykjavik's municipal government. As leader of the Independence Party, his tenure was marked by a commitment to increasing Iceland's image as an independent sovereign state.

Early Life

Oddsson was born on 17 Jan. 1948 in Reykjavik. He studied at Reykjavik College and in 1976 graduated in law from the University of Iceland. Between 1970 and 1972 he worked for the theatre of Reykjavik. From 1973 until 1976 he worked in journalism and publishing and then took a post with the Reykjavik health insurance fund. He became its managing director and also chaired the executive committee of the city's arts festival from 1976 until 1978. In 1982 he was made mayor of the capital, a post he held for 9 years.

Oddsson was a director of the youth wing of the Independence Party during the 1970s and sat on the executive committee of the full party from 1979. In 1991 he was named party chairman and in April of that year he was elected to parliament and assumed the premiership.

Career Peak

Oddsson has headed coalitions with the Social Democratic Party and, latterly, the Progressive Party. Oddsson is regarded as a conservative and has tended to support Iceland's sovereignty above increasing integration into Europe. He had several high-profile run-ins with Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson when Grímsson was leader of the People's Alliance and their relationship has

remained strained since Grímsson became president in 1996. In 2001 Oddsson announced plans for Iceland to resume commercial whaling, a decision which received intense international scrutiny. He stood down in Sept. 2004 after being defeated in an attempt to restrict private media ownership and following a period of ill health.

Later Life

After stepping down from the post of prime minister Oddsson served briefly as Iceland's foreign minister and was chairman of the board of governors of the Central Bank of Iceland from 2005–09.

In Sept. 2009 Oddsson was announced as the new editor of the national daily newspaper *Morgunblaðið*, a move that reportedly prompted a third of its subscribers to cancel their subscriptions.

Oddsson contested the June 2016 presidential election, but came fourth of nine candidates.

Odumegwu Ojukwu, Chukwuemeka (Nigeria)

Introduction

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu was military governor of Nigeria's Eastern Region and head of the state of Biafra from 1967–70.

Early Life

Born on 4 Nov. 1933, Ojukwu was the son of a wealthy businessman. He graduated from Oxford University in 1955, after school in Lagos. He joined the army in 1957 and was soon promoted to the rank of major. He then served in the Congo under a UN peacekeeping programme.

Career Peak

When the Igbo secessionist movement seized power in 1966, Ojukwu became leader of the Eastern Region. After General Gowon was named Nigeria's president following a counter-coup, Ojukwu managed to retain his position. However, with the Igbos increasingly isolated, he declared independence for the Eastern Region, re-naming it the 'Republic of Biafra' in May 1967. Civil war broke out, ending in defeat for the Biafran government and Ojukwu's exile to the Ivory Coast.

Later Life

Returning to Nigeria in 1982 he joined the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in Jan. 1983. His attempts to re-enter politics as a presidential candidate failed when the elections of 1983 ended in violence. Ojukwu died in the United Kingdom on 26 Nov. 2011.

Olmert, Ehud (Israel)

Introduction

Ehud Olmert was thrust into the political limelight in Jan. 2006 when the prime minister, Ariel Sharon, suffered a severe stroke. Olmert, a lawyer and close aide to Sharon, was appointed acting prime minister and led the newly established Kadima party to a narrow victory in the Knesset elections of March 2006. He officially replaced Sharon as prime minister in April 2006. Following a leadership challenge in July 2008, Olmert announced he would resign as soon as a new government could be formed. Binyamin Netanyahu eventually achieved this and Olmert stood down on 31 March 2009.

Early Life

Ehud Olmert was born on 30 Sept. 1945 near Binyamina in the British Mandate of Palestine. His parents were Zionists who joined the right-wing Herut Party after Israel's independence in 1948. A member of the Betar Youth Organisation, Ehud Olmert studied philosophy, psychology and law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and later served in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) as a combat infantry unit officer and a military correspondent.

In 1973 Olmert was elected to the Knesset as a member of Gahal, the parliamentary bloc of Herut and the Liberals led by Menachem Begin, which later became the Likud bloc in opposition to the governing Labour Alignment. Olmert served on the law and justice committee, campaigning against corruption in public life. From 1974 he built a successful legal practice, despite facing allegations of corruption himself in the 1980s.

Begin led Likud to victory in the 1977 elections but Olmert opposed his stance on withdrawal from land captured from Egypt in the Six Day War and voted against the 1978 Camp David Peace Accords. However, he was to become a staunch supporter of the pullout of Israeli settlers from Gaza in 2005. From 1981–88 Olmert was a member of the foreign affairs and security committee. Under Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, he served as minister without portfolio (responsible for minority affairs) from 1988–90 and then as minister of health until 1992.

In Nov. 1993 Olmert became mayor of Jerusalem, on a platform of unifying the city. He initiated projects to improve the road and rail infrastructure as well as reforming the education system. However, on resigning in Jan. 2003 to run for the Knesset his critics pointed to the gulf between the level of services in Palestinian East Jerusalem and those in wealthier Jewish areas.

In Jan. 2003 Ariel Sharon, the Likud leader, won a landslide re-election to the premiership, doubling his party's parliamentary representation. Olmert became minister of trade and industry and deputy prime minister. By Dec. 2003 Olmert had abandoned the dream of a Greater Israel including Gaza and the West Bank. Working with Sharon, he formulated plans for Israeli settlers to leave Gaza. After Binyamin Netanyahu resigned in Aug. 2005 in protest at 'disengagement'. Olmert became finance minister. In Nov. 2005 Olmert followed Sharon from Likud to form the Kadima Party ahead of elections in March 2006. On 4 Jan. 2006 Sharon suffered a severe haemorrhagic stroke and Olmert assumed the powers of acting prime minister, holding a cabinet meeting on 5 Jan. to signal the transfer of power.

Career Peak

Olmert was elected acting chairman of Kadima on 16 Jan. 2006. In a speech on 24 Jan. 2006 he backed the creation of a Palestinian State, arguing that Israel would have to relinquish control of parts of the West Bank to maintain its Jewish majority. In elections on 28 March Kadima won most votes, taking 29 of 120 seats, but lacked an outright majority with turnout at a record low. With Sharon declared 'permanently incapacitated'. Olmert took over as prime minister outright on 14 April 2006 and formed a four-party coalition cabinet which took office on 4 May 2006.

Olmert declared that he would attempt to settle the final borders of Israel in an agreement with the Palestinians. However, analysts saw little hope of progress towards a negotiated two-state solution, given that the Palestinians' Hamas government continued to reject Israel's right to exist. Selling Kadima's plans to potential coalition partners, none of whom stood for unilateral withdrawals before the election, also posed a serious challenge to Olmert's tenure. The first major test of his leadership erupted in July 2006 as an attack by Hizbollah, a Lebanese Shia militia, on Israeli forces on the Israel-Lebanon border led to full-scale hostilities between the Israeli military and Hizbollah guerrillas, resulting in many civilian casualties and a Lebanese refugee crisis. Following a month of conflict, a ceasefire came into effect in Aug. with United Nations backing. However, the Israeli military offensive had proved inconclusive, prompting ongoing criticism of Olmert's handling of the war and, in Jan. 2007, the resignation of the head of the Israeli armed forces. In other political setbacks, he had to accept the ministerial inclusion of a member of the right-wing Yisrael Beytenu party in Oct. 2006 to shore up his government's parliamentary position, and in unguarded public comments in Dec. he seemingly confirmed his country's nuclear weapon capability.

In the course of 2007 Olmert sought to forge closer contacts with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, particularly in the wake of the confrontation between the latter's Fatah party and the Islamist Hamas faction in the Gaza Strip. This culminated in a US-hosted conference at Annapolis, Maryland, in late Nov. to relaunch Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, which was attended by Olmert and Abbas as well as representatives of the Egyptian, Jordanian, Saudi Arabian and Syrian governments.

In Oct. 2007 Olmert disclosed that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer but that he could continue in office as premier. In July 2008 Olmert announced that he would not stand for re-election as head of Kadima after he faced a leadership challenge from Tzipi Livni and promised to step down as prime minister as soon as a new government was formed. Livni won the subsequent leadership contest but was unsuccessful in uniting the parties needed for a coalition. Instead elections were held in Feb. 2009 in which Kadima narrowly defeated Likud. Nevertheless President Shimon Peres appointed Binyamin Netanyahu of Likud prime minister. He took office on 31 March.

Later Life

In Aug. 2009, Olmert faced charges of fraud, breach of trust, tax evasion and falsification of corporate documents. He was subsequently convicted of bribery and breach of trust and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment to begin in Sept. 2014. However, the Supreme Court ruled that Olmert could stay out of jail pending appeal. In May 2015 a court in Jerusalem found him guilty of fraud and breach of trust and he was again sentenced to a jail term, this time for 8 months. Olmert began a 19-month jail sentence in Feb. 2016 relating to the original bribery charges levelled against him in 2009.

Ona Ondo, Daniel (Gabon)

Introduction

Daniel Ona Ondo was appointed prime minister by President Ali-Ben Bongo Ondimba in Jan. 2014, replacing Raymond Ndong Sima.

Early Life

Ona Ondo was born on 10 July 1945 in Oyem in Woleu-Ntem province. He attended the Lycée National Léon Mba in Libreville before enrolling at the Université de Picardie, France. In 1980 he graduated with a doctorate in economics from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and joined the faculty of law and economics at the Université Omar Bongo in Libreville. In 1990 he became rector of the university and was made a trade and industry adviser to then President Omar Bongo.

In Dec. 1996 Ona Ondo won a seat in the National Assembly and the following year was appointed minister delegate to the minister of health. From 1999–2002 he served as minister of arts and culture before taking over the education portfolio. He was re-elected to the Assembly in May 2002 as a Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) member representing Woleu Department. In 2005 he became minister of posts and telecommunications and, following further re-election in Dec. 2006, was appointed first vice-president of the Assembly. On 27 Jan. 2014 he was sworn in as prime minister.

Career Peak

Ona Ondo's main task was to implement the Strategic Plan for Emerging Gabon, an initiative designed to position Gabon as an emerging economy by 2025. Challenges also included the inadequate education and healthcare systems, as well as addressing high levels of youth unemployment and a significant wealth gap between the urban elite and rural poor.

In Sept. 2016 Ona Ondo was replaced as prime minister by Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet following the presidential election held in Aug.

Oresharski, Plamen (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Plamen Oresharski took office in May 2013. A former faculty dean of Sofia's University of National and World Economy (UNWE), he has been a member of the National Assembly since 2009 and was minister of finance from 2005–09.

Early Life

Oresharski was born in Feb. 1960 in Dupnitsa, Bulgaria. He graduated from UNWE, Sofia in 1985 and obtained a doctorate in investment and investment analysis in 1992. He subsequently undertook further studies in banking, capital markets and sovereign debt in the USA and the UK.

From 1992–93 Oresharski was vice-dean of UNWE's finance department and in 1993 became director of the state treasury and debt division of the ministry of finance. He served on the governing council of the Bulgarian Stock Exchange (1995–97), on the board of UniCredit Bulbank (1997–2000) and in 1997 was appointed deputy minister of finance in Prime Minister Ivan Kostov's Union of Democratic Forces administration. He returned to UNWE as dean of the finance and accounting faculty and deputy rector between 2003 and 2005.

In 2005 Oresharski became finance minister in the government of Sergey Stanishev of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), introducing a 10% flat tax rate. A parliamentary deputy on a BSP ticket from 2009, he was confirmed as the new prime minister of a Socialist-led technocrat government following elections in May 2013.

Career Peak

The formation of the Oresharski administration followed the early resignation of Boyko Borisov's GERB government in response to widespread protests over energy price hikes and the failing economy. On taking office Oresharski said that 'Bulgaria is in a deep institutional crisis, continuing economic depression and worsening disintegration of society'. He pledged to maintain close co-operation with the EU, boost growth, restore fiscal stability, review energy prices, increase social benefits and speed payments to business.

His government faced a series of popular protests from the outset, with opponents claiming that it had inappropriate ties to business figures, and Oresharski has since striven to remove the taint of corruption. He has also attempted to directly influence energy prices. In Jan. 2014 he ratified a contract with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for an electronic public procurement system.

Oresharski and his government resigned on 23 July 2014. The outgoing administration had suffered widespread opposition throughout its 16-month tenure, in particular with regard to its financial reforms and perceived failure in dealing with deadly floods that hit Bulgaria in June 2014. A caretaker government led by Georgi Bliznashki took office on 6 Aug. 2014.

Orešković, Tihomir (Croatia)

Introduction

Tihomir Orešković, who holds dual Croatian and Canadian citizenship, became prime minister in Jan. 2016. A relative political novice, his appointment followed close national elections in Nov. 2015 and his surprise nomination by a conservative coalition. He was Croatia's first non-partisan premier.

Early Life

Tihomir (Tim) Orešković was born in Zagreb on 1 Jan. 1966. His family moved to Hamilton, Canada when he was a child and he graduated in chemistry from McMaster University in 1989. In 1991 he earned his master's degree in finance and information systems from the same institution.

In 1992 he joined the US pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly, where he held various finance roles before becoming an associate vice-president overseeing relations with the government of Ottawa in Toronto. In 2005 he left the company to take up a post with generic drugs manufacturer Teva Novopharm, relocating to Zagreb in 2009 to serve as the firm's chief financial officer for Eastern Europe and Africa. In 2014 he moved with the company again, this time to Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

At the Croatian elections of Nov. 2015, support was split almost equally between the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)-led coalition and the Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP)-led coalition of outgoing premier Zoran Milanović. After 76 days of political manoeuvring, Tomislav Karamarko's

HDZ and Most, a smaller conservative party led by Bozo Petrov, nominated Orešković as its prime ministerial candidate and secured sufficient backing to form a government.

Career Peak

Orešković's key aim was to revive the economy, 2015 having recorded the first growth since 2009. Other principal targets included cutting public debt to below 80% of GDP by 2020, trimming the budget deficit to within the European Union's 3% of GDP ceiling (from around 5%) and reducing unemployment. The new government also promised to invest in energy and infrastructure while reducing business red tape. It also had to confront the challenges posed by Europe's migrant and refugee crisis.

In June 2016 Orešković lost a parliamentary vote of no confidence by 125 votes to 15. He was subsequently replaced as prime minister by Andrej Plenković of the HDZ in Oct.

Otunbayeva, Roza (Kyrgyzstan)

Introduction

Roza Otunbayeva became the head of an interim government established on 8 April 2010 following anti-government protests that forced incumbent president, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, to flee the capital. A former ally of the ousted president, Otunbayeva was a veteran opposition politician who had served as foreign minister and ambassador to the UK and the USA. She was confirmed as president on 19 May and sworn in on 3 July.

Early Life

Otunbayeva was born on 23 Aug. 1950 in Osh, in the south of what was then the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic. Graduating from the faculty of philosophy at Moscow State University in 1972, she completed a postgraduate course at the same institution 3 years later, then went on to spend 6 years as head of the philosophy department of the Kyrgyz State National University.

Otunbayeva entered politics in 1981 as second secretary of the Lenin Regional Council of Frunze (now Bishkek). She later served as vice-chairman of the Republic's council of ministers and in 1992 became the recently independent Kyrgyzstan's first ambassador to the USA and Canada. After 2 years she was appointed the country's first and thus far only female foreign minister, before requesting a posting to the UK in 1997 to become Kyrgyzstan's first post-Soviet ambassador in London.

Between 2002 and 2004 Otunbayeva was the deputy special representative of the UN secretary-general on the Georgian-Abkhazian settlement. She was present during the 'Rose Revolution' of 2003 that deposed President Eduard Shevardnadze. In Dec. 2004, on returning from Georgia, Otunbayeva founded an opposition movement, Ata-Szhurt (Fatherland), to contest forthcoming parliamentary elections. In Jan. 2005 her candidate registration was rejected on the grounds that she had not been resident in Kyrgyzstan for all of the preceding 5 years.

Otunbayeva was one of the senior opposition figures during the 'Tulip Revolution' of March 2005. In the aftermath of President Askar Akayev's deposition, she was named acting foreign minister under the interim administration of Kurmanbek Bakiyev. However, when Bakiyev became president Otunbayeva failed to secure parliamentary backing to win the post on a permanent basis. In Dec. 2007 she was elected to the Kyrgyz parliament as a representative of the Social Democratic Party and became party leader in Oct. 2009.

On 8 April 2010, after violent protests had driven the incumbent president from Bishkek, the Kyrgyz opposition elected Otunbayeva to head an interim 'government of people's trust'.

Career Peak

On coming to power Otunbayeva announced that her temporary government would put together a new constitution to establish a parliamentary democracy. She promised that elections would be held within 6 months but in May 2010,

amidst continuing political unrest, it was announced that elections would be postponed until 2011. Having acted as interim leader, she was officially sworn in as president in July.

Simmering ethnic conflict erupted in June 2010 into violent clashes between the Kyrgyz and minority Uzbek communities, which left up to 2,000 people dead and hundreds of thousands displaced. The new government nevertheless went ahead with a constitutional referendum in which voters endorsed devolving power from the presidency to parliament. Parliamentary elections were held in Oct. 2010 but produced no outright winner. Otunbayeva's Ata-Zhurt emerged as the largest party but still with only 28 of the 120 seats.

Ineligible to run in the presidential elections on Oct. 2011, Otunbayeva was succeeded by the former prime minister Almazbek Atambayev on 1 Dec. 2011.

Ould Taya, Maaouya (Mauritania)

Introduction

Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya ruled the Islamic Republic of Mauritania from 1984 until he was deposed in Aug. 2005. He came to power as head of a military junta and from 1992 he was the elected president of a civilian government. With Ould Taya out of the country in Aug. 2005, Col. Ely Ould Mohamed Vall seized power but has failed to gain international recognition.

Early Life

Born in Atâr in 1941, Ould Taya was a pupil at the city's Franco-Arabic Coranic School from 1949–55, and attended secondary school in Rosso, southern Mauritania. Graduating with officer status from military school in France, he continued his military training until 1975. Returning to Mauritania, he served as head of the defence ministry in 1978 and chief of police in 1980, before heading the army in 1981. Ould Taya rose to power in a military coup in 1984.

Career Peak

Ethnic tension and a reduction in foreign development and defence aid led to violence. Under increasing pressure, Ould Taya promulgated a new constitution in July 1991. A civilian government replaced the ruling military junta, and Ould Taya won elections in 1992 and 1997.

While Ould Taya claimed Mauritania was now a multi-party democracy, critics and opponents questioned the legitimacy of both these elections. Human rights groups frequently criticized Ould Taya's regime. However, an attempted coup in June 2003 received little popular support. In what was the first serious challenge to his leadership, rebels opposed to Ould Taya's ties with Israel and the West attempted to seize power but were crushed by loyalist forces. A second coup was quelled in Aug. 2004.

Ould Taya has overseen a period of economic regeneration, with official figures suggesting that inflation has fallen by half. The UN Development Programme estimates a reduction from 56% to 46% of the population living below the poverty line during the period 1990–2000. The African Development Bank reported economic growth of 4% per year for Mauritania over the same period. However, drought (particularly in agricultural regions) and widespread poverty remain a blight and the government has fallen under increasing pressure from foreign creditors demanding reassurances that funds are being used for development and social services.

In Aug. 2005, while Ould Taya was attending the funeral of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, troops took control of several government buildings. Led by Ely Ould Mohamed Vall, who had been regarded as an Ould Taya ally, a group of officers announced that Ould Taya had been removed from power and been replaced by a 'military council for justice and democracy'. Ould Vall's administration was initially condemned as illegitimate by the African Union, EU, UN, South Africa and the USA. Ould Vall has promised to oversee new elections after 2 years.

Ould Taya left the country firstly for Niger before moving on to Gambia and Qatar.

Özal, Turgut (Turkey)

Introduction

Turgut Özal dominated Turkish politics for over a decade, first as prime minister (1983–9) and then as president from 1989 until his death in 1993. His tenure in office witnessed the increased liberalization of trade and a foreign policy programme that sought to strengthen Turkey's ties with the west.

Early Life

Özal was born in Malatya in the south of the country on 13 Oct. 1927. He was educated at İstanbul Technical University where he studied electrical engineering, and in the USA, where he read economics for a year. In İstanbul he made friends Süleyman Demirel, a relationship that was to gain him political influence when Demirel became prime minister. Özal played a prominent role in his country's electrification programme, overseeing the construction of power stations, and serving as a technical consultant to the ministry of defence. In 1967 he was appointed an under-secretary to the State Planning Organization (SPO).

Career Peak

In 1971 when Demirel was overthrown by a military *coup d'état*, Özal went to the USA to work as an economist for the World Bank. Demirel was restored to power in 1975, and Özal resumed his role as a government advisor. In 1980, after a second coup ousted Demirel, Özal was made deputy prime minister. He embarked on a programme of economic reforms, but resigned in 1983 in the wake of a financial scandal. In the same year he founded the right-wing Motherland Party (ANAP) which won a comfortable majority in the 1983 general election. Once in power, he continued to pursue free-market economics, increased Turkey's commitment to NATO, and made an unsuccessful effort to join the European Community. He was re-elected in 1987, but grew less popular towards the end of his second term as inflation and unemployment soared. He was elected president by parliament in 1989. Özal supported the rights of the Kurdish minority within Turkey, and in 1990 he played an important role in opposing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. He died of a heart attack in 1993 while still in office.

Pacheco de la Espriella, Abel (Costa Rica)

Introduction

Abel Pacheco was sworn in as president of Costa Rica in May 2002, heading the conservative Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC; Partido de Unidad Social Cristiana) in its second governing term. A supporter of free market reforms, he pledged to reduce poverty and corruption, and to control public finances and indebtedness. His term ended in May 2006.

Early Life

Abel Pacheco was born in San José on 22 Dec. 1933. Brought up in the province of Limón, he trained as a doctor in Mexico, becoming a hospital director. He moved into television, producing documentaries, and in the mid-1980s became a businessman. Married twice, he has six children.

Pacheco was a parliamentary deputy for the San José Province between 1998 and 2002, before standing successfully for the presidency.

Career Peak

Pacheco promised to form an inclusive government, consisting of the 'best men and women regardless of their party political leanings'. His term in office was relatively uneventful, although he had to contend with a faltering economy, hit by declining coffee prices, and with labour unrest which prompted

some ministerial resignations in 2003 and 2004. Corruption scandals involving senior political and public figures continued to taint the government and Pacheco's privatization and tax reform plans met with strong opposition. Nevertheless, Costa Rica has maintained a higher standard of living and greater social cohesion than many of its neighbours.

Pacheco did not stand in the 2006 presidential election. His term ended on 8 May 2006.

Paisley, Ian (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

A leading opponent of a united Ireland, Dr Ian Paisley had been one of the leading Unionist figures in Northern Ireland for over 50 years before he became the Northern Irish assembly's first minister in May 2007, with Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness as his deputy. Renowned for his firm stance against co-operating with Sinn Féin, such a partnership was thought highly improbable until shortly before the appointments. However, during his brief time in office Paisley developed a working and apparently amicable relationship with his deputy that surprised many who had traced his political career.

Early Life

Ian Richard Kyle Paisley was born on 6 April 1926 in Armagh, Northern Ireland to an Independent Baptist pastor father and a Scottish evangelical mother. He attended the Model School in Ballymena, County Antrim before working on a farm in County Tyrone. He later studied at the theological Barry School of Evangelism (Wales) and at the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Hall in Belfast. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Bob Jones University (South Carolina) in 1966.

Paisley was ordained in 1946. In the early 1950s he was refused permission to use a Presbyterian church in County Down as a gospel mission, prompting him to co-establish the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster, based at Crossgar, County Down. He was appointed the church's second moderator, a position he has retained. Avowedly anti-Catholic and anti-republican, he campaigned with the Ulster Protestant Action throughout the 1950s and '60s to secure the safety and rights of Belfast's protestant unionist community. He was a major figure in protests against Northern Irish prime minister Terrence O'Neill's attempts to improve relations with the Irish Republic in the 1960s. Paisley's demand that a Republic tricolour flag be removed from the Belfast base of Sinn Féin in 1964 led to widespread rioting. Five years later he served a prison sentence for organizing an illegal demonstration against a Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association march.

In 1971 Paisley co-founded the DUP with Desmond Boal, a year after Paisley had been elected as the MP for North Antrim. In 1973 he was a vocal opponent of the Sunningdale Agreement to set up a Northern Irish power-sharing executive and a cross border Council of Ireland. Paisley was instrumental in a crippling strike by the Ulster Workers Council which saw the agreement collapse. In 1979 he became one of Northern Ireland's three MEPs and thus concurrently sat as an MP at Westminster, an MEP and as a member of the Northern Ireland legislative assembly (MLA).

In 1985 Paisley was at the forefront of opposition to the Anglo-Irish agreement, which allowed Dublin an advisory role in Northern Ireland's governance. He and his fellow Unionist MPs (both Ulster Unionists and DUP members) resigned their seats in protest and all but one were re-elected in a show of support. After an initial role in talks towards the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, Paisley withdrew his party when Sinn Féin was allowed to participate following the IRA's declaration of a ceasefire. The Agreement provided for a power-sharing Northern Irish Assembly and a North-South Ministerial Council to deal with cross-border issues. Under its terms the constitutional future of Northern Ireland was to be determined by majority vote of its citizens, the Republic would give up its *de jure* claim to the whole island and paramilitary weapons would be decommissioned. Despite the DUP opposition, when referenda were held the Agreement won 70% support in Northern Ireland and 90% in the Republic.

The DUP contested the subsequent Assembly elections, claiming two seats on the executive while refusing to attend executive meetings. Tensions

over decommissioning and allegations of an IRA spy-ring led to the suspension of the Assembly in Oct. 2002. Campaigning for a renegotiated treaty, the DUP performed well in elections in 2003, emerging as the leading party. When the DUP took nine Westminster seats at the general election of 2005 (as against one for the Ulster Unionists led by David Trimble), Paisley and the DUP were unarguably the dominant unionist force in Northern Irish politics.

With the IRA's decommissioning programme completed by Sept. 2005, the UK government moved towards the re-establishment of the Assembly as the alternative to direct rule from London. Paisley maintained his antipathy towards Sinn Féin, announcing in July 2006 that 'IRA/Sinn Féin' would only serve in a power-sharing government 'over our dead bodies'. However, there were signs of a thaw, epitomised by his meeting with Ireland's Catholic Primate in Oct. 2006 (despite having previously described the pope as the 'whore of Babylon'). Later in the month Paisley gave assurances in the St Andrew's Agreement that he would support a joint executive if the republicans 'complete the transition to democracy and the rule of law'. When Sinn Féin agreed to accept the powers of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the future of the Assembly was secured.

The UK government set a deadline of 26 March 2007 for its re-establishment. Paisley met Gerry Adams of Sinn Féin and the two sides agreed to re-establish the Assembly on 8 May.

Career Peak

On that day power was devolved from London. Paisley, as leader of Northern Ireland's largest party in the 2007 elections to the Northern Irish assembly, was formally elected first minister, with Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin as his deputy. During his time in office Paisley developed an amicable relationship with his previously sworn enemy, at least in public, that did much to improve relations between Northern Ireland's religious factions. His retirement as first minister in May 2008 was attributed by some commentators to pressure from those in his own party who wanted a tougher stance against Sinn Féin and Irish republicanism. Paisley's conciliatory attitude in office led to speculation that, had he been more flexible earlier in his political career, he might have contributed more to the stability of Northern Ireland. Instead he acquired an enduring reputation as a 'no' man, a blocker of reform and an opponent of measures likely to bring an earlier peace to the province.

Later Life

Following his retirement Paisley continued to hold the North Antrim seat he had retained since his election in 1970 but in March 2010 he announced that he would not contest the next general election. His son Ian Paisley Jr, also of the DUP, won the North Antrim constituency. In May 2010 Paisley was made a life peer in the House of Lords.

Ian Paisley died aged 88 on 12 Sept. 2014. A private funeral service took place at his home in Belfast, with assembly business suspended as a mark of respect to the late former DUP leader.

Palacio, Alfredo (Ecuador)

Introduction

Dr Alfredo Palacio, a cardiologist with little ministerial experience, was elected by the national congress to be the country's president on 20 April 2005. His appointment came amid a week of mass protests that resulted in the sacking of Lucio Gutiérrez as president. Palacio was faced with the task of introducing economic reforms, fighting poverty and quelling unrest in the oil-producing east of the country. He left office in Jan. 2007 when his term of office ended and was replaced by Rafael Correa, who had won the presidential elections of Nov. 2006.

Early Life

Luis Alfredo Palacio González was born on 22 Jan. 1939 in the port-city of Guayaquil. He attended the Abdón Calderón primary school and the Colegio San José La Salle, before graduating in medicine from the Guayaquil University in 1967. He moved to Cleveland, Ohio in June 1969 to work as an intern specializing in cardiology at the city's Mount Sinai hospital. Two years later he relocated to Missouri, first working at the state's Veteran's

Administration hospital and, from July 1972, at Barnes Hospital, Washington University in St Louis. Returning to Ecuador in 1979, Palacio practised at the National Institute of Cardiology. He maintained an academic career, lecturing in cardiology and public health at Guayaquil University's faculty of medicine and publishing numerous papers and books. By 1989 he was the faculty's principal professor in cardiology.

Although not a member of a political party, Palacio became minister for public health in 1994, in the government of the moderate-conservative Sixto Durán-Ballén, who had won the presidential election of July 1992. Durán's government ushered in a new economic programme, which included cutting state subsidies, joining the World Trade Organization and encouraging foreign investment. However, interest rates remained high and a resumption of the border war with Peru in early 1995 left the country with a crippling debt. When Durán was ousted in the presidential election of July 1996, Palacio left the political stage to continue his academic work and cardiology practice. The late 1990s saw an economic downturn and increasing political instability, which culminated in a bloodless military coup in Jan. 2000, led by Lucio Gutiérrez (although Gustavo Noboa became the president). Dollarization of the currency and an IMF structural-adjustment programme followed, as did widespread emigration. Palacio re-entered the political scene in late 2002, as the running mate for Gutiérrez in the Nov. presidential elections. They campaigned on a left-wing, populist platform, promising to tackle poverty, social problems and corruption. When Gutiérrez won the run-off, Palacio took up the post of vice-president.

Gutiérrez attempted to reduce Ecuador's debt by cutting subsidies on food and cooking gas, leading to widespread resentment. The president's popularity plunged and, though he survived an attempt to impeach him in Nov. 2004, he lost further support when he was accused of intervening in the affairs of the Supreme Court. By mid-April 2005 the country was gripped by mass protest. When the presidential palace in the capital, Quito, was engulfed by over 100,000 protesters on 20 April 2005, congress sacked Gutiérrez and named Alfredo Palacio as the new president.

Career Peak

Palacio was critical of Gutiérrez during the final months of his presidency, and Palacio's lack of an affinity with a political party was seen by many in congress as a strength, although analysts observed that many of the ministers he chose hailed from the Izquierda Democrática (Democratic Left). Palacio promised to fight poverty and implement reform programmes, including amendments to the country's 1998 constitution. Unrest continued, however, particularly in the oil-producing areas in the east of the country. Protesters sabotaged drilling equipment and blocked roads, demanding that foreign oil companies provide money and jobs for local people. In Aug. 2005 Palacio declared a state of emergency in the provinces of Sucumbios and Orellana and granted some concessions to protesters.

Palacio was a candidate for the post of director general of the WHO following the death of Dr. Lee Jong-wook in 2006. However, Palacio removed himself from the running in order to concentrate on his presidency until his term ended in Jan. 2007. After two rounds of voting in the presidential elections of Nov. 2006, in which Palacio did not stand, Rafael Correa emerged victorious and succeeded Palacio.

Palme, Olof (Sweden)

Introduction

Olof Palme was leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party from 1969–86 and was Prime Minister from 1969–76 and 1982–86. An advocate of social equality and an active government role in social welfare, he was also an opponent of colonialism and nuclear arms. His outspoken attacks on USA involvement in the Vietnam war left relations between Sweden and the US strained. He was murdered in 1986 by an unknown assailant.

Early Life

Sven Olof Joachim Palme was born on 30 Jan. 1927 in Stockholm into a wealthy family. His father died when he was 6 years old and Olof suffered with ill health for much of his childhood. He matriculated from school at the

unusually early age of 17, undertook national service and then enrolled at the University of Stockholm. He graduated in political science in 1948, having spent a year at Kenyon College, Ohio, USA, and then studied law, completing his degree in 1951. He joined the Social Democratic Party and served as Chairman of the National Union of Students, then spent a period travelling and working on the Defence Staff.

He was appointed Personal Secretary to Prime Minister Tage Erlander in 1953. Two years later he was also Director of Studies for the Social Democratic Youth League, a position he held for 6 years. In 1956 he married Lisbet Beck-Friis. Palme entered parliament in 1958 as the member for the county of Jönköping. After a spell during the early 1960s with the Swedish Agency for International Assistance he entered the cabinet as Minister without Portfolio in 1963, while remaining an advisor to Erlander. Two years later Palme was moved to the Ministry of Transport and Communications, where he oversaw the conversion to driving on the right. In 1967 he transferred to the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. His special interest was higher education. He opened up admission processes and advocated more adult and vocational education.

From 1965 onwards, Palme was making public criticisms of US involvement in Vietnam. In 1968 he was photographed alongside a North Vietnamese ambassador on a protest march in the Swedish capital and, while Swedish public opinion was largely behind him, it caused considerable friction with America.

Career Peak

When Erlander resigned from frontline political life in Oct. 1969, Palme was elected as party leader and took office as Prime Minister on 14 Oct. He continued his attacks on American activity in Vietnam, likening the bombing of Hanoi in 1972 to actions of fascist and communist regimes. He provoked further US indignation by accepting military deserters into Sweden.

In 1971 Palme was key to the rejection of a Swedish bid for European Community membership, arguing that it went against the national policy of neutrality that forbade peacetime alliances. He also advocated increased trade union influence in Sweden and proposed a controversial wage-earner funds scheme in which employees had majority control. In addition, he spoke out against the nuclear arms race and the system of apartheid in South Africa, and in support of Cuba's Fidel Castro and of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Palme was returned with diminishing support at the elections of 1970 and 1973. In 1976 the Social Democrats were removed from power for the first time in 44 years, to be replaced by a non-socialist coalition.

While in opposition he served on the Brandt Commission, which dealt with world economy issues, and then headed the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. He also had a term as President of the Nordic Council and was used as a special envoy during the Iran–Iraq war by the UN. By 1982 the non-socialist coalition, struggling with the economy, was near collapse and Palme was re-elected Prime Minister. He began to re-assert socialist economic principle as the economy started to recover, and continued to express his views on European security issues. During this time he also spoke out against international 'neo-liberal' economic policies which he saw as responsible for widening the gap between the rich and poor.

On the night of 28 Feb. 1986 Palme was walking home from a cinema in Stockholm with his wife when he was gunned down. A man was convicted of his murder in 1989 but subsequently freed on appeal. Conspiracy theories have abounded since his death but there is still no satisfactory explanation for the events of that night. Palme achieved a higher international profile than any other Swedish politician of the twentieth century.

Papademos, Lucas (Greece)

Introduction

Lucas Papademos became prime minister in Nov. 2011 following the resignation of George Papandreu over his handling of the EU bailout. A career economist, Papademos took office at the head of an interim coalition committed to implementing austerity measures. After heading a 5-month debt rescue, Papademos submitted his resignation after the parliamentary election of May 2012 failed to produce a working government.

Early Life

Born on 11 Oct. 1947 in Athens, Lucas Papademos was educated at Athens College before obtaining a degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1970. He went on to earn a master's degree in electrical engineering in 1972 and a PhD in economics in 1978. He taught economics at Columbia University from 1975–84 and served as a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in 1980.

Having returned to Greece, he served as chief economist at the Bank of Greece from 1985–93, also teaching economics at the University of Athens from 1988–93. In 1993 he was appointed deputy governor of the Bank of Greece, taking over as governor the following year. During his tenure, which lasted until 2002, he strongly advocated Greece's adoption of the single European currency and used a mix of monetary policies (including devaluation of the drachma and the maintenance of high interest rates) to facilitate Greece's entry into the eurozone in 2001. From 2002–10 Papademos was vice-president of the European Central Bank, a post he left to become adviser to Prime Minister Papandreou.

Having taken office during Greece's worsening sovereign debt crisis, in April 2011 Papandreou entered negotiations with the 'troika' of the EU, IMF and ECB to activate the EU support mechanism for the Greek economy. Amid widespread popular protests at spending cuts, a financial bailout was agreed in Oct. 2011, conditional on further austerity measures. In Nov. 2011 Papandreou proposed to put the plan to a public vote, prompting anger among Greece's EU partners. After intensive negotiations, Papandreou agreed to resign and an interim coalition government under Papademos was formed, incorporating Papandreou's Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok), the conservative New Democracy and the far-right Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS).

Career Peak

Papademos was sworn in on 11 Nov. 2011, pledging to implement the spending cuts and structural reforms laid out in the terms of the bailout. In early 2012 he oversaw an agreement with Greece's private creditors to write down Greek debt. In Feb. 2012 his government survived the defection of LAOS, which refused to back his austerity measures.

At the general election on 6 May 2012 Antonis Samaras' New Democracy emerged as the largest party in parliament with 108 of 300 seats, but Samaras was unable to establish a workable coalition. Alexis Tsipras of the far-left Syriza group, which came second at the polls, was then given an opportunity to form a government, but his coalition talks also failed. International markets responded nervously and Greece's already perilous economic situation worsened. With negotiations unable to produce a government, further elections were scheduled for 17 June 2012. Papademos stood down after the announcement of the new poll and was replaced by Panagiotis Pikrammenos.

Papadopoulos, Giorgios (Greece)

Introduction

Giorgios Papadopoulos led the infamous "Colonels' Revolt" that seized power in Greece in 1967. He spent most of his life on a patriotic crusade against communism, and in doing so denied his countrymen democratic rule from 1967–73.

Early Life

Papadopoulos was born on 5 May 1919 at Eleochorion in the northern Peloponnese. He was the eldest of a village schoolmaster's sons. Unable to afford sending their son to university, Papadopoulos' parents enrolled him in military academy instead. He graduated as a second lieutenant in the artillery division a few months before the Italian invasion of Oct. 1940. He was decorated three times during the war. His official biography states that he joined the Greek resistance movement that opposed Nazi occupation.

After the liberation of Greece in Nov. 1944 civil war broke out. Papadopoulos became a battery commander in the army, and suppressed several communist guerrilla insurgencies in the mountains. The fighting stopped in 1949, but he remained in the military to receive extensive staff training. He was eventually recruited by the anti-communist Greek Central

Intelligence, and was promoted to colonel in 1960. Papadopoulos first appeared on the political scene in 1964 when he claimed to have uncovered a communist conspiracy in the army. Fearing a coup, the centrist government made a series of illegal arrests in an attempt to quell dissent. It became quickly apparent that their fears were groundless, and Papadopoulos spent 2 years in disgrace before being promoted to deputy chief of operations at Army General Staff. In Dec. 1966 Constantine dismissed Georgios Papandreou from power and installed a caretaker government to prepare for elections the following May. The election was expected to sweep the left wing into power, and Papadopoulos conspired with several senior figures in the military to prevent this by force. They launched a 3 h *Coup d'état*, and Papadopoulos justified the junta's actions by stating, 'If things had been allowed to go on as they were, it is mathematically certain that Greece would have ended up behind the Iron Curtain.'

Career Peak

The seizure of power led to the arrest of thousands, and the imposition of restrictions on freedom of speech and trade union activity. King Constantine initially co-operated with the junta, but became increasingly convinced that their stentorian measures (which included the banning of long hair for men and mini-skirts for women) were dragging Greece into international disrepute. In Dec. 1967 he broadcast an appeal for assistance in deposing the regime of the Colonels. As a result of this appeal the junta deprived him of his sovereignty. Constantine fled to Rome, and the junta drew up a new constitution proclaiming a Greek republic. Papadopoulos was sworn in as prime minister. Martial law was instigated.

In 1969 Papadopoulos withdrew Greece from the Council of Europe, and by 1972 he had taken on the roles of prime minister, defence minister, foreign minister and self-styled Regent of Greece. However, opposition to his rule had begun to ferment throughout the country. A naval mutiny in 1973 was followed by student riots in Athens protesting against his leadership. In the end it was a right-wing coup, led by Brigadier Dimitris Ioannidis, that ousted Papadopoulos from power. The new regime did not last long, and in July 1974 democracy was finally restored.

Later Life

Papadopoulos was convicted of treason and sentenced to death but the sentence was later commuted to one of life imprisonment. He spent his final 3 years in hospital under armed guard. He died on 27 June 1999.

Papadopoulos, Tassos (Cyprus)

Introduction

Tassos Papadopoulos, Greek Cypriot nationalist leader of the centre-right Democratic Party (DIKO; Dimokratiko Komma), was elected president in Feb. 2003 after defeating incumbent Glafcos Clerides. He is considered more hardline than his predecessor on the issue of Cypriot reunification. In 2004 he oversaw Cyprus' entry into the EU. Papadopoulos was eliminated in the first round of the presidential elections held on 17 Feb. 2008.

Early Life

Papadopoulos was born on 7 Jan. 1934 in Nicosia. He graduated in law from King's College, London, England, and was called to the Bar as a member of Gray's Inn. Between 1955 and 1959 he was an important figure in the EOKA national liberation movement. In 1960 he opposed the Zurich-London agreements which established an independent Cypriot state, but went on to play a prominent role in drafting the constitution. He held several ministerial portfolios including internal affairs (1959–60), labour and social insurance (1960–70), agriculture and natural resources (1964–67) and health (1967–70).

In 1970 he entered parliament as the Eniain (Unified) Party representative for Nicosia. He was re-elected in 1976 as a non-partisan and acted as the intercommunal negotiator on behalf of President Clerides in talks over Cyprus' future following the establishment of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' ('TRNC') 2 years earlier. In 1991 he was elected to parliament for the Democratic Party (DIKO) and was the party spokesman in

parliament until 2001. He also represented Cyprus in several international organizations, including the UN general assembly and the ILO, and helped negotiate the country's passage to EU membership.

In 2000 Papadopoulos was elected chairman of DIKO, and in Feb. 2003 defeated Clerides for the state presidency with 51.5% of the vote in the first round in a high turnout.

Career Peak

Among Papadopoulos' first tasks was to oversee continuing negotiations to reunify the 'TRNC' with the rest of the country, having been critical of the soft negotiating line previously adopted by Clerides. In March 2004 the UN Secretary-General proposed a revised plan for Cypriot reunification based on a federation of two largely autonomous states. A referendum on the plan was held the following month, in which Papadopoulos urged the Greek Cypriot community to vote no, insisting that the provisions for their return to their former homes in the north were not good enough. Although the Turkish Cypriot community endorsed the UN plan, Greek Cypriots rejected it by a large majority. Consequently, Cyprus joined the EU in May 2004 as a partitioned state. Hopes of progress on reunification were rekindled in July 2006 when Papadopoulos and the Turkish Cypriot leader agreed at UN-sponsored talks on a new series of confidence-building measures and contacts between the two communities. In early 2007 both communities demolished parts of the barrier dividing the old city of Nicosia, paving the way for a buffer zone pedestrian crossing point in the capital. Meanwhile, Turkey continued to block Greek Cypriot shipping and air traffic from its territory while the trade embargo on northern Cyprus remained in force.

On 17 Feb. 2008 Papadopoulos was eliminated in the first round in the presidential elections. The new president Dimitris Christofias called for speedy negotiations on the issue of reunification. Christofias made an alliance with the party of the defeated Papadopoulos.

Following a lengthy period of illness, Papadopoulos died from lung cancer on 12 Dec. 2008 aged 74.

Papandreou, Georgios (Greece)

Introduction

Georgios Papandreou assumed office as prime minister on 6 Oct. 2009 after leading his party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok), to victory over the conservative New Democracy party in snap legislative elections. Having previously served as foreign minister from 1999–2004, Papandreou was also president of Socialist International, a worldwide collective of socialist parties. He was the third generation of his family to serve as prime minister of Greece, following his grandfather (also Georgios) and father (Andreas). Papandreou resigned amid financial and political turmoil in Nov. 2011.

Early Life

Papandreou was born in June 1952 in St Paul, Minnesota, USA, where his father held a teaching post. He read sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and gained a master's degree in the same subject from the London School of Economics in the UK. He also studied in Stockholm, Sweden, and in 1992 he was made a fellow at Harvard's Centre for International Affairs.

Papandreou returned to Greece after the fall of the military junta in 1974, when his father established the centre-left Pasok. In 1981, the year that his father became prime minister, he was elected MP for Achaia. He served as minister of education and religious affairs and deputy foreign minister before becoming foreign minister in Feb. 1999. During his 5 years in the post Papandreou sought closer relations with Greece's neighbours, particularly Albania and Bulgaria. He was praised for achieving a partial rapprochement with Turkey, resulting in the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU.

He replaced the former prime minister, Kostas Simitis, as leader of Pasok in 2004, before losing a general election in the same year. He held on to the party leadership and in 2009 secured an absolute majority against an incumbent government made unpopular by allegations of corruption.

Career Peak

Papandreou pledged to restore the struggling economy, but the prospects for a speedy recovery were undermined by the acknowledgment that the financial situation was considerably worse than had been reported by the preceding administration. In order to slash the large budget deficit and avoid a default on Greece's sovereign debt, Papandreou imposed a series of wide-ranging and stringent austerity measures in Dec. 2009 and in Jan., March and April 2010. He likened the crisis to a 'wartime situation' prompting a wave of social and labour unrest. In May Greece's partner countries in the eurozone, together with the International Monetary Fund, approved a €110 bn. rescue package, although Germany was initially hostile to the arrangement. Despite public discontent over the economy, voters in Greek local elections in Nov. broadly backed Papandreou's Pasok ahead of the opposition New Democracy. As Greece's sovereign debt crisis worsened in 2011, support for Papandreou's government waned. Although a fresh eurozone bailout deal had been agreed in Oct., Papandreou announced his government's intentions to hold a referendum on its terms. The proposal was dropped but sparked a deeper financial and political crisis. Despite narrowly winning a confidence vote on 5 Nov., the prime minister faced continuing pressure to resign amid chaos over the debt crisis. Papandreou agreed to step down as part of a deal to form a national unity government to push through the EU deal. Former European Central Bank vice-president Lucas Papademos was subsequently chosen as Greece's interim prime minister.

Papandreou, Georgios A. (Greece)

Introduction

Georgios Papandreou served three terms as the prime minister of Greece (1944–45, 1946–52 and 1964–65), and his Centre Union government achieved a number of important and far-reaching reforms, most notably the release of all political prisoners.

Early Life

Papandreou was born in Kaléntzi on 13 Feb. 1888. He was educated at the University of Athens and in Germany. The first notable appointment of his political career came when he was made governor of the Aegean islands, a post he held for 3 years. In 1929 he was minister of education in the government of Eleftherios Venizelos. In 1935 he left the Liberal Party to found the Democratic Socialist Party, but was forced into exile by the Metaxas regime.

Career Peak

In 1942 Papandreou was arrested by the Nazis, and was imprisoned until 1944 when he escaped. He led a Greek coalition government in exile until the withdrawal of German forces in Oct. 1944. He remained in power until Jan. 1945. By this time the country was embroiled in a civil war. In 1946 Papandreou returned to ministerial office. In 1952 electoral defeat forced him into opposition, and during this period he was largely responsible for the merger of the Liberal Party with his own Democratic Socialist Party. By 1961 a new centre-left coalition, the Centre Union, had emerged, and 2 years later it secured a slim majority in the general election. Papandreou was made prime minister but resigned from the post in an effort to achieve a more convincing majority. He did so in 1964 and used his support to instigate a programme of social reforms and to remove what he regarded as the pernicious influence of the USA on Greece.

Papandreou's policies aroused the suspicion of the military, and right wing factions opposed to his government began to appear. In an attempt to regain control of the army, Papandreou tried to take on the job of minister of defence, a move that failed to gain the approval of King Constantine. Greece was plunged into constitutional crisis. Papandreou resigned in disgust in 1965. In 1967 Constantine called fresh elections but when it became obvious the Centre Union was heading for another electoral victory, a military junta seized control and brought an end to Papandreou's hopes of further reform. He died on 1 Nov. 1968.

Papoulias, Karolos (Greece)

Introduction

Karolos Papoulias was sworn in as president of Greece on 12 March 2005, having been elected by an unprecedented parliamentary majority of 279 out of the 300 available votes. A founding member of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok) and foreign minister throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Papoulias succeeded Kostis Stephanopoulos in this largely ceremonial role and was re-elected in Feb. 2010.

Early Life

Born on 4 June 1929 in the city of Ioannina, Papoulias studied law at the Universities of Athens and of Milan in Italy, followed by a doctorate in private international law at Cologne in Germany.

In 1967, while he was in Cologne and following a coup that saw the right-wing Greek government replaced by a military dictatorship, Papoulias founded the Overseas Socialist Democratic Union, which mobilized exiled Greeks against the regime until 1974. With the fall of the dictatorship and the establishment of the democratic Third Hellenic Republic that year, Papoulias returned to Greece, where, with fellow returnee Andreas Papandreu, he helped to found Pasok. With its principles of 'National Independence, Popular Sovereignty, Social Emancipation and Democratic Process'. Pasok dominated Greek political life throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

At the Nov. 1974 elections Pasok won 13.5% of the vote, coming third behind the Liberal Party and the conservative New Democracy party. By Nov. 1977, however, Pasok had doubled its percentage of the votes and become the official opposition. In the elections of Oct. 1981 Pasok won a resounding 48% of the vote and, with Papoulias' long-time associate Andreas Papandreu as prime minister, formed the first socialist government in the history of Greece. Papoulias served as secretary of Pasok's International Relations Committee from 1975–85, and from 1976–80 he was also a member of the party's Co-ordinating Council. In 1977 he entered parliament for the first time, representing Ioannina as a Pasok member. He was to be re-elected eight times, serving a total of 27 years continuously until 2004. In Oct. 1981 he gave up his law practice to take up a full-time post as deputy foreign minister in the Pasok government. He held his post until 1984, becoming foreign minister from 1985–90, and again from 1993–96.

Under the leadership of Papoulias, Pasok foreign policy in the Balkan states contributed significantly to the stability of at least some parts of this historically volatile area. Inter-Balkan conferences in 1976, 1979 and 1982, initiated by the Greek government, led in 1984 to talks on the denuclearization of the Balkan region. Also, despite the two countries having been officially at war since 1940, Greco-Albanian relations improved dramatically during the mid-1980s and, in 1985, the Greco-Albanian border was reopened for the first time in 45 years, with full normalization of relations in 1987.

Following the death of Andreas Papandreu in June 1996 and a general election in Sept., Papoulias left the cabinet to become the Greek representative at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

On 12 Dec. 2004 Prime Minister Karamanlis (New Democracy) and leader of the opposition George Papandreu (Pasok) named Papoulias as the only presidential candidate in the Feb. 2005 election. Gaining 279 out of 300 votes Papoulias was elected by a huge majority of MPs representing all the parliamentary parties.

Career Peak

The appointment of Papoulias ended months of speculation that Pasok MPs might withhold the votes required for the endorsement of a new president, forcing early elections just 1 year after the centre-right New Democracy party had come to power. Papoulias, who enjoyed popularity across the political spectrum, spoke of his desire to see a united Cyprus and expressed hope that Turkey's EU membership aspirations would trigger progress on the issue.

Following defeat in a snap general election in Oct. 2009, Prime Minister Karamanlis resigned and Papoulias asked Pasok leader George Papandreu to form a new government. Papoulias was subsequently re-elected for a second presidential term unopposed in Feb. 2010. The Pasok government struggled to address Greece's deteriorating economy and burgeoning sovereign debt crisis, and in Nov. 2011 Papandreu submitted his resignation to Papoulias

who subsequently swore in Lucas Papademos, a respected economist and banker, as interim prime minister of a national unity administration. Elections in May 2012 failed to produce a working government but, following a further election a month later, a New Democracy-led coalition was formed under Antonis Samaras.

Papoulias' term as president came to an end in March 2015 when he was succeeded by Prokopis Pavlopoulos of the New Democracy party.

Park Chung-hee (South Korea)

Introduction

Park Chung-hee was the military ruler of South Korea for 16 years. His period in office gave his country stability and economic development but his dictatorship stifled human rights.

Early Life

Park was born into rural poverty on 14 Nov. 1917. He received an elementary education and showed great promise as a pupil. Park became a primary school teacher but left teaching for a military career, joining the army of the Japanese occupiers of Korea. Park's potential was quickly recognized and he was sent to a military academy in Japan. During World War II (1939–45) he served as an officer in the Japanese Imperial Army and joined the infant Korean forces after the Japanese occupation of his country ended in 1945.

Rapid promotion followed. He served with some distinction in the Korean War (1950–53) and became a brigadier-general in 1953. Promotion to general came in 1961. As one of the most senior army officers in the country Park led the military coup in May 1961 and made himself head of the military junta that ruled the country for the next 2 years.

Career Peak

A new constitution restored civilian rule, in theory, in 1963. Park was elected President in the same year and held office until his death on 26 Oct. 1979. In office, Park restricted opposition parties, controlled the media, expanded the secret service and curtailed civil liberties, citing the need to fight Communism as justification. In 1972 he introduced a more authoritarian constitution and declared martial law.

While the country was cowed into acceptance of Park's near-dictatorship, US investment boosted industry and raised living standards. In Oct. 1979 Park threw a popular opposition figure out of parliament. Riots paralyzed Seoul and other major cities. Park refused to give way and was consequently assassinated by a former close colleague, Kim Jae-gyu.

Park Geun-hye (South Korea)

Introduction

Park Geun-hye became the country's first female president on 25 Feb. 2013 at the head of one of the world's most male-dominated governments. She had to contend with the legacy of her late father, Park Chung-hee, a former president both revered as the driving force behind South Korea's economic miracle and condemned for his suppression of opposition.

Early Life

Park Geun-hye was born on 2 Feb. 1952 in Jung-gu, Daegu. She graduated in electronic engineering from Seoul's Sogang University in 1974. She then studied at the University of Grenoble, France, before returning to Seoul following the death of her mother on 15 Aug. 1974 in a botched assassination attempt on Park Chung-hee. Park stepped into the role of first lady until 26 Oct. 1979 when her father was assassinated by his intelligence chief.

Following her father's death, Park retreated from politics and served on the boards of various charities and educational institutions. In 1997 she joined

the Grand National Party (GNP) and won a seat in the National Assembly after winning a by-election for Dalseong, Daegu in 1998. In the run-up to the 2004 general election the GNP, beleaguered by scandals, appointed Park as leader. Despite its lacklustre performance at the election, under Park's leadership the GNP recovered in the following years by winning all the by-elections it contested.

In 2006 Park stepped down from the party leadership in a bid to become the GNP candidate at the following year's presidential election. She was narrowly defeated at the party primaries by Lee Myung-bak, who went on to become president. In Dec. 2011 Park was chosen to chair the GNP's emergency committee, overseeing the party's name change to Saenuri (New Frontier) to signal a fresh start in the face of growing voter dissatisfaction. Stepping back from the party in May 2012 to run for the presidency, she won the election on 19 Dec. 2012 with 51.6% of the vote.

Career Peak

Park's centrist agenda aimed to continue economic growth, close the wealth gap, increase spending on social welfare and reduce unemployment, especially among the young. Although she has favoured improved relations with North Korea, her tenure has been marked by military provocations, both conventional and nuclear, and threatening rhetoric by the North. In 2014 and the first half of 2015 North Korea continued to conduct missile tests, including, it was claimed, from a submarine for the first time. Tensions escalated further from Aug. 2015 following an artillery confrontation along the border over the South's propaganda broadcasts across the demilitarized zone. Then in Jan. 2016 the North claimed that it had conducted its fourth nuclear weapon test since 2006, prompting international condemnation and threats of further sanctions.

In April 2014 Park accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Chung Hong-won, who took responsibility for the government's heavily criticized response to the MV *Sewol* ferry disaster that left more than 300 of the 476 people on board (mostly schoolchildren) dead or missing. Chung remained in office until Feb. 2015 when he was replaced by Lee Wan-koo. Two other candidates for the premiership had earlier failed to secure sufficient parliamentary backing. However, following a bribery scandal he too submitted his resignation just 2 months later, which Park also accepted, and was replaced in May by Hwang Kyo-ahn. In the wake of protests in Seoul against the government's economic policy, Park announced a cabinet reshuffle in Dec. and named new finance and interior ministers.

Also in Dec. 2015 Japan agreed to settle a long-standing dispute with the South Korean government over the sexual abuse of Korean women in the Second World War by the Japanese military.

On 9 Dec. 2016 the National Assembly voted to impeach her over corruption allegations. On 10 March 2017 South Korea's Constitutional Court upheld that decision, definitively removing Park from power. During her impeachment trial and before the presidential election scheduled to be held in May 2017, Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn assumed the presidential powers.

Paroubek, Jiří (Czech Republic)

Introduction

The Czech Republic's third prime minister in 9 months, Jiří Paroubek's appointment on 25 April 2005 followed the resignation of his controversial party colleague, Stanislav Gross. Paroubek is an economist who worked for various state-owned industries under communist rule and became a consultant following the sweeping reforms and upheavals of the early 1990s. Although he worked as the deputy mayor of Prague for 6 years, Paroubek had little ministerial experience. He was faced with the task of holding together the fractious centre-left coalition government. He led his party to electoral defeat in 2006.

Early Life

Jiří Paroubek was born in Olomouc, central Czechoslovakia on 21 Aug. 1952. He attended the School of Economics in the capital, Prague, from 1970–76 and in 1970 joined the 'revived National Front' although it had no influence

while the country was ruled by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCZ). Having graduated in 1976, Paroubek worked as an economist at several state-owned organizations including Prefa Malešice, Obuv Praha (a shoe company) and Jidelny a Restaurace (restaurants and food facilities), where he was head of the planning and financial department.

Following the dramatic 'Velvet Revolution' in Nov. 1989 that culminated in the playwright and former dissident Václav Havel being elected president, Paroubek joined the newly reborn Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD). In 1990 he was elected as central secretary of the ČSSD and contributed to establishing its organizational structure and financial base. In the same year he was also elected as a member of the municipal assembly of Prague's city hall. In 1991 Paroubek established EPC, an economic consultancy that advised small businesses. At this time, sweeping reforms to the Czechoslovak economy were leading to serious hardship, particularly in the east of the country. A separatist movement in Slovakia led eventually to a formal split into independent states on 1 Jan. 1993.

Paroubek was elected the deputy mayor of Prague in 1998, the year in which Václav Havel was re-elected president. Miloš Zeman led the ČSSD to its first victory in the ensuing legislative elections, promising to prevent a repeat of the 1997 economic downturn and vowing to slow privatization and restore more control to the state. As deputy mayor, responsible for financial policy, Paroubek organized the funding for the renovation of Prague's Congress Centre and secured loans and bonds to improve the city's infrastructure. However, he was criticized for his decision to have bonds worth €170 m. issued in euros rather than Czech koruny, which allegedly caused heavy losses for the city in interest-rate speculation. He was also accused of selling off the city's stake in the water utility, Praské Vodovody a Kanalizace (PVK), to the French company, Vivendi Water, for less than the market rate. Paroubek countered that the funds from the sale were required to repair buildings and roads that were ruined in the floods of Aug. 2002.

In Aug. 2004 he was appointed minister for regional development in Gross' new ČSSD-led coalition. Despite his reputation for deal-making and his energetic approach, Gross came under fire just 6 months into his term of office when it was revealed that in 1999 he had bought a luxury apartment costing far more than his government salary. Gross' attempts to explain the purchase, combined with controversy over his wife's business dealings, led to his resignation. On 25 April 2005 the president, Václav Klaus, named Paroubek prime minister of the Czech Republic. On 13 May 2005 the government (which remained the coalition of the ČSSD and Koalice) passed a motion of confidence in Paroubek.

Career Peak

Paroubek was generally seen as politically to the left of his predecessor but he did not initiate any major policy changes. A strong advocate for the European Constitution, he accepted that it was 'impossible at present' to continue with plans for a referendum to ratify the constitution in the light of its rejection by voters in France and the Netherlands. Paroubek also pledged to bring in tax cuts for the poor and deregulate state-owned property.

He received criticism in 2005 when opposition figures accused his government of heavy-handedness after a music festival was broken up by 1,000 riot police. He came under further media scrutiny later in the year over the appointment of David Rath as health minister at the same time as he was serving as president of the Czech Medical Chamber. Nonetheless, Paroubek received overwhelming backing from his party to lead them into the elections of June 2006. The ČSSD came second to the Civic Democrats at the polls and Paroubek left office on 16 Aug. 2006.

Parts, Juhan (Estonia)

Introduction

Juhan Parts became the youngest prime minister in Europe when he took office in April 2003. He led Estonia towards European Union accession in 2004. Parts campaigned on a transparency platform and his government was designed to represent a change from the old order.

Early Life

Parts was born on 27 Aug. 1966 in Tallinn. He graduated in 1991 from the University of Tartu with a law degree and became deputy secretary general of the ministry of justice in 1992. In 1998, at the age of 31, he was appointed auditor general by President Lennart Meri. As auditor general he was a prominent critic of the Centre Party-Reform Party coalition, especially concerning state appointments and financial management. In 2002 he entered politics by becoming president of the newly formed Res Publica Party (RESP).

Career Peak

The parliamentary elections held in March 2003 produced no clear winner. As a result of post-election negotiations Parts was invited to form a coalition government with the Reform Party and the People's Union. He rejected on moral grounds any power-sharing agreement with the Centre Party, led by Edgar Savisaar, the former interior minister. Savisaar was forced to resign in 1995 as a result of allegations of covertly recording his political rivals.

In addition to his anti-corruption agenda, Parts pledged to reduce the tax burden and introduce direct presidential elections by 2006. In March 2005 parliament passed a vote of no confidence in Justice Minister Ken-Marti Vaher over his administering of proposed anti-corruption legislation. In response, Parts dissolved his government. His term as prime minister officially ended the following month.

Later Life

In 2007 Parts was appointed minister of economic affairs and communications in the government of Andrus Ansip and held the position until March 2014 when the prime minister resigned. Parts has since remained in public office and was re-elected as a member of parliament at the March 2015 elections.

Parvanov, Georgi (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Georgi Parvanov, leader of the Socialist party, was elected president of Bulgaria in Nov. 2001, defeating his predecessor, Petar Stoyanov. He was sworn into office in Jan. 2002. Re-elected in Oct. 2006, he became the first Bulgarian president to retain office through a democratic mandate, albeit in a very low turnout.

Early Life

Georgi Sedefchov Parvanov was born in Sirishtchnik, Bulgaria on 28 June 1957. He graduated from Mathematics High School in Pernik in 1975 then studied for an MA and a PhD in history at Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski.

Parvanov joined the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) in 1981 as a researcher in its institute of history. By 1989 he held the post of senior research associate. In 1990 the BCP changed its name to the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), a year after dethroning their chairman Todor Zhivkov, and in 1991 Parvanov was elected to a party post for the first time. He began a steady climb up the party ladder, becoming deputy chairman in 1994 and in 1996 replacing Zhan Videnov as the elected chairman of the BSP supreme council. He won the post again in 2000.

As an MP from 1994–2001, Parvanov held several posts, including chairman of the parliamentary group for friendship with Greece (1994–97), chairman of the parliamentary group of the Democratic Left (1997–2001) and chairman of the parliamentary group of the Coalition for Bulgaria (1997–2001). In 1999, during NATO's air bombing campaign of Yugoslavia, Parvanov led his parliamentary group in a vote against granting NATO access to Bulgarian air space. However, a year later he announced his party's support for Bulgaria's admission to NATO and the European Union.

Career Peak

Georgi Parvanov became the first former communist to win a presidential election in post-communist Bulgaria. His priorities included stabilizing the

country's economy, modernizing the Bulgarian army and fighting crime and corruption. He sought a stronger role for the state in national life and supported closer ties with former allies such as Russia and Ukraine. In Dec. 2001 parliament agreed to the destruction of Soviet-made missiles.

In Nov. 2002 Bulgaria was invited to join NATO and in March 2004 was granted admission. In April 2005 it signed the EU accession treaty and became a full member on 1 Jan. 2007. Parvanov was re-elected as president over two rounds of voting in Oct. 2006. Following parliamentary elections in July 2009, Parvanov asked Boyko Borisov, the leader of the populist centre-right Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria which emerged as the largest party, to form a new government in place of the outgoing Socialist Party administration.

In Jan. 2012, after two terms in office, Parvanov was succeeded by Rosen Plevneliev, who had won the presidential elections held in Oct. 2011.

Passos Coelho, Pedro (Portugal)

Introduction

Pedro Passos Coelho became prime minister in June 2011 when Portugal was suffering a severe sovereign debt crisis. A centre-right politician, he advocated cutting government expenditure and privatizing many of Portugal's state-owned businesses to improve efficiency and to restore the confidence of international investors.

Early Life

Born in Coimbra on 24 July 1964, Pedro Passos Coelho was educated in Silva Porto, Portugal and Luanda, Angola, where his family lived from 1969–74. He joined the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and served on the national council of its junior wing from 1980–82.

In 1982 he began studying mathematics at Lisbon University but left before graduating to work in private enterprise and to pursue his political career. Leader of the junior PSD from 1990–95, he was elected to parliament in 1991. He served as vice-chairman of the PSD parliamentary group from 1996–99 and, after standing unsuccessfully for mayor of Amadora in 1997, served as a municipal councillor from 1997–2001.

He left parliament in 1999 following the PSD general election defeat and studied economics at Lusíada University, Lisbon, graduating in 2001. After working in consultancy firms, he joined the Fomentinvest investment holding company in 2004 and became finance director. He also served as vice president of the PSD from 2005–06, gaining a business-friendly and pragmatic reputation.

In 2008 he unsuccessfully contested the party leadership, and also established a think tank to develop policies based on economic liberalization and partial privatization. In May 2010 he again contested the leadership and won with 61% of the vote.

As leader of the opposition, Passos Coelho helped vote down the government budget in March 2011, arguing it relied too heavily on tax increases rather than spending cuts. The government collapsed and a caretaker administration then agreed a €78 bn. IMF–EU bailout, with stringent austerity conditions attached.

Passos Coelho campaigned at the June 2011 parliamentary election on a platform of economic reform. The PSD won the most votes and formed a coalition with the centre-right Democratic and Social Centre–People's Party.

Career Peak

In its early months Passos Coelho's government increased taxes, cut state spending and announced a privatization programme. However, after discovering further debt, he announced the transfer of €6 bn. of banks' pension funds to the state in order to reduce the short-term deficit and boost liquidity. To comply with the bailout terms, the government was required to implement labour law reform but its proposals and austerity measures provoked strike action and street protests in 2012. Passos Coelho's government was granted an additional year by the IMF and EU to meet deficit targets. However, in April 2013 the Constitutional Court invalidated certain measures in the 2013 budget and Passos Coelho had to seek other deficit reduction avenues. In July that year his government suffered a political crisis when several senior

ministers resigned in the wake of widespread public resistance to further austerity. The reshuffled coalition survived a no confidence motion in parliament but its subsequent deficit reduction policies were again derailed by Constitutional Court rulings during the year. Nevertheless, the government did launch a €3.25 bn. bond sale in Jan. 2014 and in May Portugal exited the international bailout programme, without a precautionary credit line, as the country returned to economic growth.

In Nov. 2014 Miguel Macedo was replaced as interior minister following his resignation over a corruption inquiry.

Passos Coelho was reappointed prime minister on 22 Oct. 2015 following the victory of the centre-right Portugal Ahead alliance at elections held earlier in the month. However, 11 days later his new government lost a parliamentary vote of no-confidence by 123 votes to 107. Passos Coelho subsequently called for snap elections to take place before April 2016 but his government was replaced in Nov. 2015 by a leftist administration led by António Costa of the Socialist Party.

Pastrana Arango, Andrés (Colombia)

Introduction

Andrés Pastrana Arango was president of Colombia between 1998–2002, representing the conservative Partido Social Conservador (PSC). During his presidency he concentrated on resolving the conflict between left-wing guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries. His efforts were hindered by recession. The continued violence, especially surrounding the 2002 elections, formed a platform for his successor Alvaro Uribe to promote hardline military force.

Early Life

Pastrana was born on 17 Aug. 1954, the son of the former president Misael Pastrana Borrero (1970–74). He read law at the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Bogotá, later studying at Harvard. In the late 1970s he had a career in journalism, founding the magazine *Guión* in 1978 and the news programme *Noticiero TV hoy* in 1979. Politically active during his student career, Pastrana was later twice elected as town councillor for Bogotá, and became the city's first elected mayor in 1988. In 1990 Pastrana formed his own political party, La Nueva Fuerza Democrática, which supported him in his campaign to be elected to the Senate.

In the 1994 presidential election Pastrana stood against Ernesto Samper losing by 48.64% to 50.37% in one of the closest fought elections in Colombian history. Allegations about Samper's involvement with the Cali drug barons forced Pastrana into exile for 2 years. In 1998 Pastrana stood again for presidency against the Liberal Horacio Serpa and the outsider Noemi Sanin. In the second round, Pastrana won with 50.5% of votes in a record turnout of over 12 m.

Career Peak

On his election, Pastrana pledged to end the conflict between the left-wing guerrillas FARC and ELN, the government and the paramilitaries. Up to then, 30,000 people had died, 1 m. had been displaced. As president-elect, Pastrana met the FARC for secret talks. On 7 Jan. 1999 Pastrana officially met with FARC's leader Manuel Marulanda Veléz in San Vicente del Caguan, becoming the first president to do so. In response to the government initiative, the AUC paramilitaries (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia; United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia) renewed violence. Despite demilitarizing 40,000 km² of the southeastern region of Caquetá in the Amazonia region in Nov. 1998, where the FARC has its stronghold, the group later renewed offensives. In one attack three American human rights workers were assassinated on the Venezuelan border. There were calls for stronger government action. Continued offensives on the guerrillas by right-wing paramilitaries, including the AUC, slowed the peace effort.

On 25 Jan. 1999 Colombia suffered an earthquake which left 2,000 people dead. At the same time, the country slipped into recession. Although inflation was stable at 15%, unemployment rose to 20%. Strikes closed schools and hospitals and Pastrana was forced to concede 15% pay rises. Pastrana faced the challenge of fighting the economy, the guerrillas, the paramilitaries and international hostility.

The year 2000 showed a slight improvement in the economy, although peace was no nearer. An emerging corruption scandal revealed payments of US\$3 m. for political favours. Pastrana's popularity slumped. In 1998 Pastrana visited Washington, becoming the first Colombian president to do so in 20 years. FARC's demands were at odds with Pastrana's conservative, free-market government. The left was willing to pull out of the drug trade only in return for wealth distribution and political, military and agrarian reform. Controversial measures supported by the American government, called Plan Colombia, aimed to destroy poppy and coca crops. This was part of a US\$1.3 bn. aid package from the USA in military aid to combat the guerrillas, announced in June 2000. But legal harvests were destroyed in the process. On 5 Jan. 2001 a humanitarian accord was signed between the government and FARC allowing for the exchange of sick prisoners. Reacting to internal and international pressure, on 14 Feb. 2001 FARC yielded 62 children between 13 and 16 and promised to let 500 others go free.

Pastrana and Marulanda met again in Feb. 2001 in an attempt to restart peace talks, but Pastrana's pledge to solve the decades-long civil war failed to halt the violence. In the build up to the 2002 presidential elections (for which Pastrana was constitutionally banned from running) rebel action intensified. Highlighting Pastrana's inability to resolve the conflict, his successor, the rightwing independent Alvaro Uribe, campaigned on combating FARC activities.

Later Life

In Oct. 2005 Pastrana was appointed ambassador to the United States by president Alvaro Uribe Vélez and held the post until his resignation in July 2006.

Patil, Pratibha (India)

Introduction

Pratibha Patil was sworn in as India's first female president in July 2007. Backed by the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and the Left Front, she won nearly two-thirds of the votes cast in state assemblies and in India's parliament.

Early Life

Pratibha Patil was born on 19 Dec. 1934 in Nadgaon, Maharashtra. She graduated with a master's degree in political science and economics from Mooljee Jaitha College, Jalgaon and then studied at the Government Law College in Mumbai. She worked at the Jalgaon District Court before entering politics in 1962 when she successfully contested a seat in the Maharashtra State Assembly, representing the Indian National Congress (INC) party. Following re-election in 1967 she was appointed deputy minister working in the offices of public health, prohibition, tourism, housing and parliamentary affairs. From 1972–77 she held several cabinet portfolios including social welfare, public health and prohibition, rehabilitation and cultural affairs.

When the INC split in 1977 after Indira Gandhi's electoral defeat in the wake of the Indian Emergency, Patil remained loyal to Gandhi. She protested the arrest of Gandhi in Dec. 1977 and was herself arrested and imprisoned for ten days. Patil was appointed minister for education in 1978 and became leader of the opposition in the state assembly in July 1979 when Congress (Urs), a breakaway faction of the INC, came to power. The INC returned to power in 1980 and Patil was a frontrunner for the post of chief minister of Maharashtra but ultimately lost out to A. R. Antulay. She returned to the Maharashtra state assembly where she was minister for urban development and housing from 1982–83, then minister for civil supplies and social welfare from 1983–85.

In 1985 Patil was elected as an INC representative to the Rajya Sabha, parliament's upper house. Between 1986–88 she was variously deputy chairperson of the house, a member of the business advisory committee and chairman of the committee of privileges. Following a rift with Prabha Rau, president of the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC), Patil was chosen by Rajiv Gandhi as Rau's replacement in 1988, holding the post until 1990. In the elections of 1991 Patil was elected to the 10th Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, where she was chairperson of the House Committee. Having completed her term in April 1996 she did not stand for re-election.

In Nov. 2004 Patil became the first female governor of Rajasthan. In this capacity she refused to sign the contentious Rajasthan Freedom of Religion Bill in 2006, which had been introduced by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led state government and sought to ban forced religious conversion. Patil held that clauses in the bill infringed fundamental rights, including freedom of speech and freedom to practise and propagate religion.

Patil was announced as the United Progressive Alliance (UPA)–Left Front presidential candidate on 14 June 2007, the result of a last-minute compromise between the UPA and Left Front. Her campaign was marred by a series of allegations against her, including claims of a murder cover-up and financial irregularities. However, the allegations were not substantiated and she became president on 21 July 2007.

Career Peak

Though chiefly a ceremonial role, as president Patil had to navigate and reconcile the frequently bitter divides of party politics. A keen supporter of rights for women and the poor, she championed the spread of education to all Indian children—in April 2010 legislation guaranteeing free schooling for children aged 6–14 came into effect—and pledged to tackle abuses such as female infanticide. She retired from office in July 2012 and was succeeded by Pranab Mukherjee.

Patterson, P. J. (Jamaica)

Introduction

P. J. Patterson became Jamaica's prime minister in 1992, and won a record third term in 2002. Originally a socialist, he came to adopt free market policies. Whilst he did much to stabilize Jamaica's economy, his tenure was marked by violent crime and political infighting.

Early Life

Percival James Patterson was born in 1935 in St Andrew, Jamaica. He graduated in English from the University of the West Indies in 1959. He then studied law at the London School of Economics in England and was called to the Bar. In 1967, while running a private legal practice, he entered the Senate as a member of the socialist-leaning People's National Party (PNP).

He became party vice president and was responsible for the election campaigns of Michael Manley in 1972, 1976 and 1989. During Manley's tenures of the 1970s, Patterson played a leading role in forging ties with Cuba. Between 1972 and Manley's defeat to Edward Seaga of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) in 1980, Patterson was minister for industry and tourism and, later, foreign affairs. He was deputy prime minister from 1978–80.

When Manley returned to power in 1989 Patterson was regarded as his most likely successor. As deputy prime minister and minister of finance, Patterson set about rejuvenating the economy and devalued the Jamaican dollar. Devaluation adversely affected much of the population and this, combined with a scandal concerning tax incentives to oil companies, forced Patterson's resignation. However, when Manley retired because of bad health in 1992 Patterson succeeded him as party leader and prime minister.

Career Peak

Patterson led the PNP to victory at the 1993 elections, having remodelled himself as an advocate of the free market. The PNP won 54 of the 60 seats in the House of Representatives. Patterson has enforced tight monetary and fiscal restraints and overseen a programme of privatization. Despite the unpopularity of many of these measures, he secured re-election in 1997.

A collapse in the world price of bauxite in the late 1990s weakened the economy, while increasing crime rates damaged tourism. An increase in oil prices then prompted violent protests in Kingston, with troops being drafted in to restore order in July 1999. Drug crime and politically-motivated violence continued to escalate, and by 2005 the number of murders had reached 1674.

On the international scene, relations with the USA became strained in 1998 when Patterson criticized the American trade embargo on Cuba. In 2002 he criticized the British Privy Council for blocking judicial executions on

several Caribbean islands including Jamaica. He in turn was criticized for his refusal to reform anti-homosexual legislation which breached international human rights. Also in 2002 Jamaica and Honduras clashed when Jamaica seized several hundred Hondurans said to be fishing illegally in Jamaican waters.

In the build-up to the elections of Oct. 2002 there was further political violence, with up to 60 people dying in the weeks leading to the opening of the polls. Patterson and his JLP rival, Seaga, made a joint statement calling for calm. Patterson and the PNP won with 34 of the 60 available seats.

Patterson caused controversy in 2004 when he declared that Jamaica would not acknowledge the government of new Haitian president Gérard Latortue, after former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted.

In April 2006 Patterson was succeeded as leader of the PNP and prime minister by Portia Simson-Miller following a party vote.

Paz Estenssoro, Víctor (Bolivia)

Introduction

Victor Paz Estenssoro was four times president of Bolivia (1952–56, 1960–64, 1964, 1985–89) representing the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR), of which he was co-founder. In his radical first term he nationalized the tin mines, granted universal suffrage and expropriated land for redistribution. In his final term he reversed many of his original policies, introducing privatization and encouraging foreign investment. He was the most important Bolivian politician of the 20th century.

Early Life

Paz was born on 2 Oct. 1907 in Tarija, southern Bolivia to a land owning family, part of the country's elite. He studied economics and law at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés at La Paz, opening a law firm there in 1927. He also taught law and worked as a civil servant in the statistics department of the ministry of finance. From 1932–35 he fought in the Chaco War with Paraguay. It was during the disastrous war that Paz, with other educated Bolivians, was for the first time involved with Bolivia's indigenous population, an experience that shaped his political beliefs. The war provoked a wave of discontent among both peasants and intellectuals who were ready to fight for change from the oligarchic two-party government.

In 1938 Paz became deputy for Tarija and then 2 years later vice-president of the lower house in congress. In 1942 Paz co-founded the MNR with a group of journalists and lecturers. The party joined forces with a wave of dissatisfied militaries and supported the 1943 military coup in which MNR representative Major Gualberto Villarroel became president. From 1943–46 Paz served as finance minister. When a military coup deposed and lynched the president in 1946, Paz went into exile in Argentina.

Career Peak

Paz remained politically active in exile and in 1951 fought the election from Argentina, promising democratic reforms. He won the election, but a military coup prevented him assuming power, causing an armed revolt by miners, MNR and the police. This April Revolution brought Paz to power in 1952. Paz nationalized the country's main industry, the foreign-owned tin mines, upon which the country's economy was largely reliant. He expropriated land, of which over 80% was owned by three families and established co-operatives. Paz introduced universal suffrage and free education, empowering the impoverished indigenous majority, for whom little had changed since independence in 1825. Paz's reforms transformed the political environment and from then on the indigenous population and tin miners' unions became important political forces.

Between 1956–59 Paz lived in London as the Bolivian ambassador to the UK. The presidency passed to Paz's vice president, Hernán Siles Zuazo, although the former retained his influence over the government. In 1959 he returned to Bolivia to contest the presidential elections. Receiving a large majority, in 1960 he began a second less radical presidential term. His reforms alienated miners and the indigenous population. Falling tin prices pushed Paz into seeking US aid. Nevertheless, Paz began a third term in 1964, having passed an amendment allowing him to stand for a second consecutive term.

Three months into his term, Paz was forced to flee to Peru following a military coup by his vice-president General Rene Barrientos Ortuno. He taught developmental economics in Lima and then wrote on his return to Bolivia in 1971. Three years later a third forced exile took Paz to the USA.

After standing unsuccessfully in the 1979 election, Paz was elected for a fourth term in 1985. He replaced his former vice president Siles Zuazo, whose presidency (1982–85) had left Bolivia's economy in crisis. Inflation was at 25,000% and 2 m. pesos were worth US\$1. Bolivia had a huge external debt and the tin mining industry had collapsed. Austerity measures included cuts in government spending and floating the currency. Reversing his original reforms, Paz closed many mines and sold the rest. 25,000 miners lost their jobs and were forced into the booming, but illegal, coca trade. Paz's hardline policies benefited the economy, lowering inflation within a year. Yet the free-market policies, praised by IMF and the World Bank, did not benefit the poorest Bolivians and there were violent protests. In 1989 Paz handed over the presidency to his nephew Jaime Paz Zamora.

Later Life

Paz retired to his hometown in 1989. He died on 7 June 2001.

Pearson, Lester (Canada)

Introduction

Lester Bowles Pearson was the Liberal Prime Minister of Canada between 1963 and 1968. Best known as a diplomat and peace-maker, he was a forceful advocate for the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

Early Life

Pearson, the son of a Methodist minister, was born on 23 April 1897 in Newtonbrook (now an area of Toronto), Ontario. His studies at the University of Toronto were interrupted by World War I, during which he served as a medical orderly in Salonika before joining the Royal Air Force. He was invalided home following a road accident in London and finished his degree in 1919. He had a spell working in a meat processing factory before going to Oxford University, where he gained an MA in Modern History in 1925. He was an accomplished athlete, playing semi-professional baseball, gaining a half blue in lacrosse and appearing for the British ice hockey team at the 1922 Winter Olympics.

In 1925 Pearson began teaching History at the University of Toronto, the same year he married Maryon Moody with whom he would have two children. In 1928 he joined the department of External Affairs and was made First Secretary. In 1935 he moved to the Canadian High Commission in London, remaining there until he became Assistant Under-secretary of State for External Affairs in May 1941. In June of the following year he moved to Washington to the Canadian Embassy and in 1945 he became Canadian Ambassador to the US. Another promotion came in 1946 when he was made Under-secretary of State for External Affairs.

Pearson's intellect and diplomatic skills came to the fore during his 20 years with the Department of External Affairs. In the 1930s he was secretary to Canadian commissions on wheat futures and commodity prices. He attended numerous major international gatherings including the 1930 Hague Conference on the Codification of International Law, the 1933–34 Geneva World Disarmament Conference and various meetings of the League of Nations. In 1943 he assisted in the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) which sought to assist areas devastated by World War II. He was key to the establishment of the FAO, set in motion at a conference in Hot Springs, Virginia following which Pearson took the chairmanship of the Interim Commission.

Having played a leading role in setting up the United Nations, Pearson headed the Canadian delegation from 1946 until 1956. He was President of the General Assembly in 1952–53, a term dominated by the Korean conflict. In 1948 he entered parliament as the member for Algoma East, Ontario, the constituency he served until his retirement. In the government of Louis St Lawrence, who had been Minister of External Affairs when Pearson had been Deputy, Pearson was given charge of the Ministry himself, remaining there

for 9 years. He drafted St Laurent's speech in which the establishment of NATO was proposed and signed the enabling treaty in 1949. He headed the Canadian delegation until 1957 and was chairman of the NATO Council, 1951–52.

Pearson's finest hour came in 1956 with the Suez Crisis, when British, French and Israeli troops invaded Egypt to prevent Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal. Recognizing a threat to world security, Pearson suggested a UN peacekeeping force led by Canadian troops, to supervise the withdrawal of the invading forces. Later in the year his proposal for UN intervention in the Hungarian Revolution was rejected but in 1957 he was rewarded for his efforts with the Nobel Peace Prize.

Career Peak

Pearson was elected St Laurent's successor to the Liberal leadership in 1958, but his election record proved patchy. Having led the party to heavy defeat, he managed to form a minority government in 1963. His time as Prime Minister was dogged by scandal and corruption allegations. However, his Medicare Plan made a free national health service possible and he made significant reforms to the pensions and family assistance programmes. A Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism brought the issue of French separatism into focus and paved the way for eventual bilingualism. He also introduced the Canadian maple leaf flag, though in the face of strong Conservative opposition. In terms of foreign policy he sought to assert Canadian independence, a position that led to a sometimes tempestuous relationship with the US.

Later Life

Pearson retired from politics in April 1968 to be succeeded by Pierre Trudeau. In that year Pearson headed an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development review on economic aid to developing nations. He later taught foreign affairs, was Chancellor at Ottawa's Carleton University and published a volume of memoirs. He died in Ottawa on 27 Dec. 1972. The Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre is in Nova Scotia.

Pereira, Aristides (Cabo Verde)

Introduction

A guerrilla fighter against the Portuguese colonial administration, Aristides Pereira became Cabo Verde's first post-independence president in 1975. His tenure lasted until the country's first multi-party elections in 1991.

Early Life

Aristides Maria Pereira was born on 17 Nov. 1923 in Fundo Figueiras, in the north of the island of Boa Vista. He trained as a radio-telegraph technician at the Lycee de Cap-Vert. Extreme drought in Cape Verde prompted him to emigrate to Guinea-Bissau (then Portuguese Guinea) in 1947. There he began working as a telegraph operator and rose to head the country's telecommunications services.

In 1951, after meeting the prominent nationalist Amílcar Cabral, Pereira became involved in the anti-colonial movement. In 1956, along with Cabral and four others, he co-founded the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC). He was the party's assistant secretary-general between 1964 and 1973.

The PAIGC, with the support of the Soviet Union and Cuba, launched guerrilla campaigns in the early 1960s to end Portuguese rule. Following Cabral's assassination by the Portuguese secret police, Pereira was elected as the PAIGC's general secretary in 1973. Portuguese Guinea declared independence that year and Cabral's brother, Luis, was made president of the newly independent nation of Guinea-Bissau.

In the aftermath of the April 1974 revolution in Portugal, the PAIGC became an active political movement in Cape Verde. On 5 July 1975 the country declared its independence and Pereira was named president, with Pedro Pires as prime minister.

Career Peak

Pereira's primary challenge was to secure the new nation's economic survival. With Cape Verde susceptible to drought and famine, the government instituted resource-management and agrarian reforms. Although the PAIGC instituted one-party rule, Pereira pursued a foreign policy of non-alignment, winning support from both the USA and the USSR, along with other Western nations including Sweden. With international assistance, the government created a viable infrastructure and a national health service.

Despite the initial intention of uniting the two countries, relations between Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde were strained and in 1981 the Cape Verdean PAIGC changed its name to the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). Pereira was re-elected in 1981 and 1986 but the PAICV faced growing pressure for pluralistic democracy. In 1990 an emergency congress led to the end of one-party rule.

In the first multi-party elections held in 1991, Pereira was defeated by the Movement for Democracy (MPD) candidate, Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, and subsequently retired from political life. The elections marked the first time in sub-Saharan Africa that a single-party government was voted out of office.

In July 2007 Pereira was hospitalized in France after suffering from heart problems and diabetes. He died in Coimbra, Portugal, in Sept. 2011. A state funeral was held in Cape Verde's capital, Cidade da Praia, and Boa Vista's Rabil Airport was renamed as Aristides Pereira International Airport in Nov. 2011.

Peres, Shimon (Israel)

Introduction

A veteran Labour politician, Shimon Peres has served as prime minister on three occasions since 1977 and held the deputy premiership and foreign affairs portfolio in Ariel Sharon's Likud/Labour-led coalition. He was instrumental in the negotiations leading to the Sept. 1993 peace accord with the PLO and the 1994 treaty with Jordan. In 2007 he succeeded Moshe Katsav as president of Israel. Peres was the oldest head of state when his term as president came to an end in 2014. He died aged 93 in Sept. 2016.

Early Life

Born in Poland in Aug. 1923, Peres emigrated to Palestine with his family in 1934 and was educated at the Ben Shemen Agricultural High School. In 1943 he was elected secretary of the Labour-Zionist youth movement. During and after the 1948–49 war with the Arabs he served as head of naval services, and from 1953–59 was director-general of the ministry of defence. Elected to the Knesset in 1959, Peres became deputy minister of defence until 1965 when he left the factious Mapai Party with David Ben-Gurion. He returned to the reconstituted Labour Party in 1968, holding various ministerial responsibilities until mid-1977 when his three-month tenure as acting prime minister in succession to Yitzhak Rabin ended in electoral defeat by Likud. After the election Peres assumed the Labour chairmanship, holding it until 1992.

Career Peak

From Sept. 1984–Oct. 1986 Peres served as prime minister in a national unity government based on a rotation arrangement with the then Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir. Deputy prime minister from 1986–90, he then led the opposition in the Knesset from 1990–92. After Labour's return to power under Yitzhak Rabin in 1992, Peres was appointed foreign minister. He played an integral part in the negotiations leading to the Oslo agreements with the PLO in Sept. 1993, for which he shared the Nobel Peace Prize. A further term as prime minister followed Rabin's assassination in Nov. 1995. However, he lost narrowly in the May 1996 elections to Binyamin Netanyahu. Having surrendered the Labour chairmanship to Ehud Barak in June 1997, he then served in Barak's administration as minister of regional co-operation from July 1999 until Feb. 2001 when Ariel Sharon was directly elected as prime minister. In 2000 Peres was defeated in presidential elections by Moshe Katsav. He was subsequently appointed deputy prime minister and foreign minister in Sharon's coalition government.

In 2007 Katsav, whose term had been marred by allegations of criminal offences, stood down as president. The Knesset elected Peres his successor, defeating Reuven Rivlin of Likud and Colette Avital of Labour. Although the role is largely ceremonial, Peres pledged to rise above party politics and unify Israeli society. He left the Knesset after 48 years to take up the position of president.

On the resignation of the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, in Sept. 2008, Peres asked Tzipi Livni, the foreign minister and new leader of the Kadima Party, to try and form a new government. However, the following month Livni announced her failure to negotiate another coalition, heralding an early general election scheduled for Feb. 2009 following which Binyamin Netanyahu of Likud became prime minister for a second time.

In April 2013 Peres announced that he would not seek re-election, which was to end on 27 July 2014. Aged 90, he was the world's oldest head of state upon leaving office. Reuven Rivlin of the Likud party was chosen by the Knesset to succeed Peres as head of state.

Later Life

Peres suffered from a stroke in Sept. 2016 and was hospitalized in Tel Aviv. He died 2 weeks later.

Pérez Molina, Otto (Guatemala)

Introduction

Otto Pérez Molina took office as president in Jan. 2012. A former director of military intelligence, he has adopted a hardline policy towards tackling crime.

Early Life

Born in Guatemala City on 1 Dec. 1950, Pérez Molina graduated from the country's military academy in 1973. He rose through the army ranks, serving in counterinsurgency campaigns during the 1980s, particularly in the Quiché region. Allegations of atrocities committed under his command have persisted but have never been proven.

In 1983 he backed the coup that removed President Ríos Montt. In the late 1980s he studied at the Army School of the Americas and the Inter-American Defense College, both in the USA, after which he worked in military intelligence, serving as director from 1992–93. After helping to force the resignation of President Serrano in 1993, he served from 1993–95 as chief of staff to President de León Carpio.

Appointed inspector general of the army in 1996, he represented the military in negotiations with guerrilla forces that resulted in a peace treaty ending 36 years of civil war. He was also Guatemala's delegate on the Inter-American Defense Board from 1998–2000. In Feb. 2001 Pérez Molina founded the conservative Patriotic Party (PP), guiding it into the Grand National Alliance (GAN) 2 years later.

Elected to parliament in Nov. 2003, he subsequently withdrew the PP from GANA while serving as commissioner for defence and security. In 2007 he unsuccessfully contested the presidential election as the PP candidate, but stood again and won in 2011 promising tough policing and increased social spending.

Career Peak

Pérez Molina took office on 14 Jan. 2012. He asked for international help in combating the drugs trade and has introduced a system of checkpoints aimed at curtailing violent crime. His other challenges have included reducing poverty and unemployment, as well as managing the conflict between the mining industry and indigenous groups defending their land rights. This led the government to declare a state of emergency in southeastern areas of the country in May 2013.

Pérez Molina resigned on 2 Sept. 2015 amid allegations of his involvement with a customs fraud ring. He was arrested a day later and put in prison, with vice-president Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre taking over on an interim basis.

Perón, Juan (Argentina)

Introduction

Lieutenant-General Juan Domingo Perón Sosa was three times president of Argentina twice between 1946 and 55 and from 1973 until his death. Leader of the *Peronista* movement inspired by Italian fascism, Perón heavily influenced the current Partido Justicialista. During his first term Perón's policy of industrialization and social reform won him mass populist support. His following was boosted by his politically active wife Eva Perón. His second term was less successful and led to a military coup and exile. His final term in office was characterized by political instability.

Early Life

Perón was born on 1895 in Lobos, Buenos Aires province. The son of a small rancher, he was educated at military school. He rose to the rank of lieutenant, becoming an instructor in the war academy and teacher of military history. In 1936 he served in Chile as a military attaché before travelling to Europe. On visits to Spain, Germany and Italy in the late 1930s and early 40s he formed the basis of his own political ideology, founded on fascism. On his return to Argentina, Perón joined the fascist-style Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (Group of United Officers; GOU). When in 1943 Perón was part of a GOU coup that deposed the civilian government, he became secretary for labour and social welfare in the military junta. Over the next 2 years he gradually increased his power base gaining popularity with the workers and the military. He became minister of war and then in 1945 vice-president.

Career Peak

Fearful of his power, the military government forced Perón to resign and in 1945 he was imprisoned. His partner Eva Duarte along with several of Perón's allies rallied a workers protest forcing his release. The same day Perón's address from the balcony of the presidential palace was heard by more than 300,000 supporters in Buenos Aires. The following year he was elected president with 56% of votes on a populist manifesto.

Perón played on populist and nationalistic sentiment implementing a 'third way' of politics known as *justicialismo*. This involved widespread industrialization and social reform, including increased wages and benefits. Social security and education were available to all, and improved housing and leisure facilities were created. He nationalized the railways and invested in the shipbuilding and iron and steel industries. Perón's political strength was reinforced by support for his wife Eva Perón known popularly as Evita who acted as de facto minister of health and labour.

In 1951 Perón was re-elected president. His second term was marred by the death of Evita in 1952 and less than successful economic policy. Resources were exhausted, inflation was increasing and there was growing discontent in the armed forces as Perón's rule became increasingly autocratic and dictatorial. Perón was also at odds with the Catholic Church. In 1955 the military deposed Perón and forced him into exile.

Later Life

Perón eventually settled in Madrid. During his years in exile he maintained a strong base in Argentina. One of his supporters was the future Argentine president Carlos Menem, who founded the Juventud Peronista (Peronist Youth) movement. The ban on Peronists holding office was lifted when General Alejandro Lanusse came to power in 1971. He announced free elections for 1973 in which all political parties could participate. Perón was able to return to Argentina for the 1973 election when the Peronists represented by Héctor J Cámpora won an outright victory. Cámpora then stood down and another election was called in Oct. 1973. Having retained working class support Perón was victorious, but his final term in office was politically and economically unstable. Having retained working class support throughout his exile, once in power Perón turned to the military and right wing groups. He appointed his third wife, Maria Estela Martínez (known as Isabelita) as vice-president despite her unpopularity. Perón died in office in Buenos Aires on 1 July 1974. On Perón's death Isabelita Perón took over his presidency to become the hemisphere's first woman president. She was deposed in a military coup in 1976.

Persad-Bissessar, Kamla (Trinidad and Tobago)

Introduction

Kamla Persad-Bissessar was sworn in as the country's first female prime minister in May 2010.

Early Life

Persad-Bissessar was born on 22 April 1952 in Siparia, southern Trinidad. She studied at the University of the West Indies, the Hugh Wooding Law School in Trinidad and Tobago, Norwood Technical College in England and the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, Trinidad.

While in England, Persad-Bissessar was a social worker with the Church of England Children's Society of London. She then worked as a teacher in Jamaica. She later taught at the St Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. She also lectured at the Jamaica College of Insurance. After 6 years in education, Persad-Bissessar became a full-time attorney-at-law.

From 1987 to 1991 she served as an alderman for St Patrick County Council. She joined the Senate in 1994 representing the United National Congress (UNC). From 1995 she was the MP for Siparia. She twice served as attorney general, in 1995 and in 2001. In Dec. 2000 she became minister of education. The UNC returned to the opposition benches in 2002, with Persad-Bissessar elected leader of the parliamentary opposition in April 2006.

Career Peak

On 24 Jan. 2010 Persad-Bissessar was elected party leader of the UNC. After a landslide victory for the People's Partnership coalition (of which the UNC is a part) at a snap general election on 24 May 2010, she replaced Patrick Manning as prime minister, promising increased transparency in government.

In March 2012 she defeated a no confidence motion in parliament brought by the opposition leader, who accused her government of not properly managing the economic, political and social issues facing the country.

Persad-Bissessar's term as prime minister ended in Sept. 2015 after the People's Partnership was defeated at parliamentary elections held that month. She was succeeded by Keith Rowley of the People's National Movement.

Persson, Göran (Sweden)

Introduction

Göran Persson was elected leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Labour Party (SAP) in 1996 following Ingvar Carlsson's retirement. The general election held in spring that year returned the Social Democrats to government, and Persson became prime minister on 21 March. He was re-elected, albeit on a reduced share of the vote, on 21 Sept. 1998. He led the SAP to re-election in Sept. 2002 to form a minority government reliant on the support of either the Greens or the Left Party. In Sept. 2006 he led the SAP to electoral defeat against the centre-right 'Alliance for Sweden' coalition.

Early Life

Persson was born in Vingåker on 29 Jan. 1949. He was educated at the University College of Örebro and began his political career in 1971 as a secretary for the Swedish Social Democratic Youth League. He became a board member of the League the following year. From 1974–76 he was the secretary of the Worker's Educational Association in Sörmland. For a decade Persson pursued a career in finance as the vice-chairman of the board of Oppunda Savings Bank, but continued to participate in municipal politics and was elected as a member of parliament in 1979. During the 1980s he continued to balance his political career with participation in various local and private projects. In 1984 he abandoned his parliamentary seat, and the following year he became a municipal commissioner for Katrineholm. In

1989 Persson received his first ministerial portfolio, that of a minister in the department of education. He was re-elected to parliament in 1991, and in the same year became the chairman of the standing committee on agriculture. In 1992 he became a party spokesman on industrial policy. In 1993 he was chosen as a deputy member of the SAP executive committee, and in 1994 he was appointed minister of finance. This latter role groomed Persson for the party leadership, which he was awarded in 1996. In March that year he became prime minister.

Career Peak

In his first term Persson was preoccupied with Sweden's entry into the EU and its political and economic consequences. On the domestic front he remained committed to imposing a high level tax on top earners to finance the welfare state. A gradual disenchantment with social democratic policies meant that in 1998 Persson led the SAP to their worst general election performance in 40 years. As a result he rapidly came under pressure to cut taxes, liberalize Sweden's labour market and shift the welfare budget from direct transfers to spending on health care and education. A growing mood of scepticism about Sweden's role in the EU in the wake of the Danish rejection of monetary union also hindered the pro-Europe Persson. In 2001 Persson was further immersed in European politics as the union presidency passed to Sweden. During this period he argued tirelessly for the enlargement of the EU to take in Central European applicants.

Persson again led the SAP at the Sept. 2002 elections, winning almost 40% of the vote. Unable to form a majority government, he survived a vote of confidence in early Oct. when he secured the support of the Green Party. His minority administration relied on the backing of the Greens or the Left Party to stay in office. In return for Green support, Persson agreed to implement a green tax, cut defence expenditure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. In Sept. 2003 Swedish voters rejected a proposal to adopt the EU single currency by 56–42% in a referendum, despite the ruling SAP's support for the euro. Although the Swedish economy remained robust compared with most other European countries, Persson's government lost popular support over continuing high levels of unemployment.

At elections on 17 Sept. 2006 Persson led the SAP to their worst showing in 92 years, winning just over 35% of votes cast. They lost power to the 'Alliance for Sweden' coalition, consisting of the Moderate Party, the Centre Party, the Christian Democratic Party and the Liberal Party. Persson stepped down as party leader in March 2007 to be succeeded by Mona Stahlin.

Phan Van Khai (Vietnam)

Introduction

Phan Van Khai was head of government from 1997 to 2006. He was seen as a reformer and was unusual among the rulers of modern Vietnam in that his roots and political career were in the south. Before Khai, Vietnam's Communist leadership has been largely Hanoi-dominated. His historic visit to the USA in June 2005 was seen as a boost to Vietnam's economic status.

Early Life

Phan Van Khai was born on 25 Dec. 1933 in a village suburb of Saigon, then part of French Indochina. As a child of 14 he joined a movement opposed to French rule and advocating socialism. By 1954 Khai was an experienced resistance soldier, having fought in the civil war for the Communists against the Western-sponsored southern forces. When Vietnam was partitioned in 1954, he settled in Communist North Vietnam. There, he attended the Foreign Languages College in Hanoi, before being sent to Moscow to study economics at the Plekhanov Institute. It was during his 5 years in Moscow that he joined the Vietnamese Communist Party.

Returning to North Vietnam, Khai held a variety of party posts, eventually working for the State Planning Committee. Reunification of Vietnam in 1976 gave him the opportunity to return to Ho Chi Minh City (as Saigon was renamed), and he was appointed deputy director, and later director, of the city's planning department.

In 1978 Khai gained his first important Communist Party office when he became a deputy mayor of Ho Chi Minh City. In the following year, he was

appointed a member of the party committee for the city. Khai was elected to the (national) central committee of the party as an alternate member in 1982, and as a full member in 1984. He was appointed mayor of Ho Chi Minh City in 1985 and remained in that post until he was brought back to Hanoi as chairman of the State Planning Committee in 1989. Two years later he became a member of the Vietnamese cabinet and of the party's Politburo. In 1992 he was made deputy prime minister.

Career Peak

In Sept. 1997 Phan Van Khai succeeded Vo Van Kiet as prime minister of Vietnam. Although he oversaw the normalization of trade relations with the USA and the progress of Vietnam's bid for WTO membership, Khai was not prepared to sanction political reforms to match economic liberalization. Following the elections in 2002 which returned the ruling Communist Party unopposed, the National Assembly reappointed him as prime minister. In June 2005 he made the first visit to the USA by a Vietnamese leader since the end of the Vietnam War. However, the visit provoked some protests in the USA over Vietnam's human rights record.

He resigned on 24 June 2006, along with President Tran Duc Luong and Assembly Speaker Nguyen Van An. The three left, unable to guarantee re-election to the politburo, claiming they were making way for a new generation of politicians in line with party policy. He died aged 84 on 17 April 2018.

Philip, Danny (Solomon Islands)

Introduction

Danny Philip was named prime minister on 24 Aug. 2010 after nearly 3 weeks of negotiations following a general election. Despite leading a minority party, he won the premiership with a narrow majority in parliament.

Early Life

Danny Philip was born on 5 Aug. 1953. Prior to his career in politics, he was an English teacher. In 1984 he was elected to the National Parliament representing the Vona Vona, Rendova and Tetepare constituency, for whom he served two terms. From 1993–2001, following boundary changes to the constituency, Philip held the seat of South New Georgia, Rendova and Tetepare. He served as foreign minister from 1995–96 and was appointed leader of the People's Progressive Party in 1997, a post he kept for 3 years. In June 2000 he was reappointed as foreign minister but lost the portfolio in a cabinet reshuffle in July 2001.

On 18 April 2010 Philip launched the Reform and Democratic Party of the Solomon Islands (RDP-SI), naming himself as party president. Having established the party to contest the general election, he regained his old seat of South New Georgia, Rendova and Tetepare on 4 Aug. 2010. With no party winning more than 14 of the 50 available seats, a period of intense horse trading began. The RDP-SI won only two seats but, nonetheless, Philip won a run-off for the premiership on 25 Aug, defeating Steve Abana of the Democratic Party by 26 votes to 23 in the parliamentary vote.

Career Peak

Philip campaigned on a platform of introducing a new federal constitution. His government's key challenges included improving law and order, finding investment for health and education, and strengthening diplomatic ties with international neighbours. Philip also pledged to work with RAMSI, the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, arguing that the force had a pivotal role to play in assisting the Solomon Islands in meeting its development goals. Following the defection of five ministers and seven backbenchers to the opposition, Philip stood down on 11 Nov. 2011 to avoid a no confidence vote. He was succeeded by finance minister Gordon Darcy Lilo.

Later Life

Philip joined the newly appointed government led by Manasseh Sogavare in Dec. 2014 as minister of national development planning and aid co-ordination, but resigned in Oct. 2017.

Pindling, Lynden (The Bahamas)

Introduction

Lynden Oscar Pindling was prime minister of the Bahamas from 1967–92. He ended the centuries-long domination by the white minority and brought independence and democracy to his country. But his term was overshadowed by allegations of corruption and government involvement in drug-trafficking.

Early Life

Pindling was born in Nassau on 22 March 1930 of a Bahamian mother and a Jamaican father. The son of a policeman, Pindling was educated at the Government High School before studying Law in London between 1948–52. He was called to the Bahamian Bar in 1953. Soon after he joined the newly formed Progressive Liberal Party (PLP), which had been set up to challenge the white-dominated government. Politics was still rooted in the 18th century, with the white Bahamian ‘Bay Street Boys’ (named after the main business centre in Nassau) as an automatically re-elected oligarchy.

Pindling was elected to the Assembly in 1956 as the junior member for the southern district of New Providence. Pindling became the leader of the PLP in the election year, 1956 when the party gained six seats. In response the white leaders formed their own party, the United Bahamian Party (UBP). Pindling led the PLP into the 1962 elections. He had strong support from the working classes and black population. Nevertheless, the UBP won, mainly due to secure votes in the family islands (those islands other than New Providence and Grand Bahama).

Initially disconcerted, the PLP soon focused on rousing popular support for the next election. Universal suffrage, granted in 1964, helped its cause. The following year, the rejection of a commission report on government boundaries fuelled a public demonstration led by Pindling. The result was the introduction of new boundaries. The 1967 general election was fraught and intense. Despite a large UBP campaign budget, the elections resulted in a tie. Two independent parties, including an ex-PLP minister Randol Fawkes, sided with Pindling and the Bahamas’ first black prime minister was elected.

Career Peak

On his ascension to power, Pindling put his energies into the fight for Bahamian independence from Britain. He dissolved the Assembly and in the ensuing general election of 1968 called for a mandate for change. The PLP won 28 of the 38 seats. Pindling’s policies were based on the advancement of the black majority. Freeport, long controlled by the powerful Port Authority, was brought under government control. Industry developed and the government cracked down on immigration—especially the large number of illegal Haitians—in order to provide more jobs for Bahamians. The UBP fell apart and the PLP dominated future elections. Opposition eventually came from dissident PLP members. Disagreeing with Pindling’s style of government, and claiming it to be dictatorial, Cecil Wallace-Whitfield left the PLP to form the Free-PLP. This party became the Free National Movement (FNM), which attracted floating UBP members and developed into the major opposition party. The 1972 elections were dominated by the issue of independence. The PLP strove for immediate independence, while the FNM was prepared to delay it. The PLP was successful, winning 29 seats. On 10 July 1973 the Bahamas gained independence.

In 1974 the College of the Bahamas was opened, offering tertiary education. In the same year, the Central Bank opened extending the profitable finance industry. Despite rising wages, unemployment was still a major problem in the Bahamas, especially among the young. Further problems arose from the trade in drugs. From the late 1960s, the Bahamas provided the ideal stop-off point on the route between South America and the USA. Money laundering, which reached a height in the mid-1970s, was a further problem. There were accusations of government involvement in both illegal trades. In 1983 Pindling sued the American television channel NBC for

defamation and set up a royal commission to investigate the charges. It found no evidence to link Pindling directly to the traffic, although several of his ministers were inculpated. Nevertheless, the commission found that Pindling had received large sums of money as ‘gifts’ and ‘loans’. and that his income was far inferior to his expenditure.

In the 1987 elections the FNM inferred government involvement in drug-trafficking. In return, Pindling highlighted national and race issues and attached the FNM’s relations with the USA. Pindling held onto power for a fifth consecutive term.

Later Life

In the early 1990s, the Bahamas went into recession. Unemployment and crime rose as prosperity fell. A scandal involving the state-owned Bahamasair erupted. In the 1992 elections, the PLP’s domination was ended with an FNM victory. Hubert Ingraham succeeded Pindling who had been prime minister for 25 years. Pindling’s offer to resign as leader of the PLP was rejected. He continued his political career in opposition until he resigned from the Assembly in 1997. He died on 26 Aug. 2000. Pindling was knighted in 1983.

Pinochet Ugarte, Augusto (Chile)

Introduction

General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte was president of Chile from 1973 to 1990 having led a military coup which overthrew the socialist government of Salvador Allende Gossens. Pinochet implemented free-market policies and widespread privatization. He achieved economic growth but led a hardline repressive regime. He died in Dec. 2006, having spent many years under threat of trial for human rights abuses.

Early Life

Pinochet was born on 26 Nov. 1915 in the coastal city of Valparaíso. The son of a customs official, he was educated at the Military Academy of Santiago. Having climbed the ranks of the officers’ corps, in the early 1950s he was associated with the suppression of the Chilean Communist Party. In 1968 he became sub-director of the War Academy. During the presidency of the Partido Socialista de Chile leader, Allende, he gained the rank of general. In 1973 he was promoted to commander-in-chief of the Chilean army.

Chile was experiencing an economic crisis. Allende’s nationalization and land collectivization policies had led to high inflation, a shortage of consumer goods and civil unrest. In the military, there was an emerging opposition faction linked to Pinochet who organized and led the military coup on 23 Sept. 1973, 18 days after Allende appointed him as commander-in-chief. A military junta representing all branches of the Chilean armed forces was established with Pinochet as head of state.

Career Peak

Pinochet set about reversing Allende’s socialist policies. He implemented privatization schemes and free-market policies. By the end of the 1970s Chile was enjoying an economic boom but Pinochet’s policies polarized Chile’s rich and poor. He closed down parliament and elected himself absolute ruler. He outlawed opposition politicians and trade unions. In Oct. 1973 over 70 political prisoners fell victim to the notorious ‘caravan of death’. An execution squad which toured the country hunting out Allende’s supporters. In 1974 Pinochet elected himself president demoting the rest of the junta to an advisory role. Previous plans to rotate the presidency were abandoned. Many left-wing politicians and liberal minded citizens were forced into exile, tortured or killed. It is estimated that over 3,000 of Allende’s supporters lost their lives, over 30,000 were forced into exile and more than 130,000 were arrested over a 3 year period.

In 1978 a plebiscite showed 75% of voters supported Pinochet, albeit in a political climate in which opposition was barely tolerated. In 1980 a constitutional amendment created ten senator-for-life places, four for army leaders and one for Pinochet. A plebiscite held the same year extended Pinochet’s rule for 10 years. From the mid-1980s, exiled opposition politicians returned to set up a ‘democratic opposition’ alliance. In 1986 Pinochet survived an assassination attempt. In the fallout, Pinochet imprisoned opposition politicians,

including future president Ricardo Lagos Escobar. Widespread international condemnation forced their release. With growing confidence the opposition united under the Comando por el No group which rallied voters to reject Pinochet in the Oct. 1988 referendum. Fifty-five percent voted against, while only 43% voted for the President. Pinochet stepped down although he remained commander-in-chief of the army, thereby preventing any move to prosecute him for human rights abuses.

Later Life

In 1998 Pinochet retired as head of the army. On a trip to Britain in Oct. of the same year, Pinochet was arrested, pending extradition to Spain where a warrant had been issued for his arrest to stand trial for human rights abuses and murder charges. Following prolonged legal arguments Pinochet's extradition was blocked despite opposition from the governments of Spain, France, Belgium and Switzerland. A 2-year legal battle culminated with Pinochet, now suffering heart problems, being released on compassionate grounds. On 3 March 2000 Pinochet arrived back in Chile where he was stripped of his immunity to face trial in his native country. However, his failing health ensured he was never tried and he died on 10 Dec. 2006. The government announced that he would not receive a state funeral and there were clashes in Santiago between his supporters and critics.

Pinto da Costa, Manuel (São Tomé and Príncipe)

Introduction

Manuel Pinto da Costa, a Marxist, came out of retirement to win the presidency in Aug. 2011. He promised to tackle corruption and poverty but opponents warned of a return to authoritarian rule.

Early Life

Manuel Pinto da Costa was born in São Tomé on 5th Aug. 1937. The son of a plantation official, he was educated in São Tomé, Angola and Portugal. He graduated from the University of Lisbon and was a founder of the Committee for the Liberation of São Tomé e Príncipe in 1960. Da Costa spent time in France and Cuba in the early part of the decade before completing a doctorate in economics at Humboldt University in East Berlin.

Elected secretary-general of the new Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe (MLSTP) in 1972, da Costa developed links with other independence groups in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. When Portugal's fascist government was overthrown in April 1974, he spearheaded negotiations that led to independence in July 1975.

As leader of the MLSTP, the sole legal party, da Costa was blamed for the economic hardships that accompanied the nationalization of plantations and the departure of skilled workers to Portugal. After an attempted coup by foreign-based mercenaries in 1978 and amid rising political tensions the following year, da Costa called upon Angolan troops to maintain the peace in a deeply unpopular move.

During the early 1980s he became increasingly authoritarian, but a new constitution ended one-party rule in 1990 and he announced that he would not contest the 1991 multi-party elections. Miguel Trovoada became president, elected unopposed as an independent candidate, and da Costa moved to Angola.

He nonetheless returned to contest the 1996 presidential election, narrowly losing to Trovoada. Re-elected leader of the MLSTP in 1998, he also contested the 2001 presidential election, this time losing to Fradique de Menezes. He remained party leader until retiring in Feb. 2004. However, he returned again to run as an independent candidate for the presidency in July 2011, promising to overcome instability, poverty and corruption. He received sufficient support to force a run-off against the parliamentary speaker, Evaristo Carvalho, and emerged victorious with 52.9% of the vote. He was sworn in on 3 Sept. 2011.

Career Peak

Pinto da Costa's priority was to revitalize the struggling economy by developing tourism, the nascent oil industry and coffee exports, while working in conjunction with Patrice Trovoada, whose Independent Democratic Action (ADI) party had won legislative elections in 2010. In Nov. 2012 Trovoada lost a no-confidence vote in the National Assembly and da Costa dismissed his government the following month, appointing Gabriel Arcanjo da Costa as premier. However, the ADI won an outright majority of seats in further elections in Oct. 2014 and Trovoada was reappointed as prime minister.

Pinto da Costa's term as president ended in Sept. 2016, having lost elections held in July and Aug. to ADI candidate Evaristo Carvalho. Da Costa, who had lost by a significant margin in the first round of voting, boycotted the second round, alleging fraud, resulting with Carvalho's automatic election.

Plevneliev, Rosen (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Rosen Plevneliev was sworn in as president on 22 Jan. 2012, having been elected in Oct. 2011 with the support of the centre-right Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria (GERB). He succeeded the Socialist Georgi Parvanov, who had held the presidency for the maximum two terms. Prior to the election Plevneliev had never run for public office, having worked as a non-partisan member of the cabinet.

Early Life

Rosen Plevneliev was born in Gotse Delchev, southern Bulgaria in 1964. Having graduated in engineering from the Sofia Technical University in 1989, he founded a building firm, Iris International. From 1991 he worked in Germany as the co-owner of a construction firm subcontracting for the German conglomerate Lindner. In 1998 he returned to Bulgaria to head the Lindner Bulgaria group.

Plevneliev entered politics in June 2009 as part of the GERB economic policy team. The following month he was appointed minister of regional development and public works in Boyko Borisov's cabinet, delivering several long-delayed, large-scale infrastructure projects.

On 4 Sept. 2011 he was nominated as GERB's candidate for the presidency. In a second round of polling, Plevneliev and his vice presidential candidate, former justice minister Margarita Popova, gained 52.6% of the vote to defeat the Socialist candidate, Ivailo Kalfin, and his running mate.

Career Peak

Plevneliev, a pro-European, pledged to oversee the reduction of the budget deficit and implement further austerity measures. He was expected to push for the development of regional and international trade. The diversification of energy supplies was among his most pressing challenges, although a referendum on controversial plans to expand Bulgaria's nuclear generating capacity was invalidated in Jan. 2013 by a low turnout.

In Feb. 2013, in the face of violent protests against economic austerity, Prime Minister Boyko Borisov and his government resigned and Plevneliev appointed a caretaker administration pending fresh parliamentary elections that took place in May. An inconclusive outcome, with no majority party, resulted in the establishment of a Socialist-led government headed by Plamen Oresharski. However, continued political and economic instability, and a banking crisis, led to the resignation of Oresharski and his fragile administration in July 2014, prompting a further election in Oct. This produced another divided parliament, including eight different parties. Plevneliev asked Borisov, as head of the largest party, to form a GERB-led coalition government and his new cabinet was endorsed by parliament in early Nov.

In May 2016 Plevneliev announced that he would not be standing for re-election at the presidential election scheduled for Oct. of that year, citing personal reasons. He left office in Jan. 2017 when he was succeeded by the pro-Russia independent candidate Rumen Radev.

Pohamba, Hifikepunye (Namibia)

Introduction

Lucas Hifikepunye Pohamba, representing the ruling South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), won a landslide victory at presidential elections in Nov. 2004 and took office in March 2005. He succeeded Namibia's 'founding father' and former president, Sam Nujoma, and has continued with the same broad political programme. He was re-elected in Nov. 2009.

Early Life

Pohamba was born on 18 Aug. 1935 at Okanghudi in South West Africa (modern Namibia) and educated at the Holy Cross Mission School at Onamunama. He worked in the Tsumeb copper mines and joined SWAPO in April 1959. He joined Nujoma in exile in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and became a leading figure in SWAPO, representing it in Zambia and Algeria and raising funds. In 1969 he was appointed to SWAPO's central committee and in 1975 became secretary for finance and administration. From 1979 until the late 1980s he was based in Luanda, Angola.

Following Nujoma's victory in the country's first presidential elections on 7 Nov. 1989, Pohamba was appointed as minister of home affairs. In 1995 he became minister for fisheries and marine resources until 2001, when he took responsibility for lands, resettlement and rehabilitation. As such, he pushed ahead with Namibia's controversial 'land reform' scheme, involving the compulsory purchase of land owned by white farmers for distribution to black citizens.

Career Peak

Since his inauguration on 21 March 2005 Pohamba has pursued established policies, including development of education, the rural water supply and the infrastructure network. He has also continued the controversial compulsory land purchases scheme. In elections in Nov. 2009, Pohamba was returned to the presidency with about 75% of the vote and SWAPO retained its majority of parliamentary seats with a similar vote share. A legal challenge launched in 2010 by opposition parties against the election results was dismissed by the High Court in Feb. 2011 for lack of evidence.

In Dec. 2012 Pohamba carried out a cabinet reshuffle and appointed SWAPO vice-president and former trade minister, Hage Geingob, as prime minister. In 2013 Pohamba launched several major public infrastructure projects, including the National Mass Housing Development Programme, the deepening of Walvis Bay harbour and the construction of the Neckartal Dam in !Karas region.

Pohamba was unable to stand for re-election at the Nov. 2014 elections due to constitutional limits. He was succeeded as president by incumbent prime minister Hage Geingob.

Pol Pot (Cambodia)

Introduction

Pol Pot, supported by the nationalist communist Khmer Rouge, ruled Cambodia between 1975 and 1979. Believing in the supremacy of the Cambodian race and preaching the destruction of urbanism and intellectualism, he led a totalitarian regime that resulted in the deaths of between 1,000,000 and 2,500,000 people. Though overthrown in 1979, he retained a significant influence in the Khmer Rouge until just before his death when internal splits led to his arrest.

Early Life

Pol Pot, originally called Saloth Sar, was born on 19 May 1925 in Kompong Province. His father was a land-owning farmer and Pol Pot was educated at a number of French-speaking schools in Phnom Penh. He spent some 6 years in

a Buddhist Monastery and it is believed was himself a monk for 2 years. He went on to study carpentry for a year and was a member of the anti-French resistance in the late 1940s. In 1949 he moved to Paris to study radio electronics, becoming an activist in the Communist party, but had to return to Phnom Penh 4 years later when his scholarship was withdrawn.

Married in 1956, he became a school teacher but gave most of his time to strengthening the Cambodian Communist Party. Bent on the overthrow of the government of Prince Norodon Sihanouk, he turned to Vietnam for protection but by 1965 the Vietnamese Communist hierarchy was less interested in Cambodia than in defeating the US. Pol Pot went to China, then in the midst of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution, where he planned his take-over of Cambodia.

1970 saw Sihanouk replaced by General Lon Nol's US-backed military regime. Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, backed by the Vietnamese Communists, began a guerrilla war. In April 1975 Lon Nol was removed from power and Pol Pot headed a new Khmer Rouge government, renaming the country Democratic Kampuchea.

Career Peak

Almost at once the 2 m. residents of Phnom Penh, who had received Pol Pot's invaders in the hope that the fighting would end, were forcibly moved into rural communes. The media, organized education, markets, religion and private property, all came under sustained attack.

In 1976 Pol Pot devised a 4-Year Plan which set out largely unrealistic targets for the country's agricultural growth. The problem of failing harvests and chronic overwork were exacerbated by grain restrictions imposed by Khmer Rouge officials and the absence of a medical infrastructure, leading to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians. Officially sanctioned torture and executions accounted for many more lives. By 1978 tensions with Vietnam had turned in to full-blown war and the Khmer Rouge, having been refused Chinese assistance, were overpowered. On 25 Dec. 1978 over 100,000 Vietnamese troops entered Cambodia and Pol Pot fled to Thailand on 7 Jan. 1979.

Hiding out in the Thai and north Cambodian forests, he led the Khmer Rouge in further attacks on Vietnamese-backed Phnom Penh. In 1982 the Khmer Rouge was the dominant partner in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) which held Cambodia's UN seat and gained Western recognition. Pol Pot resigned as leader in 1985 but remained a powerful figure.

Later Life

The Khmer Rouge was part of a UN-backed coalition in 1991 but declined to participate in democratic elections and reverted to guerrilla tactics 2 years later, reputedly under the guidance of Pol Pot.

A rift seems to have riven the Khmer Rouge in the mid-1990s. Pol Pot's former foreign minister and brother-in-law, Leng Sary, was one of many defectors from the party and in 1996-97 Pol Pot led a purge of the party moderates. Following an internal power struggle he was arrested on the orders of one of the party elders, Ta Mok, who was rumoured to be preparing to hand him over to the Americans. The Khmer Rouge carried out their own show trial, sentencing Pol Pot to life imprisonment. On the evening of 15 April 1998, Pol Pot was found dead, supposedly of heart failure. His body was destroyed by Khmer Rouge officials before an autopsy could be held. Despite being responsible for the death of around a quarter of the country's population, he told a journalist in Oct. 1997 that 'my conscience is clear'.

Pompidou, Georges (France)

Introduction

Georges Jean Raymond Pompidou was prime minister between 1962-68, and president from 1969 until his death in 1974. As prime minister he had key roles in the resolution of the Algerian War and of the May 1968 student uprising. As president he promoted France's economic and industrial advance.

Early Life

Pompidou was born in Montboudif, Auvergne on 5 July 1911 and educated at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. After gaining a diploma in administration, he taught in Marseilles until his conscription in 1939. After the Fall of France in June 1940, he taught at the Lycée Henri IV in Paris until 1944. After meeting Charles de Gaulle who was leading the Free French from exile in London, Pompidou was appointed his adviser. When France was liberated in 1944, Pompidou was in de Gaulle's cabinet in the provisional government, later holding the position of maître des requêtes in the Conseil d'Etat from 1946. Concurrently, he was assistant to the general commissioner for tourism. He resigned in 1953 and went to work for the Rothschild Bank, becoming its director general in 1959.

De Gaulle had resigned on 20 Jan. 1946, but returned to power in May 1958 to end the Algerian War (1954–62). Pompidou, who had worked on de Gaulle's *Rassemblement pour la France* campaign in the late 1940s and early 50s, was asked to assist in drafting the constitution of the Fifth Republic. At the same time, Pompidou worked on plans for France's economic recovery. When, in 1959, de Gaulle was elected first president of the Fifth Republic, Pompidou rejoined the private sector.

In 1961 Pompidou returned to politics to orchestrate secret negotiations with the Algerian revolutionaries, the Front de Libération Nationale. His intervention led to a ceasefire and the signing of the Evian Agreements.

Career Peak

In 1962 Pompidou replaced prime minister Michel Debré. Pompidou was prime minister for four consecutive terms—April–Sept. 1962, Dec. 1962–Jan. 1966, Jan. 1966–March 1967, and April 1967–July 1968. In May 1968 Pompidou was faced with the student-worker riots. Workers demanded more pay and better conditions, but both groups were unhappy with de Gaulle's authoritarian leadership. Pompidou, aided by Jacques Chirac, mediated between the government and the strikers and persuaded the president to offer concessions. Revolution was averted but de Gaulle felt let down.

Pompidou was relieved of the premiership by de Gaulle in July 1968. It has been suggested this was to allow Pompidou to inherit the presidency. Others argue that he resigned over criticism of his handling of the May '68 crisis. Pompidou maintained links with the government and when de Gaulle resigned in 1969 and retreated to his home in Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises, Pompidou campaigned for the presidency. He was elected on 15 June 1969 with 58% of the votes.

Pompidou was dedicated to modernization. He gave the go-ahead to the pioneering rail network, the TGV (train à grande vitesse; high-speed train), that would create electrically-powered trains with a top speed of 370 km/ph. He also invested in the roads and telephone networks. On an international level, Pompidou kept good relations and economic ties with Arab countries, although he failed to improve relations with either Germany or the USA. He facilitated the UK's entry into the European Economic Community (EU) in 1973, a move that had been blocked by de Gaulle. Throughout his presidency, Pompidou maintained economic stability in France, although war in the Middle East in 1973 led to an oil crisis and a rise in unemployment. He managed to regain the presidency in 1973, despite a strengthening of the Socialist and Communist parties.

The victim of a rare form of blood cancer, Pompidou died in office on 2 April 1974. A centre for arts and culture, the Centre Pompidou was completed after his death and opened on 31 Jan. 1977.

Ponta, Victor (Romania)

Introduction

Victor Ponta became prime minister in May 2012 following the collapse of the short-lived government led by Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu. Ponta's Social Liberal Union administration (USL) secured a parliamentary mandate following elections in Dec. 2012. In Nov. 2014 he made an unsuccessful electoral bid for the presidency. Ponta resigned in Nov. 2015 following allegations of corruption.

Early Life

Ponta was born on 20 Sept. 1972 in Bucharest. He graduated in law from the University of Bucharest in 1995 and worked as a prosecutor specializing in corruption cases. Employed in the Supreme Court of Justice from 1998–2001, he was also an assistant professor in public law at the Romanian-American University (RAU) in the capital. He received his master's degree from Italy's University of Catania in 2000 and graduated from the National Defence College in 2002. The same year he began lecturing at the RAU, receiving his PhD from the University of Bucharest in 2003 and becoming an associate professor at RAU in 2007.

A youth wing member of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), Ponta joined the party's national council and was chairman of Social Democratic Youth from 2002–06. In 2004 he entered the Chamber of Deputies, securing re-election 4 years later. In Dec. 2006 he was elected PSD vice-president and became party president in 2010.

In 2008 Ponta was named minister responsible for liaison with parliament in the coalition of Emil Boc of the Democratic Liberal Party but he and his PSD colleagues resigned from the cabinet in Oct. 2009 in protest at the sacking of the interior minister, Dan Nica.

The government collapsed, but Boc formed a new coalition that brought in austerity measures to meet IMF conditions. In 2011 Ponta led the PSD into an alliance with the National Liberal Party (PNL), forming the USL. Amid growing popular discontent, Boc resigned from office in Feb. 2012 and Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu replaced him. However, that government fell 2 months later when it lost a confidence vote. President Băsescu then invited Ponta to form a new administration.

Career Peak

On 1 May 2012 Ponta announced his cabinet, with the USL's constituent parties sharing portfolios equally. His initial mandate lasted only until elections scheduled for late 2012. He pledged to create jobs and to 'right the social injustices' caused by his predecessors' austerity measures. As his relationship with Băsescu deteriorated, Ponta launched an unsuccessful attempt to impeach the president in July that year. Their mutual hostility persisted until Ponta's USL won a comfortable victory in parliamentary elections the following Dec., after which they signed an agreement to set aside their differences to end the political turmoil. However, in Oct. 2013 state prosecutors charged Ponta's deputy prime minister, Liviu Dragnea, with fraudulently trying to sway the outcome of the impeachment referendum that had failed to oust President Băsescu.

In March 2014 the PNL ministers left the government and Ponta formed a new coalition administration. Then in Nov. he contested the presidential election. Despite being the frontrunner in the first round, he nonetheless lost in the run-off to Klaus Iohannis of the PNL.

Ponta's government survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence in June 2015 with the motion receiving only 194 of a required 278 votes. The prime minister had faced accusations of corruption and money laundering, and parliament had previously voted to grant Ponta immunity with regards to any charges brought before him.

Ponta survived another vote of no confidence in Sept. 2015, 1 week after going on trial for corruption charges. He became the first Romanian prime minister to go on trial while still in office. However, following widespread public dissent and protests triggered by a deadly fire in a Bucharest nightclub, Ponta and his government resigned. Sorin Cîmpeanu took over as prime minister on an interim basis.

Popescu-Tăriceanu, Călin (Romania)

Introduction

Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu entered Romanian politics in early 1990 following the collapse of Nicolae Ceaușescu's Communist regime. He was appointed prime minister in Dec. 2004 by President Traian Băsescu, his fellow member of the then centre-right Justice and Truth Alliance, although their relationship subsequently deteriorated. In April 2007 Popescu-Tăriceanu formed a new minority government without the president's Democratic Party and went on to survive a parliamentary confidence vote in Oct. 2007. Following inconclusive

general elections in Nov. 2008 President Băsescu asked economist and former Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan to form a new government.

Early Life

Born in Bucharest on 14 Jan. 1952, Popescu-Tăriceanu was educated at the Sf. Sava High School and then at the Hydro-engineering faculty of the Bucharest Construction Institute. A master's degree in science, research methods and mathematics followed at Bucharest University. In 1976 Popescu-Tăriceanu served as an engineer at the National Water Administration in Argeş county division and at a construction company in Bucharest. Returning to the Bucharest Construction Institute in 1980, he worked as a tutor in hydro-engineering, a position he held for the next 10 years. Following the collapse of Nicolae Ceauşescu's regime in Dec. 1989, Popescu-Tăriceanu entered politics, helping to re-establish the National Liberal Party (PNL). He was a member of the provisional Council of National Unity, an unelected parliament that governed Romania in the spring of 1990. After the first post-Communist elections on 20 May 1990, Popescu-Tăriceanu represented the PNL in a government that was dominated by the National Salvation Front (FSN). At this time he also founded Romania's first private radio station. In Dec. 1990 the PNL, together with other right-of-centre opposition groups, formed the Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR), which served in the government of Theodor Stolojan from Oct. 1991. After withdrawing from the Democratic Convention in April 1992, the PNL suffered a disastrous defeat in the elections held on 27 Sept. 1992. This led to serious splits in the party, and Popescu-Tăriceanu concentrated on his business interests, becoming Director General of Radio Contact Romania and establishing the Association of Automobile Producers and Importers (APIA).

Popescu-Tăriceanu returned to parliament in 1996 when he was elected as a deputy representing the CDR. He served in the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea and held the portfolio of trade and industry in 1996–97, where he became unpopular with trade unions for his decision to close unprofitable mines. He also led attempts to restructure Romania's oil sector and the National Electric Company. Following the crushing defeat of the CDR by the Social Democratic Party (PSD), led by Ion Iliescu, in the Nov. 2000 general election, Popescu-Tăriceanu and others led the PNL out of the CDR, and later (in early 2002) joined forces with the reformist Democratic Party to form the Justice and Truth Alliance (DA). It was intended to be a vehicle for co-ordinating opposition efforts against the ruling, and allegedly corrupt, PSD.

In March 2004 Popescu-Tăriceanu was made manager of the DA's campaign for the local elections in June. In late Oct. 2004 the alliance endorsed Popescu-Tăriceanu as its prime ministerial candidate in the Romanian legislative elections, which took place alongside the presidential election on 28 Nov. Both Popescu-Tăriceanu and the DA's presidential candidate, Traian Băsescu, campaigned on fighting corruption, creating jobs, alleviating poverty and establishing a non-political judiciary. The DA performed strongly at the polls, coming within a few percentage points of the PSD and eliminating the government's majority. When Băsescu triumphed over Adrian Năstase in the presidential run-off on 12 Dec., he invited Popescu-Tăriceanu to form the next government. Alliances were forged with both the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania and the Humanist Party (renamed the Conservative Party in May 2005) in a centre-right coalition that was approved by parliament on 28 Dec. The following day, Popescu-Tăriceanu was sworn in as Romania's prime minister.

Career Peak

Presenting his government's programme to parliament, Popescu-Tăriceanu pledged to fight corruption and poverty and carry out reforms needed for his country's entry into the European Union in 2007. His first step was to lower income and corporate profit taxes to a 16% flat rate, in a bid to reduce the size of the country's black market economy and encourage foreign investment. In Sept. 2006, despite continuing reservations about levels of crime and corruption, the European Commission confirmed Romania's eligibility to join the EU. On 1 Jan. 2007 Romania, with neighbouring Bulgaria, became the EU's 26th and 27th member states.

Subsequent tensions within the government and a breakdown of relations with President Băsescu led Popescu-Tăriceanu to formally end the alliance with the Democratic Party in April 2007 when he formed a minority government consisting of the PNL and the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania. The parliament then voted in favour of a motion to suspend President Băsescu from office because of alleged abuse of his constitutional powers, although he was returned to power in May following a national

referendum. In Oct., after further months of feuding, Popescu-Tăriceanu survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote tabled by the opposition Social Democratic Party, which had accused the government of inefficiency.

In Nov. 2007 the PNL suffered a heavy defeat in Romania's first elections to the European Parliament, coming third with only six seats. The EU had earlier urged the government to do more to combat corruption and in Dec. the justice minister resigned having been accused of abusing his position. The EU also threatened to withhold farm aid if Romania did not reform its agricultural payments system.

Following the inconclusive general election of Nov. 2008, Popescu-Tăriceanu was stripped of his position. President Băsescu asked the former Prime Minister Theodor Stolojan to form a new government. However, Stolojan turned down his nomination and the position was instead taken by Emil Boc, the leader of the Democratic Liberal Party.

Portillo Cabrera, Alfonso Antonio (Guatemala)

Introduction

Alfonso Antonio Portillo Cabrera was president of Guatemala representing the rightwing Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG) party. Elected in 1999 in the first democratic elections after the end of the 36-year civil war, Portillo took over from Álvaro Arzú Irigoyen, leader of the Partido de Avanzada Nacional (PAN). Inheriting a precarious economy, Portillo's challenges were to uphold democracy and to implement the peace agreement.

Early Life

Portillo was born in the Zacapa department on 24 Sept. 1951. He studied law at the Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (Mexico) before taking a doctorate in economics at Mexico's national Universidad Autónoma. At the end of the 1970s he became involved with left-wing guerrilla groups. He worked with the Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres, one of four groups comprising the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, which fought against the suppression of indigenous culture. In 1982 Portillo killed two rival law professors in Mexico. He fled the region to escape trial. On his return to Guatemala in 1989 he joined the Partido Socialista Democrática, at that time the only legal left-wing political party. His political views shifted to the right and he joined the leading Democracia Cristiano Guatemalteca (DCG). In 1993 he became deputy leader of the party, presiding over several ministries including finance and foreign trade. Concurrently, he directed the Instituto Guatemalteco de Estudios Sociales y Políticos, and wrote for the *Siglo Veintiuno* daily newspaper.

In 1995, with corruption scandals surrounding the DCG, Portillo left the party to join the FRG, led by the right-wing former dictator Ríos Montt. When a Supreme Court ruling prevented Montt from standing in the 1995 elections, Portillo replaced him as FRG candidate. Gaining 22% of votes, he forced a run-off with Partido de Avanzada Nacional candidate, Alvaro Arzú Irigoyen, who narrowly won with 51.2%. Following this success, Portillo replaced Montt as party leader and prepared his candidacy for the 1999 elections, the first democratic elections after the 1996 peace accord. His main rival was PAN candidate and former mayor of Guatemala City, Óscar Berger Perdomo. During the election campaign, Portillo was haunted by the 1982 murders and tarnished by his affiliation to Montt who had been accused of allowing paramilitary atrocities. Nonetheless, Portillo's courting of the popular vote, his promise to combat rising crime and his exploitation of discontent with the failures of the current leadership outweighed the accusation that he was Montt's puppet. He won the first round of voting with 48% and in a landslide run-off gained 68%.

Career Peak

On election Portillo called for unity in an attempt to stabilize and strengthen the precarious, nascent democracy. He outlined plans to combat crime, improve the situation of the poorest Guatemalans and reduce the disparity between rich and poor. He acknowledged that the economy was on the brink of collapse. In accordance with the peace treaty, he also promised to dismantle the military security force, the *Estado Mayor* (EMP), and create a civilian force.

Portillo's term was soon marred by violent rioting. In April 2000 there were protests against increased bus fares, followed in Aug. by a protest against tax increases, and a spate of public lynchings in rural areas. He was more successful on an international level. In Sept. 2001 he hosted a meeting of Central American governments in Guatemala City that concentrated on resolving low coffee prices on the international market. The meeting produced a non aggression pact with neighbouring countries aimed at border disputes.

In Aug. 2000 Portillo admitted the culpability of past governments in crimes against humanity. The death of 100,000 people and the disappearance of 50,000 since 1961, the majority civilian, had hitherto been blamed on guerrillas. An investigation was set up. He also announced an investigation into the 1998 killing of Juan Gerardi, a Catholic bishop who had headed the church's human rights office. Portillo pledged to solve the murder within 6 months, although it was not until June 2001 that the former head of military intelligence, Desraíl Lima, two other soldiers and a priest were sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. Despite this, the EMP has still not been disbanded. Further conditions of the peace accord not implemented include tax and human rights reforms and the reduction of the army's powers. The deadline for those reforms has been postponed from 2000 to 2004.

In Sept. 2001 severe drought brought food shortages and the threat of famine. Emergency taxes highlighted Guatemala's lack of economic progress.

Portillo was barred from standing for re-election in 2003 and was succeeded by his 1999 opponent, Óscar Berger, on 14 Jan. 2004.

Later Life

After leaving office Portillo fled to Mexico. But in 2008 he was extradited to Guatemala to stand trial on charges that he stole US\$15 m. from the military in 2001. He was cleared of those charges in 2011. Then in May 2013 he was extradited to the USA to face charges of laundering US\$70 m. through US banks during his time in office, a charge that he refuted. In May 2014, Portillo was found guilty of these charges and sentenced to 5 years and 10 months imprisonment. He was released in Feb. 2015 and returned to Guatemala.

Portillo y Pacheco, José López (Mexico)

Introduction

José López Portillo was president of Mexico between 1976 and 1982, representing the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI). During his presidency Portillo served as a mediator in Pan-American disputes and encouraged industrial development by the creation of non-agricultural jobs and the exploitation of Mexico's natural resources. He continued the programme implemented by his predecessor Echeverría to promote population control. However, any successes he had during his presidency were overshadowed by charges of corruption within his administration and by the economic crisis brought on by excessive spending and borrowing.

Early Life

Portillo was born in Mexico City on 16 June 1920. He became a lawyer and university professor who wrote both novels and essays on political theory. He studied at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and the University of Chile before becoming a professor. He joined the PRI in 1954 and subsequently worked in the governments of both Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverría, serving as finance minister under the latter when he modernized tax-collection procedures and reduced public spending.

Career Peak

At the beginning of his term Portillo's aim was to promote economic stability. Originally there were hopes of radical economic and social change. He set out to achieve this by nationalizing the country's banks. The major key in Portillo's presidency was the discovery of oil by the state-owned Petróleos Mexicanos in the Tobasco and Veracruz regions, a discovery he exploited to the full. But instead of implementing tax reforms, he borrowed heavily on the strength of the oil reserves. The money raised was used for public spending to

create employment and improve education and living conditions of the poorest Mexicans. However, when oil prices plummeted at the beginning of the 1980s, the Mexican government was left with massive debts. The resulting economic problems included a rise in inflation and unemployment and a large migration of rural Mexicans to the larger towns and to the USA.

The Portillo government was beset by accusations of corruption. There were claims that revenue from the country's oil production, instead of going to repay the international debt, was being filtered off by the government. Controversy also surrounded the appointment of his personal security chief and childhood friend, Arturo Durazo Moreno, or 'El Negro Durazo', as commander of the Mexico City Police. During 6 years in the job there was a high level of police corruption, especially in drug trafficking and bribe taking. The División de Investigación para la Prevención de la Delincuencia (Crime Prevention Investigation Division), founded by Durazo, may have kept the streets safe but only by acts of brutality, including torture, which provoked the concern of human rights activists. Portillo's links to such a figure led many PRI colleagues to disassociate themselves. In the elections of 1982, the PRI candidate Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado was elected as Portillo's successor. Portillo died on 17 Feb. 2004.

Prabhakaran, Velupillai (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

Velupillai Prabhakaran was the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)—also known as the Tamil Tigers—a separatist militant group claiming to represent the Tamil population of Sri Lanka. A skilled military strategist, Prabhakaran had no experience of civilian government. He was killed on 18 May 2009 after the Sri Lankan army launched a military campaign to eradicate the rebel forces.

Early Life

Velupillai Prabhakaran was born on 26 Nov. 1954 in Velvettithurai, a coastal town on the northern Jaffna peninsula, into a lower caste family. The son of a civil servant and youngest of four children, Prabhakaran became involved early on in the Tamil separatist movement, joining the Tamil Youth Front in 1973. Facing police arrest, that same year he fled to Madras (capital of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu), where he underwent military training. In 1975 he returned to Jaffna and joined the New Tamil Tigers (NTT) becoming its head within a year. On 27 July 1975, in the first of many political assassinations, Prabhakaran and two other members of the NTT shot Jaffna's Mayor, Alfred Duraipappa. In 1976 the NTT reformed as LTTE with Prabhakaran remaining at its head.

Career Peak

When in 1983, the Sri Lankan government called for the main Tamil parliamentary presence, the Tamil United Liberation Front, to renounce its wishes for a separate state, Prabhakaran took part in an ambush on a Sri Lankan army convoy killing 13 soldiers. A wave of retaliatory Sinhalese aggression throughout the island gave a pretext for Prabhakaran to declare an all-out guerrilla war against the Sri Lankan state.

Retreating to the northern stronghold of Jaffna, the LTTE expanded rapidly and by the end of 1984 commanded over 10,000 cadres. Over the next few years Prabhakaran began a process of assimilating, or more frequently, eradicating the many rival Tamil guerrilla groups. During this period intra-Tamil violence reached a high-point, over-shadowing violence between the Tamil groups and the Sinhalese government.

In 1989 Prabhakaran created a political wing to the LTTE, the People's Front of Liberation Tigers, for which he appointed his deputy, Kopalaswamy Mahendrarajah, as leader. Through this medium Prabhakaran began consultation with Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa's government over the issue of ejecting the Indian Peace Keeping Force, brought in following the Indo-Sri Lanka accord in 1987 to resolve the ethnic conflict. In 1990 talks between the two broke down. Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Premadasa were assassinated, in 1991 and 1993 respectively, in suicide bomb attacks linked to the LTTE. Prabhakaran also

imprisoned and executed Kopalaswamy Mahendrarajah, apprehensive of the latter's ties with Premadasa.

In Jan. 1995 a ceasefire was established between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. Despite offers from the latter to lift economic embargoes on LTTE-held areas (which were subsequently carried through), Prabhakaran broke the ceasefire, citing delays in this process, and fighting again broke out.

Movement towards a permanent settlement of the conflict gained ground with the signing of a month-long ceasefire in Dec. 2001, followed by an internationally-monitored ceasefire in Feb. 2002. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in the US on 11 Sept. 2001 and the international consensus on combatting terrorism, many of the LTTE's financial assets were frozen. Eager to throw off the LTTE's adverse image, Prabhakaran made his first public appearance in 12 years on 10 April 2002, declaring an end to the 'Black Tiger' suicide bombings for which the LTTE had become famous. In return, Prabhakaran demanded that the ban on the LTTE should be lifted prior to peace talks, a step which was taken on 4 Sept. 2002. On 31 Oct. 2002, a Sri Lankan court passed a 200-year jail sentence on Prabhakaran for his alleged involvement in the bombing of Sri Lanka's central bank in 1996. Despite this, peace talks moved towards a compromise agreement between the government and the LTTE. Prabhakaran reduced his demands for a separate Tamil state after a peace deal was signed in Dec. 2002 granting Tamil autonomy.

The LTTE pulled out of talks in 2003 and violence recommenced the following year. New peace talks failed in Oct. 2006 in Geneva and by Jan. 2008 the government had pulled out of the 2002 ceasefire agreement. In May 2009 the government launched a campaign to eradicate the last Tamil stronghold in the northeast of the island and reported that Prabhakaran had been killed on 18 May. Despite initial denials, the LTTE confirmed his death a week later and conceded defeat.

Préval, René (Haiti)

Introduction

René Préval won a controversial election in Feb. 2006 to become president of Haiti for the second time. However, the already difficult task of restoring hope to the poorest nation in the western hemisphere was undermined by political instability and the devastating consequences of natural disasters. Following further presidential elections in Nov. 2010 with a second round in March 2011, in which he could not stand, Préval left office in May 2011.

Early Life

René Garcia Préval was born on 17 Jan. 1943 in Port-au-Prince. His family was forced into exile in 1963 by the dictator, François 'Papa Doc' Duvalier. He studied agronomy at the College of Gembloux, Belgium, before moving to New York, USA in 1970, where he lived for 5 years. Having returned to Haiti, he became active in politics and charity work following the fall of Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier in Feb. 1986. He grew close to the radical slum preacher, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who in Dec. 1990 was elected president. Préval was appointed prime minister in Feb. 1991 but was forced to flee the country shortly after a military coup led by Gen. Raoul Cedras in Sept. 1991.

Joining the exiled constitutional government in the USA in 1992, Préval held the prime minister's portfolio. Aristide was reinstated as president in Oct. 1994 but was constitutionally barred from running in the Dec. 1995 election. Préval won with 88% of the vote and took office on 7 Feb. 1996, inheriting a country with a devastated economy. In Jan. 1999, following a series of disagreements with legislators, Préval began to rule by decree. Following Aristide's return to power after a controversial presidential election in Nov. 2000, Préval, whose relationship with Aristide had deteriorated from the mid-1990s, retreated from politics.

Poverty and unemployment, together with Aristide's increasingly authoritarian rule, led to violent protests which forced the president into exile in Feb. 2004. His successor, former chief justice Boniface Alexandre, worked with a US-led international force to stabilize the country and prepare for fresh elections. Préval unexpectedly returned to the fray, running as the candidate for Lespwa. Following repeated delays, the presidential election was held on 7 Feb. 2006 and Préval was subsequently declared the outright winner, with 51.2% of the vote.

Career Peak

Préval pledged to create 'cohesion' in Haiti's fractured society and restore peace in an effort to revive the ailing economy and provide employment. However, political in-fighting, economic vulnerability, organized crime and natural disasters continued to undermine the stability of the country. Jacques-Edouard Alexis and Michèle Pierre-Louis were both dismissed as prime minister before Préval named Jean-Max Bellerive as the new premier in Oct. 2009. Meanwhile, in Aug. and Sept. 2008 tropical storms caused extensive flooding across the country, and in Jan. 2010 Port-au-Prince and the surrounding region were hit by an earthquake that left over 200,000 dead and further weakened the fragile economy.

Préval's preferred successor, Jude Célestin, contested the first round of presidential elections in Nov. 2010 but was subsequently disqualified from standing in the delayed run-off poll in March 2011. Préval's mandate was extended until 14 May 2011 when he was succeeded by Michel Martelly. He died in Port-au-Prince on 3 March 2017 at the age of 74.

Price, Cadle (Belize)

Introduction

George Price was the first prime minister of Belize—formerly British Honduras—from 1981–84 and served a second term from 1989–93. Regarded as the 'father of the nation', he played a key role in negotiating independence from British rule.

Early Life

The third of eleven children, George Cadle Price was born on 15 Jan. 1919 in Belize City. Raised a devout Catholic, he attended St. John's College, a prominent Jesuit-run secondary school, and decided to train for the priesthood, studying at seminaries in Mississippi and Guatemala City. However, the Second World War prevented him from studying in Rome. He returned to Belize to attend his ailing father.

Price entered politics in 1944 to contest, unsuccessfully, the Belize Town Board elections. Three years later he won a seat on the Belize City council. Angered by the colonial authority's decision to devalue the British Honduran dollar in 1949, he co-founded the People's Committee in Sept. 1950, which evolved into the pro-independence People's United Party (PUP). Three of the PUP's founders were found guilty of sedition but Price escaped imprisonment. Starting as party secretary, he became its leader in 1956, a position he held for 40 years.

Price served as mayor of Belize City from 1956–62. In 1961, under a revised constitution, he was elected first minister. In 1964 Belize became self-governing except in matters of defence, internal security and external affairs. All the governor's powers were handed to an Executive Council headed by Price.

Career Peak

Guatemala's long-standing claim to Belize proved an obstacle to independence. As premier of British Honduras, Price rejected calls for Belize to become an 'associated state' of Guatemala, instead orienting external relations towards North and Central America and building on established links with the English-speaking Caribbean. Price secured the support of near neighbours including Cuba, Mexico, Panama and Nicaragua. In Nov. 1980 the United Nations supported Belize's independence. The country formally gained independence on 21 Sept. 1981, with Price serving as both prime minister and foreign minister.

In the first post-independence elections, held in 1984, the PUP lost to the United Democratic Party (UDP) of Manuel Esquivel. However, Price returned to power in 1989 before again giving way to the UDP and Esquivel in 1993. Price was replaced by Said Musa as leader of the PUP in 1996 but he remained a prominent figure in the party and was a senior minister in Musa's government until his retirement from active politics in 2003.

Later Life

In Sept. 2000 Price received Belize's highest honour, the Order of National Hero, for his part in winning independence. On 19 Sept. 2011, 2 days before the 30th anniversary of Belize's independence, he died. Prime Minister Dean Barrow declared a week of mourning and the country's first premier received a state funeral.

Privert, Jocelerme (Haiti)

Introduction

Jocelerme Privert was elected interim president on 14 Feb. 2016 by parliament after the second round of national polling to replace the outgoing Michel Martelly had been postponed amid fears of violence. Privert was scheduled to serve a term of up to 120 days and to oversee fresh elections initially rescheduled for April 2016 but then delayed owing to the continuing political stalemate.

Early Life

Jocelerme Privert was born on 1 Feb. 1953 in Petit-Trou-de-Nippes. Having graduated in accounting from Centre Universitaire Maurice Laroche, Port-au-Prince, he enrolled in 1978 at l'École Nationale d'Administration Financière (ENAF) and a year later joined the Directorate of General Taxation. In 1995 he became its director general and in 2001 was named secretary of state for finance under President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In 2002 he was appointed interior minister.

Privert was arrested in April 2004 on suspicion of orchestrating the killings of several people presumed to be opponents of Aristide in the town of Saint Marc. He spent 26 months in jail without trial and was released in June 2006 after he went on hunger strike. From 2008–10 he served as an adviser to President René Préval, and in 2010 was elected to the Senate. On 14 Jan. 2016 Privert became president of the Senate, a role he held for a month before resigning to become interim state president. He received 77 votes after two rounds of parliamentary polling (against a combined 35 for his two opponents) to assume the office.

Career Peak

Although his indirect election was immediately denounced by his opponents, it was hoped Privert's reputation as a pragmatic bureaucrat would bring respite from the political chaos and violent demonstrations that marred the presidential elections. He was charged with overseeing the formation of a provisional electoral council to complete rescheduled legislative, municipal and presidential elections and with forming a workable government for the interim period. They were initially scheduled for 24 April 2016 but were postponed yet again. Privert stated that it might not be held until late Oct. The elections eventually took place on 20 Nov. 2016, when Jovenel Moïse was elected in the first round. Privert left office on 7 Feb. 2017 when Moïse was sworn in as president.

Prodi, Romano (Italy)

Introduction

In April 2006 Romano Prodi was elected prime minister for the second time, defeating his arch-rival Silvio Berlusconi by a slim majority. Leading a diverse leftist coalition, Prodi initially struggled to maintain his government in power and briefly resigned in Feb. 2007. He was previously prime minister from 1996–98 and was credited with steering the Italian economy towards European Monetary Union (EMU). As president of the European Commission between 1999–2004 he was instrumental in working towards the expansion of the European Union and closer unity between the member states.

Early Life

Romano Prodi was born on 9 Aug. 1939 in Scandiano, Reggio Emilia. On completion of his schooling in Reggio Emilia, he studied law at the Catholic University of Milan before undertaking postgraduate studies at the London School of Economics in the UK. He went on to hold the post of professor of industrial organization and policy at the University of Bologna for over 25 years. He was also a visiting professor at Harvard University and had a long association with the Stanford Research Institute, both in the USA. In 1978 he commenced his political career, holding an array of posts including minister for industry (in the government of Giulio Andreotti) and chairman of the institute for industrial reconstruction (a government holding company). While in the latter position, he was subject to allegations of conflict of interest in relation to his private business concerns, but was acquitted of any wrongdoing.

In 1995 Prodi became chairman of the *Ulivo* (Olive Tree) centre-left coalition and stood in the 1996 elections against the then prime minister, media millionaire and owner of AC Milan football club, Silvio Berlusconi. *Ulivo* won the election with a narrow majority and in May 1996 Prodi was appointed prime minister. During his 28-month premiership he introduced a swathe of financial reforms and reduced the public sector deficit. He also introduced changes in the areas of public administration, fiscal planning and corporate governance law. On 9 Oct. 1998 Prodi lost a vote of no confidence, initiated by the leader of the Communist Refoundation party, Fausto Bertinotti.

Prodi was elected president of the European Commission in May 1999. In this role he promoted increased powers for the European Union (EU) and common foreign and immigration policies. He also oversaw increased EU involvement in national economic policies. When his tenure expired in Nov. 2004, he was replaced as president of the European Commission by José Manuel Durão Barroso.

Following the end of his European Commission presidency Prodi returned to the national political arena, leading the opposition against Silvio Berlusconi's ruling right-wing coalition, *Forza Italia*. In Oct. 2004 the centre-left opposition coalition, formerly known as *Ulivo*, was refounded and renamed the Great Democratic Alliance (GAD). Key to this restructuring was the inclusion of the far-left Communist Refoundation party led by Fausto Bertinotti. On 6 Oct. 2005, 4 m. people voted in primary elections to choose the opposition candidate to stand against Berlusconi in general elections planned for April 2006. Prodi claimed a landslide victory, winning 73.5% of the vote, while Bertinotti polled 15.4%.

A general election took place on 10 April 2006. Following a record-breaking electoral turnout of 83%, the result was a knife-edge victory for Prodi and his Union coalition. Recent changes to the electoral system provided the winner of the lower house with a working majority, 348 seats against 281 for *Forza Italia*. Less comfortably, the Union coalition won only 158 seats in the upper house against 156 for *Forza Italia*. With both houses holding equal power, the government was vulnerable.

Career Peak

Berlusconi contested the results of the election, demanding a recount in several areas. However, Prodi's victory was confirmed by the judiciary on 22 April 2006. There were further delays before Prodi was able to take office. The new government had to wait until Giorgio Napolitano, the newly-elected president, had formally replaced outgoing president Carlo Azeglio Ciampi on 15 May. Chosen after four rounds of voting, 80-year-old Napolitano was Prodi's favoured candidate. The speakers of both houses of parliament were also elected following several rounds of close voting, with the position in the lower house going to Fausto Bertinotti and in the upper house to moderate trade union leader Franco Marini. In both cases the speakers were Prodi's chosen candidates.

By the time of the election, with a public debt that had ballooned to 106.5% of gross domestic product and a budget deficit that had exceeded European Union limits for the previous 2 years, Italians chose a prime minister who promised to improve tax collection, slim down the country's overweight bureaucracy, increase competition and gradually reduce the budget deficit. However, his rainbow coalition of parties ranging from communists to Catholic centrists was fragile, with widely differing views on issues such as privatization and the war in Iraq (against which Prodi has long been an outspoken opponent). And with a majority in the upper house so small that the absence of a single senator could change the outcome of a vote, the ability of the government to implement the reforms necessary for the long-term revitalization of the Italian economy was questionable. Nevertheless, Prodi made

several significant policy changes during his first year in office, including rejecting devolution reforms proposed by the Berlusconi government and pledging to withdraw Italian troops from Iraq. He also introduced a range of deregulatory measures and initiated a clampdown on tax evasion.

The government's precarious parliamentary position was demonstrated in Feb. 2007 when it was defeated in the Senate over foreign policy issues. However, President Napolitano rejected Prodi's resignation and called on the prime minister to return to parliament for a confidence vote. At the end of the month Prodi won a narrow 162–157 majority in the upper house and then secured a more comfortable victory in the Chamber of Deputies by 342–253 votes in early March.

Qarase, Laisenia (Fiji)

Introduction

Laisenia Qarase was appointed prime minister of an interim government following the collapse of Mahendra Chaudhry's government in a coup in May 2000. Qarase formed a new party, Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua, and won the elections of Aug.–Sept. 2001. An ethnic Fijian, he ruled out a return to the pre-coup situation of government by the Indian minority. His major challenges were to return Fiji to political stability and revitalize the economy. He was deposed in late 2006 in a military coup led by Commodore Frank Bainimarama, who had been instrumental in his rise to power in 2000.

Early Life

Qarase was born in 1941 in Mavana on the eastern Lau islands. He was schooled in Suva and graduated in commerce from the University of Auckland in New Zealand. He returned to Fiji and took a job with the Fijian Affairs Board. He then became deputy secretary of the finance department, permanent secretary for commerce and industry, and secretary of the Public Service Commission. Between 1983 and 1998 he headed the Fiji Development Bank and in 1998 moved into the private sector to take charge of a merchant bank.

In 1999 he was appointed to the Senate, where he gained a reputation for his vociferous criticism of the regime of Mahendra Chaudhry, Fiji's first ethnic Indian prime minister. In May 2000 George Speight, an indigenous Fijian, stormed parliament with his supporters and took the government hostage. Chaudhry's administration was dismissed by decree of the Great Council of Chiefs and Speight, a bankrupt businessman, pronounced himself prime minister. Qarase was named prime minister of an interim government in July 2000 as part of the deal which saw the release of Chaudhry and his colleagues. The affair was the culmination of years of rising tensions between the ethnic Fijian population and the Fiji's financially and politically powerful ethnic Indian minority.

Career Peak

During Qarase's first month in office the hostages were freed and Speight was arrested. Fiji had been suspended from the Commonwealth's councils the previous month and was subject to sanctions by Australia, New Zealand, France and the USA. Qarase was charged with restoring stability to the political scene. He was to pave the way for new elections, prepare a new constitution and revive the badly-hit economy.

In March 2001 the Supreme Court declared the interim government illegal. President Iloilo, who had come to power after the coup, formally dismissed Chaudhry (who had been effectively excluded from political life since the coup) and replaced Qarase with Ratu Tevita Momoedonu, a tribal leader, for 24 h. He then reappointed Qarase, thus legitimizing the new administration, despite Chaudhry's protests that his sacking was unconstitutional.

In the build-up to the elections of Aug.–Sept. 2001 Qarase formed a new nationalist party, Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua (SDL). He announced that a new constitution would not be of the multi-racial nature of the 1997 document which allowed for the appointment of Chaudhry. Instead Qarase stated that 'there must be better guarantees for indigenous Fijians to be in control of their political destiny'. The SDL won 32 out of 71 seats, against 27 for Chaudhry's Fiji Labour Party.

Qarase was constitutionally required to invite Chaudhry into the new government but actively encouraged his opponent not to accept any posts, claiming a joint government would be unworkable. Chaudhry announced plans to establish an opposition group within the government. In his first 18-man cabinet Qarase failed to appoint any Labour members but did include two allies of Speight, whose Matanitu Vanua had won six seats. Chaudhry claimed his party was entitled to six cabinet posts, a view upheld by an appeal court in Feb. 2002 and by the Supreme Court in July 2003.

Qarase oversaw Fiji's re-entry into the Commonwealth in Dec. 2001, although the domestic political environment remained unstable. In Jan. 2002 a gang was arrested for plotting Qarase's kidnapping in order to secure the freedom of Speight who in Feb. 2002 received a death sentence, later commuted by life imprisonment, for treason. In June 2002 Qarase came under investigation for vote-buying at the previous year's elections. The political fall-out from the Speight-led coup was again evident in 2004 when the vice president, Ratu Jope Seniloli, was found guilty of treason for his involvement.

Meanwhile, negotiation had not resolved the problem of the number of cabinet posts to which the Labour Party was entitled. In 2004 Chaudhry declined any seats and took the position of leader of the opposition. In 2005 Qarase's government introduced the Promotion of Reconciliation, Tolerance and Unity Bill. This generated considerable opposition from many sections of society towards the proposed amnesty for those who were involved in the 2000 coup, and led to friction between the government and the military.

This friction came to a head when the government tried to replace Commodore Frank Bainimarama in 2006. Bainimarama, who had been a prominent figure in the 2000 coup, led a bloodless coup on 5 Dec. 2006. He assumed the president's powers and removed Qarase, whom he accused of corruption. Jona Senilagakali was named Qarase's successor and charged with overseeing an eventual return to democracy. Fiji was suspended from the Commonwealth on 9 Dec.

Qassim, Abdul Karim (Iraq)

Introduction

Gen. Qassim was the main architect of the overthrow the Hashemite monarchy of Iraq on the 14 July 1958 and became prime minister in the new republic's government. Although an Arab nationalist with left-wing sympathies, he rejected the pan-Arab cause advocated by Egypt's President Nasser. Faced with increasing political opposition and rebellion among the Kurdish population, his power deteriorated steadily. On 8 Feb. 1963 he was overthrown and executed by nationalist army officers and civilian members of the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Ba'ath) Party.

Early Life

Qassim was born in Baghdad in 1914. After graduating from the Iraqi Military Academy in 1934, he attended the Army Staff College. Following distinguished service in campaigns against the Kurds and in the Palestinian war of 1948, he had become a high-ranking officer by 1955. Like many Iraqis, Qassim was hostile to the conservative and pro-Western policies of the monarchy. He became active in the opposition movement that spread within the army officer corps, and in 1958 instigated the coup that ushered in the new republic.

Career Peak

Almost immediately Qassim clashed with his deputy premier, Col. Abdul Salem Aref. Aref was associated with elements of the Ba'ath Party and favoured union between Iraq and the then United Arab Republic (of Egypt and Syria). Qassim sought internal Iraqi stability ahead of pan-Arab federation and dismissed Aref from office in Sept. 1958. In 1959 Qassim survived an assassination attempt by young Ba'ath activists (including Saddam Hussein). In the same year he announced the withdrawal of Iraq from the international Baghdad Pact. His rule became increasingly repressive and, from 1961, he faced a serious Kurdish rebellion. An alliance of nationalist army officers and the Ba'ath Party seized power in Feb. 1963. Qassim was captured and shot.

Qureia, Ahmed (Palestinian Territories, Israel)

Introduction

Following the resignation of Mahmoud Abbas on 6 Sept. 2003, Jerusalem-born Ahmed Qureia was nominated as prime minister by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Recognised as one of the leading Palestinian representatives of the 1993 Oslo Agreement, the first Palestinian-Israeli peace accord, Qureia's pragmatism and negotiating experience were anticipated to bring a measure of stability to the peace process despite his loyalty to Yasser Arafat (who died in Nov. 2004) and restrictions in his power of office. Qureia's term ended with his resignation in Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Ahmed Ali Sulieman Qureia was born to a wealthy family in the village of Abu Dis in Jerusalem in 1937. In 1968 Qureia left a banking career to pursue politics, joining the Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). His background in business helped his rise to prominence in the mid-1970s when he took control of Fatah's extensive enterprises in Lebanon. Following the PLO's expulsion from Lebanon by Israeli troops in 1982, Qureia joined Fatah leader Arafat in Tunis. The following year he became head of the PLO's executive committee's economic department. Qureia's influence increased as the number of PLO leaders diminished, and in 1989 he was elected member of the Fatah central committee.

Qureia first came to international attention as a key negotiator in the secret talks between Israel and Palestine in Norway in 1993. The interim peace agreement that followed led to an autonomous Palestinian administration in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and marked the beginning of his participation in peace talks involving Israel and the USA. These included talks in Camp David in July 2000 and in Taba, Egypt, in Jan. 2001.

In 1993 Qureia drafted a Palestinian development plan, presented at a World Bank conference on aid that year. He helped develop the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), and assumed the role of secretary-general. He also served as minister of economy and trade and minister of industry for the Palestinian Authority between 1994 and 1996, when he was elected a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and subsequently its speaker.

After the resignation of Mahmoud Abbas on 6 Sept. 2003, 4 months after taking office, Qureia was appointed prime minister with the support of Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Army.

Career Peak

Prior to the creation of the office of prime minister, Qureia served as Arafat's second in command as speaker for the Palestinian Legislative Council. His position of prime minister was fragile, given Arafat's reluctance to relinquish power. The days succeeding Qureia's appointment were dominated by retaliatory acts of aggression from both Israel and Palestine, and Arafat's decision to install Qureia as head of an emergency government on 5 Oct. 2003 angered representatives in the National Council, bypassed by presidential decree. Nasser Yousef, named as interior minister and thus head of the Palestinian security forces, refused to be sworn into office on 7 Oct., stating that he needed the approval of the Council. Persuaded not to resign, Qureia agreed to remain for the 3 weeks of emergency government allowed by the Palestinian charter. Arafat's reluctance to relinquish control of the security forces undermined Qureia as it did his predecessor.

On completion of his term as head of the emergency government, Arafat requested that Qureia remain in power and form a new government. He accepted and in Nov. 2003 stated his aims: a ceasefire with Israel, an international peace conference, an Israeli withdrawal from certain territories to allow elections to take place and an end to the violence of Palestinian militant groups. In Dec. 2003 Qureia reaffirmed his commitment to the 'road map to peace' while expressing that any unilateral action by Israel would be disastrous. In Feb. 2004 he called for immediate action to deal with the Israeli security fence being built in the West Bank, claiming that it was threatening the peaceful creation of a separate Palestinian state. On his first tour outside the Middle East since coming to office, Qureia campaigned against the construction of the wall and

openly criticized the USA for not doing enough to help the peace process. In May, however, after a meeting between Qureia and US Secretary of State Colin Powell, the US administration stressed its commitment to a future Palestinian state and asserted that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza (announced by Prime Minister Sharon in Feb. 2004) should be seen as a chance for peace.

As the violence continued, and after an unpopular reform of the security services by Arafat resulting in reappointments of key officials and mass protests, Qureia threatened to resign in July 2004. As a result Arafat conceded some security powers to his prime minister. In Nov. 2004 Arafat died and in Jan. 2005 Mahmoud Abbas was elected president. Qureia retained the premiership and formed a new cabinet of technocrats in Feb. 2005. Qureia resigned briefly in Dec. 2005 to run for parliament. Nine days later he changed his mind and resumed his position as prime minister.

On 26 Jan. 2006 Qureia resigned for the final time when Fatah was defeated in legislative elections by Palestinian Islamist group Hamas. At the request of Mahmoud Abbas, he remained as caretaker prime minister until Hamas formed the government and appointed a successor.

Rabbani, Burhanuddin (Afghanistan)

Introduction

A religious scholar and founding father of the Afghan mujahideen, Burhanuddin Rabbani played a key role in ending the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1988–89. He served as president from 1992–96 and again in 2001. As head of the High Peace Council, Rabbani attempted to bring Taliban leaders into the reconciliation process. He was killed in a suicide bomb attack in 2011.

Early Life

Burhanuddin Rabbani was born in 1940 in the northern province of Badakhshan. He attended Abu-Hanifa, a religious school in Kabul, and graduated in Islamic law and theology from Kabul University in 1963. He then taught at the University and later gained a master's degree in Islamic philosophy from Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

Returning to Kabul University's faculty of Islamic law in 1968, he was increasingly inspired by the revivalist pan-Islamism of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. In 1972 he became head of the activist Jamiat-e Islami (Islamic Society of Afghanistan). Under threat of arrest for his pro-Islamic stance, Rabbani fled the country in 1973 and settled in Pakistan. In 1979 Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan and Rabbani became a leading figure in the mujahideen, offering religious inspiration to fighters including military leader Ahmed Shah Massoud who later served as Afghanistan's minister of defence during Rabbani's presidency.

Career Peak

After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 and the collapse of the pro-Moscow government of Mohammed Najibullah in 1992, Jamiat-e Islami fighters were the first to enter Kabul. Rabbani was appointed president under an agreement designed to ensure the annual rotation of the presidency. However, he refused to relinquish power and stayed in office for a further 4 years.

As the mujahideen failed to bring peace to Afghanistan, Taliban forces gained in strength and took over Kabul in 1996. Forced to leave the city, Rabbani retreated to his home town of Faisabad. During the Taliban rule he established himself as leader of the United National and Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, commonly known as the Northern Alliance—the main armed opposition to the Taliban.

Following the US invasion and fall of the Taliban regime at the end of 2001, Rabbani returned to Kabul and served as president in a temporary capacity from Nov. to Dec. of that year. Marginalized as an ethnic Tajik, he reluctantly handed power to the Pashtun tribal leader Hamid Karzai, who was backed by the UN-backed Bonn conference.

For the next decade Rabbani remained leader of the Jamiat-e Islami. In Oct. 2010 Karzai appointed him head of Afghanistan's 68-member High Peace Council (HPC) to negotiate with the Taliban and other insurgent groups. On 20 Sept. 2011 he was killed in a suicide bomb attack at his home. Afghan officials blamed the Quetta Shura, a group of insurgents operating out of Quetta in Pakistan.

Rabin, Yitzhak (Israel)

Introduction

A career soldier until the late 1960s, Rabin was ambassador to the United States until he entered politics as a leading figure in the Labour Party. He served as prime minister (the first native-born premier) from 1974–77 and again from 1992 until his assassination by a fellow Jew in Nov. 1995. The crowning achievement of his second premiership was the peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Sept. 1993.

Early Life

Rabin was born in Jerusalem in March 1922 into a Zionist family. He was educated at the Kadoorie Agricultural High School and then served in the Palmach, an elite force of the Jewish Haganah underground defence organization, during the 1940s. Upon the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Rabin joined the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), achieving the rank of lieutenant-general by 1962 when he was appointed chief of the general staff. The architect of the Israeli victory in the Six Day War of 1967, he retired from the IDF in 1968 and became Israel's ambassador to the United States. He promoted strategic bilateral co-operation with the US and secured massive military aid for Israel.

Having returned to Israel, Rabin was elected to the Knesset as a Labour deputy in Dec. 1973. Following the resignation of Golda Meir, he successfully contested the Labour leadership and became prime minister in June 1974. In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur war of Oct. 1973, Rabin's government negotiated the 1974–75 military disengagement agreements with Egypt and Syria. In 1977 a scandal involving his wife Leah's breach of foreign currency regulations forced his resignation as Labour leader prior to elections which swept opposition leader Menachem Begin into office. Rabin remained a member of the Knesset and served as minister of defence from 1984–90 in national unity governments.

Career Peak

In Feb. 1992 he unseated his long-time rival Shimon Peres as Labour leader and, after the party's election victory in June that year, began his second tenure as prime minister. Following months of secret negotiations, Rabin signed an accord with the PLO in Sept. 1993 (the Oslo agreements) providing for the phased handover of the Gaza Strip and Jericho to Palestinian authority and a lesser degree of autonomy in the rest of the West Bank (an achievement for which he shared the Nobel Peace Prize). In Oct. 1994 a peace treaty was also signed with the kingdom of Jordan. However, Rabin's policies were not universally popular, particularly among Jewish settlers in the occupied territories. On 4 Nov. 1995 he was shot dead by a right-wing Jewish extremist.

Radičová, Iveta (Slovakia)

Introduction

Radičová became Slovakia's first female prime minister in July 2010 at the head of a centre-right coalition. She promised to tackle Slovakia's economic crisis by cutting public debt and floated a renegotiation of Slovakia's commitments to EU funding. Having lost a vote of confidence in Oct. 2011, early elections were held in March 2012 and the following month Radičová was succeeded by former prime minister Robert Fico.

Early Life

Born in Bratislava on 7 Dec. 1956 to Polish–Slovak parents, Iveta Radičová grew up in Bratislava and studied sociology at Comenius University. After graduating, she was a researcher in family policy at the Slovak Academy of Sciences from 1979–89, during which time she gained a PhD. She entered politics in 1990, joining the Public Against Violence organization, speaking on their behalf until 1992. After completing postdoctoral studies at Oxford

University in 1991, she returned to Slovakia and founded the Center for Analysis of Social Policy. From 1991–2005 she served as its executive director and lectured in sociology, political science and social work at Comenius University, where she was appointed professor of sociology in 2005.

That year she joined the centre-right government of Mikuláš Dzurinda as minister of labour, social affairs and family. She served until the general election of 2006, when Dzurinda's Slovak Democratic and Christian Union–Democratic Party (SDKÚ–DS) lost power to the centre-left Direction–Social Democracy (Smer–SD). In the same election, Radičová was elected to parliament for the SDKÚ–DS and became deputy chair of the party and deputy chair of the parliamentary committee on social affairs and housing. She contested the 2009 presidential election as the SDKÚ–DS candidate, with the endorsement of the conservative Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Party of the Hungarian coalition (SMK–MKP), losing to the incumbent President Gašparovič in the second round. On 23 April 2009 she resigned her seat in parliament after a controversy involving a violation of parliamentary voting rules.

In Feb. 2010 Radičová successfully contested the leadership of the SDKÚ–DS, succeeding former finance minister Ivan Mikloš. The party lost heavily in the June 2010 general elections, polling just 15% of the vote to the ruling Smer–SD's 35%. However, Smer–SD was unable to renew its coalition owing to the poor performance of its coalition partners and on 23 June 2010, as leader of the largest opposition party, Radičová was asked to form a government. The SDKÚ–DS formed a coalition with the KDH, the socially progressive, fiscally conservative Freedom and Solidarity party (SaS) and the Most–Híd party, which promotes Slovak–Hungarian co-operation. Radičová took office on 8 July 2010.

Career Peak

Radičová came to power promising to cut government spending and tackle corruption. In late 2010 she drew up a plan to reduce expenditure by 7%. Identifying long-term unemployment as a key challenge, she announced that pension reform and education were priorities. Aside from the ailing economy, her main challenges included instability in the euro zone, tensions between Slovakia and Hungary, and lack of transparency in Slovakian financial affairs. However, her administration collapsed in Oct. 2011 as the SaS, one of the coalition parties, abstained in a parliamentary vote of confidence in her government over the issue of ratifying an enlarged euro zone bail-out facility. An early election was held in March 2012 but the opposition Direction–Social Democracy won and former prime minister Robert Fico returned to power the following month.

Raffarin, Jean-Pierre (France)

Introduction

Jean-Pierre Raffarin was made French prime minister in 2002. A relatively unknown politician but with experience in regional government, Raffarin was appointed by President Jacques Chirac on the resignation of Lionel Jospin. A senator of the Démocratie Libérale party (DL; originally an offshoot of the Union pour la Démocratie Française, UDF, and now part of the centre right ruling coalition), Raffarin was committed to working in close cooperation with Chirac.

Early Life

Raffarin was born in Poitiers on 3 Aug. 1948. He studied law and finance in Paris before working in corporate marketing. His first political role was employment ministry advisor from 1976. The following year he was elected councillor for Poitiers, a position he held until 1995; in 1988 he also became the leader of the Poitou-Charentes local council. A senator for Vienne between 1995–97, his party representation included UDF leader in 1995 and DL vice president from 1997. He served as minister of commerce, craft and small and medium businesses, a subsection of the industry and finance ministry, under the government of Alain Juppé.

Career Peak

Following the surprise defeat of prime minister and Parti Socialiste leader Lionel Jospin in the first round of the May 2002 presidential elections, Jospin resigned the premiership. President Jacques Chirac appointed the relatively unknown Raffarin as interim prime minister in the run up to the June 2002 parliamentary elections. His position was consolidated with a centre right victory.

In Raffarin's first speech to parliament he reiterated Chirac's policies, including investment in law and order (a subject central to the election), increased decentralization and tax cuts. €3.5 bn. was allocated to the justice ministry while €5.6 bn. was put into an increased police force, increased prison capacity, an extension of civil offences (such as aggressive begging) and a proposed civil volunteer force. The plan to reduce income tax by a third over 5 years raised concerns from other EU countries that France would not keep to its promise to balance its budget by 2004. Raffarin announced increased autonomy for Corsica, as a front for decentralization, including €2 bn. for development, a policy initiated by Jospin but previously rejected by Chirac.

Raffarin's budget for 2003 proposed an overhaul of the culture, tertiary education and housing ministries, though he admitted that as a result of the global downturn and the war in Iraq, the economy would grow at a much slower pace than was earlier predicted.

Local election defeats for the governing party in March 2004 appeared to threaten Raffarin's position but Chirac immediately reappointed him. The European elections that took place in June 2004 were also disappointing for the Raffarin government. The UMP party won only 16.4% of the vote, leading to calls for the resignation of the government.

Set against the backdrop of a faltering economy, Raffarin's approval rating fell to 24%. France held a referendum on whether or not to accept the proposed EU constitution on 29 May 2005 and the poll was widely seen as an opportunity to express dissatisfaction with Raffarin, a champion of the 'Yes' vote, and his government. The constitution was rejected and Raffarin resigned from office.

Later Life

After standing down, Raffarin was re-elected UMP senator for Vienne in Sept. 2005. Following Nicolas Sarkozy's election to the French presidency, Raffarin was named UMP vice-president. He launched an unsuccessful bid to become Senate president in Sept. 2008, losing in the primary to Gerard Lárcher. In Feb. 2010 Raffarin turned down the office of French ambassador to China.

Rafsanjani, Hashemi Ali Akbar (Iran)

Introduction

In a smooth transfer of political power following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, Hashemi Rafsanjani was elected the fourth President of the Islamic Republic on 28 July 1989, replacing Seyed Ali Khamenei who became Iran's new spiritual leader. Pragmatic and relatively moderate, Rafsanjani sought to revive the war-damaged economy, improve relations with the West, and re-establish Iran as a regional power. He retained the presidency for two terms until 1997.

Early Life

Born in 1934, Rafsanjani was a theology student under Ayatollah Khomeini in Qom in the early 1950s, remaining a close associate thereafter. After Khomeini was ordered into exile in 1964, Rafsanjani remained in Iran to organize his mentor's opposition to the Shah and was imprisoned several times in the 1960s and 1970s for his political activities. Following the Islamic revolution in 1979, he was appointed to the ruling Revolutionary Council and was a co-founder of the Islamic Republican Party (which was dissolved in 1987). Having been elected to the Majlis in early 1980, he built his power base as the Assembly's Speaker from July of that year until 1989. From 1988–89 he was also acting commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and strongly advocated the Iranian acceptance in July 1988 of the ceasefire resolution bringing the war with Iraq to a close.

Career Peak

With the support of almost all the country's political, religious and military groups, Rafsanjani was elected President in July 1989, attracting 94% of the votes cast. In a referendum held at the same time, voters approved constitutional amendments strengthening the presidency. The position of Prime Minister was abolished, thereby bestowing exclusive executive power on Rafsanjani, who was also empowered to appoint ministers with the approval of the Majlis and to take direct control of the economy. Legislative elections held in April/May 1992 strengthened the position of supporters of Rafsanjani's reformist policies of economic liberalization and openness in foreign relations (although Iran's relations with Western countries remained tense). Returned for a second successive 4-year presidential term on 11 June 1993, albeit by a much reduced 63% of the vote, he was barred constitutionally from seeking a third term in the 1997 elections. However, he retained considerable influence through his chairmanship of the Council of Expediency, established in 1989 to arbitrate in the event of a dispute between the Majlis and the Council of Constitutional Guardians.

Later Life

Once out of presidential office, Rafsanjani retained considerable influence in public life through his chairmanship of the Council of Expediency, established in 1989 to arbitrate in the event of a dispute between the Majlis and the Council of Guardians. From 2007–11 he was chairman of the Assembly of Experts, charged with supervising the activities of the Supreme Leader. In May 2013 he registered to contest the presidential election but the electoral watchdog subsequently disbarred him. He died at the age of 82 on 8 Jan. 2017.

Rainier III (Monaco)

Introduction

Prince Rainier III belonged to the Grimaldi family, which has ruled Monaco since 1297 and is one of Europe's oldest royal families. He succeeded to the throne on 9 May 1949 and reigned until his death in April 2005. Since 1911, the prince acts as chief of state and shares power (under the 1962 constitution) with the National Council. Legal power is invested in the prince which he delegates to the courts, to dispense justice in his name.

Early Life

Rainer-Louis-Henri-Maxence-Bertrand De Grimaldi, Monaco's 31st ruler, was born on 31 May 1923 in Monaco. His father, who died on 10 Nov. 1964, Prince Pierre-Marie-Xavier-Antoine-Melchior, Count of Polignac, was named Grimaldi by Order in Council on 18 March 1920. His mother, Princess Charlotte Louise Juliette, Duchess of Valentinois, died on 16 Nov. 1977. Rainier III studied in England, Switzerland and France (University of Montpellier). In 1944 he joined the French army as a foreign serviceman. Following World War II, he continued his studies at the University of Paris. His mother having renounced the throne in 1944, Rainier succeeded his grandfather, Prince Louis II, in 1949. On 18 April 1956 the prince married the American actress Grace Patricia Kelly, who was in Monaco filming the Hitchcock film 'To Catch A Thief'. Princess Grace was killed in a car crash in 1982. The couple had three children, Princess Caroline Louise Marguerite (born on 23 Jan. 1957), Prince Albert Alexandre Louise Pierre, heir to the throne and Marquis of Baux (born on 14 March 1958) and Princess Stéphanie Marie Elisabeth (born on 1 Feb. 1965).

Career Peak

Rainier III reigned for almost 56 years, one of the longest reigns in Monaco's history. He aimed to attract business to the country, relying less on income from tourism and the casino. In 1954 he opened the Monte Carlo television station and in 1961 he founded the International Television Festival. Through land reclamation, he increased the size of Monaco from 150 ha to 195 ha. The prince had a friendly relationship with France, though in Oct. 2000 he announced that Monaco wanted to regain full sovereignty. During his reign Monaco was granted Embassy status. Within the arts, Rainier III established

an award for musical composition and a literary award to French authors. The prince's family had a high profile in Europe and attention often turned to the private lives of his daughters, Caroline and Stephanie.

Rainier's health deteriorated sharply in March 2005 and, after a period of hospitalization, he died on 6 April 2005. He was succeeded by his son, Albert.

Rajapaksa, Mahinda (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

Mahinda Rajapaksa succeeded Chandrika Kumaratunga as the executive president of Sri Lanka in Nov. 2005. A human rights lawyer and former prime minister, he rejected outright the demands of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for an ethnic homeland and sought to crush the Tamil rebellion through military force. He achieved this objective by May 2009 and was re-elected president in Jan. 2010. However, his rule was criticized for its authoritarianism and human rights abuses. Rajapaksa lost presidential elections and resigned as chairman of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) in Jan. 2015.

Early Life

Mahinda Rajapaksa was born on 18 Nov. 1945 in Weeraketiya in the southern district of Hambantota. He was educated at Richmond College, Galle, followed by Nalanda and Thurston Colleges in Colombo. While studying law at Vidyodaya University he joined the centre-left Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and in 1970 was elected as the party's parliamentary representative for Beliatta, Hambantota (a seat held by his father for the SLFP from 1948–65). Having graduated in 1974, Rajapaksa practised as a lawyer specializing in labour law and human rights and received plaudits for his work on behalf of the underprivileged.

Rajapaksa lost his parliamentary seat in the landslide defeat of the SLFP to the United National Party (UNP) in the general election of 1977. The UNP administration liberalized the economy and reduced unemployment but was unable to stem violence. The parliamentary elections in Feb. 1989 (in which Rajapaksa regained his seat) were preceded by terror campaigns by both the LTTE and the banned People's Liberation Front (JVP) in the south. Rajapaksa joined Mangala Samaraweera's 'Mother's Front', a group representing the mothers of those who 'disappeared' in the violence of 1988–89. He served on the central committee of the SLFP from the early 1990s and became an increasingly vocal critic of President Ranasinghe Premadasa's UNP government.

Following narrow victory for the SLFP (as part of the People's Alliance coalition) in the parliamentary elections of 1994, Rajapaksa was appointed minister for labour by President Chandrika Kumaratunga. His attempts to reform labour laws and introduce a workers' charter met with resistance. He was moved to the fisheries ministry, establishing a coast guard service and a university of oceanography. Following defeat for the People's Alliance in elections in Dec. 2001, Rajapaksa became leader of the parliamentary opposition. He forged alliances including, controversially, with the Sinhala-nationalist JVP to form the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). The Alliance won the parliamentary elections that followed Kumaratunga's sacking of the UNP government in Feb. 2004. Kumaratunga then appointed Rajapaksa as prime minister and he was sworn in on 6 April 2004.

Career Peak

Without a commanding parliamentary majority, Rajapaksa's UPFA government struggled to implement its promises to halt privatization, increase wages and create new jobs. It was also criticized for its handling of the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami in Dec. 2004, which killed 31,000 Sri Lankans and displaced nearly half a million.

Rajapaksa was chosen as the SLFP's presidential candidate for the election of Nov. 2005 and narrowly defeated the UNP's Ranil Wickremesinghe. He vowed a tougher approach to dealings with the LTTE, arguing that the 2002 ceasefire agreement had not brought peace, and appointed Ratnasiri Wickremanayake as prime minister. The security situation deteriorated seriously in 2006, and Rajapaksa reiterated his determination to defeat rebel

violence as he revived draconian anti-terrorism legislation that had been suspended in 2002. Further escalation in 2007 of LTTE attacks and retaliatory offensives by state forces on LTTE positions in the north and east culminated in the government's formal abrogation of the 2002 ceasefire in Jan. 2008.

Rajapaksa intensified the military campaign against strategic LTTE positions through 2008, making significant territorial advances. In Jan. 2009 government troops captured Kilinochchi, the rebels' administrative headquarters, and also Elephant Pass linking the Jaffna peninsula with the mainland. Despite international concern over the safety of Tamil civilians trapped in the remaining LTTE-controlled enclave, government forces maintained their offensive (reportedly entering the last rebel-held town in Feb.) until Rajapaksa delivered a victory speech to parliament in May.

Meanwhile, the global financial crisis had a significant negative impact on the economy and in July 2009 the IMF approved a stand-by arrangement equivalent to US\$2.6bn. to support recovery and help rebuild after the civil war.

A bitter breakdown in the relationship between Rajapaksa and his army chief Sarath Fonseka led the latter to resign and challenge the president in the elections in Jan. 2010. Capitalizing on his post-war popularity among the Sinhalese majority population, Rajapaksa was re-elected with almost 58% of the vote. The result was contested by Fonseka, but he was subsequently court-martialled, jailed and politically sidelined following his release in May 2012. In Sept. 2010 parliament endorsed a constitutional amendment allowing Rajapaksa to stand for an unlimited number of presidential terms.

In April 2011 Rajapaksa rejected as biased a United Nations report accusing both sides in the civil war of human rights abuses against civilians, although he did agree in Aug. to allow the expiry of long-standing and contentious state of emergency legislation. The UN Human Rights Council has since pressed the Sri Lankan government to investigate alleged serious violations committed during the final stages of the conflict. Continuing international concerns over the rule of law in Sri Lanka and the Rajapaksa government's response to dissent led India and Canada to boycott the biennial Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Colombo in Nov. 2013.

In Nov. 2014, Rajapaksa called for early elections, which were held in Jan. 2015. He lost to Maithripala Sirisena of the New Democratic Front amid allegations he had misused state funds and resources during the campaign. Sirisena was sworn in on 9 Jan. 2015 following an election mired in violence and controversy. On 15 Jan, Rajapaksa resigned as chairman of the SLFP.

Rajoelina, Andry (Madagascar)

Introduction

Andry Rajoelina assumed the presidency on 21 March 2009. He was installed by the military after the former president, Marc Ravalomanana, ceded power following 3 months of political turmoil. On assuming office Rajoelina suspended parliament and set up a transitional authority to run the country. His mandate was not universally recognized by the international community.

Early Life

Rajoelina was born on 30 May 1974 into the wealthy family of a colonel in the Malagasy army. He rose to prominence as a disc jockey in Antananarivo, before setting up a TV and radio station and running an advertising company. Rajoelina's brash personality earned him the nickname TGV, after the French high-speed train. The initials went on to serve as the acronym for his political movement, Tanora malaGasy Vonona (Young Malagasies Determined). He harnessed his public profile to win the Antananarivo mayoral election in Dec. 2007.

In Dec. 2008 and Jan. 2009 Rajoelina's radio and TV networks were shut down by the government, which accused them of 'inciting civil disobedience'. Rajoelina called a general strike, resulting in widespread disorder. On 17 March Ravalomanana stepped down under pressure from military chiefs who immediately installed Rajoelina as his successor. The African Union (AU) denounced the change of government as a coup and suspended Madagascar's membership. Rajoelina's ascent to power was also condemned by the European Union and the USA.

Career Peak

Aged 34, Rajoelina was the youngest president in Madagascar's history, although the prevailing constitution stipulated that presidential candidates must be at least 40 years of age. At that time he promised a new constitution and elections within 2 years.

On 17 April 2009 Rajoelina issued a warrant for the arrest of Ravalomanana, who was then tried *in absentia* (having fled to South Africa) and sentenced in June to 4 years in prison for abuse of office. In Aug. 2009 a power-sharing agreement, sponsored by international mediators, was signed between the rival Rajoelina and Ravalomanana political camps with the aim of establishing a transitional unity government. However, continued disputes prevented its effective implementation and in Dec. 2009 Rajoelina announced that he was abandoning the agreement. This prompted the AU to impose targeted sanctions against his administration in March 2010. Then, in Aug., a court sentenced Ravalomanana *in absentia* to life imprisonment for conspiracy to commit murder.

A referendum on a new constitution took place in Nov. 2010. The referendum was boycotted by the main opposition parties, which regarded the revision as an illegal attempt to consolidate Rajoelina's hold on power by lowering the age requirement for the presidency from 40 to 35. 74% of participants voted in favour. At the same time, an attempted coup against Rajoelina failed as loyal troops arrested a group of dissident army officers.

In Nov. 2011 a transitional cross-party administration took office pending fresh elections. Despite promising not to run for election as part of an agreement between the transitional government and ousted president Marc Ravalomanana, Rajoelina announced his candidacy for president in May 2013. However, in light of pressure from the African Union and the suspension of electoral funding from the European Union, neither Rajoelina nor Marc Ravalomanana ultimately contested the presidency in elections held in Oct. and Dec. 2013.

On 25 Jan. 2014 Rajoelina was replaced as head of state by former minister of finance, Hery Rajaonarimampianina, who had won the presidential run-off a month earlier.

Rajoy, Mariano (Spain)

Introduction

A veteran of the conservative Popular Party (PP), Mariano Rajoy became prime minister in 2011 during a period of financial crisis. He implemented sweeping economic reforms and committed his government to accepting austere deficit reduction targets set by the European Union. In Oct. 2016, following two inconclusive parliamentary elections, he was reconfirmed as prime minister at the head of a new minority coalition government.

Early Life

Mariano Rajoy was born on 27 March 1955 in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia. In 1978 he graduated in law from Santiago de Compostela University before working in the civil service as a property registrar from 1979–81. His political career began in 1981 when he won a seat in the newly inaugurated Galician parliament, representing the conservative People's Alliance (AP).

He served as regional minister of institutional relations from 1982–86 and as president of Pontevedra council from 1986–91. He was elected to Spain's national parliament in June 1986, serving briefly as a deputy before resigning to return to the Galician parliament in Nov. 1986, where he served as vice-president until Sept. 1987. In 1989 the AP merged with other parties to form the PP, with Rajoy appointed to its national executive committee.

He won re-election to parliament in 1993 and was minister of public administration in José María Aznar's government from 1996–99, before serving as minister of culture until 2000. After the PP retained power at the 2000 election, Rajoy was appointed deputy prime minister. From 2001–02 he served as minister of the interior and in 2004 fought the general election as party leader-designate. However, the PP unexpectedly lost to the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) in the aftermath of the train bombings in Madrid that the PP government had wrongly blamed on the Basque separatist group ETA.

Rajoy took over as party leader in Oct. 2004 and fought the 2008 election on a platform of liberal economic policies and social conservatism, including restrictions on immigration and opposition to further regional devolution. Although the DP gained seats, it narrowly failed to secure a majority.

As Spain struggled with recession and high unemployment, Rajoy adopted more moderate positions on social and cultural matters while calling for budget cuts. In the 2011 election campaign he committed his party to the ambitious deficit reduction targets set by the EU, balanced against promises to boost growth. In Nov. 2011 the PP won a decisive election victory, claiming 45% of the vote and 186 of 350 parliamentary seats.

Career Peak

Rajoy took office on 21 Dec. 2011 and in an effort to meet deficit reduction targets applied swingeing spending cuts, along with increases in income and property taxes and tax breaks for companies hiring staff. While his parliamentary majority allowed him to pass his reforms, maintaining public support for austerity proved a major challenge. In June 2012 his administration had to seek approval from its eurozone partners to access emergency financial assistance in order to bail out the ailing banking sector, while a number of heavily-indebted regional governments applied for rescue funds from the central government. However, Spain emerged from recession in the third quarter of 2013 amid signs of returning investor confidence.

Despite winning the Dec. 2015 election Rajoy's PP fell far short of securing a parliamentary majority. After lengthy attempts by all the main parties failed to render a workable coalition, King Felipe formally acknowledged that the negotiating process was deadlocked by April 2016. Rajoy consequently remained in office in a caretaker capacity, with new elections scheduled for 26 June 2016. Again, no party was able to secure a majority and Rajoy continued as acting prime minister. He was eventually confirmed as prime minister on 29 Oct. 2016 with parliament voting in favour of his new coalition government by 170 votes to 111. The PSOE elected to abstain from the vote in order to avoid a third election.

In addition to simmering diplomatic friction with the United Kingdom over the issue of sovereignty over Gibraltar, Rajoy has had to contend with sustained pressure from Catalan separatists that has generated a constitutional crisis. In Nov. 2014 the Madrid government had refused to acknowledge a majority referendum vote in Catalonia in favour of secession. Then in Oct. 2017, following another unauthorized referendum, Catalonia's parliament approved a unilateral declaration of independence, in response to which Rajoy imposed direct rule by Madrid and called a regional election for Dec. Pro-independence parties won a majority of seats in the poll, further aggravating the secession issue.

Meanwhile, in Nov. 2012 Rajoy's government had rejected an offer from the Basque separatist group ETA to enter talks with Spain and France on a definitive end to its operations, stating that it would not negotiate with a terrorist organization. Nevertheless, in April 2017 ETA effectively ended its 50-year campaign as it surrendered its arms caches to the French authorities.

In Aug. 2017, two Islamist terror attacks in Barcelona and the nearby town of Cambrils killed 14 people and injured more than 100.

After several PP members were convicted of corruption in May 2018, Rajoy lost a motion of no confidence supported by PSOE leader Pedro Sánchez. In accordance with the constitution Sánchez replaced him as prime minister and was sworn in on 2 June 2018.

Rákosi, Mátyás (Hungary)

Introduction

Mátyás Rákosi was leader of the Hungarian Communists between 1945 and 1956, serving two terms as prime minister (1952–53, 1955–56). A staunch Stalinist, his reign relied on inducing terror and systematically plotting against his ideological enemies. His policies of forced agricultural collectivization and industrialization made little concession to the practical needs of the country and proved economically disastrous. Following the death of Stalin his support within Moscow dwindled and he was ultimately removed from power as a conciliatory gesture by the Soviet Union towards Yugoslavia's General Tito, with whom he had had a number of disputes.

Early Life

Rákosi (whose surname at birth was Rosenkrantz) was born on 14 March 1892 in Ada, Serbia into a well-to-do Jewish family. The family moved to Hungary when Rákosi was still young and he proved a notable student while being schooled in Budapest, learning 8 languages. Politically, he leaned towards a Social Democratic ideology and in the years before the outbreak of World War I he moved to Britain and worked in London as a banker.

In 1914 he was called into the Austro-Hungarian Army and while fighting on the Eastern Front he was captured by the Russians. He was released in 1918, by which time he had become an adherent of communist ideology. In 1919 Béla Kun established himself as head of the short-lived and ill-fated Soviet Republic of Hungary. Rákosi served in the Kun government as Commissar for Socialist Production, before the regime fell after defeat by Romanian troops.

Rákosi fled to Moscow and worked for Comintern before returning to Hungary in 1924 to assist in the expansion of the Hungarian communist movement. He was imprisoned in 1925 for his activities, freed in 1934 but immediately re-arrested and imprisoned for life. In 1940 he was given permission to leave the country in a deal that saw the Soviet Union return a number of nineteenth century Hungarian flags, and he went once again to Moscow. Four years later he re-entered Hungary and, with the support of Soviet troops, became Secretary of the Communist Hungarian Workers' Party.

After general elections in 1947 which were widely believed to have been fraudulent, Rákosi set about consolidating power. By 1949 Hungary was a 1-party state and a new constitution was promulgated establishing the Hungarian People's Republic. Rákosi exercised ruthlessness in his rule, assisted by the feared Secret Police (AVO), and executed or imprisoned large numbers of his opponents, including the nationalist László Rajk. Both religious and secular institutions were purged of potential dissenters, industries were nationalized, agricultural collectivization enforced and freedom of expression severely curbed. In 1949 the country also joined the Moscow-oriented Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

Career Peak

While to all intents and purposes he was Hungarian leader in his capacity as Party Secretary, he became Prime Minister in 1952. By this time the economy was in severe trouble and when Stalin died the following year, Rákosi came under intense criticism from the new regime in Moscow, notably from Prime Minister Georgy Malenkov. He was replaced by Imre Nagy, who set about reversing many of Rákosi's reforms as well as relaxing restrictions on civil liberties.

Rákosi, however, had retained his position as Party Secretary and, with the Soviet Union becoming ever more concerned at the pace of Nagy's reforms, he was perfectly placed to move against Nagy. Malenkov fell from power in Feb. 1955 and Nagy was forced to resign his position, with Rákosi once again taking the reins of power. He embarked on another programme of Stalinist policies but in July 1956, in a Soviet attempt to appease the non-conformist General Tito in Yugoslavia with whom Rákosi had an on-going dispute, Rákosi was again removed from power at the instigation of Moscow. He was replaced by his deputy, Erno Gero.

Later Life

Under Gero, dissent grew throughout Hungary and culminated in the uprising of Oct. 1956, during which Nagy returned to power. Rákosi fled to the Soviet Union, ostensibly for health reasons, and was officially removed from the Hungarian party in 1962. He never ventured back to Hungary and he died on 5 Feb. 1971 at Gorky in the Soviet Union.

Ramgoolam, Navin (Mauritius)

Introduction

Navin Ramgoolam served two terms as prime minister from Dec. 1995 to Sept. 2000, and July 2005 to Dec. 2014.

Early Life

Navin Ramgoolam was born in Mauritius on 14 July 1947, the son of Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the country's first president following independence in 1968. The younger Ramgoolam studied sciences at the Royal College at Curepipe in Mauritius before moving to Dublin, Ireland to train as a doctor at the Royal College of Surgeons in 1968. He gained full registration with the UK General Medical Council in 1977. Over the next 10 years he worked as a senior medical officer and as a general practitioner in Mauritius, also holding the post of resident medical officer at the Yorkshire Clinic in the UK.

In 1987 Ramgoolam abandoned medicine to study for a master's degree in law at the London School of Economics. However, he subsequently abandoned a legal career in favour of politics, becoming leader of the Mauritius Labour Party in 1991. He went on to succeed Sir Anerood Jugnauth as prime minister in 1995.

Career Peak

In 2000, towards the end of Ramgoolam's first period in office, Mauritius secured a temporary seat on the United Nations Security Council. Having lost the premiership to his predecessor, Jugnauth, at elections later that year, he then formed the Social Alliance, a coalition led by the Mauritian Labour Party and including the Mauritian Party of Xavier-Luc Duval, the Mauritian Social Democrat Party, the Greens, the Republican Movement and the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM).

At the election of July 2005 the Social Alliance won 42 of a possible 70 seats, giving Ramgoolam a further term as prime minister. On coming to power he announced plans to tackle rising inflation and high levels of unemployment, and sought trade agreements to protect Mauritian exports, particularly sugar and textiles. By 2008 he had overseen a reduction in both unemployment and the budget deficit and the attraction of increasing levels of foreign investment. However, as Mauritius imports most of its food and energy, rising world prices for these commodities then pushed up inflation while recession in the developed world has posed a threat to the country's tourism industry and export potential. Nevertheless, Ramgoolam's ruling coalition won the May 2010 parliamentary election, maintaining a secure majority until Aug. 2011 when the MSM withdrew, citing disagreements with the Mauritius Labour Party. In March 2012 the state president, Sir Anerood Jugnauth of the MSM, similarly resigned from office, being replaced following elections in July by Rajkeswur Purryag.

In Nov. 2013 Ramgoolam boycotted the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in response to claims of human rights violations by President Mahinda Rajapaksa's administration against the Tamil minority population in that country.

The Alliance of Unity and Modernity led by Ramgoolam was soundly beaten by the Alliance Lepep at the Dec. 2014 general elections. After losing his own seat in the National Assembly, Ramgoolam conceded defeat and was succeeded by veteran politician Sir Anerood Jugnauth, who had served as prime minister twice before.

Ramgoolam, Seewoosagur (Mauritius)

Introduction

Doctor and politician, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam was instrumental in securing Mauritian independence. Premier from 1964–82 representing the Parti Travailleiste (Labour Party; PT), he administered his country's transition to independence in 1968. During his premiership he implemented labour, education, health and welfare reforms.

Early Life

Seewoosagur Ramgoolam was born on the 18 Sept. 1900 at Belle Rive Village, Flacq District, to an immigrant Indian labourer. His early education concentrated on Indian culture and philosophy and the Hindi language. After studying with English tutors at the Royal College, Curepipe, and 3 months in the civil service, in 1921 he went to study medicine at University College Hospital, London. Politically aware as a student, he formed pro-independence ideas. He worked with the Indian National Congress' London office, becoming its president in 1924. The shaping of his political ideas was influenced by

mixing with London based Fabian socialists. After the completion of his studies in the 1930s, he went back to Mauritius to set up a medical practice in Port-Louis. Ramgoolam was involved with the PT from its establishment in 1936.

In 1940 he founded the newspaper *Advance* to campaign for independence and social reform. Nominated for the Legislative Council in 1948, he won concessions on self-rule. Ramgoolam became the head of the PT in 1956. Generally considered a Hindu party by the Franco-Mauritian and Creole communities, Ramgoolam attempted to widen the party's support network throughout all Mauritian society. Two years later he was made mayor of Port-Louis.

The first elections under universal suffrage were held in 1959. The PT won a majority of seats and Ramgoolam became the leader of the house and finance minister. In 1961 he became chief minister in the first phase of self-government.

Career Peak

In the 1963 general elections were successful for the PT and Ramgoolam became premier the following year. For the next few years he fought for complete independence from Britain. In 1967 independence was supported by 54% of the electorate and was granted on 12 March 1968. Ramgoolam became the first prime minister of independent Mauritius representing a PT-led coalition government.

Ramgoolam strived to promote democracy and economic growth and fought to relieve ethnic tensions within Mauritian politics. His reforms included lowering the age of suffrage to 18 and granting free education on all levels.

In 1975 Mauritius was devastated by a cyclone, badly affecting the sugar plantations upon which the economy was reliant. Thereafter the government embarked on a policy of agricultural diversification. He was awarded the UN Human Rights Award in 1973 and served as OAU chairman between 1976–77, the first non-African to do so.

Throughout the 1970s a new branch of militant socialism was being fostered by a group of young politicians who had formed the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) in 1969. Strongly influenced by the Marxist revolutionary feeling sweeping the world in 1968, they recruited the support of the trade unions. Several strikes occurred over the next decade as the MMM gained ground. The government reacted by imposing a state of emergency in 1971, only reprieved in 1978. In 1982 elections, the PT was overwhelmingly defeated by the MMM and Ramgoolam was replaced by Anerood Jugnauth.

Later Life

In 1983 Ramgoolam took the largely ceremonial position of governor-general. He died at the age of 85 in Dec. 1985.

Ramos, Fidel (Philippines)

Introduction

Fidel (Steady Eddie) Valdez Ramos was president of the Philippines between 1992 and 1998. A relative of Ferdinand Marcos, he had prominent roles in the Marcos administrations before offering his support to Corazon Aquino after the disputed 1986 elections.

Early Life

Fidel Ramos was born in Lingayen, Pangasinan on 18 March 1928. His father was Narciso Ramos (a lawyer, journalist and secretary of foreign affairs under Marcos) and Angela Marcos Valdez. He was second cousin to Ferdinand Marcos. Educated in Lingayen, Manila and then at the US Military Academy, West Point, Ramos went to the University of Illinois where he graduated in civil engineering in 1951.

After joining the Philippine army Ramos served in Korea with the Philippine expeditionary force and in Vietnam where he rose from chief of staff of the Philippine civic action group to presidential assistant on military affairs. In 1972 Ramos became chief of the Philippine constabulary. As chief of staff Ramos was responsible for detaining many opposition leaders in during the years of martial law.

After the fraudulent re-election of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 Ramos and the defence secretary, Juan Ponce Enrile, stood firmly behind Corazon Aquino, widow of the assassinated Benigno Aquino Jr. This action did much to inspire the EDSA revolution that overthrew the Marcos regime. Ramos remained secretary of national defence in the Aquino cabinet.

Career Peak

In May 1992 Ramos was elected 8th president of the Third Republic of the Philippines, succeeding Corazon Aquino, as her nominated choice, in a seven-candidate race.

Ramos implemented several radical reforms during his tenure. He confronted police corruption, removing large numbers of officers, and improved relations with leading communist and Muslim dissident groups. He also advocated use of contraceptives in a bid to halt the country's spiralling population growth. Economically, he promoted deregulation and campaigned against several monopolies and corrupt business practices. The economy grew rapidly throughout the mid-1990s and suffered less than many of its counterparts during the Asian economic downturn of 1998. In March 1997 the Supreme Court rejected calls to allow Ramos to amend the post-Marcos constitution to give him an extended presidential term.

Ramos-Horta, José (Timor-Leste)

Introduction

José Ramos-Horta, a key figure in Timor-Leste's struggle for independence for over 30 years, became president after a landslide victory in the second round of presidential elections in May 2007 but was defeated at the presidential poll of 2012.

Early Life

Ramos-Horta was born on 26 Dec. 1949 in Dili to a Timorese mother and a Portuguese father who was a political exile. In 1969 he became a journalist but was exiled to Mozambique from 1970–71 for his political activities. As Portugal began pulling out of Timor-Leste in 1975, Ramos-Horta, a member of FRETILIN, emerged as a key figure in the nationalist leadership. On 28 Nov. 1975 FRETILIN proclaimed independence and appointed him foreign minister. Three days before Indonesia's invasion on 7 Dec. 1975 he pleaded the Timorese case before the United Nations in New York.

Stranded in exile, he was nevertheless FRETILIN's permanent representative at the UN from 1977–85. He also studied at The Hague Academy of International Law, the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg and Antioch University in Ohio. In 1996 Ramos-Horta and Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize for their commitment to the East Timorese struggle for independence.

Following Indonesia's agreement to a referendum on Timor-Leste's status, Ramos-Horta returned home in Dec. 1999. After independence in May 2002 he served as foreign minister (to July 2006) and then prime minister before winning the presidency in May 2007.

Career Peak

The presidential role is largely ceremonial, but Ramos-Horta pledged to work on reform and national reconciliation with the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction-led government. He was seriously wounded in an attack by rebel soldiers in Feb. 2008 but, following treatment in Australia, returned to Dili 2 months later to resume his presidency. In the first round of the presidential election on 17 March 2012, Ramos-Horta came third and was eliminated. Following the run-off on 16 April he was succeeded as president by Taur Matan Ruak on 20 May.

Later Life

From Jan. 2013–July 2014 Ramos-Horta served as then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's special representative to Guinea-Bissau. He was named as counsellor for national security in Timor-Leste's new government that took office in Sept. 2017.

Ramotar, Donald (Guyana)

Introduction

Donald Ramotar became president in Dec. 2011, succeeding Bharrat Jagdeo. An economist, Ramotar has spent most of his career working within the socialist People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), whose support base is the Indo-Guyanese community. The party had been in power since 1992 but lost its overall parliamentary majority for the first time at the Nov. 2011 elections. Ramotar then lost the May 2015 presidential election to David Granger.

Early Life

Donald Rabindranauth Ramotar was born on 22 Oct. 1950 in Guyana's Essequibo-West Demerara province. He was at school in Georgetown and graduated in economics from the University of Guyana before taking a master's degree at the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow.

Returning to Guyana, he worked in the timber industry and, from 1966, the Guyana Import-Export Company, a commercial venture under the opposition PPP/C. Between 1975 and 1983 Ramotar was the manager of Freedom House, the Georgetown headquarters of the PPP/C, before becoming the editor of a journal, *Problems of Peace and Socialism*.

He served as international secretary of the Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU) between 1988 and 1993, when he assumed the role of PPP/C executive secretary. The party had been restored to power in Oct. 1992 under Cheddi Jagan. Following President Jagan's death in March 1997, Ramotar replaced him as party general secretary, a post he still holds. Janet Jagan led the PPP/C to victory in the Dec. 1997 elections although she was forced to retire through ill-health in 1999 and was succeeded by Bharrat Jagdeo.

Ramotar has served on the Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP)-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and on several corporate boards. In April 2011 he was selected as the PPP/C's presidential candidate. Later that month he was appointed political adviser to President Jagdeo, a move criticized by the opposition A Partnership for National Unity (APNU).

Ramotar emerged victorious in the election on 28 Nov. 2011 and his PPP/C took 32 seats in parliament (compared with 26 for APNU) to form a minority administration, the first since independence in 1966.

Career Peak

Ramotar was sworn in as president on 3 Dec. 2011. He pledged to build on the achievements of the previous administration, developing the country's infrastructure and raising competitiveness while reducing poverty within a programme agreed with international financial institutions. While Ramotar called for unity, Guyana's politics remained divided on ethnic lines and relations between the two main parties were frequently hostile. In Nov. 2014 he discontinued the National Assembly session to avert a no-confidence vote that the opposition majority in the legislature likened to a constitutional coup and a denial of democracy.

At the May 2015 general election, Ramotar was defeated by David Granger of the National Unity and Alliance for Change (APNU+AFC) coalition. Granger was sworn in as president on 16 May.

Rasizade, Artur (Azerbaijan)

Introduction

Artur Rasizade, an oil engineer-turned-politician, has been prime minister since 1996. He was appointed by President Heidar Aliyev and has served under his son, Ilham Aliyev, since Oct. 2003.

Early Life

Artur Tahir oglu Rasizade was born on 26 Feb. 1935 in Gandja in the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Educated at the Azerbaijan Institute of Industry in Baku, Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, Rasizade began work as an engineer at the Institute of Oil Machine Construction in 1957. He served as chief engineer at Trust Soyuzneftemash from 1973–77, before taking the post of deputy head of the Azerbaijan state planning committee.

In 1986, after 5 years as bureau chief of the central committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, Rasizade became first deputy prime minister under Kamran Baghirov, who had been widely blamed for the Republic's economic stagnation and the escalating tension with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh (now Artsakh).

Following the break-up of the Soviet Union and Azerbaijan's declaration of independence in Aug. 1991, Rasizade became an adviser to the foundation for economic reforms. He served as an assistant to President Heidar Aliyev in early 1996 and was then appointed first deputy prime minister. He was appointed prime minister when Fuad Kuliev resigned following accusations by Aliyev of economic mismanagement. The National Assembly endorsed Rasizade's appointment and he took office on 26 Dec. 1996.

Career Peak

Heidar Aliyev won the presidential election in Oct. 1998 and retained Rasizade (a fellow member of the New Azerbaijan Party) as prime minister until 4 Aug. 2003, when the premier unexpectedly resigned. Rasizade's departure, ostensibly for health reasons, paved the way for Ilham Aliyev to assume office. Ilham Aliyev contested the presidential election of 15 Oct. 2003 and emerged victorious, although the opposition staged mass protests, alleging intimidation and fraud. On 4 Nov. 2003 Rasizade was formally reinstated as prime minister. He was reappointed in Oct. 2008, following Aliyev's first re-election as president, and again in Oct. 2013. He was replaced as prime minister by Novruz Mammadov in April 2018.

Rasmussen, Poul Nyrup (Denmark)

Introduction

Poul Nyrup Rasmussen served as the leader of the Social Democratic Party from 1992–2002 and was Denmark's prime minister between 1993–2001. He tried to convince the Danish electorate of the value of European integration, and in particular the need for entry into the single currency.

Early Life

Poul Nyrup Rasmussen was born in Esbjerg on 15 June, 1943. He read economics at the University of Copenhagen and received his degree in 1971. From 1971–80 he worked as an economist for the Danish Trade Union Council. In 1980 he became the Council's chief economist and held this post until 1986 when he was appointed as the managing director of the Employees' Capital Pension Fund and chairman of Lalandia Investment. The following year he began his political career as the deputy chairman of the Social Democrats. Rasmussen was first elected as a member of parliament in 1988 and was chosen to chair the parliamentary committee on commerce, industry and shipping. He served on this committee until 1991 when he became a member of the parliamentary Labour Market Committee and the Political-Economic Committee. In 1992 he was elected as the chairman of the Social Democrats. In late 1992 the Ministry of Justice was implicated in preventing a group of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka entering the country. This scandal toppled the conservative Schlüter government on 14 Jan. 1993 and triggered a general election. Rasmussen campaigned for increased expenditure on welfare provisions and for the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. An SDP and Radical Liberal (RV) coalition won a slim majority and Rasmussen became prime minister.

Career Peak

Rasmussen's first major duty as prime minister was to convince the electorate, and many members of his own party to adopt the Maastricht Treaty on

European integration. In 1993 the treaty had been rejected in a referendum, but voters overwhelmingly approved a revised version which included exemptions for Denmark.

In the 1998 elections the SDP-RV coalition retained office by the narrowest of margins and Rasmussen was forced to compromise with his opponents in his efforts to promote the single currency and a liberal immigration policy. He was assisted by the performance of the Danish economy under his premiership: from 1993 GDP grew by an average 3% a year, and unemployment fell from 12.4% in 1993 to about 7.4% in 1998. The government budget went into surplus for the first time in 10 years.

In spite of the SDP's vigorous 'Best for Denmark' campaign to persuade Danes to adopt the single currency the electorate rejected the euro, by 53% to 47% in Sept. 2000. This was a critical blow for Rasmussen. However, following the events of 11 Sept. 2001 his popularity rating increased. He called snap elections for Nov. 2001 but in a campaign dominated by immigration, a popular anti-immigration stance by Venstre shifted the balance in favour of the opposition. Rasmussen was defeated by Venstre party leader Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

Ratsiraka, Didier (Madagascar)

Introduction

Ratsiraka was president of Madagascar representing AREMA (The Pillar and Structure for the Salvation of Madagascar Party) between 1997 and 2002. He was previously leader between 1975–93, coming to power following the assassination of his predecessor, Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava, during a period of military rule and political instability. In his autocratic and repressive leadership, he implemented a scheme of leftist policies including nationalization while furthering ties with Communist countries until economic crisis forced him to adopt free market policies. Defeated in 1993, he returned to power in 1997 but was forced out of power in 2002 after disputed elections.

Early Life

A *côtier* (from the coast), Didier Ratsiraka was born on the 4 Nov. 1936 in the province of Tamatave. After his secondary schooling in Tananarive, he studied mathematics. He embarked on a military career as lieutenant commander in the Malagasy navy following training at the Brest naval academy. He was military attaché to the Malagasy embassy in Paris and later became minister of foreign affairs.

Career Peak

Following the assassination of Colonial Ratsimandrava after 6 days in control, Ratsiraka took power of the revolutionary council amid a climate of violent political instability which had forced martial law, press censorship and the suspension of political parties. After a referendum held in Dec. 1975 he was confirmed president of the newly established Democratic Republic of Madagascar as leader of the military Conseil Suprême de la Révolution (Supreme Revolutionary Council; CSR).

He continued the leftist reforms instigated by Ratsimandrava's predecessor, General Gabriel Ramanantsoa. A programme of nationalization included shipping and petroleum industries, mineral resources and the financial sector. He advocated the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean and adopted a foreign policy of non-alignment. He was re-elected in the Nov. 1983 presidential election with 80% of votes. Economic crisis forced Ratsiraka to adopt IMF austerity measures and eventually to implement a free market economy. He was re-elected for a third consecutive term in 1989 with 62%. However these results were contested and riots followed. In March 1990 the government formally assented to the resumption of multi-party politics and ended press censorship and the state monopoly of the media.

Despite these advances, the new climate allowed Ratsiraka's political opponents to gain ground. An alliance of opposition factions united the same year under the Forces Vives (Live Forces; FV). They were soon calling for Ratsiraka's resignation. In July 1991, he declared a state of emergency, and soon after dissolved his government. Following shootings during a peaceful protest at his residence, he resigned and was offered asylum by the French

government. In Oct. 1991 the constitution was suspended and Ratsiraka relinquished all executive powers, although he remained politically active.

A new constitution was approved in Aug. 1992 to pave the way for elections the following year. Having returned from exile, Ratsiraka contested the election against the Union Nationale pour le Développement et la Démocratie leader Albert Zafy. The latter took the presidency, but Ratsiraka returned to power 3 years later, albeit with less than 25% of votes (remaining votes being spoilt or counted as abstentions). He went to Washington, Paris and Brussels to strengthen relations and secure aid. In the 1998 national assembly elections, he was again re-elected and his government won a majority. However, at the presidential elections of May 2002 his opponent, Marc Ravalomanana, was declared president. Ratsiraka rejected the result but several regions under his control were taken by troops loyal to the new president. In June 2002 Ratsiraka fled to the Seychelles.

Later Life

In Aug. 2003 Ratsiraka was sentenced *in absentia* to 10 years hard labour on charges of stealing US\$8 m. of public money before going into exile. He was also declared unfit for public office.

Rau, Johannes (Germany)

Introduction

Johannes Rau was president of Germany from July 1999 to June 2004. Best-known as the moderate Social Democrat premier of North-Rhine Westphalia from 1978–98, he stood unsuccessfully for the chancellorship in 1987 and the presidency in 1994. His duties as president were largely ceremonial.

Early Life

Johannes Rau was born on 16 Jan. 1931 in Wuppertal-Barmen. His father was a Protestant preacher. Rau left school in 1949 and undertook a career in publishing and journalism, specializing in publishing Protestant literature. In 1952 he joined the All-German People's Party. In 1957 the party disbanded and he joined the Social Democratic Party (SPD). During this period he developed a close working relationship with Gustav Heinemann who served as German president (1969–74). Heinemann's granddaughter, Christine Delius, became Rau's wife in 1982.

In 1958 Rau was appointed president chairman of the Young Socialists in Wuppertal and gained a seat in the North-Rhine Westphalia parliament. He joined the Wuppertal SPD executive board the following year, became a city councillor in 1964 and mayor of Wuppertal from 1969–70. In 1970 he was made minister of science and education for North-Rhine Westphalia, in which post he opened several new higher education institutions.

In 1977 he won the chairmanship of his regional party and the following year successfully stood for the premiership of North-Rhine Westphalia. He oversaw victory at the 1980 regional elections, the first time the SPD had achieved an absolute majority in the *Länd*. Further election victories followed in 1985, 1990 and 1995.

In 1982 he became deputy chairman of the federal SPD and in 1987 ran for the chancellorship, although he was heavily defeated by Helmut Kohl. In elections for the 1994 presidency he lost to Roman Herzog. On 23 May 1999 Rau was selected as Herzog's successor, and took his oath of office in Bonn on 1 July.

Career Peak

After almost 50 years of active political life, Rau was recognized as an important figurehead. He was renowned for his highly personalized style of oratory. He was strongly associated with his motto 'to reconcile, not divide' and he worked to achieve reconciliation with the Jewish community. In 2000 Rau became the first German head of state since the holocaust to address the Israeli parliament in German. The controversial move won praise from the Israeli president, who applauded Rau for trying to bridge the gap between the two countries.

Rau left office in June 2004 and was succeeded as president by Horst Köhler on 1 July 2004.

Later Life

After leaving politics Rau divided his time between family homes in Berlin and Wuppertal. He had a long history of heart disease and after an extended period of illness, he died on 27 Jan. 2006, aged 75. He is survived by his wife and their three children.

Ravalomanana, Marc (Madagascar)

Introduction

Marc Ravalomanana became president in May 2002 following disputed presidential elections held in Dec. 2001. Having accused incumbent Didier Ratsiraka of rigging the vote that saw neither man achieve the necessary majority to take office, there followed several months of political and social unrest before Ratsiraka went into exile. Having secured international recognition, Ravalomanana's principal task was to lead an economic recovery. He won a second 5-year presidential term in elections in Dec. 2006 but was forced out of office in 2009. He resigned on 17 March.

Early Life

Ravalomanana was born on 12 Dec. 1949 as a member of the Merina ethnic group in Imerikasina, a village outside the capital city, Antananarivo. He was educated at a protestant school in Sweden but finished his academic pursuits in his early twenties to set up a yoghurt manufacturing operation in Antananarivo. Having secured World Bank funding for expansion, his company grew to claim a monopoly of Madagascar's dairy and oil products and to become the biggest locally-owned company in the country.

In 1999 Ravalomanana was elected mayor of Antananarivo and set about a programme of urban redevelopment. Recognized for his dynamism, several of his schemes were also controversial, such as when he ordered the destruction of a hundred habitations on aesthetic grounds. When the first round of presidential elections were held in Dec. 2001, neither Ravalomanana nor incumbent President Didier Ratsiraka gained the required 50% plus one vote needed to take office.

Career Peak

A run-off was set to take place in late Feb. 2002 but Ravalomanana accused his opponent of electoral corruption and claimed that he had won 52% of the vote outright. Ravalomanana's supporters took part in mass protests and declared a general strike. In response, Ratsiraka's supporters blockaded the capital. It was estimated that the strike was costing the already impoverished nation US\$14 m. per day. An international mediation team, including the secretary of the Organization of African Unity (as was), brokered a deal that saw the run-off postponed. However, on 22 Feb. Ravalomanana declared himself president. Ratsiraka set up a rival government in Tamatave, a port city on the east coast. There followed a suspension from the Organization of African Unity, which claimed the transfer of power from Ratsiraka to Ravalomanana was unconstitutional.

On 29 April the High Constitutional Court ruled that Ravalomanana had indeed won the election and he formally took office on 6 May 2002. Fighting continued between the two camps throughout the country, resulting in extensive casualties. Ravalomanana gradually gained the upper hand and secured international recognition, first from the USA and later from France, the former colonial power and chief trading partner. Having lost control of what had been his provincial heartlands, Ratsiraka went into exile in July 2002. In Feb. 2003 a former head of the armed services was charged with an attempted coup. Six months later Ratsiraka was sentenced *in absentia* to 10 years hard labour for embezzlement. In Dec. 2003 former prime minister Tantely Adrianarivo was given 12 years for corruption.

The months of instability following the election had severely weakened what was already a failing economy. Parliamentary elections were held in Dec. 2002 and the strong showing of Ravalomanana's I Love Madagascar party was seen as a reassertion of popular support for the president, who continued to implement free market reforms, provide free primary education for all and oversee improvements in the medical and transport infrastructures. The economy was further hit when two cyclones wreaked havoc and left many thousands homeless in Feb. and March 2004, but received a boost in

Oct. 2004 when the World Bank and IMF announced that US\$2 bn. of Madagascar's debt was to be written off. In March 2005 Madagascar became one of the first beneficiaries of a new US development aid scheme designed to reward nations promoting democratic and free market principles.

A coup attempt by a dissident military officer in Nov. 2006 was suppressed, and in Dec. Ravalomanana was re-elected president with 55% of the vote. For his second term in office he introduced an action plan to reduce poverty and promote development. In April 2007 constitutional reforms increasing his presidential powers were endorsed in a national referendum, and in Sept. his party won an overwhelming majority of seats in parliamentary elections, albeit in a low voter turnout.

In Feb. 2008 the government was confronted by the devastating effects of one of the largest tropical cyclones to strike Madagascar. Nearly 100 people were killed and over 300,000 made homeless.

Violent protests erupted in Jan. 2009 following the closure of opposition radio and television stations and again in Feb. when Ravalomanana sacked opposition leader Andry Rajoelina as mayor of Antananarivo. Ravalomanana resigned on 17 March after he lost the support of the military and went into exile in South Africa. In June he was sentenced to a four-year jail term *in absentia* on corruption charges and fined US\$70 m. to make amends for having purchased a jet for US\$60 m. in Dec. 2008. He signed a power-sharing agreement with Rajoelina and other party leaders in Nov. 2009 but attempts to found a transitional coalition government have yet to be successful.

Rawlings, Jerry John (Ghana)

Introduction

Jerry John Rawlings held power for three and a half months in 1979 and from Dec. 1981 to Dec. 2000. On both occasions he seized power in a military coup. From 1992 he held the position of elected president. Credited with some free market reforms and overseeing a period of relative internal peace, his human rights record is less impressive.

Early Life

Jerry John Rawlings was born on 22 June 1947 in Accra, Ghana. His father was a pharmacist from Scotland and his mother was Ghanaian. Having graduated from the military academy at Teshie, he joined the air force in 1969, reaching the rank of flight-lieutenant. In May 1979 he was charged with leading a mutiny but, having outlined the social injustices which he claimed inspired the mutiny, he escaped custody during a court appearance in June. With large-scale support from the armed forces, he overthrew the ruling supreme military council and headed a new ruling armed forces revolutionary council.

In office for 112 days, he set about removing officials he considered corrupt, executing eight people and imprisoning many more. Elections were held in July 1979 and Rawlings handed power over to the victor, Hilla Limann, in Sept. 1979. Shortly afterwards Limann retired Rawlings from the military. Limann's government was unsuccessful in combating Ghana's hyper-inflation and large foreign debts. In Dec. 1981 Rawlings removed Limann in a coup, naming himself head of the provisional national defence council.

Career Peak

Initially basing government on his Marxist ideology, Rawlings set up workers' councils to supervise industry and established localized workers' defence committees. When these measures failed to make any significant impact on the economy he adopted a more pragmatic approach. He authorized the devaluation of the currency, cut public spending, subsidies and price controls, and privatized several industries, including the coffee and cocoa sectors. Having earlier looked to the USSR for support, Rawlings' free market initiatives won praise from the IMF and significant aid and foreign investment. By the early-1990s, after Rawlings had survived several attempted coups, the economy was more stable.

Rawlings was a charismatic populist, once declaring that 'I don't know any law and I don't understand economics, but I know when my stomach is empty.' He was accused of civil rights abuses, including the illegal

imprisonment and murder of political opponents. In 1992 he established the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and ran for the presidency, winning 58% of the vote. He won re-election in 1996 despite claims from the opposition New Patriotic Party that the election was flawed. During the 1990s he imposed curfews in the north of the country in a bid to curb ethnic violence.

In foreign policy Rawlings retained the favour of many early allies including Libya and Nigeria while meeting with Western leaders. Constitutionally prohibited from standing for re-election in 2000, he supported NDC vice president John Atta Mills, who was defeated by John Kufuor in a run-off.

Later Life

In May 2002 Kufuor initiated a reconciliation committee to investigate civil rights abuses during the Rawlings period. 120 petitions were received on the first day. In Aug. 2002 Rawlings criticized the Kufuor government's record and called for 'positive defiance'. The speech was widely condemned as incitement and he was held briefly for questioning.

Razak, Abdul (Malaysia)

Introduction

Abdul Razak was the second prime minister of Malaysia. Although he held office for 5 years, Abdul Razak's main achievements were as minister for rural development.

Early Life

Abdul Razak was born into a noble family in the Malay state of Pahang. His father had the title Dato, held by local chieftains. Razak trained as a lawyer but did not practise for many years. In 1950 he joined the colonial civil service and was soon drawn to the Malay nationalist cause. He entered politics in 1955 and attracted the attention of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, the leader of the independence movement.

When Malaya gained independence in 1957, Abdul Razak was appointed deputy premier and minister of defence, an important role given the guerrilla uprising by ethnic Chinese Communists in the north of the country. As a cabinet member of the newly named Malaysia (1963), he continued in both posts until 1970. However, it was as minister of rural development that he made his major contribution. He was responsible for improving life in the villages and for encouraging industries into rural communities. Abdul Razak held this portfolio from 1959 until 1969. In 1959 he was awarded a high order, which gave him the title Tun (lord).

In the late 1960s, ethnic violence between Malays and Chinese broke out in the cities of Malaysia. Abdul Razak was appointed chair of the National Operations Council with a brief to contain the violence. When the ethnic riots ended, the premier, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, resigned, opening the way for his deputy to succeed.

Career Peak

As Prime Minister, Abdul Razak was able to ease the racial tension. He pursued a non-aligned stance in foreign policy. He died in office on 14 Jan. 1976, while visiting London.

Reagan, Ronald W. (United States of America)

Introduction

The 40th president of the United States, Ronald Wilson Reagan served two successive terms from 1981–89. Best remembered for his anti-communism and his genial style, Reagan's economic policies, which became known as 'Reaganomics' helped define the 1980s.

Early Life

Reagan was born in Tampico, Illinois on 6 Feb. 1911 to shoe salesman John Edward Reagan, an Irish-born Roman Catholic, and Nelle Wilson Reagan, who was of Scottish-English ancestry. In 1920 his family moved to Dixon, Illinois and Reagan entered Eureka College, from where he graduated in 1932 with a degree in economics and sociology. After working as an announcer for radio stations WOC and WHO, a trip to California led to a successful screen test with Warner Brothers. Reagan went on to play a variety of roles in more than 50 movies over the next 27 years. In 1940 he married actress Jane Wyman, who he had met on set in 1938, although they divorced in 1948. During the Second World War he entered the US Army, working for an army film unit for 3 years in Los Angeles from 1942–45.

After being discharged from the army Reagan turned increasingly to politics. In 1947 he was elected president of the screen actors' guild, a position that he would retain for a further 5 years. Reagan was initially a 'New Deal' Democrat and he campaigned for Harry S. Truman in the 1948 presidential election. However his belief that communist sympathies were eroding American institutions increasingly led him to the political right. He testified to the Un-American Activities Committee and assisted with the blacklisting of actors, directors and screenwriters who were suspected of having left-wing sympathies.

In 1950 Reagan campaigned on behalf of Republican senatorial candidate Richard M. Nixon. Two years later he married Nancy Davis. Increasingly politics took the place of acting in Reagan's life and in 1964 he made an impact with a televised address on behalf of Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. This speech helped him win support when he announced his candidacy for the governorship of California in 1966. He won the Republican nomination with 64.7% of the vote and then defeated Democratic incumbent Edmund G. Brown Sr. by almost one million votes.

Reagan served for 8 years as California governor (1966–74), winning a second term when he defeated Democrat rival Jesse Unruh in 1970. Reagan's gubernatorial style was to concentrate on the broader picture and leave day-to-day policy matters to department heads and assistants. Reagan's main achievement was large-scale reform of California's welfare system, which saw the number of recipients drop dramatically, while those who still received benefits saw their payments increase by 40%. Reagan also oversaw an increase in the state budget from \$4.6 bn. to \$10.2 bn. and took a hard-line view of student demonstrations, cutting university spending by 27% in his first 2 years in office and urging the University of California at Berkeley to fire president Clark Kerr. After the student demonstration movement had faded Reagan increased spending on higher education, more than doubling it by 1974.

The high profile of his role as governor saw Reagan begin to focus on a presidential bid. A last-minute attempt to secure the Republican nomination in 1968 saw him finish third behind Richard M. Nixon and Nelson Rockefeller. In 1974 Reagan decided not to seek re-election in California and to concentrate his efforts on a presidential bid in 1976. However Nixon's subsequent resignation and the succession of Gerald R. Ford to the presidency made success unlikely. He challenged Ford for the Republican nomination but was defeated by 60 votes.

Career Peak

In 1980 Reagan won the Republican nomination with ease, choosing one of his defeated opponents, George Bush, as his running mate. High inflation and the failure of incumbent president Jimmy Carter to solve the Iran hostage crisis as well as Reagan's considerable charm, helped him win the election by 51% to Carter's 42% and 483 electoral college votes to 49. On the day of his inauguration Reagan announced the release of the remaining American hostages in Iran. On 30 March 1981 Reagan survived an assassination attempt by John W. Hinckley, Jr. in Washington, D.C. during which a bullet punctured a lung and only just missed his heart.

Reagan's first year in office was dominated by economic reforms. A 25% tax cut for individuals and corporations was introduced in an effort to stimulate the economy. Welfare expenditure was cut but military expenditure was increased by \$1.5 trn. over a 5-year period. Through his policy of 'new federalism' Reagan sought to delegate many federal programmes to state and local levels. A severe recession in 1982 saw bankruptcies hit record levels and unemployment rise to nearly 11%. Reagan was forced to support a large tax increase and by 1983 inflation and unemployment had fallen. However the long-term effect of the recession saw the country's trade deficit increase to \$111 bn. by 1984 (up from \$25 bn. in 1980). Socially, Reagan endorsed many fundamentalist policies, such as anti-abortion, but failed to win Congress' support for such measures.

In his foreign policy, Reagan sought to reassert the United States' military pre-eminence. He was unstinting in his criticism of the Soviet Union, denouncing it as 'the focus of evil in the modern world'. The shooting down of a South Korean airliner containing American citizens in 1983 and the increased US deployment of missiles in Western Europe both worsened relations between the two countries as did Reagan's announcement of the intended development of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). This proposal aimed to introduce a missile defence system in space and was dubbed 'Star Wars' by the media.

In 1983 Reagan ordered an invasion of Grenada after a coup in order to limit Soviet-Cuban influence in the Caribbean. In 1984 Reagan and Bush were re-nominated by the Republican party and swept to victory against Democratic opponents Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro, winning every state except Minnesota and the District of Columbia and gaining 525 electoral college votes, the highest ever by a presidential candidate. In his second term Reagan continued his tax reforms. In 1986 he reduced the number of tax rates, abolishing tax altogether for many low-income earners.

On 19 Oct. 1987 the economy suffered its biggest crisis under Reagan when the stock market collapsed. The Dow Jones index fell by over a third in just 2 months. Reagan's critics blamed his economic policies for encouraging a culture of boom and bust. By the end of his second term the United States' national debt had more than tripled to \$2.5 trn.

Relations with the Soviet Union improved during Reagan's second term after he met Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985. Two years later the two leaders signed a treaty in Washington, D.C. agreeing to destroy a wide array of intermediate-range nuclear weapons and in 1988 Reagan visited Moscow. Reagan continued to use military force when he thought American interests were under threat. In 1986, after suspected Libyan involvement in the bombing of a nightclub in West Berlin which killed two American servicemen, Reagan authorized American planes to bomb Tripoli.

In 1987 the Reagan administration was involved in what became known as the Iran-Contra affair. The United States had been secretly selling arms to Iran, using profits from the sales to assist anti-communist guerrillas in Nicaragua. Investigations into the affair cleared Reagan of any direct involvement but criticized his 'personal management style' which had allowed the affair to develop. The scandal dented Reagan's popularity but was never a serious threat to his presidency.

Later Life

Reagan campaigned on behalf of George Bush in the 1988 presidential election, helping his former vice-president reach the White House, and then retired from politics. His autobiography, entitled *An American Life*, was published in 1990. Four years later, in a public letter, Reagan announced that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. He died on 5 June 2004 and was honoured with a state presidential funeral and a day of national mourning.

Regmi, Khil Raj (Nepal)

Introduction

Khil Raj Regmi, the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Nepal, was sworn in as prime minister on 14 March 2013, heading an interim government charged with supervising elections initially scheduled for June 2013 but which were delayed until Nov. He succeeded Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai, who stepped down amid the political stalemate that had left the nascent republic without a functioning parliament since May 2012.

Early Life

Khil Raj Regmi was born on 31 May 1949 in Pokharathok in the Lumbini Zone of southern Nepal. He studied arts at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu before completing a master's degree in law at the same institution. He became a district judge in 1974, rising through the judicial ranks to become chief justice of the Supreme Court on 6 May 2011.

Regmi's appointment as prime minister in March 2013 was the result of a compromise deal between the four main political parties (the United Democratic Madhesi Front, the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal

[Unified Marxist-Leninist] and the United Communist Party of Nepal [Maoists]). They had been unable to agree on a suitable candidate since May 2012 when a special assembly was dissolved having failed to draft a new constitution.

Regmi was regarded as a political independent with the bureaucratic skills to lead an interim administration. Though his appointment was well received by the international community, domestic opponents criticized it for blurring the separation between executive and judicial power.

Career Peak

Regmi announced an 11-member cabinet on 19 March 2013, made up entirely of ex-civil servants in accordance with the cross-party agreement that brought him to power. He was charged with overseeing elections to select a constituent assembly to finish drafting the country's first constitution since the monarchy was abolished in 2008. In those elections, which were staged in Nov., the Nepali Congress emerged as the largest party ahead of the Communist Party of Nepal and the Maoists. The latter, who had earlier questioned the validity of Regmi's appointment as head of government, claimed that the elections were rigged but agreed in Dec. to join the new assembly.

His premiership ended in Feb. 2014, following defeat by Nepali Congress candidate Sushil Koirala in constituent assembly elections in 2013. As prime minister, Regmi faced difficult economic conditions as the nation, dependent on foreign aid and tourism, struggled to rebuild after the 10-year civil war that ended in 2006.

Reinfeldt, Fredrik (Sweden)

Introduction

Fredrik Reinfeldt led a centre-right alliance to victory in the legislative elections of Sept. 2006, ousting the Social Democrats (SAP) from over a decade in power. After taking over the leadership of the Moderate Party in 2003, Reinfeldt rebranded it as a centrist party advocating entrepreneurship and job creation coupled with reform of Sweden's cherished welfare system. He retained the premiership following the Sept. 2010 elections.

Early Life

John Fredrik Reinfeldt was born in Stockholm on 4 Aug. 1965. He joined the youth wing of the conservative Moderate Party in 1983. Having completed military service, in 1990 he graduated in business and economics from Stockholm University, where he was active in student politics. He embarked on a political career, becoming chairman of the Moderate Youth League and standing in the legislative elections of Sept. 1991. He won a seat in parliament as the Moderate Party emerged as the leading non-socialist party. The SAP remained the largest single party, but without an overall majority, and Moderate leader Carl Bildt became the first Conservative prime minister since 1930, heading a four-party coalition. The government attempted to tackle the economic crisis that gripped Sweden in 1992 by introducing market reforms, imposing spending cuts and privatizing publicly-owned enterprises. It also sought accession to the European Union.

In the Sept. 1994 elections the Moderates held on to the 80 seats they had won in 1991, but some of their centre-right coalition partners fared badly and the Social Democrats were returned to power. After Bo Lundgren succeeded Bildt as Moderate leader in 1999, Reinfeldt was promoted to chairman of the parliamentary justice committee in 2001–02.

The Moderate Party's poor performance in the 2002 elections was compounded by a scandal in 2003 in which some members were accused of racism. Lundgren was forced to resign as leader in Oct. 2003 and Reinfeldt was elected unanimously to succeed him. Reinfeldt rebranded the party as the New Moderates and shifted the focus to the centre ground. In the run-up to the Sept. 2006 legislative elections, he formed the Alliance for Sweden, aiming to unite a four-party centre-right coalition (New Moderates plus the Centre Party, Liberal Party and Christian Democrats). Presenting a joint manifesto, the alliance narrowly beat the SAP. The New Moderates took 26.1% of the vote, a record for the party, and Reinfeldt was nominated prime minister on 5 Oct. 2006.

Career Peak

On taking office, Reinfeldt initiated a programme of reforms aimed at strengthening incentives to work, reducing welfare dependency and streamlining the state's role in the economy. However, in the wake of the global financial crisis, Sweden slipped into recession in 2008, and in Dec. Reinfeldt proposed a stimulus package to boost the economy. The downturn nevertheless had a significant impact on Sweden's trade-oriented economy in 2009 as exports declined and job losses mounted.

Reinfeldt's own party has favoured joining the single European currency and, in principle, supports membership of NATO. In 2008 the Alliance, supported by the SAP, ratified the Lisbon Treaty (signed in Dec. 2007) on EU institutional and administrative reform. From July–Dec. 2009 Sweden held the rotating EU presidency and oversaw the treaty's implementation. The Swedish presidency also pressed the EU to take the lead in fighting climate change. In Feb. 2009 Reinfeldt's government announced its intention to lift a 30-year-old ban on building new nuclear energy capacity.

In the Sept. 2010 legislative elections the Alliance fell narrowly short of a parliamentary majority but Reinfeldt formed a new minority government the following month with no changes in key ministerial portfolios.

In May 2013 Stockholm suffered several nights of rioting in mainly inter-ethnic suburbs, prompting leftist criticism of Reinfeldt for social spending cuts and right-wing attacks for his immigration and asylum policies.

Reinfeldt's term as prime minister came to an end when his New Moderates lost the 2014 general election to the Social Democrats. At the time of his departure from office he was the longest-serving conservative premier in Sweden's history. He subsequently announced his resignation from the party and was succeeded as leader by Anna Kinberg Batra in Jan. 2015. Stefan Löfven of the SAP took over as prime minister on 3 Oct. 2014.

Yet, despite these reforms, a new constitution was adopted in 1979 creating a one-party state with the SPPF as the only legal party. Strict censorship and government control of the media were imposed. He maintained close links with Tanzania, from whom he received military support, and was allied with the USSR, Cuba and China. Political opponents, including Mancham, were forced into exile. In total around 10,000 islanders fled. Several attempts were made to depose René, including a failed operation in 1981 by South African mercenaries. The president imposed a state of emergency that was not lifted until 1992. In 1987, the government embarked on a campaign to acquire land owned by dissident Seychellois living abroad. The president was re-elected in 1984 and 1989.

Following increased international pressure and the fall of European communist states, René restored multi-party democracy in 1991. Opposition politicians returned and were involved in establishing a new constitution which separated legislative, judicial and executive powers. In 1993 it was approved by 73.9% of votes. Presidential elections were held in the same year, in which René was returned to power with 60% of votes to Mancham's 37%. In 1998 he won a fifth term in office with 66.7% to the Seychelles National Party candidate Wavel Ramkalawan's 19.5%. A sixth term followed in 2001 when he defeated Wavel Ramkalawan (Seychelles National Party) and Philippe Boullé, claiming 54% of the vote.

In the last years of his presidency, René moved away from traditional socialist policies by encouraging a free-market economy. On 14 April 2004 he stepped down as president and was succeeded by his vice-president, James Michel. René remained the leader of the SPPF.

Renner, Karl (Austria)

Introduction

Karl Renner was Austrian chancellor twice (from 1918–20 and in 1945) and the country's first President from 1945–50. Before World War II he was a supporter of the *Anschluss*, by which Germany annexed Austria, but his political involvement decreased as the war progressed. He co-operated with Soviet officials after the war to re-constitute an independent government. He assisted in Austria's re-integration into the international community and developed a policy of neutrality.

Early Life

Renner was born on 14 Dec. 1870 in Unter-Tannowitz in Bohemia (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and now part of the Czech Republic), the tenth son of a poor farming family. He studied at the University of Vienna, achieving his degree in law in 1896. Around this time he joined the Social Democratic Party and married. His wife, Luise, remained an influential figure till his death.

He entered parliament in 1907 and when Emperor Charles I abdicated in 1918, Renner became Chancellor of the new republic.

Career Peak

Renner held the post until July 1920, during which time Austria lost territory to Italy, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia in post-World War I settlements. In addition, Austria agreed to a permanent ban on union with Germany. Renner was President of the Parliament from 1931–33, but Austria's international status had collapsed, its economy was weak and its prospects bleak.

By the late-1930s Renner was pursuing union with Germany. He advocated Germany's annexation of the country in 1938, commenting that 'Austria has no future'. Austria's democratic framework was dismantled by the Nazi regime and Renner left his home in Vienna to move to Lower Austria. Victorious Soviet troops entered the city in April 1945 and Renner quickly opened negotiations with them. Within 4 weeks he was Chancellor of a new provisional government that comprised Social Democrats, Communists, Conservatives and non-partisans.

Independence was declared, the *Anschluss* officially dissolved and by Oct. the government had the support of the other Allied countries. A free general election was held in Nov. 1945. The following month parliament appointed Renner as President for a 6-year term. He campaigned for the re-integration of South Tyrol into Austria and was critical of the Allied system of occupation

René, France Albert (Seychelles)

Introduction

France Albert René was president of the Seychelles from 1977–2004, representing the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF; called the Seychelles People's United Party until 1978). A socialist and campaigner for independence from British rule, he came to power in 1977 when he deposed the then president, Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP) leader James Mancham. He implemented wide social reforms, but imposed one party rule and strict censorship. After relaxing political restrictions, he was returned to the presidency in 1993 in the first multiparty elections and again in 1998 and 2001.

Early Life

René was born on the island of Mahé on 16 Nov. 1935. He was educated in Switzerland and Britain before completing a law degree in London in 1957. He was politically active during his student years, becoming involved with the British Labour Party. Returning to work in the Seychelles, he continued his political activity, founding the island's first trade union. This formed the basis for the SPPF, which René created in 1964. The party campaigned against British rule, opposing Mancham who wanted membership of the Commonwealth. Between 1967–70 René served in the islands' administration.

In 1975 the SPPF and the SDP formed a coalition government, and the following year the Seychelles became an independent republic. Mancham was appointed president and René was chosen as his prime minister.

Career Peak

While Mancham was in London at a Commonwealth conference in 1977, René took the opportunity to lead a bloodless coup and establish himself as president. As leader, he implemented policies of social reform to improve education, housing and employment and increased social security including establishing a minimum wage. Increased investment in agriculture and fishing improved the economy, while efforts were made to encourage tourism. René classified much of the islands as protected sites to preserve the Seychelles' natural beauty, a major tourist attraction.

zones. Controversially, he suggested that post-war Austria would not welcome migrating East European Jews when unemployment was rife among the country's existing population. He distanced himself from the idea of German unification and voiced support for the United Nations, to the disappointment of the Soviet Union. By 1949 the Communists were effectively killed off as a major force within Austrian politics. He died while in office on 31 Dec. 1950 in Doebling, Austria. The Renner Institute in Vienna is the Social Democrat's affiliated political academy.

Renzi, Matteo (Italy)

Early Life

Matteo Renzi was born on 11 Jan. 1975 in Florence and graduated in law from the city's university. In 1996 he joined the centrist Italian People's Party (which in 2002 integrated with the Democratic Party; PD) and within 3 years was appointed its regional secretary. In June 2004 he was elected president of the province of Florence.

After 5 years in the post, Renzi announced his candidacy for Florence's mayoral election. He won 48% of the vote on 9 June 2009, comfortably defeating his nearest rival, Giovanni Galli, and used his time in office to pedestrianize the city centre and cultivate his political persona.

He suffered the first significant setback of his political career in Dec. 2012 when he was defeated by the veteran Pier Luigi Bersani in the race for the PD-led centre-left coalition's endorsement as a prime ministerial candidate. However, Bersani's inability to build a workable governing coalition in the wake of the election of Feb. 2013 forced his resignation. PD deputy leader Enrico Letta subsequently established a coalition and was sworn in as prime minister.

In Dec. 2013 Renzi was elected PD leader and declared his intention to sweep away the party old guard—an ambition that brought him into conflict with Letta. In Feb. 2014 tensions came to a head and Renzi formally asked Letta to resign the premiership. When he did so, then President Giorgio Napolitano invited Renzi to form a new government.

Career Peak

Renzi came to power in the midst of Italy's worst economic crisis since the end of the Second World War, with two consecutive years of recession compounding a sovereign debt level in excess of annual GDP. He pledged major reforms, including constitutional changes and a new electoral law and a restructuring of the labour market and tax system. In April 2014 he outlined the government's framework economic policy, envisaging a reduction in income tax for lower earners and cuts in public spending, and in Sept. set out a controversial programme to reform restrictive employment rules, which was approved by parliament in Nov. Meanwhile, his plan to reduce the size and powers of the Senate was accepted by the upper house in Aug. 2014, while in May 2015 parliament approved an electoral reform giving the largest political party an automatic majority of seats. However, the credibility and reputation of Renzi's government was undermined in mid-2015 by a series of political scandals, resulting in a fall in public support. Following his defeat in a referendum held on 4 Dec. 2016, Renzi handed in his resignation to the president. He was succeeded as prime minister by Paolo Gentiloni.

Reynolds, Albert (Ireland)

Introduction

Albert Reynolds was Irish Prime Minister (*Taoiseach*) from 1992–95. Leader of Fianna Fáil, he made peace in Northern Ireland his main objective. After talks with British Prime Minister John Major, he was party to the 1993 Joint (Downing Street) Declaration that set out criteria for a lasting resolution to the Irish problem. He was forced to resign after his coalition broke up but his Declaration was to have a lasting impact on Irish politics.

Early Life

Reynolds was born on 3 Nov. 1932 in Rooskey, County Roscommon. He attended Summerhill College in County Sligo before starting a career in commerce. He worked for a shipping firm, became a local newspaper proprietor and made a fortune from a dog food business. In 1977 he entered the Dáil as the Fianna Fáil member for Longford.

In 1979 he was made minister for transport, posts and telegraphs. Three years later he moved to the Department of Energy and from 1987–88 he was minister of industry and commerce. He was appointed minister of finance in 1988 but left the post in 1991 after unsuccessfully challenging prime minister Charles Haughey for the party leadership. He succeeded Haughey the following year.

Career Peak

Emphasizing his commitment to the Northern Irish peace process, Reynolds was perceived as a pragmatist who was unburdened by previous involvement in Northern Irish issues. He embarked on negotiations with the UK government to establish a framework for peace talks. He and John Major issued their Joint Declaration on Peace on 15 Dec. 1993.

The Agreement stressed that Northern Ireland's status would be decided by the will of the majority and that peace negotiations would involve all groups who renounced violence. The agreement led to the first Irish Republican Army (IRA) ceasefire in 1994.

Despite this breakthrough, Reynolds' premiership was dogged by internal party conflicts and opposition from those who distrusted his pragmatic approach. There was further controversy over a deal he had made to secure meat exports when minister of finance. In Dec. 1994 he resigned the premiership, remaining in office until his successor, John Bruton, was installed in early 1995.

Later Life

An investigation into Reynolds' business affairs published in the British newspaper *The Sunday Times* led to a drawn-out libel trial which found in favour of Reynolds but awarded him only one penny damages and left him with large costs. Having been given leave to appeal the size of the award, he came to an out-of-court settlement with the newspaper. The Joint Declaration was an important step on the road to Northern Irish peace, leading directly to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

Reynolds died on 21 Aug. 2014 following a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. He was buried at Shanganagh Cemetery in Dublin with full military honours.

Reza Pahlavi, Mohammad (Iran)

Introduction

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was the Shah (monarch) of Iran from 1941–79, before being deposed in an Islamic revolution. His reign, although repressive, was marked by attempts at reform and modernization. However, during the 1970s Iran's economy deteriorated, social inequalities widened, and discontent grew among religious fundamentalists over perceived decadent Western influences. Opposition to the monarchy culminated in the Shah's flight abroad in Jan. 1979. He died in Egypt on 27 July 1980.

Early Life

Born on 26 Oct. 1919 in Tehran, Mohammad Reza was educated in Switzerland before returning to Iran in 1935 to attend military academy. He came to the throne in Sept. 1941 after British and Soviet forces had occupied Iran and forced his father Reza Shah, a Nazi sympathiser, to abdicate. The new Shah proclaimed an end to absolute rule, granting political powers to the Cabinet and Assembly (Majlis). In 1949, after narrowly escaping assassination, he banned the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party.

During the late 1940s public discontent grew in Iran over British ownership of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company which controlled a large part of the country's oil assets. In 1951 the Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadeq,

nationalized the oil industry, incurring British sanctions. The economy declined, giving rise to internal unrest. In Aug. 1953 army officers loyal to the Shah tried to overthrow the Prime Minister and his supporters. The Shah was forced briefly into exile before his reinstatement in a coup, widely believed to have involved the British and United States security services. Over the following years he sought to consolidate his personal authority over Iran.

Career Peak

In pursuit of his aim of turning Iran into an industrial nation based on Western rather than traditional values and culture, the Shah received extensive financial and military backing from the United States. In the early 1960s he launched a reform programme—his so-called ‘white revolution’—which included land redistribution, the promotion of literacy, the emancipation of women and extensive construction. However, in the process of the breaking up of the old feudal structures, the peasantry and urban poor became increasingly isolated from the oil-based wealth of a minority of Iranians. The Shah’s pro-Western stance also provoked criticism from the Muslim clergy.

As popular discontent became more evident in the early 1970s, the Shah grew more repressive. Opposition was dealt with harshly by his national intelligence and security agency, SAVAK. Despite the oil price rise in 1973–74, wealth inequalities persisted. A survey in 1976 revealed that only 3% of Iranians shared 90% of the nation’s wealth. Protests and riots worsened during 1977–78, and the opposition movement threw its support behind the exiled religious leader, Ayatollah Khomeini.

On 16 Jan. 1979, the Shah fled the country and Khomeini returned to Iran to direct the Islamic revolution. After brief periods of exile in Egypt, Morocco, the Bahamas, Mexico, the US and Panama, he returned to Egypt in May 1980. His death 2 months later in Cairo was attributed to complications induced by treatment for cancer.

Richards, George Maxwell (Trinidad and Tobago)

Introduction

George Maxwell Richards became president in March 2003. A chemical engineer by training, he is non-partisan and, with his mixed-race background, has sought to offset ethnic tensions in the country’s political life. He was re-elected for a second term in Feb. 2008.

Early Life

Richards was born in San Fernando, Trinidad in 1931. He graduated from the Queen’s Royal College in Port of Spain in 1955 and took a master’s degree in chemical engineering at Manchester University in England. In 1963 he obtained his PhD from Cambridge University.

From 1957–65 he worked for Shell Trinidad before taking a lectureship in chemical engineering at the University of the West Indies. Five years later he became professor of chemical engineering and in 1985 was promoted to principal of the university, a post he held until late 1986. Richards was also active on the boards of several commercial companies and chaired the government salaries review commission from 1977–2003.

Following tied parliamentary elections in 2001, Arthur Robinson, then president, was forced to choose between Patrick Manning and Basdeo Panday for the premiership. When Robinson selected Manning he was accused of bias and the non-partisan nature of the presidency came under scrutiny. When Manning nominated Richards for the presidency, he cited Richards’ lack of a party political background as a key reason. In a secret ballot in Feb. 2003 parliament elected Richards by 43 votes to 25.

Career Peak

The presidency is primarily a ceremonial role and, following the controversy after the 2001 elections, Richards emphasized on assuming office that he was ‘completely apolitical’. With his mixed race (including black, Chinese and white) roots, he aimed to diffuse some of the tension arising from the racially

divided political structure and in Feb. 2008 was re-elected by parliament as the sole presidential candidate. In May 2010 he swore in Kamla Persad-Bissessar as the country’s first female prime minister.

Richards’ presidency came to an end in March 2013; Anthony Carmona was subsequently sworn in as the fifth president of Trinidad and Tobago.

Later Life

Richards died in Port of Spain on 8 Jan. 2018 at the age of 86 following a heart attack.

Robinson, Mary (Ireland)

Introduction

Mary Robinson was Ireland’s first female President, holding office from 1990–97. A barrister, she served in the Seanad Éireann (the Irish Senate) from 1969–89. Her unexpected victory in the 1990 presidential election ended 45 years of Fianna Fáil domination of the presidency. Robinson raised the profile of the presidency, a largely ceremonial post, and used her office to boost Ireland’s international image and to highlight global human rights issues. She ended her tenure early to become the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Early Life

Robinson was born Mary Bourke on 21 May 1944 in Ballina, County Mayo. Her family background was Roman Catholic but she studied at the traditionally Protestant Trinity College, Dublin, gaining a master’s degree in 1970. She went on to get a Law degree from King’s Inn, Dublin before continuing her legal studies at Harvard University. In 1969 she became Reid Professor of Law at Trinity College where she specialized in constitutional and human rights issues.

In 1969 she joined the Senate as representative of the University and a year later she married a Protestant, Nicholas Robinson, with whom she would have three children. She joined the Labour Party in 1976 and fought two unsuccessful campaigns for election to the Dáil, in 1977 and 1981. From 1979–83 she was a member of Dublin City Council. In 1985 she resigned from the party in protest at the signing of the Anglo–Irish Treaty, which she believed was slanted unfairly against Unionists.

In 1988 she and her husband founded the Irish Centre for European Law. Robinson remained its director until 1990. In 1989 she was approached by Labour leader Dick Spring to stand as an independent candidate against Fianna Fáil’s Brian Lenihan in the presidential elections. Her campaign centred around policies that reflected her human rights interests, including liberalization of laws on divorce, contraception, abortion and homosexuality. Boosted by a large female turnout, she won a narrow victory commenting that Ireland’s women ‘instead of rocking the cradle had rocked the system’.

Career Peak

The symbolic nature of the Irish presidency enabled Robinson to rise above the minutiae of day to day politics. Her tenure coincided with a period of economic stability and growth which combined with her natural charm and eloquence ensured her popularity with the Irish public. The presidency gained prestige on the international scene. She campaigned on behalf of the oppressed and weak throughout the world, drawing parallels between Third World poverty and unrest and Ireland’s own turbulent history. While remaining non-partisan, she worked to encourage peace in Northern Ireland and in a landmark gesture shook hands with the Sinn Féin leader, Gerry Adams.

In 1997 the UN General Secretary invited Robinson to become High Commissioner on Human Rights. Despite the approaching presidential election which she was likely to win, Robinson resigned a few months early to take up the UN post. In her new capacity she highlighted human rights abuses in Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone and Kosovo. In March 2001 Robinson confirmed she would not seek a second term, claiming that she could achieve more outside the ‘constraints’ of the UN.

Robinson, Peter (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

A member of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) since its foundation, Peter Robinson served as deputy leader of the party for 28 years, almost without interruption, before being elected unopposed to the leadership following the resignation of Ian Paisley in May 2008. He was sworn in as first minister of Northern Ireland the following month.

Early Life

Peter David Robinson was born in Belfast on 29 Dec. 1948. He attended Castlereagh College before becoming an estate agent. The death of an old school friend in an IRA bombing at the Northern Ireland Electricity headquarters in 1971 prompted Robinson to begin a political career. In the same year he joined the DUP, recently founded by Ian Paisley and Desmond Boal. Quickly winning renown for his managerial skills, Robinson rose through the party ranks. He was made an executive member in 1973 and was appointed party secretary-general in 1975. In 1980 Robinson became deputy leader.

Standing for the DUP in the constituency of Belfast East, Robinson was elected to parliament in May 1979. Having overturned (by 64 votes) an Ulster Unionist majority of 17,000, Robinson has successfully defended the seat six times. He is the longest serving member of parliament for any Belfast constituency since the Act of Union. Robinson's wife Iris (*née* Collins) is also an MP.

In common with all Unionist MPs (both DUP and Ulster Unionist), Robinson resigned his seat in 1985 in protest at the implementation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement that allowed Dublin an advisory role in the governance of Northern Ireland. He was returned in the subsequent by-election. Motivated by his staunch opposition to the settlement, on 7 Aug. 1986 Robinson was among 500 loyalists to descend upon the village of Clontribet, County Monaghan, in the Republic of Ireland. Robinson was arrested and pleaded guilty to unlawful assembly. He resigned his position as deputy leader of the DUP, though he was reinstated within months.

The DUP withdrew from talks leading to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in protest at the participation of Sinn Féin following the declaration of an IRA ceasefire. The Agreement was approved by referendum on both sides of the Irish border, despite the opposition of the DUP. This allowed for the establishment of the power-sharing Northern Irish Assembly. Although refusing to attend Stormont Executive meetings, in 1999 Robinson took office as minister for regional development and won further plaudits for his efficient management and organizational skills. Responsible for the introduction of free public transport for older people, he was also a key architect of the St Andrews Agreement which preceded the restoration of power to the Northern Irish Assembly in 2007. Robinson negotiated the inclusion of a power of veto, which his party has since used on several occasions.

The expansion of the DUP's appeal—historically limited to the white protestant working classes—is often attributed to Robinson, who is seen as representing the urban, secular wing of Unionism. The DUP won the largest share of votes of any party at the Northern Ireland Assembly elections in March 2007. This victory entitled the party to nominate its leader for the position of first minister. Following Ian Paisley's resignation as leader of the DUP on 31 May 2008, Robinson was elected unopposed to the party leadership. He was subsequently confirmed as first minister by the Assembly.

Career Peak

In partnership with a Sinn Féin representative, Robinson heads an administration of ten ministers and two junior ministers drawn from the DUP, Sinn Féin, the Ulster Unionists and the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party. The strikingly amicable relationship between Robinson's predecessor, Ian Paisley, and the deputy minister, Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness, was a cause of dissatisfaction among much of the DUP's core membership. Robinson is expected to distance himself from any close personal relationship while striving to maintain a pragmatic working relationship with the deputy first minister. Widely regarded as a technocrat and lacking Paisley's force of

personality, Robinson's challenge is to maintain unity in his own party while working in tandem with his partners in government.

In Jan. 2010 it came to light that Peter Robinson's wife and DUP MP for Strangford, Iris Robinson, had been involved in illegal property dealings and that her husband had been aware of her actions. Robinson claimed he had not acted improperly but stood down temporarily while an inquiry into his conduct could be carried out. Arlene Foster, the minister for enterprise, became acting first minister. Robinson resumed his duties on 3 Feb. In the May general election he lost his parliamentary seat in Belfast East which he had held for 31 years to Alliance Party rival Naomi Long but stayed on as DUP leader and First Minister.

In May 2015 Robinson suffered a suspected heart attack, but made a full recovery.

Robinson temporarily stood aside as first minister on 10 Sept. 2015 after parties rejected a proposal to adjourn power-sharing institutions in Northern Ireland in the wake of allegations that the IRA had been involved in a recent murder in Belfast. Robinson stated that the continued existence of IRA structures 'pushed devolution to the brink' following Sinn Féin's denial that the IRA still existed. He appointed Arlene Foster to serve again as acting first minister.

Robinson resigned as first minister on 11 Jan. 2016, with Arlene Foster taking over on an official basis.

Rodríguez Echeverría, Miguel Ángel (Costa Rica)

Introduction

Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Echeverría was president of Costa Rica between 1998–2002, representing the conservative Partido Unidad Social Cristiana (PUSC). When he replaced the centre-left Partido Liberación Nacional (PLN) leader José María Figueres Olsen, he inherited a growing economy, which was further boosted by his success in attracting foreign investment. His major challenges were settling border disputes with Nicaragua and placating opposition to the reform and privatization of the national electricity company.

Early Life

Rodríguez was born on 9 Jan. 1940 in San José. He studied law and economics at the Universidad de Costa Rica before finishing his higher education at Berkeley University in 1966. He wrote a column for *La Nación* newspaper at the end of the 1960s. Between 1970–90 he was economics professor at the national university, writing books on political and social economics. A successful businessman, he worked for agroindustrial companies. Rodríguez began his government career in 1966 as planning minister under the presidency of José Joaquín Trejos while simultaneously managing the Costa Rican national bank. He joined the PUSC's ruling body and in 1990 became deputy for San José. He served as a deputy in the legislative assembly between 1990–93, acting as president of the assembly between 1991–92. In the 1986 presidential election he fought party colleague and future president Rafael Ángel Calderón. In 1994 he was the PUSC's presidential candidate, but lost to Figueres.

Career Peak

Austerity measures brought on by an economic slump in the mid-1990s led to public discontent with Figueres' government and his party. Before the 1998 presidential elections Rodríguez was far ahead in the opinion polls but in the end a slim margin of votes separated him from the PLN candidate, José Corrales, the latter receiving 44.4% to Rodríguez's 46.9%.

On election Rodríguez pledged to improve opportunities for women, the young and the poor. He continued Figueres' economic policies, including the unpopular austerity measures. He planned to cut government spending, implement market reforms, including limited privatization, and encourage foreign investment in order to lower the country's fiscal deficit from 3.7% of GDP to 1.7% by the end of 1999 and to reduce Costa Rica's US\$4 bn. national debt. The first and most significant foreign investment led in 1998 to the setting up of production centres in San José for two leading American

computer chip companies. The following year the country experienced its first trade surplus for 15 years. By 2000 government investment in high-tech companies had improved GDP, further boosting a general economic recovery with reduced inflation and lower unemployment.

Attempts to reform and privatize the state owned electricity and telecommunications company, ICE, led to a strike by public sector workers and protests in early 2000. Rodríguez planned to split the company into two parts—energy and telecommunications—to attract the maximum foreign investment. Despite support from opposition parties, strikers rejected the proposal believing it would mean job losses. Rodríguez agreed to delay legislation while a bipartisan committee reviewed the bill, but a ruling by the Supreme Court making it unconstitutional stopped it going further.

Rodríguez renewed ties with the US, travelling to Washington, D.C. to promote trade relations. In 1999 a long-standing border dispute with Nicaragua flared up, increasing tension between the two governments. Nonetheless, following the devastation of hurricane Mitch, Rodríguez granted an amnesty for illegal immigrants in Costa Rica, according all 150,000 mainly Nicaraguan applicants permanent residency status with full access to the welfare state. Nicaraguans make up 10% of Costa Rica's inhabitants.

Rodríguez was replaced as president by fellow PUSC member Abel Pacheco de la Espriella.

Later Life

In 2004 Rodríguez was briefly Secretary General of the Organization of American States. In April 2011 he was sentenced to 5 years in prison for accepting bribes from the French telecommunications company Alcatel.

Rodríguez, Eduardo (Bolivia)

Introduction

Eduardo Rodríguez was named Bolivia's interim president on 10 June 2005, after mass protests in the crisis-hit country led to the resignation of President Carlos Mesa. The lawyer and former head of the Supreme Court, who was considered untainted by political life, faced the task of leading one of Latin America's poorest and most divided countries into the elections of Dec. 2005.

Early Life

Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé was born on 2 March 1956 in Cochabamba. He attended the San Agustín High School in the city and went on to read law at the Universidad Mayor de San Simon, also in Cochabamba. After graduating in 1981, Rodríguez began work as a solicitor. He travelled to the US in 1988 to take a master's degree in public administration at Harvard University. On his return to Bolivia he joined the civil service, taking up the post of deputy of legal services in the treasury and in the ministry of foreign affairs, serving in the government of President Jaime Paz Zamora of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria). Rodríguez subsequently worked as co-ordinator of the department for the prevention of crime and the treatment of delinquency at the United Nations' Institute of Latin America. He also practised as a legal consultant on a number of international projects.

From the mid-1990s Rodríguez taught law at the Universidad Católica Boliviana, the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar and the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés in La Paz. He was nominated as one of 12 justices of the Supreme Court, confirmed by the national congress in March 1999. Rodríguez was closely involved in a drive to improve the country's court system, particularly the implementation of the code of criminal procedures in May 2002, which attempted to root-out corruption and protect human rights. In March 2004 Rodríguez was elected chief justice of the Supreme Court.

After the arrival of a new president, Carlos Mesa, in Oct. 2003, Bolivia was gripped by social unrest, caused by the poverty of the majority indigenous community coupled with the desire of wealthier provinces for autonomy. By April 2005 there were mass protests on the streets of La Paz, with demonstrators calling for the nationalization of the energy sector. A blockade led to shortages of food and fuel in La Paz and when clashes erupted between the police and protesters, Mesa was forced to flee under an armed escort. He resigned shortly afterwards. After Hormando Vaca Díez and Mario Cossio,

presidents of the senate and chamber of deputies respectively, both declined the post of interim president, it was accepted by Rodríguez, who, as head of the judiciary, was considered to be above party politics.

Career Peak

Rodríguez was sworn in as interim president on 10 June 2005. Emphasizing his neutrality, he urged Bolivians to unite in the spirit of national solidarity. Shortly afterwards, Rodríguez announced that fresh elections would be held in Dec. 2005, to ensure that a 'fairer and more equitable democracy emerged'. And that a referendum on regional autonomy would take place in July 2006. True to his word, presidential elections were held on 18 Dec. 2005. Socialist leader Evo Morales was declared the winner and was sworn in as premier on 22 Jan. 2006.

Roh Moo-hyun (South Korea)

Introduction

Roh Moo-hyun won the presidential elections of Dec. 2002 and succeeded incumbent Kim Dae-jung in Feb. 2003. A member of Kim's Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) until Sept. 2003, Roh has continued Kim's policy of promoting closer ties with North Korea. He has commanded most support among young voters who favour a close relationship with the North, although his stance has strained relations with the US leadership, which has taken a hardline against Pyongyang over its nuclear development activities. Lee Myung-bak replaced Roh as South Korea's president in Feb. 2008 after Roh's 5-year term came to an end.

Early Life

Roh was born on 6 Aug. 1946 in Gimhae in the Gyeongsangbuk region. In 1966 he graduated from Busan Commercial High School and undertook various low-paid jobs while teaching himself law. He passed his state bar exams in 1975. In 1977 he was appointed a district court judge in the city of Daejeon, and the following year he opened his own law office. In 1981, after representing a student prosecuted for owning outlawed literature, he committed himself to human rights cases and became a prominent pro-democracy campaigner. In 1987 Roh was imprisoned for three weeks for assisting striking workers.

The following year he entered parliament as part of a grouping led by future president, Kim Young-sam. In the same year he won recognition as a member of a parliamentary committee which investigated the 1980 massacres of protesters during the rule of Chun Doo-hwan. Having lost his parliamentary seat in 1992, Roh re-entered parliament in 1998 after winning a seat in Seoul.

In 2000 he joined the supreme council of the MDP. Between Aug. 2000–March 2001 he was minister for fisheries and maritime affairs. With President Kim Dae-jung constitutionally barred from standing for re-election in 2002, Roh was selected as the MDP's candidate. The election campaign was fought in the shadow of rising tensions between the USA and North Korea over the North's nuclear programmes. Roh and the MDP continued to espouse Kim's 'sunshine policy' of engagement with Pyongyang. Lee Hoi-chang of the Grand National Party (GNP), Roh's chief opponent, favoured the freezing of talks until the North ended all nuclear activities and was thus regarded as Washington's favoured candidate.

Roh's close ties with the MDP and Kim Dae-jung cost him support as several corruption scandals came to light. Roh's campaign was further weakened shortly before polls opened when his running-mate, Chung Moon-jung, pulled out. Chung had a popular following based on the successful staging of the 2002 football World Cup finals but he withdrew from the elections following Roh's perceived anti-US comment that 'if the US and North Korea start a fight, we should dissuade them.' Nonetheless, Roh won large-scale support from young voters and claimed victory at the elections of Dec. 2002 with 49% of the vote against Lee's 46.6%.

Career Peak

Roh was sworn into office in Feb. 2003. He appointed former mayor of Seoul, Goh Kun, as prime minister. Goh Kun had previously held the office in

1997–98. Roh's first major challenge was to establish a policy on North Korea acceptable both domestically and to the USA. Although a vocal supporter of Kim's 'sunshine policy', Roh had to demonstrate a more conciliatory approach towards Washington. In May 2002 he sought to heal rifts with the USA by supporting the continued presence of US forces in the region, having previously called for the removal of 30,000 troops stationed in South Korea. The more aggressive policy of US President George W. Bush towards North Korea—threatening the North by placing it in the 'Axis of Evil' declaration—made the continuation of peaceful engagement with Pyongyang more difficult, especially so since the North's first test of a nuclear device in Oct. 2006 and the subsequent imposition of punitive sanctions by the United Nations Security Council.

In the domestic sphere, Roh sought on his election to repair the cultural and commercial split between South Korea's south-eastern and south-western regions. Large-scale business and the media were both expected to be subject to major reforms and the president promised to prevent the further rise in property prices, which grew 16% in 2002 despite economic stagnation. Decentralization and autonomy were central to Roh's domestic agenda. To relieve population pressure in the Seoul area, Roh outlined a national development programme, including the construction of a new administrative capital in the central region of Chungcheong, scheduled to begin during 2007.

Negotiations for free trade areas with Singapore and Japan made a promising start. Economic relations with North Korea, although strained by tensions with the USA, continued to expand. Inter-Korean ministerial talks in Oct. 2003 focused on the construction of the Kaesong Industrial Complex in North Korea, one of three large-scale economic projects agreed by the Kim Dae-jung government. In Feb. 2006 South Korea and the USA began negotiations on a major bilateral free trade agreement.

Roh's determination to distance himself from the corruption scandals of the previous presidency led him to leave the MDP in Sept. 2003. His decision was anticipated after the departure of parliamentary allies who formed a new party—the Uri Party—with a reformist agenda. In March 2004 Roh was suspended from office following a vote in the National Assembly to impeach him for allegedly trying to influence unfairly the outcome of parliamentary elections due in April 2004. Prime Minister Goh Kun took over as acting president. The pro-Roh Uri Party gained a slim overall majority in the April elections, winning 152 seats in the 299-member Assembly, and the following month Roh was reinstated after the Constitutional Court overturned his impeachment. Goh Kun meanwhile resigned as prime minister and was replaced in June 2004 by Lee Hai-chan. In his new year message at the start of 2005 Roh promised to make revitalizing the flagging South Korean economy his policy priority. Nevertheless, his government's popularity continued to wane. In April 2006 Han Myeong-sook became the country's first female prime minister in place of Lee Hai-chan, but the following month Roh's Uri party suffered a heavy defeat in local elections. Han Myeong-sook resigned as premier in March 2007 and Han Duck-soo was appointed her successor.

In Feb. 2007 Roh announced that he would leave his Uri Party, acknowledging that he had become a political liability in advance of the Dec. 2007 presidential election. Unable to run for re-election under the constitution, Roh's 5-year term ended in Feb. 2008, putting an end to liberal rule which critics say hindered economic growth and showered unconditional aid on North Korea with little to show for it. Roh died on 23 May 2009 after falling from a mountain near his home. His death was later confirmed as suicide.

Rõivas, Taavi (Estonia)

Introduction

Taavi Rõivas became prime minister in March 2014 following the resignation of Andrus Ansip. A former minister of social affairs, he leads a coalition comprising the Estonian Reform Party (Reform) and the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SDE). Retaining the premiership after Reform emerged as the biggest single party at elections in March 2015, he headed up another coalition administration with the SDE and also the Pro Patria and Res Publica Union (IRL).

Early Life

Born on 26 Sept. 1979 in Tallinn, Rõivas studied international economics and marketing at the University of Tartu. He began his political career while still a student, joining Reform in 1998 and becoming adviser to the minister of justice, Märt Rask, in 1999. After graduating, he worked for the AS IT Grupp and became adviser/officer manager for the minister of population affairs, Paul-Eerik Rummo, in 2003.

From 2004–05 he was mayor of the Haabersti City District in Tallinn. He advised Prime Minister Andrus Ansip from 2005–07 and was elected to parliament in 2007. He served on its social affairs committee from 2007–09 and was chairman of the finance committee from 2009–11. From 2011–12 he chaired the European Union affairs committee while continuing to serve on the finance committee. In Dec. 2012 he was appointed minister of social affairs, where he had a key role in delivering government austerity measures.

After Ansip resigned as premier on 4 March 2014 and Reform's founder Siim Kallas withdrew as a potential successor, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves appointed Rõivas as prime minister.

Career Peak

Rõivas took office on 26 March 2014 when parliament narrowly voted (by 52 votes out of 101) to back a new coalition of Reform and the SDE. He was elected leader of Reform 11 days later. Rõivas pledged to focus on security issues in the aftermath of Russia's intervention in Ukraine, and in Oct. his government announced that Estonia would bolster its troop presence and monitoring of its border after Russia's alleged abduction of an Estonian security officer. Domestically, he promised to increase public spending from 2015, with plans to lower labour taxes, increase child benefit, bring forward pension increases and raise salaries for teachers and the police. At the general election in March 2015 Reform won the most seats of any party (30 of 101), securing Rõivas a further term as premier. His main challenges included addressing faltering economic growth and managing differences within his coalition government.

On 9 Nov. 2016 Taavi resigned after a vote of no confidence was supported by 63 votes to 28. He was replaced as prime minister by Jüri Ratas.

Rojas Pinilla, Gustavo (Colombia)

Introduction

Gustavo Rojas Pinilla was president of Colombia between 1953–57, originally at the head of a military government and later as leader of the left-wing Alianza Nacional Popular (ANAPO). His presidency was blighted by widespread guerrilla violence which largely thwarted attempts at social and economic reform.

Early Life

Rojas Pinilla was born on 12 March 1900 in Tunja, Colombia. He attended the Colombian Military Academy until 1920, and studied civil engineering in the United States until 1927. In the 1930s he worked on several large-scale highways projects and was also employed as a military engineer. He was appointed commander of the First Brigade at the end of 1946. Rojas Pinilla played a significant role in suppressing the rioting that ensued after the assassination of the left-wing leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in April 1948 and was promoted to lieutenant general. He was appointed to the Inter-American Defense Board in 1951 and was named commander-in-chief of the armed forces at the end of 1952.

Career Peak

Rojas Pinilla took power in military coup on 13 June 1953, bringing to an end the 4-year regime of President Laureano Gómez. Rojas Pinilla espoused the ideology of the revolutionary, Simón Bolívar, and promised social justice and freedom. However, his rule by decree and the utilization of media censorship and the secret police against political opponents soon aroused popular discontent. Accusations of siphoning government monies for personal use and an aggressive policy against the Protestant church increased his unpopularity.

Rojas Pinilla granted an amnesty on rural guerrillas in June 1953 but continued violence led to a military offensive 2 years later, known as the War of Villarica. He enjoyed partial success in forcing a guerrilla retreat to the Andean foothills but by 1957 he was confronted by student strikes and unified protests by conservative and liberal forces which forced him into exile in the United States. A military junta came to power in his place.

Later Life

When Rojas Pinilla returned to Colombia in Oct. 1958 he was impeached and in April 1959 he was stripped of his civil liberties. In the same year, the conservative and liberal elites created the National Front to end the civil war which had claimed 250–300,000 victims since 1948. The failure of the National Front and the left-wing Liberal Party helped revive Rojas Pinilla's appeal and he achieved a small share of the vote at the presidential elections of 1962. He founded the Alianza Nacional Popular (ANAPO), which claimed widespread support among the poor working class, and in 1966 had his civil rights legally re-established. He came a close second at the 1970 presidential polls and claimed that winner Misael Pastrana Borrero had stolen victory. His supporters were responsible for violent protests that led to a declaration of martial law. Rojas Pinilla's health deteriorated and he retired from political life in 1973. He died from a heart attack on 17 Jan. 1975, a year after his daughter had unsuccessfully stood as the ANAPO candidate for the presidency.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (United States of America)

Introduction

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the 32nd President of the United States, serving from March 1933 until April 1945 when he died in office just weeks before Germany's surrender in World War II. He is remembered best for leading the United States into World War II, as well as for social and economic reforms which pulled a demoralized nation out of the Great Depression.

Early Life

Born on 30 Jan. 1882 on his aristocratic family's estate in Hyde Park in the state of New York, Roosevelt was educated at home by tutors until his early teens. He then attended Groton School in Massachusetts between 1896 and 1900, a school whose emphasis on teaching a sense of public responsibility did much to form his political opinions. However the future president's academic record was unimpressive, as it was at Harvard University, which he attended from 1900 until 1904. In 1905 Franklin married Eleanor Roosevelt, a distant cousin, and the couple had five children in the next 11 years.

Roosevelt drifted between law school and Wall Street without conspicuous success until he entered politics in 1910 when he was elected to the New York State senate for the Democratic Party, securing re-election in 1912. His fledgling political career suffered a setback in 1914 when he was defeated in his attempt to become a senator. Nevertheless, in 1921, Roosevelt, who had acquired a reputation as a charismatic political performer, secured the Democratic Party's vice-presidential nomination. However he and James M. Cox were beaten by Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

Having contracted polio in 1921 Roosevelt found himself paralysed in both legs and largely wheelchair-bound, although he would later be able to walk for several steps at a time with the aid of leg braces. He retreated from the limelight for several years before returning to the political stage in 1928 when he became governor of New York. His sureness of touch while handling the early days of the depression saw him re-elected in 1930 by the largest margin in the state's history. During this period Roosevelt also set up an influential think-tank to devise new political ideas to combat the Great Depression.

Career Peak

Roosevelt won the Democratic nomination to run for the presidency in 1932 with John Nance Garner as his running mate. Founding his campaign on the

promise of 'a New Deal for the American people' Roosevelt defeated President Herbert Hoover by 472 electoral college votes to 59. Three months after his election victory Roosevelt survived an assassination attempt when he was fired upon by an unemployed bricklayer in an incident that saw four other men injured and one killed.

When Roosevelt was inaugurated in March 1933, the United States was in crisis with unemployment running at around 14 m. The new president embarked on an energetic period in which he initiated a whirlwind of legislation through an emergency 99-day session of Congress. This period came to be known as Roosevelt's '100 days'.

The USA deserted the gold standard and the Emergency Banking Relief Act gave Roosevelt greater powers to control the economy. Meanwhile the National Industry Recovery Act gave Roosevelt's government far-reaching powers to control industry. Farmers were given considerable subsidies while the Public Works Administration created more jobs in the construction industry.

Unemployment fell rapidly as a consequence of Roosevelt's policies, although the effectiveness of many of his programmes was far from total. However, the new president's charisma succeeded in re-motivating America—a mood he enhanced further by repealing the prohibition laws with the words 'I think this would be a good time for a beer'.

In 1935, Roosevelt initiated 3 major pieces of legislation including the Works Progress Administration bill, which would eventually see \$11bn. of works relief distributed, and the Wagner Act, which gave workers the right to bargain on equal terms with their employers. The Social Security Act of the same year saw the United States gain the bare bones of a welfare state by offering relief to the elderly, unemployed and the disabled.

Some of Roosevelt's measures, such as the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act, were later ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, in 1936, he was re-elected president by a landslide margin over Republican opponent Alfred M. Landon, carrying every state bar 2 and winning the popular vote by 28 m. votes to 17 m. Roosevelt's domestic programme suffered a setback soon afterwards when a bill he introduced giving him the power to appoint a new justice for every justice already over the age of 70 was rejected. The incident soured his relations with Congress and the Republicans made significant gains in the congressional elections of 1938, which put an end to any further development of his New Deal programme.

Disturbing developments abroad, particularly in Germany, Italy and Japan now absorbed Roosevelt's time. Congress passed a Neutrality Act in 1937 and Roosevelt maintained guarded neutrality to appease the many anti-interventionists in Congress and safeguard his domestic legislative programme. However he came to realise that war was inevitable. He also surmised that increased spending on defence would help pull the United States out of recession.

After Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Roosevelt asked Congress to lift an arms embargo, they refused and the president acted unilaterally in supplying 50 American destroyers to the British and introducing a peacetime draft. In 1940 Roosevelt secured re-election for an unprecedented third term when he defeated Wendell Willkie, although his margin of victory, 27 m. votes to 22 m., showed a marked decline. He continued to aid the Allies without entering the war by seizing Axis ships in US ports after a German submarine sank an American destroyer and stationing forces in Iceland and Greenland.

The United States finally entered World War II after being attacked by Japan in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii on 7 Dec. 1941 which Roosevelt dubbed 'a day that will live in infamy'. During the war Roosevelt's military policies caused some controversy – particularly his insistence on unconditional surrender as well as his refusal to fight on a second front against Germany until 1944.

In his diplomatic efforts Roosevelt was also criticized for an over-reliance on personal charm, rather than more accepted diplomatic protocol. Nevertheless, he succeeded in maintaining alliances with Great Britain and the Soviet Union in trying circumstances and successfully guided the Allies' broad strategy while delegating responsibility for specific military plans to his generals.

By 1944, Roosevelt was drained by the efforts of war and was suffering from heart disease. He was re-elected for a fourth term in office in 1944, with Harry Truman as his vice-president, when he defeated Republican Thomas E. Dewey. Three months later, with Allied victory looking inevitable, he met British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin at Yalta to begin planning the post-war European map. On 12 April 1945, Roosevelt died of a cerebral haemorrhage and Truman was sworn in as president in his place. The German surrender came just weeks later on 7 May.

Rousseff, Dilma (Brazil)

Introduction

Dilma Rousseff became Brazil's first female president on 1 Jan. 2011. A left-winger from the Workers' Party, she succeeded Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, whom she had served as chief of staff for 5 years and with whose policies she had been closely associated. She was narrowly re-elected in Oct. 2014. Rousseff was impeached and removed from office in Aug. 2016.

Early Life

Rousseff was born on 14 Dec. 1947 in Belo Horizonte, the state capital of Minas Gerais, to a Bulgarian émigré and his teacher wife. Her father had fled Europe in the 1920s, fearing persecution because of his involvement with the Bulgarian Communist Party. In Brazil he became a successful businessman.

Rousseff was schooled first at a francophone nunnery and then at Central State High School. In 1967 she joined the Worker's Politics faction of the Brazilian Socialist Party. Committed to armed struggle as the best means of achieving socialism's aims, Rousseff became involved in the militant Colina ('National Liberation Command') She was also editor of a Marxist newspaper, *The Piquet*, and married fellow militant, Cláudio Galeno Linhares, in 1968. Fearing arrest, Rousseff abandoned her studies at the Minas Gerais Federal University School of Economics and moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1969. Her first marriage failed when she began an affair with another militant, Carlos Araújo, whom she later married.

Rousseff became a leading member of the VAR Palmares (Palmares Armed Revolutionary Vanguard), a military-political organization. In 1970 she was arrested in São Paulo and subsequently claimed that she suffered torture for 22 days. Following her release from jail at the end of 1972 she moved to Porto Alegre, the state capital of Rio Grande do Sul. She graduated with a degree in economics from its Federal University.

In the late 1970s she co-founded the Democratic Labour Party (PDT) of Rio Grande do Sul and was involved in the Direct Elections Now movement, credited with helping bring an end to Brazil's military regime. Having made the transition to mainstream politics, Rousseff was appointed municipal secretary of treasury in Porto Alegre in 1986. She later led the national economics and statistics foundation as well as serving as secretary of energy and communications for Rio Grande do Sul. In the latter role she oversaw a major increase in power production and distribution that ensured the state avoided the power cuts that routinely blighted much of the rest of Brazil.

In 2001 Rousseff joined the Workers' Party led by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. In 2002 she was named minister of mines and energy by the newly elected president. The following year she became director of the Brazilian state-controlled oil conglomerate Petrobras. On 21 June 2005 she was appointed Lula's chief of staff following the resignation of José Dirceu in the wake of the Mensalão scandal that rocked the Lula administration. In April 2010 she resigned her position at Petrobras. In June 2010 she announced she was standing for the presidency. Promising to continue the populist policies of Lula, she claimed 56% of the vote in a run-off against her centre-right opponent, José Serra.

Career Peak

Never before elected to public office, Rousseff campaigned on a broad commitment to continue the left-leaning policies of her predecessor. She was also expected to forge close ties with other leftist South American leaders. As a former head of Petrobras, Rousseff has supported state involvement in key areas of the economy including banking, the oil industry and energy.

Growth figures released in March 2011 indicated that Brazil had overtaken Italy to become the world's seventh largest economy, but Rousseff's government had to introduce unpopular measures to forestall economic overheating and reduce inflation. She was also weakened politically in 2011 by the resignations of her chief of staff and the ministers of transport, agricultural and sports, together with her dismissal of the defence minister, over corruption allegations that would continue to cast a shadow over her administration. Despite antipathy towards privatization, she announced plans in Aug. 2012 to encourage private involvement in the building and running of new and essential national infrastructure, while resisting the pay demands of

public sector workers. Against a background of stagnating economic growth, a wave of street demonstrations erupted in cities across the country in June 2013, protesting against high prices, poor public services and the cost of hosting the 2014 World Cup football finals.

In May 2012 Rousseff established a truth commission to investigate the abuses committed during the military dictatorship between 1964 and 1985. In Sept. 2013 she reacted angrily to reports suggesting that the US National Security Agency had been monitoring her personal communications and those of other senior government and public officials. She cancelled a planned state visit to Washington in protest.

Rousseff was re-elected as president following her victory in a run-off against Aécio Neves of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party in the elections of Oct. 2014. However, the first year of her second term was blighted by a major corruption scandal involving politicians and former executives of Petrobras while Rousseff was chair of the company. Public indignation over the scandal and the ailing economy led to massive protests across the country, and from late 2015 opposition calls for her impeachment. The lower house of Congress moved to impeach Rousseff in April 2016, with the Senate due to decide its position in May. Rousseff could only have been impeached with the support of both houses.

In May 2016 the Senate successfully voted to suspend Rousseff's presidential powers for 6 months while it reached a verdict on whether to formally impeach her. Vice president Michel Temer took over the presidency on an interim basis. She was formally impeached by the Senate in Aug. 2016, and Temer fully took over for the rest of her term.

Later Life

In Sept. 2017 Brazil's chief federal prosecutor charged Rousseff, as well her predecessor as president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva ('Lula'), with forming a criminal organization to divert funds from Petrobras (the country's state oil company).

Rudd, Kevin (Australia)

Introduction

Having defeated Kim Beazley to become leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in Dec. 2006, Kevin Rudd maintained his political momentum into the Nov. 2007 general election in which he ousted Prime Minister John Howard's centre-right government from power. He sought to modernize the ALP—out of power for more than a decade—but faced opposition from trade unions (over proposed changes to industrial relations laws) and from within the party. Although his fiscal policy plans were deflected by the effects of the global financial crisis, he maintained a high voter approval rating as a capable leader and economic manager through to 2010 when he stood down in June following a challenge from his deputy prime minister, Julia Gillard. He became prime minister for a second time in June 2013. Following the ALP's defeat in the general election of Sept. 2013, Rudd resigned from parliament.

Early Life

Kevin Rudd was born on 21 Sept. 1957 in Queensland, the son of a dairy farmer who died after a car accident when Kevin was just 11. At 15 Rudd joined the Labor Party. In 1981 he graduated in Chinese language and history from Australian National University. His fluency in Mandarin led to a role as a diplomat, working at embassies in Beijing and Stockholm before moving to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Policy Planning Bureau.

In 1988 Rudd moved into state politics, becoming chief of staff to the then Queensland opposition leader Wayne Goss. The ALP came to power the following year after 32 years in opposition. Rudd was appointed director general of the Office of the Cabinet in Goss' government, during which time he earned a reputation for overseeing public service cutbacks. In 1996 Rudd stood for election to the federal House of Representatives. However, the ALP suffered heavy losses at both state and federal levels and he was unsuccessful. He left politics immediately after, becoming a business consultant and adjunct professor of Asian languages at the University of Queensland.

In 1998 Rudd secured election to the federal parliamentary seat of Griffith, Brisbane, although the ALP failed to dislodge the ruling Liberal-National coalition from power. He was promoted to opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, trade and national security and led criticism of Howard's handling of the 2003 Iraq war, calling for an inquiry into intelligence failures. His political rise was nevertheless controversial; he was accused of self-promotion in 2003 when he greeted Hu Jintao, the Chinese president, in Mandarin and was attacked ferociously by a former ALP leader, Mark Latham, in his autobiography.

In Nov. 2006 Rudd declared that he would challenge Kim Beazley for the leadership of the ALP, pledging a new style of politics. He won by 49 votes to 39 and was officially announced as leader on 4 Dec. 2006.

Career Peak

Following the ALP's election victory, Rudd was sworn in on 3 Dec. 2007. He promised the staged withdrawal of Australian combat troops from Iraq (achieved by mid-2008) and a 'three pillars' approach to foreign policy through closer engagement with the UN, Asia and the US-led coalition. He also pledged substantial extra investment in health and education, despite some concerns over a faltering economy. On taking office he immediately reversed the Howard government's refusal to ratify the Kyoto protocol on climate change and its decision to sell uranium to India (which is not a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty).

In Feb. 2008 Rudd made a formal apology in parliament for past injustices by the state against the indigenous population, and in July he reversed the long-standing policy of detaining all asylum seekers upon arrival until their cases are heard. Meanwhile, on his return from an overseas tour of the USA, Europe and China, he announced the appointment in April of human rights lawyer Quentin Bryce as Australia's first female Governor-General.

His government's first budget, presented in May 2008, sought to address rising inflation while earmarking anticipated budget surplus funds for infrastructure, education and health service investment. However, in response to the effects of the worsening global financial crisis, Rudd announced in Oct. a \$A10.4 bn. stimulus package to boost the economy, support families and households, and create jobs. Further government funding to help the ailing Australian motor industry followed in Nov. The next budget, delivered in May 2009, revealed a deficit of nearly 5% of GDP (one of the largest ever), underlining the economy's fragility. Rudd nevertheless used the budget to invest further in infrastructure and clean energy projects while cutting forms of middle class tax breaks. Also in May 2009, the government published a defence White Paper envisaging weapons modernization and procurement costing about US\$70 bn.

In Nov. 2009 Rudd offered a formal apology to surviving British children who had been forcibly shipped to Australian orphanages and other institutions and suffered abuse and neglect between 1930 and 1970.

His popularity waned severely in the first half of 2010 following a series of badly received policy decisions including the scrapping of an emissions trading scheme, a key part of the government's climate change strategy which was scheduled to take effect in 2011. He also announced the introduction of a supplementary tax on the mining industry which proved a divisive issue amongst voters. When rumours emerged that the deputy prime minister Julia Gillard was mounting a leadership challenge against him, Rudd initially sought to defend his position. However, when it became clear that he had insufficient support within the party he bowed out of the contest. Gillard stood unopposed at a leadership ballot on 24 June and was sworn in on the same day.

In Sept. 2010 Rudd was appointed foreign minister in Gillard's second cabinet. However, in Feb. 2012 he resigned as foreign minister and challenged Gillard's leadership. The prime minister won the backing of her Labor party colleagues in the leadership ballot, by 71 votes to 31.

By June 2013 Labor's popularity had significantly slumped in the polls and a landslide defeat in the upcoming elections was predicted. On 26 June Rudd challenged Gillard's leadership and emerged victorious in the ballot by 57 votes to 45. He was sworn in as prime minister for the second time on 27 June, 3 years after being ousted by Gillard.

During his second term as prime minister, Rudd was seen to have performed a reversal on a number of key policies and issues of his first tenure as premier. Rudd became the first Australian premier to publicly support same-sex marriage, having previously opposed it in 2007. He also backtracked on his stance against offshore asylum seeker processing, and signed an agreement with Nauru which allowed asylum seekers arriving by

boat to be detained on the island. The deal also permitted legitimate political refugees to be resettled on Nauru.

On 4 Aug. 2013, Rudd announced that general elections would take place in Sept., after parliament was dissolved by the Governor General at his request. He was subsequently defeated by Tony Abbott of the Liberal Party at the elections, and stood down from parliament shortly after.

Rüütel, Arnold (Estonia)

Introduction

Arnold Rüütel was the president of Estonia between 2001–06.

Early Life

Arnold Rüütel was born in Saaremaa, Estonia on 10 May 1928. He graduated from agricultural college in 1949 and from 1949–57 worked in agronomics and as a teacher of agriculture. In 1957 he became director and livestock expert of an experimental farm owned by the Estonian livestock breeding and veterinary institute. In 1963 he was appointed director of the Tartu Model Sovkhoz state farm. He was also studying during this period and graduated from the Estonian academy of agriculture in 1964. In 1969 he was appointed rector of the academy, a position he held for 8 years. He continued his studies into the 1990s, being awarded his doctorate in agriculture in 1991.

Rüütel's political career began in 1977 when he took the first of a series of posts in the communist institutions of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR). In 1983 he was selected as chairman of the presidium of the supreme council of the ESSR (effectively head of state). He held the position until 1990 and was key in the preparation of the Estonian declaration of sovereignty adopted on 16 Nov. 1988.

Estonia declared independence on 20 Aug. 1991. Rüütel was a member of the constitutional assembly from 1991–92 and was instrumental in drafting the new Republic's constitution. In 1992 Rüütel stood for the presidency but lost to Lennart Meri. In 1995 he was elected to parliament as vice-speaker. From 1994–2000 he was party chairman of the People's Union of Estonia.

Career Peak

When Rüütel came to power in 2001 Estonia was aiming to join NATO and the EU. To this end and to benefit the third of Estonians who are native Russian speakers Rüütel ratified a law in Dec. 2001 opening public office to non-Estonian speakers. In Nov. 2002 NATO invited Estonia to join the alliance, with the EU issuing a similar invitation a month later. In Sept. 2003 EU membership won overwhelming backing in a referendum and Estonia was one of ten new states to join the EU in May 2004. Full NATO membership was granted in March 2004.

Although the presidency is largely ceremonial, the president has been much involved with a ruling coalition subject to inter-party hostility. In 2002, Prime Minister Mart Laar resigned after parliamentary confusion threatened entry into NATO and the EU. In April 2003 Rüütel invited Juhan Parts, leader of the conservative Res Publica party, to be prime minister in a coalition with the Reform Party and the People's Union. In Feb. 2005 he sacked foreign minister Kristina Ojuland after secret files, mostly concerned with Estonia's position at EU summits, had disappeared from her ministry. Parts submitted the government's resignation after a vote of no confidence in the justice minister over a tough anti-corruption programme. Rüütel invited Reform Party leader Andrus Ansip to take over the premiership.

In March 2005 Rüütel declined an invitation to attend Moscow's celebrations to mark the anniversary of the end of the Second World War as a protest against the suffering and loss experienced by Estonia during the Soviet occupation.

Rüütel found himself at the centre of controversy in Jan. 2006 when it was reported that his underage grandchildren had hosted a party on presidential grounds which included alcohol. Amid speculation that he would not stand for office again, in June 2006 he announced he would contest a further presidential term. After two failed attempts to select a president, parliament met for a third time on 23 Sept. Rüütel received 162 votes to 174 for Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Ilves duly succeeded Rüütel on 9 Oct. 2006.

Saakashvili, Mikheil (Georgia)

Introduction

Mikheil Saakashvili was first elected president on 4 Jan. 2004. A former protégé of President Eduard Shevardnadze, he led opposition to the rigged parliamentary elections of Nov. 2003 and forced the president to resign. Saakashvili's peaceful management of the 'rose revolution' earned him respect at home and abroad and even the support of the ousted Shevardnadze. However, he faced increasing domestic opposition. He secured re-election as president in Jan. 2008, but with a much reduced majority, and was further undermined as he entered the final year of his second presidential term when an opposition coalition won control of parliament in elections in Oct. 2012. Relations with Russia, which were shattered in Aug. 2008 when Georgian military action against the separatist enclave of South Ossetia provoked a retaliatory invasion by Russian forces, have remained fraught. Saakashvili renounced his Georgian citizenship in 2015 in order to become a Ukrainian national.

Early Life

Mikheil (Mikhail in Russian) Saakashvili was born on 21 Dec. 1967 in Tbilisi. He received law degrees from Kyiv University, Ukraine in 1992 and Columbia University, New York in 1994 and completed a doctorate in juridical science at George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He pursued further studies in Florence and Strasbourg.

While working for a New York law firm, Saakashvili was approached by Zurab Zhvania, speaker of the Georgian parliament. The Georgian leader, Eduard Shevardnadze, was seeking potential parliamentary candidates, unconnected to the Soviet system. Saakashvili returned home and was elected to parliament in Dec. 1995. As a member of Shevardnadze's Citizens' Union and a trained jurist, his political career developed rapidly. He served as chairman of the parliamentary committee on electoral reform and contributed to the drafting of the 1995 constitution. He led the Citizens' Union in parliament from 1998–99 and was appointed vice-president of the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly in Jan. 2000.

Appointed justice minister in Oct. 2000, Saakashvili attempted an overhaul of the judicial system, condemned by international observers as highly corrupt. He also tried to reform the prison system and proposed a bill on illegal property confiscation, which was blocked by Shevardnadze. His programme was cut short when he openly accused the ministers for economics and state security and Tbilisi's head of police of corruption and profiteering. Shevardnadze, then president, refused to act on these charges, forcing Saakashvili to resign in Sept. 2001.

Having left the government, he continued his anti-corruption programme by forming a party, the United National Movement (UNM), to represent Georgia's reformist elements. Coalition partners included the small ideological Republican Party and the Union of National Forces. Support was widened by alliances with Zurab Zhvania's United Democrats and the Burjanadze-Democrats, led by Nino Burjanadze, Zhvania's replacement as speaker. Saakashvili was elected chairman of the Tbilisi Assembly in June 2002.

Saakashvili campaigned for the Nov. 2003 parliamentary elections on an anti-Shevardnadze platform, drawing large crowds with his energetic rhetoric, especially in Adjara, in the southwest, and Kvemo Kartli, a province in the southeast with a large Azeri minority. Despite OSCE sponsorship, the elections on 2 Nov. were chaotic and heavily rigged by the ruling Citizens' Union. The delayed announcement of provisional results provoked accusations of electoral fraud. Burjanadze and Zhvania agreed to form a coalition with Saakashvili—the United Opposition Front—and massive demonstrations were organized night after night in Tbilisi. After the results were announced, putting Saakashvili's UNM in third place, a boycott of parliament was declared by the coalition. Shevardnadze refused to compromise and opened parliament on 22 Nov. Saakashvili responded by summoning his national supporters to Tbilisi and demanded the president's resignation. During Shevardnadze's opening address Saakashvili burst into the assembly, brandishing a rose, the symbol of the peaceful demonstrations. His supporters occupied the chancellery, causing the president to declare a state of emergency.

Bereft of support from abroad and in his own government, Shevardnadze finally resigned on 23 Nov. His avoidance of a military solution was praised

internationally and by the opposition leaders. In the wake of his resignation, Saakashvili, Burjanadze and Zhvania agreed to present a united front in immediate presidential elections, the former gaining the support from the other two in exchange for senior government positions. On 4 Jan. 2004 Saakashvili won the presidential election with just over 96% of the votes. His electoral promises were broad and ambitious: the abolition of taxes on small businesses, doubling of pensions and public sector salaries and swift punishment for the worst abuses of the previous regime. His campaign was strengthened by the co-operation of Shevardnadze, who voted for his successor.

Career Peak

Saakashvili declared his priorities in office as maintaining the territorial integrity of Georgia and his anti-corruption programme. He consolidated his political position in March 2004 when the National Movement–Democrats bloc won the parliamentary elections with a substantial majority of seats. Tension increased with Adjara's president, Aslan Abashidze, who declared a state of emergency in his jurisdiction and rejected the new central government's authority. Saakashvili reasserted direct control over Adjara in May 2004 after popular demonstrations in Batumi forced Abashidze to step down. Elsewhere, Saakashvili proposed giving greater autonomy—but not full independence—to the separatist regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Despite friction with Russia over its links with these regions, its military bases in Georgia and the conflict in Chechnya (where Russia has accused Georgia of aiding Chechen fighters), Saakashvili initially sought to improve relations between the two countries. Nevertheless, bilateral tensions resurfaced in 2006 as energy supplies from Russia were disrupted in Jan., Russia suspended imports of Georgian wine and mineral water on health grounds in March–May, and Georgia briefly detained and then expelled four Russian army officers on spying charges in Sept.–Oct. (in retaliation for which Russia imposed a transport blockade and adopted punitive measures against ethnic Georgians living in Russia). In Dec. 2006 the Georgian government accepted a doubling of the price of Russian natural gas supplies, but accused its powerful neighbour of political blackmail.

Tension continued through 2007, as Georgia accused Russia of violations of its airspace in Aug. and of orchestrating mass opposition demonstrations in Tbilisi against Saakashvili's government which in Nov. led to a police crackdown and temporary state of emergency. The protests were sparked particularly by allegations of corruption and murder against Saakashvili made by a former defence minister in Sept. Despite his apparent unpopularity and opposition claims of fraud and vote rigging, Saakashvili was re-elected as president in polling in Jan. 2008, and in May the ruling UNM won a landslide victory in parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, suspicious of Georgia's aspirations to join NATO, Russia stated in April 2008 that it would strengthen its links with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. This prompted the Georgian government to accuse Russia of planning military intervention and annexation of the regions. In Aug. continuing tensions escalated into outright military conflict after Georgian troops had mounted an attack of separatist forces in South Ossetia. Russian forces occupied the enclaves and advanced deep into Georgian territory, destroying strategic targets, before agreeing a French-brokered ceasefire following diplomatic intervention by the European Union. Later in the month, Russia unilaterally recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a move rejected by Saakashvili and the Western nations. In Sept. Russia announced that it would keep troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia but completed the withdrawal from the rest of Georgia in Oct.

Also in Oct. 2008, Saakashvili's former ally, Nino Burjanadze, announced the creation of a new opposition group, claiming that the government was not capable of protecting the country and should face fresh elections. Opposition agitation against the president and his powers continued in 2009 and in May the authorities quelled a military mutiny. In May 2011 riot police violently broke up a rally in Tbilisi by opposition protesters calling on Saakashvili to resign, and in May 2012 a massive anti-government demonstration took place in the capital. In elections in Oct. 2012, the opposition Georgia Dream coalition led by Bidzina Ivanishvili won a parliamentary majority to oust the ruling pro-Saakashvili UNM administration.

Georgia's relations with Russia thawed in the first few months of 2010 as direct air traffic resumed in Jan. and a border crossing closed since 2006 was reopened in March. However, in Aug. Russia announced that it was deploying air defence systems in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in defiance of Georgian sovereignty.

In the lead-up to the Oct. 2013 presidential elections public support for Saakashvili plummeted, reflecting the general disillusionment with his rule in recent years, as the president was increasingly criticized for extensive authoritarianism. Saakashvili was forbidden from contesting the elections owing to term limits and Giorgi Margvelashvili, an ally of Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, was elected president, while UNM's candidate obtained only a fifth of the vote. Saakashvili stepped down as president in Nov. and faces questioning over the 2008 war and for his alleged role in the 2005 death of Zurab Zhvania, the prime minister at the time.

Later Life

Saakashvili left Georgia shortly after the 2013 election, moving to the United States to take up a teaching position at Tufts University in Massachusetts. During his period abroad he voiced support for the 2014 Ukrainian revolution, and in Feb. 2015 was appointed by Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko to lead an advisory body working to implement reforms in the country.

In June 2015 Saakashvili became a Ukrainian citizen (renouncing his Georgian citizenship) and was appointed governor of Odesa province. He resigned in Nov. 2016, citing corruption in the Ukrainian government, and in July 2017 he was stripped of Ukrainian citizenship.

Saca, Elías Antonio (El Salvador)

Introduction

Antonio Saca, a sports broadcaster and media mogul with limited political experience, was elected president in March 2004. His conservative administration strengthened ties with the USA through a free-trade agreement. Saca left office on 1 June 2009 at the end of his term in office.

Early Life

Eliás Antonio Saca González was born on 9 March 1965 in Usulután, the son of Palestinian immigrants. Educated at the San Agustín school in Usulután and the Cervantes Institute in the capital, San Salvador, Saca began working in the media, initially for Radio Vanguardia. From 1980, against the backdrop of civil war, Saca specialized in sports commentary for radio while studying journalism at the University of El Salvador. In 1983 he became head of sports coverage at El Salvador's Channel 4 television station, a position he held for 10 years. By the mid-1990s he was a well-known national figure, as well as the owner of several radio stations. In 1997 he became president of the Salvadorean Association of Radio Broadcasters (ASDER) and was later elected to the presidency of the Association of Private Businessmen.

Saca contested the presidential election of March 2004 as candidate for the conservative Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). Despite his lack of political experience, he easily defeated the National Liberation Front candidate, Schafik Hándal. Opponents were critical of Saca's influence over the media.

Career Peak

Sworn in as president on 1 June 2004, Saca built on the conservative, pro-US policies of his predecessor, Francisco Flores. Saca pledged to fight poverty and unemployment and attract inward investment. In March 2006 the government implemented the Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) along with the USA, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In the same month Saca's ARENA party emerged as the largest party in parliamentary elections, although in those of Jan. 2009 ARENA was defeated by the left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). Saca left office on 1 June 2009 at the conclusion of his 5 year term. He was succeeded by Mauricio Funes of the FMLN, who became the first leftist president of El Salvador for 20 years.

Later Life

In 2014 Saca contested the presidential election held in Feb. but failed to progress beyond the first round, gaining just 11.4% of the vote.

In March 2016 the supreme court ordered that Saca should stand trial on charges of illegal enrichment during his time in office. He was arrested in Oct. 2016, along with several other suspects accused of diverting US\$246 m. of public funds.

Sadat, Muhammad Anwar (Egypt)

Introduction

Muhammad Anwar Sadat became President of Egypt in 1970, at a time when the country was preoccupied with neighbouring Israel. Having emerged a hero from the fourth Arab-Israeli War of 1973, his most controversial political move came in 1977 when he travelled to Jerusalem with overtures of peace. This initiative won Sadat the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize (together with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin). But the consequent Camp David accords (in Sept. 1978) and bilateral peace treaty (signed in March 1979), which were brokered by United States President Jimmy Carter, earned Sadat the enmity of the rest of the Arab world. He was assassinated, while still in office, by Muslim extremists in 1981.

Early Life

Sadat was born into a family of 13 children on 25 Dec. 1918. He grew up in the town of Mit Abu al-Kom, north of Cairo. Like his contemporary, Gamal Abdel Nasser, he went to the military academy in Cairo and graduated in 1938. He was then commissioned in the Egyptian army. An ardent nationalist, Sadat was imprisoned in 1942 during the Second World War for plotting with the Germans against the British-backed Egyptian establishment. Later he joined Nasser's Free Officers revolutionary organization. Having taken part in the successful coup against the monarchy in 1952, he supported Nasser's election to the presidency in 1956. Under the Nasser regime, Sadat held various high offices, serving as vice president between 1964–7 and 1969–70. On Nasser's death, although largely unknown and untested, he became acting president and was then elected to the post in a plebiscite on 15 Oct. 1970.

Career Peak

Sadat's enduring presidential legacy was his redirection of Egyptian foreign policy and his impact on international diplomacy generally. He made bold moves. In 1972 he expelled thousands of Russian technicians and advisers from the country in the wake of deterioration in the Egyptian-Soviet relationship fostered by his predecessor. He launched, with the Syrians, a joint surprise attack on Israel heralding the 'Yom Kippur' war of Oct. 1973. This campaign restored a degree of Arab military pride and prestige. It undermined the image of Israeli invincibility and gave Sadat greater credibility and respect both at home and abroad. But his most dramatic initiative was his historic personal address to the Israeli Parliament in the cause of peace in Nov. 1977 during the first official visit by an Arab head of state to Israel since its foundation. In his address to the Knesset, Sadat explicitly accepted (with conditions) the existence of Israel as a Middle East state. This led to a series of diplomatic contacts culminating in the Camp David accords of Sept. 1978—which provided for the staged Israeli withdrawal from Sinai and moves towards the establishment of Palestinian autonomy and a self-governing authority in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

However, his peace initiative isolated Egypt from the rest of the Arab world. The Arab League relocated its headquarters from Cairo to Tunis and many Arab countries broke off diplomatic and trading relations. At home, hostility to negotiation with Israel, ongoing economic hardship, the growth of Islamic fundamentalism, and government repression further undermined Sadat's standing.

On 6 Oct. 1981 Sadat was assassinated at a military parade in Cairo. In contrast to the public grief displayed at the death of his predecessor, Sadat's funeral elicited little reaction from his people.

Saikhanbileg, Chimed (Mongolia)

Introduction

Chimed Saikhanbileg became prime minister on 21 Nov. 2014 after his predecessor, Norov Altankhuyag, was ousted after a parliamentary vote of no confidence on 5 Nov. Saikhanbileg had previously been minister of the Cabinet Office and was a former minister for education.

Early Life

Saikhanbileg was born in 1969 in Dornod. He was schooled in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, before graduating in history from Russia's Moscow State University for the Humanities in 1991. He later received a law degree from the National University of Mongolia in 1995 and a master's degree in the same subject from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., USA in 2002.

An aspiring career politician, in 1991 Saikhanbileg became an officer in the Mongolian Youth Federation (MYF) and acted as its secretary in Ulaanbaatar until 1997. In 1996 he was elected to parliament for the DP, serving until 2000 and re-entering parliament in 2008. From 1997–2002 he served as national president of the MYF, and was minister for education from 1998–2000. Between 2000 and 2008 he worked in private legal practice and as a government press officer. In 2008 he was re-elected to parliament, becoming leader of the DP caucus. From 2012–14 he was minister of the Cabinet Office.

Career Peak

Saikhanbileg was elected to the premiership in Nov. 2014 by parliament, claiming 44 of 46 available votes. However, the poll was boycotted by 32 members of the opposition Mongolian People's Party (MPP), who claimed that Saikhanbileg was equally culpable in the Altankhuyag government's failure to tackle the slowing economy, attract foreign investment and monetize rich mineral resources. The MPP nonetheless joined the new coalition government comprising Saikhanbileg's DP and the Justice Coalition.

Needing to rejuvenate the mining sector, which has been affected by disputes and delays to projects, Saikhanbileg promptly began negotiating with the International Monetary Fund to secure financial support. He also signed a trade deal with Japan, including a US\$308 m. loan to finance a new international airport in Ulaanbaatar.

Ahead of elections scheduled for June 2016, Saikhanbileg dismissed the six MPP ministers in his coalition cabinet in Aug. 2015—a move endorsed by the DP-controlled parliament but opposed by President Elbegdorj—and replaced them in Sept. with new appointments.

Saikhanbileg left office in July 2016 having failed to secure re-election as a member of parliament in June.

Early Life

Simeon Borisov Saksoburggotski was born on 16 June 1937 in Sofia, the son of King Boris III. His father died in Aug. 1943, widely believed to have been murdered, and the 6-year old Simeon succeeded him, though day-to-day rule was in the hands of a council of regency. Soviet forces invaded the country in Sept. 1944 and 2 years later oversaw a referendum that abolished the monarchy. Shortly afterwards Simeon fled the country, though without officially abdicating.

Settling first in Egypt, where he studied at Victoria College in Alexandria until 1951, he then moved to Spain and attended the French School there. On his 18th birthday he issued a proclamation challenging the legality of the Soviet takeover and reasserting his constitutional rights. After finishing his schooling, he attended at the Valley Forge Military Academy, Pennsylvania before studying business administration and law.

In 1962 he married Margarita Gómez-Acebo y Cejuela, with whom he had five children. Fluent in six languages, Simeon then embarked on a career in commerce. He made his return to Bulgaria in 1996, 7 years after the collapse of the communist regime, and received widespread public support. His former estates were returned to him in 1998. He was considering standing in the presidential elections of Oct. 2001 but was ineligible on residency grounds. Having declared that his aim was 'to work for Bulgaria, not for one party' he established the NDST to fight the parliamentary elections.

In April 2001 a Sofia court ruled that his party did not meet several criteria necessary to be registered for the June elections. This ruling was subsequently overturned and the party, which included politicians from across the political spectrum, won 42.7% of the vote and 120 seats. Having reached agreement for a coalition with the DPS, Simeon was asked to form a government by President Stoyanov in July 2001.

Career Peak

Simeon's government set out an optimistic agenda that included the eradication of corruption and the 'substantial improvement' of living standards within 800 days of taking office. Among his proposed economic reforms were wholesale privatization, tax cuts and business deregulation. It was also hoped that an overhaul of the country's economy would hasten acceptance into the EU and NATO. In Oct. 2002 Bulgaria was refused entry into the EU during the planned expansion of 2004 but was given a target date for membership of 2007. The country was invited to join NATO in 2004 and, as planned, became a member of the EU on 1 Jan. 2007.

Among the considerable problems his administration faced were unemployment (officially running at 18%, though other observers have suggested a base rate closer to 28%), poverty affecting 65% of the population, rampant inflation and the long-term impact of emigration (10% of the population having left the country since the collapse of communism in 1989).

At the elections Simeon's party claimed 20% of the vote, behind the Socialists who, under Sergei Stanishev, went on to form the government after a month of political wrangling. Having initially refused to join the ruling coalition, Simeon joined Stanishev's administration in 2005.

Salad Hassan, Abdiqasim (Somalia)

Introduction

Following the removal from office of the Somali dictator Siyad Barre in 1991 by a coalition of clan leaders, Somalia sank into anarchy. There was no central government, the infrastructure of the country was destroyed and two break-away states in the north—Somaliland (the former British Somaliland) and Puntland—effectively seceded. In Aug. 2000, a Somali peace conference, boycotted by some factions, elected Abdiqasim Salad Hassan as president of a transitional government, the authority of which is limited to less than one quarter of the country. He served as interim president from 2000 through to 2004.

Early Life

Abdiqasim Salad Hassan was born in 1942 into the powerful Hawiye clan in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. He was too young to have been involved in the Somali struggle for independence from Italian rule. However, he

Saksoburggotski, Simeon (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Simeon II was Bulgaria's prime minister from 2001–05 and its former monarch, having been deposed and exiled by the communists in 1946. He formed the National Movement for Simeon the Second (Nacionalno Dvišenie Simeon Tsvori/NDST) 2 months before general elections in 2001 when he claimed half of the parliamentary seats. He formed a coalition with the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (Dvišenie za Pravata i Svobodie/DPS), representing the Turkish minority. Opponents initially feared he would attempt to reinstitute the monarchy but no such move was ever made. Simeon sought to implement market reforms to kickstart the economy and supported membership of the EU and NATO.

became politically active during the presidency of Adan Abdullah Osman, the first president of Somalia, who held office until 1967. When Siyad Barre seized power in 1969, Salad Hassan was already an established political figure. Initially sympathetic to the aims of Barre, Salad Hassan was appointed interior minister in 1971 and later became deputy prime minister.

When Barre was overthrown, Salad Hassan fled to Egypt. He and his family established themselves in Cairo while Somalia disintegrated into warring factions controlled by local warlords. Leaving his family in Egypt to campaign for a peace conference to set up a national government, Salad Hassan spent all but 17 months of the period 1991–2000 in Somalia. From 1997 he was based in Mogadishu. The conference, held in Djibouti in 2000, established a framework for a transitional government to run for 3 years. On 27 Aug. 2000, Abdiqasim Salad Hassan was elected by the conference to head the government.

Career Peak

Most Western governments withheld recognition from Salad Hassan. The four strong southern warlords, including one of the most powerful of Somalia's faction leaders, Xusen (Hussein) Mohammed Aydeed, also refused recognition.

Salad Hassan eventually returned to Mogadishu, a city in ruins, without electricity or running water, in Oct. 2000. He began to form a national army and a police force, and appointed a 25-member government, in part from the Somali diaspora in Europe and North America. However, his progress was hampered by the continuing secession of Puntland and Somaliland and the transitional authority's inability to control more than a fraction of the national territory. Since March 2001, Salad Hassan has faced opposition from the five-person Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council, whose members rotate monthly the nominal role of chairman. This Council is the meeting place for the principal warlords outside the control of the transitional government.

Rumours of possible links between al-Qaeda and an Islamic organization in Somalia called al Itihaad surfaced in 2001. Salad Hassan has denied these links.

In Oct. 2002 peace talks between the Somali government and rebel groups were held in Eldoret, Kenya. Representatives of other East African nations, the African Union and the Arab League also attended. After 2 weeks of negotiations a ceasefire was signed.

In the presidential elections held in Oct. 2004 Salad Hassan was eliminated in the second round of voting.

Salam, Tammam (Lebanon)

Introduction

Tammam Salam was nominated as prime minister-designate in April 2013 by President Michel Suleiman following Najib Mikati's resignation 2 weeks earlier. Considered a centrist, Salam received support for his premiership from parties across the political spectrum, including Hizbollah. However, the process of forming a cabinet with broad political appeal took until Feb. 2014. He was acting president from May 2014 to Oct. 2016.

Early Life

Salam was born in Beirut on 13 May 1945 to a prominent Sunni Muslim family. His father, Saeb, was prime minister on four separate occasions between 1952 and 1973 and his grandfather, Salim Ali Salam, was an official in the Ottoman Empire and later in the French colonial mandate. Salam was educated at Brummana High School and Haigazian University in Beirut. He later graduated with a degree in economics and management after studying in the United Kingdom.

In 1974 Salam founded Ruwwad Al Islah in Beirut, a movement advocating political reform, but disbanded it at the start of the civil war as he distanced himself from militant activities. In 1978 he joined the board of Makassed, an Islamic philanthropic organization with strong ties to the Salam family, and in 1982 took over its presidency from his father. He stayed in the role until 2000.

He first stood for election to parliament in 1992 but withdrew his candidacy in protest at Syrian dominance of Lebanese politics. He stood again in 1996 with the support of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and was elected to represent a Beirut constituency. By 2000 the alliance between al-Hariri and Salam had collapsed and Salam failed to win re-election. On 11 July 2008 Salam was appointed minister of culture in Fouad Siniora's government and returned to parliament at the 2009 election.

Following Mikati's resignation as premier on 23 March 2013, the 14 March Alliance nominated Salam to replace him. He won 124 of a possible 128 votes from parliament and on 6 April 2013 President Suleiman tasked him with forming a government. However, it was not until 15 Feb. 2014 that he was sworn into office.

Career Peak

Having spent almost a year negotiating the composition of his government, Salam's main task was to organize legislative elections that were initially scheduled for Nov. 2014. However, parliament's term was subsequently extended to 2017, given its deadlock over electing a new state president, in whose place Salam had assumed acting responsibilities on 25 May 2014. Salam was subsequently confronted by political rivalries, serious sectarian tensions, economic problems and a refugee crisis caused by the continuing conflict in neighbouring Syria. Inconclusive efforts to elect a new president continued for a record period extended into 2016 when parliament finally elected Michel Aoun. Shortly after, Aoun named Saad al-Hariri prime minister, a position he had already held from Sept. 2009 to June 2011. Aoun was succeeded as prime minister by al-Hariri in Dec. 2016.

Saleh, Ali Abdullah (Yemen)

Introduction

Ali Abdullah Saleh came to power at the age of 36 in July 1978 as president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). On the YAR's unification with the People's Democratic Republic (South Yemen) in May 1990, he assumed the presidency of the new Republic of Yemen. In 1994 his regime crushed an attempted secession by southern forces in a brief civil war. Secure in power, Saleh was re-elected president in 1999 and 2006. After months of protests, Saleh signed an agreement that transferred his powers to the Vice President, Abdo Rabu Mansour al-Hadi, who was sworn in as president in Feb. 2012. Saleh was Yemen's longest-serving president and the fourth Arab leader to fall since the beginning of the Arab Spring revolutions.

Early Life

Saleh was born in 1942 in Bait Al Ahmar in Sana'a governorate and joined the armed forces at the age of 16. In Sept. 1962 Imam Muhammad al-Badr (king and spiritual leader) was deposed in a military revolution and an eight-year civil war ensued, in which Saleh fought for the new Yemen Arab Republic government, aided by Egypt, against the royalist forces supported by Saudi Arabia. The YAR regime retained power and secured international recognition, but remained unstable throughout the 1970s, partly owing to tensions with the Marxist regime in southern Yemen. Saleh meanwhile gained military promotions, and reportedly played a role in a coup that brought Ibrahim al-Hamadi to power in 1974. When President Ahmad al-Ghashmi (in power from Oct. 1977) was assassinated in June 1978, Saleh was military commander of Ta'iz governorate. After the assassination (blamed on the regime in Aden), the Constituent Assembly formed a provisional Presidential Council, including Saleh. On 17 July the Assembly elected him president of the YAR.

Career Peak

Saleh's early months in power were turbulent. In Sept.–Oct. 1978 he survived an assassination attempt and a coup plot, both thought to have external backing. In Feb.–March 1979 further sporadic conflict with South Yemen escalated into full-scale war. Arab League mediation brought the fighting to an end and subsequent protracted negotiations resulted in reunification as the Republic of Yemen on 22 May 1990. Saleh had previously been re-elected as

YAR president by the Constituent Assembly in May 1983 and again in July 1988 by a new Consultative Council. On unification and political liberalization in May 1990, a five-member Presidential Council assumed power and Saleh was chosen as president of the new republic for a transitional period. A rebellion by disaffected southern forces was suppressed in 1994. In Oct. of that year Saleh was elected president of the republic by parliament. His position was further reinforced in Sept. 1999 when he was directly elected by the people as president for the first time (albeit on a low turnout). An extension of his presidential term from five to 7 years was approved in a referendum in Feb. 2001 and he continued to head the General People's Congress, which won decisively the most recent parliamentary elections in April 2003. In Sept. 2006 Saleh was re-elected for a further presidential term with 77% of the popular vote. Despite opposition protests, the parliament voted in Jan. 2011 in favour of constitutional amendments that could have seen the president in power for life. Subsequently, however, there were increasing demonstrations against his 32-year rule, fuelled by anti-government sentiment across the Arab world, and in Feb. he announced that he would not stand for re-election again.

Saleh imposed a crackdown against Islamic terrorism following al-Qaeda attacks on a US warship in Aden in Oct. 2000 and on a French supertanker off the Yemeni coast in Oct. 2002. However, the country has since remained vulnerable to anti-Western terrorist violence, with bomb attacks on diplomatic, business, transport and tourist targets. In 2010 government forces stepped up their campaign to counter the growing and destabilizing presence of the al-Qaeda terrorist network in Yemen. In particular, al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the failed attack on a US passenger airliner in Dec. 2009 and for planting explosive packages that were intercepted aboard commercial cargo planes flying from Yemen to the USA in Oct. 2010.

Since 2004 there has been frequent fighting between government forces and rebellious tribesmen demanding regional autonomy. These clashes have also provoked military confrontation with Saudi Arabia along the two countries' common border.

On 3 June 2011 Saleh was injured in an attack on his presidential compound. After 9 months of mass protests calling for his resignation, Saleh signed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) plan on 23 Nov. 2011, which agreed to transfer the office and powers of the presidency to his deputy, Vice President Abdo Rabu Mansour al-Hadi. Al-Hadi was sworn in as the new president on 25 Feb. 2012, bringing an end to Saleh's 33 years in power.

Later Life

The Houthis, an Islamic rebel movement that took part in the 2011 protests, disagreed with the terms of the GCC plan and used this as a pretext to expand the territories they already controlled in North and West Yemen. Allegedly supported by Iran, by 2014 they had reached Sana'a. In Jan. 2015 they seized the presidential palace, forcing President al-Hadi to flee to Saudi Arabia. In response, a Saudi-led military coalition aimed at re-establishing him as president. In the conflict, Ali Abdullah Saleh—who had kept some political influence—surprisingly approved the Houthi rebels, but on 2 Dec. 2017 he changed his mind and urged the population to come forward and fight them. As he was trying to escape Sana'a 2 days later he was shot dead in a clash with the Houthis.

Salinas de Gortari, Carlos (Mexico)

Introduction

Economist and government official for the dominant PRI party, Carlos Salinas de Gortari was president of Mexico from 1988 to 1994. He aimed to lead Mexico onto a more capitalist track, privatizing many state owned corporations and opening up the economy to foreign investment. His major achievements included taking Mexico into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the USA and Canada in 1992. However, the successes of Salinas' reforms were in some cases short lived and his reputation has been clouded by the Zapatista uprising of 1994 and its aftermath, as well as claims of corruption and scandal.

Early Life

Salinas was born in Mexico City on 3 April 1948, the son of a Mexican senator. He studied economics at the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de México (National Autonomous University), where his professors included his political predecessor Miguel de la Madrid, the Mexican president between 1982 and 1988. Subsequently, Salinas studied at Harvard University. His political career began at the age of 18 when he joined the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI) and progressed from 1971 as he held increasingly important economic roles in the government. His political career was advanced further by the election of de la Madrid in whose cabinet he was minister of planning and budget. In 1987, de la Madrid nominated Salinas to be his successor as the PRI candidate in the 1988 presidential elections. His rival was the Frente Democratico Nacional (National Democratic Front; FDN) candidate Cuauhtemo Cárdenas, the son of the former president Lazaro Cárdenas. The long domination of the PRI appeared to be threatened as Cárdenas gained a majority of the votes and prepared to be the next president. However, a mid-election computer crash resulted in a recount that installed Salinas de Gortari as de la Madrid's successor with 50.4% of the votes.

Career Peak

Despite accusations of electoral fraud, de Gortari was considered more successful than his immediate predecessors. He instigated a series of economic reforms that resulted in the reduction of Mexico's foreign debt and a lowering of inflation. He reduced public spending, devalued the peso, reformed the tax system, removed import controls and tariff reductions and renegotiated Mexico's US\$100 m. debt. Salinas continued de la Madrid's privatization policies, selling off many state-owned corporations so that by early 1992 approximately 85% had become privately owned. Privatized companies included the Banco Nacional de Mexico and the Banco de Comercio as well as the telephone company Telefonos de Mexico. By 1993 Salinas' policies had resulted in a 10% lowering of inflation and a US\$25 bn. reduction of foreign debt. These reforms were widely praised internationally and laid the groundwork for the implementation of NAFTA with the USA and Canada, which served to reduce tariffs between these 3 countries. This agreement was signed on 7 Oct. 1992 and came into effect on 1 Jan. 1994. One industrial benefit of the treaty has been a large increase in car production.

The increasing trend towards capitalism under Salinas' government resulted in a slackening of anticlericalism which led to a re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican, an authorization of religious schools and the right to vote for nuns and priests.

As a result of increased privatization, Salinas reduced the power of the trade unions, a measure that resulted in a mud-slinging campaign by the hitherto powerful leader of the oil union, Joaquín Hernández Galicia. He distributed defamatory leaflets about Salinas, an act that led to his subsequent arrest and imprisonment. Living standards fell sharply for many poorer Mexicans as wealth inequality widened. The abolition of the *ejidos* system of agricultural co-operatives led to financial problems for the poorest farmers who could not afford to buy the privatized land. These reforms were a catalyst for the revolt in early 1994, commencing with an armed insurrection in the southern state of Chiapas where *campesinos*, or peasant farmers, took over the state capital San Cristóbal de las Casas, under the command of the guerrilla leader Subcomandante Marcos. Fighting under the name of the revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata, the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of National Liberation; EZLN) fought for land reform policies and social and economic equality. Despite a forceful army reaction to the uprising, in which more than 145 people died, EZLN continued to defy government control and to gain support. After failed attempts to suppress the insurrection, President Salinas opened negotiations with the Zapatistas. A direct consequence of the Zapatista insurrection was a virtual collapse of the Mexican currency in 1994, sending the economy into chaos.

In March 1994 the popular PRI candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, who was due to succeed Salinas, was assassinated in Tijuana. Consequently, it was Ernesto Zedillo who led the PRI into the next election and succeeded Salinas as president. Colosio had shortly before promoted controversial changes for the PRI, and there were rumours of government involvement in his assassination.

Salmond, Alexander (Scotland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

Leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP), Alex Salmond became Scotland's first minister on 16 May 2007 and headed a minority Scottish Government from 2007–11. Following a historic victory by the SNP in the 2011 Scottish Parliament election Salmond now heads a majority government. As one of the foremost proponents of Scottish independence, Salmond and the SNP supported the campaign for secession from the United Kingdom leading to the Sept. 2014 referendum on whether Scotland should become an independent country. He subsequently resigned as leader of the SNP and first minister after Scotland voted to stay in the union.

Early Life

Alexander Elliot Anderson Salmond was born on 31 Dec. 1954 in Linlithgow. He was educated at Linlithgow Academy and the University of St Andrews, where he gained an MA in economics and history. He became active in the SNP when he joined the Federation of Student Nationalists at St Andrews in 1973, later becoming its president. In 1978 Salmond joined the department of agriculture and fisheries for Scotland as an assistant economist. He was recruited to the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1980.

As a young activist, Salmond was a committed left-winger and a leading member of the 79 Group, a socialist republican organization within the SNP. He was expelled from the party in 1982 for his hard-line views but readmitted a year later. In 1987 he won the parliamentary seat of Banff and Buchan, which he has held ever since. In 1990 he was elected the leader of the SNP. Under Salmond's leadership the SNP emerged as the second largest party in Scotland, developing its image as socially democratic, pro-European and with a gradualist approach toward independence.

In 1999 Salmond was elected to the Scottish parliament but unexpectedly stood down as leader of the SNP in 2000 and left the Scottish parliament a year later to concentrate his efforts in Westminster. In 2004 Salmond had a change of heart and decided to run again for the SNP leadership, which he won with an overwhelming majority. On 3 May 2007 he was re-elected to the Scottish parliament when he won the constituency of Gordon.

Career Peak

From 2007–11 Salmond's minority government faced tough opposition to its more radical policies, including a referendum on Scottish independence. In the general election of May 2010 the SNP retained its six seats but failed to reach Salmond's ambitious target of 20, a result Salmond blamed on the exclusion of minor parties from the televised leader debates. However, in the May 2011 Scottish Parliament election the SNP won 69 seats, delivering the first majority government since the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. There was now sufficient support in the Scottish Parliament for a referendum on Scottish independence. In Jan. 2012 Salmond announced his intention to hold the referendum in the autumn of 2014.

In March 2013 the Scottish government announced that the referendum would be held on 18 Sept. 2014. Arrangements for the referendum set out in the Scottish Independence Referendum Bill were subsequently ratified by the Scottish parliament and given royal assent. According to an ICM poll held in July 2014, 34% of Scots were in favour of independence.

A 670-page document outlining the case for Scottish independence was published by the Scottish government in Nov. 2013. Titled *Scotland's Future*, it addressed key issues regarding a potential independent Scotland, including the retention of the British monarch as head of state, new employment legislation, renationalization of the Royal Mail and the removal of Trident nuclear weapons. The paper was described by Salmond as 'the most comprehensive blueprint for an independent country ever published'.

In the referendum on Scottish independence from the United Kingdom held on 18 Sept. 2014 voters decided to remain in the union, with 44.7% of votes in favour of independence and 55.3% against. The next day Salmond

announced his resignation as leader of the SNP and first minister of Scotland. He continued as leader of the SNP until the party conference held in Nov., and stood down as first minister of Scotland less than a week later. Nicola Sturgeon, who had been deputy leader of the SNP since 2004, took over both offices.

Samaras, Antonis (Greece)

Introduction

Antonis Samaras was sworn in as prime minister on 20 June 2012. His appointment ended a 7-week stalemate in which successive parties had failed to form a workable coalition. He was faced with rebuilding an economy damaged by the global financial crisis. He remained in office until Jan. 2015 when he was succeeded by Alexis Tsipras of the radical left Syriza party.

Early Life

Samaras was born in Athens on 23 May 1951 and educated at the elite Athens College. In his youth he was a close friend of his future political rival, the socialist prime minister, Georgios Papandreu.

Samaras graduated in economics from Amherst College, a private liberal arts college in the USA, and completed an MBA at Harvard Business School. He was elected to parliament in 1977 as the New Democracy representative for Messenia and was appointed finance minister in 1989. He was named minister of foreign affairs in the cabinet of Konstantinos Mitsotakis 3 years later.

Samaras led hard-line opposition to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia using that name as a newly independent state on the grounds that it is also the name of a bordering Greek province. It was a stance that led to his expulsion from the Greek government. He responded by establishing his own political party, Political Spring, creating a schism on the Greek right that prompted the demise of Mitsotakis' government in 1993.

Political Spring remained a fringe party until its dissolution in 2004, when Samaras rejoined New Democracy. He was elected to the European Parliament that year, resigning in 2007 after winning a seat in the Greek parliament. In 2009 he defeated Dora Bakogiannis, the daughter of Konstantinos Mitsotakis, for the party leadership.

Although New Democracy emerged as the largest party in the inconclusive May 2012 elections, Samaras was unable to mediate a coalition. The stalemate forced a second election in June, with New Democracy claiming 129 of the 300 available seats (an increase of 21 on the May result). Samaras forged a coalition with the centre-left Pasok and the small Democratic Left party.

Career Peak

Aiming to secure Greece's future inside the eurozone, Samaras' first task was to implement further austerity measures demanded by the European Union, IMF and European Central Bank in return for continued bailout instalments. A programme meeting the terms of the loan aid met with widespread public hostility and the coalition suffered a number of defections before the measures gained parliamentary approval in late 2012. Samaras also encountered rising domestic extremism and strong anti-immigrant sentiment as the economy continued to contract and unemployment soared. Further austerity provisions were agreed with the EU and IMF in April 2013 and in July parliament approved extensive reductions in the public sector workforce. The previous month the government had announced the closure of the state broadcaster ERT—an unpopular move that prompted the Democratic Left to leave the coalition.

Early parliamentary elections were automatically triggered following parliament's failure to appoint a new president on 29 Dec. 2014. Samaras lost the elections held on 25 Jan. 2015 to Alexis Tsipras and his Syriza party. His term as premier ended a day later when Tsipras was sworn in as Greece's new prime minister.

Samba-Panza, Catherine (Central African Republic)

Introduction

Catherine Samba-Panza became the country's first female head of state when she was elected interim president by the National Transitional Council (CNT) on 20 Jan. 2014. Her election took place 10 days after the resignation of Michel Djotodia, the former leader of Séléka (founded as a predominantly Muslim rebel organization), who had come under international pressure for not reining in sectarian conflict between the Christian majority and Muslim minority populations. Samba-Panza, a Christian, is regarded as non-partisan and is scheduled to hold the post until elections, in which she will not be allowed to stand, can be held in a less volatile security environment.

Early Life

Samba-Panza was born on 26 June 1954 in Fort-Lamy, Chad, to a Cameroonian father and a mother from the Central African Republic (CAR). She studied law at the Panthéon-Assas University in Paris, France, before settling in the CAR in the 1990s. Working as a corporate lawyer and in insurance, she experienced at first hand the difficulties in doing business in, and attracting investment to, a country suffering long-term instability. She worked closely with various non-governmental organizations, most notably l'Association des Femmes Juristes de Centrafrique, with whom she campaigned for greater inclusion of women in government positions and for the rights of victims of violence, especially survivors of sexual violence.

Samba-Panza entered politics in 2003 when she co-chaired the National Dialogue Table, a forum aimed at addressing national reconciliation and socio-economic recovery. She was later chosen to lead the committee monitoring the forum's recommendations. In May 2013, shortly after Djotodia's coup, Samba-Panza was selected as mayor of Bangui by the CNT, an appointment welcomed by both Séléka and the 'anti-balaka' ('anti-machete'). Christian militias, as well as by France. Following Djotodia's resignation on 10 Jan. 2014, Samba-Panza was chosen to succeed him by the CNT on 20 Jan. after two rounds of voting. She was sworn in 3 days later.

Career Peak

Nicknamed 'Mother Courage' by her supporters, Samba-Panza's main task has been to try to open up dialogue with Christian and Muslim armed groups in order to restore security and ensure a functioning state. A programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration will be required, although she is expected to avoid the much-criticized previous strategy of incorporating former rebel fighters into newly formed police and military units.

As per the terms of her mandate as interim president, Samba-Panza was not permitted to stand in the presidential elections held in Dec. 2015 and Feb. 2016. The winner of the elections, Faustin-Archange Touadéra, was sworn in as president in March 2016.

Sambi, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed (Comoros)

Introduction

Known as the 'Ayatollah' after studying in Iran, Ahmed Abdallah Sambi was elected president in May 2006, marking the country's first peaceful handover of power. A moderate Islamist, he defeated two other candidates from the island of Anjouan, in accordance with the federal power-rotation agreement between the three islands. Following further presidential elections in Nov.–Dec. 2010, in which he did not stand, Sambi left office on 26 May 2011 with Ikililou Dhoinine—one of two Vice Presidents—succeeding him.

Early Life

Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi was born on 5 June 1958 at Mutsamadu on the Comorian island of Anjouan (Nzwani), where he attended primary and secondary school. He later studied in Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Iran. In 1980 he launched the first Comorian periodical, *Retour à la Source*. His preaching took him to Madagascar in 1982 and Mauritius in 1984 before he returned to the Comoros in 1986. On Anjouan he founded a girls' school and organized evening lectures which were banned by the police and led to his arrest.

In 1990 Sambi entered politics, helping to form the Front National pour la Justice, which supported Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim (who later became president). In 1993 he was active in raising money for Bosnian Muslims and the following year opposed the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. He was elected to the then Federal Assembly in Dec. 1996 and was appointed president of the Law Commission. Sambi opposed the central government's crackdown on Anjouan in Aug. 1997 and was forced to resign his seat in the Assembly. Despite urging Anjouan's separatists to negotiate, he fled to Madagascar in Jan. 1999 amid accusations of separatist sympathies. In May 2005 he announced his candidacy for the presidency and came first in the April 2006 primary, held only on Anjouan.

Career Peak

Supervised by South African peacekeepers, Sambi defeated two secular candidates, Deputy Speaker Mohamed Djaanfari and the veteran politician Ibrahim Halidi, in a national vote in May 2006, although his rivals alleged fraud. Sambi voiced support for the reinstatement of an Islamic state in the Comoros, sparking fears of Islamic radicalization and restrictions on women's freedoms. Doubts were also raised concerning the authority of an Anjouanais over the central government bureaucracy, which is dominated by Grande Comorians. In mid-2007 Anjouan's regional president Mohamed Bacar, who had refused to step down after his five-year term, held an illegal election in defiance of Sambi and the federal government and claimed a landslide victory. Negotiations failed to resolve the impasse and in March 2008 Comorian and African Union troops invaded Anjouan to oust Bacar who fled to the French island of Réunion.

In May 2009 voters in a referendum approved constitutional changes to streamline the complex decentralized governance system and to extend the president's term of office by 12 months, allowing Sambi to serve until 2011. He left office on 26 May following elections in late 2010.

Sampaio, Jorge (Portugal)

Introduction

Jorge Fernando Branco de Sampaio was first elected president in 1996 and won a second term in 2001. A student activist and protester against the Salazar dictatorship, Sampaio was secretary-general of the Partido Socialista Português (PSP) between 1989–91 and mayor of Lisbon from 1989–95. His second presidential term ended in Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Sampaio was born in Lisbon on 18 Sept. 1939. The son of a doctor and a teacher, he spent part of his early life in London and the USA. He studied law at the Universidade de Lisboa, graduating in 1961. Sampaio's political activism began during his university career. He was the law school's student union president from 1960–61 and the following year was secretary-general of the Federation of Students Associations. He was involved in the student uprising in 1962 and the continuing battles between students and Salazar's government that helped end the dictatorship. Concurrently, Sampaio practised as a lawyer defending political prisoners.

Sampaio was active in the Comissão Democrática Eleitoral (Democratic Electoral Commission; CDE), the left-wing opposition party and front organization of the outlawed Partido Comunista Português. In 1968 he was elected to the national assembly as a CDE representative. In 1974 he co-founded the Movimento de Esquerda Socialista, but left soon after owing to policy disagreements. In 1975 he joined the fourth post-revolution provisional government as deputy minister for external co-operation.

Sampaio joined the PSP in 1978 and was elected to parliament the following year as a PSP representative. He was re-elected in four consecutive elections. Between 1979–84 he sat on the European Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe. Following several senior positions in the PSP, Sampaio was made secretary-general in 1989. In the same year he was elected mayor of Lisbon, a position he retained in the 1993 municipal elections.

Career Peak

Having given up the leadership of the PSP to Antonio Guterres in 1991, Sampaio decided to run in the 1996 presidential elections, replacing outgoing president Mário Soares as PSP candidate. Sampaio's main competitor for the largely ceremonial post was the Partido Social Democrata (PSD) candidate Aníbal Cavaco Silva. Sampaio was elected with 53.8% of votes to Cavaco Silva's 46.2%.

After a successful first term, Sampaio ran for re-election in 2001. With three quarters of votes counted, he claimed 55.5%. His PSD opponent, Joaquim Ferreira do Amaral, conceded with 34.85%.

In 2004 Sampaio met with strong resistance from left wing parties when he refused to hold early elections following the resignation of prime minister José Manuel Durão Barroso. Sampaio elected Pedro Santana Lopes to the post but after four difficult months dissolved parliament and called elections for Feb. 2005, which resulted in José Sócrates taking office as prime minister.

At the presidential elections of Jan. 2006 Sampaio was succeeded by Aníbal Cavaco Silva, who was prime minister from 1985–95.

Samper Pizano, Ernesto (Colombia)

Introduction

Ernesto Samper Pizano was president of Colombia between 1994–98, representing the Partido Liberal (PL). His presidency was dominated by the struggle to control the drug cartels and concurrently defending himself from investigations into the cartels' support of his presidential campaign. The continuing activity of left-wing guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries further hindered Samper's attempts to implement social policies, leaving an unstable economy.

Early Life

Samper was born on 3 Aug. 1950 in Bogotá. He studied economics and law at the capital's Universidad Javeriana until 1973. Samper's political career began as a councillor in Bogotá. He was then elected to the Senate. During Alfonso López Michelsen's 1982 campaign, Samper served as campaign treasurer and co-ordinator. On 3 March 1989 he survived an assassination attempt in which the leader of the Unión Patriótica, José Antequera, was killed by right-wing paramilitaries. The following year he became the leader of the PL and unsuccessfully stood in the presidential elections. Under the leadership of his PL colleague, Virgilio Barco Vargas, Samper served as minister for economic development.

Career Peak

In 1994 he stood in his second presidential elections, this time against Partido Social Conservador candidate, Andres Pastrana Arango. In a close run race, Samper won with 50.4% of votes. On his election, Samper pledged to tackle social inequality and poverty through public sector spending, especially on health, education and sanitation and to attract foreign investment. Yet, these promises were soon overtaken by accusations of the PL's involvement with the drug cartels. Tapes were released incriminating Samper's presidential campaign treasurer, Santiago Medina. One year into his presidency, the attorney general, Alfonso Valdivieso, began an investigation into the charges that £4 m. donation by the Cali drug cartels had boosted Samper's presidential campaign. Those indicted included Samper's campaign manager, and then defence minister, Fernando Botero. Foreign investment and aid came to an end. Samper was forced to issue compulsory war bonds to finance combating guerrillas.

Throughout his presidency Samper struggled to control left-wing guerrilla activities, the two principal groups being FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia; Colombia Revolutionary Forces) and ELN

(Ejército de Liberación Nacional; National Liberation Army). The country was further destabilized by right-wing paramilitaries.

Samper's other problem was curtailing the influence of the powerful narcotraffickers, who controlled a substantial illegal economy. In June 1991, under the administration of César Gaviria Trujillo, a promise not to enforce extradition to America led to the surrender of the drug baron, Pablo Escobar, leader of the dominant Medellín cartel. By 1995 many of the key players in the Cali cartel had been imprisoned. Critics claimed the imprisonments in La Picota jail were as farcical as the personalized, luxurious million dollar 'imprisonment' of Escobar when the Medellín cartels were tackled. In 1996 Samper passed a law allowing the state to confiscate around £1.4 bn. of Escobar's property. During Samper's term over 200 tonnes of cocaine were seized and 1,500 km² of coca and poppy crops were destroyed through aerial spraying. In 1997 Samper reversed Trujillo's promise and introduced non-retrospective extradition for captured narcotraffickers. Despite Samper's efforts to eliminate the Cali cartels, the Clinton administration 'decertified' Colombia as an anti-drugs ally. Samper claimed this treatment hindered his efforts. Embarrassingly, in 1996 when travelling to present an anti-drugs speech to the UN, 3.7 kg of heroin were found on Samper's plane. The USA refused Samper a visa.

In June 1997 the Chamber of Deputies acquitted Samper of knowingly receiving drug traffickers' funding. Financially, Samper's presidency left Colombia unstable. In 1996 exports were affected by a rise in the peso while a US\$4 bn budget deficit was a result of insufficient tax collection and large public spending. In 1997 a state of economic emergency was declared. Banana and coffee markets suffered. By 1998 unemployment had reached 15.8% in the cities, twice the rate on Samper's arrival. Inflation was at 18%, interest rates over 40%. In the 1998 elections Samper was replaced by Pastrana.

Later Life

In Sept. 2014 Samper was appointed secretary general of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and promised to tackle poverty on the continent as his main priority.

Sanader, Ivo (Croatia)

Introduction

Ivo Sanader was elected prime minister in Dec. 2003. A member of President Tudjman's right-wing administration throughout the 1990s, the former literary agent campaigned to steer the country to eventual EU membership. Following parliamentary elections in Nov. 2007 he retained the premiership and formed a new coalition government.

Early Life

Ivo Sanader was born on 8 June 1953 in Split, Yugoslavia. He studied comparative literature and Romansch languages at Innsbruck University in Austria, graduating with a PhD in 1982. Returning to Split, he began work as a literary agent for the *Logos* publishing house, becoming editor-in-chief in 1988. In 1991, following a 3-year spell as a freelance writer and publisher in Innsbruck, Sanader was appointed general manager of the Croatian National Theatre. In Aug. 1992, having been elected to represent the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) in the Republic of Croatia's new parliament, Sanader became minister of science and technology. Appointed deputy foreign minister in early 1993, he participated in the bilateral talks which led to the establishment of the Croat-Muslim Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord in Nov. 1995, Sanader was named chief of staff to President Tudjman, then leader of the HDZ. Sanader was appointed to the defence and national security council, serving as deputy foreign minister from 1996 until the parliamentary elections of Jan. 2000, when the ruling HDZ was defeated by a coalition of the Social Democratic Party and the Croatian Social-Liberal Party. Subsequently elected leader of the HDZ, Sanader brought in sweeping reforms, attempting to root out corruption and draw a line under its authoritarian past. He was re-elected president of the HDZ at the party's congress in April 2002 and led the party to

victory in the Nov. 2003 parliamentary elections (winning 66 seats of 152). President Mesić named Sanader prime minister designate on 9 Dec. 2003 and, following parliamentary consent, he was sworn in 2 weeks later.

Career Peak

Sanader pledged his commitment to democracy, the rule of law and free market economics. He also promised to cut taxes, fight corruption and prepare Croatia for membership of NATO and the EU. However, constrained by a coalition administration, his economic reforms were slower than expected. In the Nov. 2007 elections the HDZ maintained its position as the largest parliamentary party, but Sanader again had to negotiate a coalition—this time backed by the Croatian Social Liberal Party, the Croatian Peasant Party and the Independent Democratic Serbian Party—which took office in Jan. 2008. After a series of delays, EU accession talks began in Oct. 2005. Membership could be possible by 2011, but the European Commission president advised Sanader in Sept. 2008 of the need for more action on judicial and competition reforms and tackling organized crime and corruption. In April 2008 Croatia was formally invited by NATO to begin negotiations on accession to the alliance and in April 2009 it became a full member.

Contrary to rumours that he intended to step down early to run for president in 2010, Sanader announced on 1 July 2009 that he was quitting politics for good citing personal reasons. His suggested successor, vice prime minister Jadranka Kosor, took office on his departure on 6 July having gained parliamentary approval. Sanader also resigned as leader of the HDZ.

Later Life

Wanted in connection with a corruption investigation, Sanader fled Croatia in Dec. 2010 but was arrested the following day in Austria. In May 2011 an Austrian court ruled that he could be extradited back to Croatia to face charges.

In Nov. 2012 Ivo Sanader was sentenced to 10 years in prison on war profiteering and corruption charges in a case closely watched by the European Union. Sanader, the highest Croatian official to have been convicted for corruption, was found guilty of taking millions of dollars of bribes from a Hungarian energy company and an Austrian bank. The court has also ordered him to pay back 41.1 m. kuna (€5.4 m.).

Ivo Sanader was handed a further 9 years in prison by a Croatian court in March 2014, after he and the HDZ were found guilty of illegally siphoning funds from state-run firms during his terms in office between 2003 and 2009. Sanader was ordered to pay back €2.0 m. and the HDZ €3.8 m. Three former HDZ party officials were also sentenced to prison terms.

Sánchez de Lozada, Gonzalo (Bolivia)

Introduction

Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada was president of Bolivia from Aug. 1993–Aug. 1997 and Aug. 2002–Oct. 2003. He represented the right wing Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (Nationalist Revolutionary Movement, MNR). Following a close run first round, Sánchez was appointed by Congress in 2002 ahead of Evo Morales of the Movimiento al Socialismo (Movement to Socialism party). Sánchez advocated free market policies, pledging to counter unemployment by investing heavily in public works, though attempts to impose tax rises led to violent protests. Opposition to proposals to export natural gas to the USA spiralled out of control. Sánchez failed to demonstrate the benefits to the economy and was forced to relinquish office to his vice-president.

Early Life

Sánchez was born in La Paz on 1 June 1930. The son of a diplomat, he was educated in Ohio before taking an English literature and philosophy degree in Chicago. A businessman and millionaire, he was involved in the running of the Andean Geo Services mine (1957–62) and the Compañía Minera del Sur (Southern Mining Company, 1962–79).

His political career began in 1979 when he was elected deputy of Cochabamba, a position to which he was re-elected in 1982. Between 1986–88 he served as planning minister in Víctor Paz Estenssoro's government, during

which time he managed to combat hyperinflation which had peaked at 25,000%. The following year, despite winning the most votes in presidential elections, he lost out to Jaime Paz Zamora who had support from the opposition Acción Democrática Nacional (National Democratic Action, ADN) party.

Career Peak

In 1990 Sánchez replaced Paz Estenssoro as MNR leader. He stood successfully for election in 1993, beating ADN candidate Hugo Banzer Suárez. In his first term in office he implemented free market reforms and encouraged foreign investment, although the privatization of oil and gas companies failed to provide increased employment or benefit the majority indigenous population living in poverty. In 1997 he was replaced by Banzer, who implemented a controversial US-backed coca eradication programme. A centuries-old crop traditionally cultivated for religious ceremonies and later to sustain workers in difficult conditions in the Andes, coca production increased dramatically in the 1970s to feed the booming illegal drug industry. At its height, around a third of Bolivians were financially dependent on its production and the trade generated millions of dollars for the black economy. Eradication programmes destroyed 40,000 ha in the Chapare region leaving many farmers destitute.

When Sánchez stood for re-election in 2002, his main rival was Morales, an indigenous Andean representative of coca farmers who attacked the programme. Sánchez again campaigned on free market policies. The narrow margin in the first round results, with Sánchez taking 22.5% of votes to Morales' 21%, forced congress to decide between the two. Sánchez was chosen with 84 votes to 43.

On election he outlined his plans to reduce unemployment by investing US\$1 bn. (or US\$5 bn. over 5 years) in public works developments. He was also faced with the need to cut Bolivia's fiscal deficit in order to qualify for IMF aid. Police strikes in Feb. 2003 over pay led to violent demonstrations and looting of government buildings in La Paz. Trade unions and the political opposition joined farmers in protesting against Sánchez's austerity measures. His attempt to raise income tax to 12.5% was abandoned after the deaths of 33 people, mainly policemen. Consequently, the cabinet resigned and Sánchez cut five ministries to reduce costs.

Sánchez came under US pressure to continue Banzer's coca eradication programme. The US threatened to scupper a deal for Bolivia to export natural gas to California if the eradication programme did not continue. But after continued protests from coca farmers, Sánchez announced plans to investigate the possibility of extending the legal coca farming capacity of 12,000 ha to allow the government more control over illegal trafficking, despite the threat of losing both US and IMF aid.

Having promised public consultation over the export of natural gas to the US, Sánchez provoked further demonstrations in Sept. and Oct. 2003 by pressing on with negotiations. Demands were made for the heavily subsidized sale of gas supplies in Bolivia before any gas was exported. Sánchez accused the opposition Socialist Movement of fomenting violence by trying to 'govern from the streets'. Demonstrators also demanded land reform, investment in education and healthcare, and the withdrawal of Bolivia from Mercosur, the South American free trade area.

Demonstrations continued for over 4 weeks across the country with violent confrontations between protesters and the armed forces protecting Sánchez in the presidential palace at La Paz. On 13 Oct. Sánchez agreed to end immediate negotiations to sell gas but opposition leader Evo Morales refused to accept the compromise, demanding Sánchez's resignation. Over 70 people died in fighting with the police and armed forces, forcing Sánchez to resign on 17 Oct., handing power to his vice-president, Carlos Mesa Gilbert. Morales called for the prosecution of the ex-president for the deaths of protestors after Sánchez left the country for Miami, Florida.

Sanhá, Malam Bacai (Guinea-Bissau)

Introduction

Malam Bacai Sanhá was sworn in as president in Sept. 2009 after elections praised by the international community for their orderly running and served until his death in Jan. 2012. He was a member of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC).

Early Life

Sanhá was born on 5 May 1947 in Dar Salam in the Quinara region. He worked as an aide to Amílcar Cabral, the founder of the PAIGC, and served as governor of the Gabú and Biombo regions. From 1994–99 he was president of the National People's Assembly and from 14 May 1999 to 17 Feb. 2000 he was acting head of state, having been appointed by the military following the ousting of João Bernardo Vieira in the 1998–99 civil war.

Sanhá, a vociferous critic of Vieira, finished second to Kumba Ialá in the presidential elections that straddled 1999 and 2000 and again in 2005 (a result Sanhá challenged). In 2008 he unsuccessfully challenged Carlos Gomes Júnior for the PAIGC leadership.

In March 2009 President Vieira was assassinated and presidential elections were scheduled for June. Sanhá led the polls after the first round of voting and defeated Mohamed Ialá Embaló in a second round in July. He was sworn into office on 8 Sept.

Career Peak

In his inaugural speech Sanhá promised to investigate the March 2009 killings of Vieira and army chief of staff Batista Tagme Na Waie. He also prioritized the fight against crime, particularly drug trafficking and corruption. In Sept. 2009 China pledged US\$1.5 m. to help feed the army, and in Dec. 2009 the European Union promised US\$37 m. to help pay Guinea-Bissau's domestic debt and government workers' salaries. In April 2010 soldiers mutinied, briefly invading the prime minister's residence and forcing the replacement of the army chief of staff.

A diabetic, Sanhá suffered numerous bouts of ill health and died on 9 Jan. 2012 in Paris. Raimundo Pereira, the President of the National People's Assembly, had been serving as interim president during Sanhá's illness and was sworn in as acting president following the president's death.

Sankara, Thomas (Burkina Faso)

Introduction

The leader of a radical leftwing military regime, Thomas Sankara was president of Burkina Faso between 1983 until his assassination in 1987. Deposing President Jean-Baptiste Ouedraogo, Sankara came to power in 1983 as a leader of a breakaway faction of the original Conseil de Salut du Peuple (People's Salvation Council; CSP) military revolutionary group which itself had deposed President Sayé Zerbo in 1982. Throughout his tenure he implemented progressive social reforms and changed the country's colonial name from Upper Volta to Burkina Faso. But his tough control became unpopular and leftwing elements within the ruling council felt he had betrayed their original revolutionary Marxist-Leninist principles. He was overthrown by his second in command and longtime ally, current president Blaise Compaoré.

Early Life

Sankara was born on 21 Dec. 1949 in Yako, Upper Volta, and completed his secondary education in the capital Ouagadougou. The son of a World War II combatant, upon leaving school Sankara joined the military. He was soon posted to the military academy in Antsirabé, Madagascar where he attained the grade of officer. He formed his revolutionary ideas when he participated in the overthrow of the Malagasy neo-colonial regime. He then trained with a parachute regiment in Pau, France, before working in Rabat, Morocco, where he met Blaise Compaoré.

Returning to Upper Volta, he became involved in government, serving as information secretary under President Zerbo. This was a time of political instability in Upper Volta, as coups were followed by counter coups. Himself having attained power by force in 1980, 2 years later Zerbo was overthrown by army officials who set up a 120-member military junta, the CSP, with Ouedraogo at its head. Sankara worked under Ouedraogo, becoming prime minister in Jan. 1983. But he was involved in an increasingly factionalized leftwing element within the CSP who broke away to create the Conseil National de la Révolution (CNR), with Thomas Sankara at its head. In May 1983 Sankara was imprisoned by Ouedraogo on charges of treason.

Anti-government revolts ensued, led by Campaoré, and the president was ousted. The CNR seized power with the freed Sankara as president.

Career Peak

Sankara's leadership was based on Marxist-Leninist ideology. He pledged to eradicate rural poverty and all traces of neo-colonialism beginning with a series of progressive social and economic reforms including investment in education, housing and agriculture. Health policies included a widespread vaccination programme to combat the country's high infant mortality rate. He also campaigned for women's rights, banning female circumcision and appointing five female ministers to his government. Top civil servants received pay cuts, including the president himself. Living conditions improved and food production increased. In 1984 he replaced the country's colonial name with Burkina Faso, a combination of two native languages meaning 'Land of the Upright People'. Civilian Revolutionary Committees were established throughout the country to implement government policy while Revolutionary People's tribunals were installed to try former public officials charged with corruption.

On an international front, Sankara allied Burkina Faso with Cuba, North Korea and Libya. He developed close relations with Ghana, even talking of merging the two countries. A brief war with Mali over the Agacher Strip in 1985 was settled by the International Court of Justice. Opposed to any forms of neo-colonialism, he rejected the conditions of World Bank loans.

Despite progressive reforms, Sankara was intolerant of opposition. He provoked the ire of rural Mossi chiefs by pledging to eradicate patriarchy and feudalism, and his contempt for the 'bourgeoisie' alienated prospective investors and forced entrepreneurs to leave the country. He also lost the support of trade unions and of the far left in the CNR. Towards the end of his tenure, Sankara had improved relations with France and the US and this was seen as an abandonment of his original revolutionary principles. In an attempt to mollify his critics, in 1987 he proposed a cooperative one party state which was refused. Along with several allies, Sankara was assassinated on 15 Oct. 1987 by soldiers loyal to Compaoré. Compaoré was installed as president, a position he still holds.

Santana Lopes, Pedro (Portugal)

Introduction

Plucked from his position as mayor of Lisbon during a period of political upheaval, Pedro Santana Lopes succeeded José Manuel Durão Barroso as Portugal's prime minister on 19 July 2004. The leader of the centre-right Social Democratic Party (PSD) and former Culture Secretary pledged to continue the structural and economic reforms of his predecessor. Santana Lopes' detractors accused him of being 'Portugal's answer to (Italian Prime Minister) Silvio Berlusconi' because of his tendency to mix media, football and politics. However, he only held office for 8 months, resigning after President Sampaio had called early elections.

Early Life

Pedro Miguel Santana Lopes was born in Lisbon on 29 June 1956. He attended the Padre António Vieira secondary school from 1966 and went on to read law at Lisbon University in 1974, teaching at night and selling books to help pay for his studies. While at university he led the Independent Law Movement and joined the centre-right Social Democratic Party (PSD), one of four political parties to have emerged in the aftermath of Portugal's 1974 revolution. Santana Lopes graduated in 1978 and won a scholarship from the German government to study Political Science and European Studies. After completing this course he entered the team of Prime Minister Sá Carneiro (founder of the PSD) as his legal adviser. In 1980, at 24 years of age, he was elected a member of parliament. The PSD-led coalition government advocated strong free-enterprise measures and succeeded in implementing a process of constitutional revision which reduced presidential power and paved the way for Portugal's entry into the European Community in 1986.

Prime Minister Cavaco Silva (elected in Oct. 1985) appointed Santana Lopes as Secretary of State of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, a job which was interrupted in 1987 when he spent 2 years as a member of the

European Parliament. In Jan. 1990 Santana Lopes became Secretary of State for Culture, orchestrating the restoration of buildings and the opening of libraries, cinemas and theatres. Economic progress and relative stability were key factors behind the PSD's victory by a clear majority in the general legislative elections of July 1991. The following year Santana Lopes presided over the European Council of Ministers of Culture. After his party's defeat to the Socialist Party (PSP), led by António Guterres, in the 1995 general election Santana Lopes left politics and became president of the soccer club Sporting Lisbon. In 1997 he was elected mayor of Figueira da Foz, a small town north of Lisbon. Four years later he won the race for Lisbon's mayor and began an ambitious programme to improve the traffic movement in the city and to upgrade urban spaces, although he was accused by some of adopting cosmetic solutions rather than long-term strategies. While mayor of Lisbon, Santana Lopes became a high-profile public figure, making regular TV appearances as a political commentator and writing a football column in the press.

Santana Lopes was thrust back into the political limelight in June 2004 when the prime minister and leader of the PSD, José Manuel Durão Barroso, resigned to accept the nomination to become the next president of the European Commission. Portugal's president, Jorge Sampaio, resisted pressure from the opposition Socialist Party (PSP) to call a fresh election, and instead let the PSD form a new government. Pedro Santana Lopes was elected leader of the PSD and appointed prime minister by Sampaio.

Career Peak

Santana Lopes was regarded as a populist, slightly to the right of Barroso. In his inauguration speech, Santana Lopes vowed to continue the work of his predecessor, including reducing the national deficit. However, in Dec. 2004 he announced his resignation after President Sampaio called early elections for Feb. 2005.

Santer, Jacques (Luxembourg)

Introduction

Jacques Santer was prime minister of Luxembourg from 1984–95, winning re-election twice in that period. He became president of the European Commission in 1995 but resigned along with the entire commission in 1999 following allegations of fraud, corruption and mismanagement.

Early Life

Santer was born on 18 May 1937 in Wasserbillig, Luxembourg. He graduated in law from the University of Strasbourg in France and received a master's degree in political sciences from the Paris Institute of Political Studies before embarking on a career as a solicitor. He entered Luxembourg politics in 1966 and became president of the Christian Social People's Party 8 years later. In 1979 he was appointed finance minister, a position he kept for the next decade. He was also a member of the European Parliament from 1975–79, acting as its vice-president for 2 years.

Career Peak

Santer became prime minister of Luxembourg in 1984 and was a key figure in drafting the 1986 Single European Act—the first major revision of the 1957 Treaty of Rome that aimed to create a single European market by 1992.

In the contest to become president of the European Commission in 1994, Santer was not the first choice of any member state. However, he was widely considered a viable compromise candidate and was duly elected to the post in Jan. 1995. His 4-year tenure saw the implementation of the Schengen Agreement in 1995 and the introduction of the single European currency in 1999.

However, his presidency was overshadowed by the mass resignation of the Commission after an independent investigatory committee found a lack of political control. Santer was cited for giving evidence to the committee which was considered evasive to the point of being misleading. Lacking the power to dismiss individuals accused of fraud and corruption, Santer called an emergency meeting before announcing the Commission's collective resignation on 15 March 1999.

Later Life

Santer remained a member of the European Parliament until 2004. As an honorary minister of state for Luxembourg he has held various positions, including president of the Academy for European Law and president of the European Union of Federalists group. In 2012 he became head of the Special Purpose Investment Vehicle (SPIV)—part of the European Financial Stability Facility—and in May 2013 was made an honorary member of SME Europe (Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Europe).

Sargsyan, Serzh (Armenia)

Introduction

Serzh Sargsyan was sworn into office on 9 April 2008, nearly 2 months after he was declared the winner of the disputed presidential election. Although said to be fair by international observers, the election sparked violent clashes between protesters and police. A 20-day state of emergency was declared by the government before Sargsyan took office. He nevertheless won re-election in Feb. 2013.

Early Life

Sargsyan was born on 30 June 1954 in Stepanakert, in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. He enrolled at Yerevan State University in 1971 but served in the Soviet armed forces from 1972–74. He then worked as a metal turner from 1975–79 before graduating from the philological department of Yerevan State University in 1979. In the same year he became the divisional head of the Young Communist Union for Stepanakert.

Rising through the ranks of the Communist Party, Sargsyan was the leader of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic self-defence forces committee during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of 1989–93. From 1993–95 he served as minister of defence and was later promoted to minister of national security. In 1996 he took over the ministry of interior portfolio when it merged with the national security ministry. When the offices separated in 1999, Sargsyan retained responsibility for national security. In the same year he joined the president's office as chief of staff and was selected as secretary of Armenia's national security council. In 2000 he returned to the defence ministry, where he served until 2007.

Sargsyan joined the conservative Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) in 2006 and became party chairman in Nov. 2007. In April 2007 President Robert Kocharyan appointed Sargsyan prime minister and in Feb. 2008 he went on to win the presidential election by a landslide.

Career Peak

Responding to the violent protests that followed his election victory, Sargsyan called for unity and co-operation among all political factions.

In addition to promoting economic growth, he sought to improve international relations, especially with Armenia's neighbours. Turkey's rejection of charges of genocide in Armenia during the First World War has posed a stumbling block to bilateral reconciliation. In Oct. 2009 the two governments agreed on a framework to normalize relations, but in April 2010 Armenia suspended the ratification process accusing Turkey of imposing preconditions, including a resolution of Armenia's territorial dispute with Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has meanwhile refused to concede its claim on Nagorno-Karabakh despite several Russian-brokered meetings between Sargsyan and the Azeri president and tensions have continued to fuel periodic clashes between Armenian and Azeri troops, most recently in Feb. 2017.

In parliamentary elections in May 2012, boycotted by the opposition, the governing pro-Sargsyan HHK retained its majority in the National Assembly, while in Feb. 2013 Sargsyan was re-elected president, winning almost 59% of the vote. In a referendum in Dec. 2015 around 66% of voters were in favour of constitutional amendments championed by Sargsyan that envisaged Armenia's transition to a parliamentary system of government. The amendments enhanced the powers of the prime minister and cabinet appointed from the majority parliamentary party and demoted the president (henceforth to be elected by an electoral college) to a largely ceremonial role. Opponents accused Sargsyan of aiming to perpetuate his political influence after his second and final presidential term ends in 2018. In April 2017 Sargsyan's

HHK again secured parliamentary control in legislative elections that were criticized by European observers and the opposition for alleged voting irregularities.

In Oct. 2014 Sargsyan shunned closer ties with the European Union as he signed a treaty with the leaders of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus incorporating Armenia into the Eurasian Economic Union, a free trade zone superseding the former Eurasian Economic Community from 1 Jan. 2015. Armen Sarkissian was chosen by the National Assembly to succeed him as president and Sargsyan left office on 9 April 2018.

Sarkis, Elias (Lebanon)

Introduction

Lawyer, banker and Maronite Christian politician, Sarkis served as state president from 1976–82. His presidency was dominated by continuing civil strife between opposing militia groups and by foreign military intervention.

Early Life

Sarkis was born on 24 July 1924 and was educated at the St. Joseph University in Beirut. Having worked in law and banking, he became director-general of the president's office under President Chehab in 1962. From 1967–76 he was the governor of the Banque du Liban (central bank). He lost by a single vote to Suleiman Franjeh in the 1970 presidential election, but stood again successfully in 1976 during the civil war.

Career Peak

Sarkis took office in Sept. 1976. Despite the deployment of the Syrian-dominated Arab Deterrent Force (ADF), large areas of the country remained outside government control, including Muslim West Beirut. Frequent sectarian conflict was exacerbated by an Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in 1978. This was followed by the installation of Israeli-controlled Christian Lebanese militia forces in border areas to deter Palestinian attacks. Sarkis' administration tried to formulate a national accord but remained unable to exert its authority. As the end of his presidential term approached, Israel launched a second invasion in June 1982 which led to the expulsion of PLO forces from Lebanon by Sept.

Sarkis died in Paris, France, on 27 June 1985.

Sarkozy, Nicolas (France)

Introduction

Nicolas Sarkozy became president in May 2007, succeeding Jacques Chirac. Having been minister of the interior and the economy, he defeated the Socialist Ségolène Royal and ten other candidates for the presidency. Despite his electoral mandate to introduce modernizing reforms and his commitment to reinvigorating the economy and reducing unemployment, he encountered widespread labour opposition to some of his policies and was confronted by the impact of the global credit crisis and ensuing economic downturn. He nevertheless pursued an active and influential role on the world diplomatic stage. Sarkozy was defeated in the 2012 election by François Hollande and after leaving office announced his retirement from politics.

Early Life

Nicolas Sarkozy de Nagy-Bosca was born in Paris on 28 Jan. 1955, the son of a Hungarian aristocrat and a French-Jewish mother. Educated at a private Catholic school, he graduated in political science and law and undertook further studies at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris, although he did not

graduate. He entered the legal profession as a barrister specializing in business law and began his political life in 1977 as a councillor for Neuilly-sur-Seine. He became a national youth delegate for the newly founded neo-Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) a year later. In 1979 Sarkozy was elected president of the RPR's youth wing under the party's leader Jacques Chirac, who subsequently lost the 1981 presidential campaign to the Socialist, François Mitterrand.

In 1983 Sarkozy was elected mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine. A member of the Île-de-France Regional Council from 1983–88, he was elected as a parliamentary deputy for the département of Hauts-de-Seine in June 1988 following Mitterrand's re-election as president. Sarkozy was re-elected to the National Assembly at the 1993 elections, in which the RPR made significant progress and the Socialists were reduced to their weakest position since 1958. Sarkozy was appointed minister for the budget before becoming spokesman for the executive in the cabinet of Prime Minister Édouard Balladur.

His decision to back Balladur rather than his mentor, Chirac, in the presidential election of 1995 led to a prolonged rift. Sarkozy retreated into the RPR's internal politics, becoming the party's secretary general in 1998 and its interim president a year later. He also sat as an MEP in 1999.

When Chirac won a landslide victory in the 2002 presidential election he appointed Jean-Pierre Raffarin as prime minister and made Sarkozy minister of the interior. Sarkozy's 'tough on crime' policies divided opinion with his critics claiming that his measures infringed civil rights.

As minister for the economy, finance and industry from 2002–04 Sarkozy introduced market-led reforms, including the reduction of the government's stake in France Télécom. However, he also backed a partial renationalization of the troubled manufacturing company, Alstom. In Nov. 2004 Sarkozy was elected to succeed Alain Juppé as leader of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP, which grew out of a merger of the RPR and Liberal Democracy in 2002). Reappointed minister of the interior in the government of Dominique de Villepin in June 2005, Sarkozy responded to rioting in some suburbs of Paris by promising to toughen justice measures for delinquents and to counter illegal immigration.

Having been endorsed by the UMP as its candidate in the 2007 presidential election, Sarkozy pledged his support for reducing bureaucracy to help create jobs and to nurture an entrepreneurial culture.

Career Peak

Having defeated Ségolène Royal in a second round of voting held on 6 May 2007, Sarkozy outlined plans for a more dynamic economy with France playing a more prominent global role. He announced his cabinet on 18 May 2007, including François Fillon as prime minister. In June 2007 the UMP won the parliamentary elections, but with a reduced majority. Also in June, Sarkozy enjoyed a successful diplomatic debut at the European Union summit of heads of government, where a new draft treaty on the Union's institutional structure and decision-making process was agreed (and which eventually came into force in Dec. 2009). Later in 2007 his plans for public sector pension benefits provoked paralysing strike action in Nov. by civil servants and workers in the transport and energy sectors. Also in Nov. he was confronted with a renewed, although brief, eruption of rioting in poor immigrant suburbs in Paris and Toulouse.

Public attention in early 2008 focused largely on Sarkozy's private life and remarriage before his UMP party fared badly against the Socialists in municipal elections in March. However, after France assumed the rotating EU presidency in July, he took a prominent role in calling for reform of the world's financial system in response to the global credit crisis and, acting in the name of the EU, helped to secure a ceasefire in the violent conflict that erupted in Aug. between Russia and Georgia. Also in July, a new Union for the Mediterranean was launched at a summit of regional heads of state and government hosted by Sarkozy in Paris.

In early 2009 the government faced strikes and protests in response to the economic downturn. However, France unexpectedly pulled out of recession with a return to growth in the second quarter of the year and Sarkozy's UMP party topped the polls in French elections to the European Parliament in June.

In March 2009, in a significant foreign policy move, Sarkozy confirmed that France would rejoin NATO's integrated military command, reversing its withdrawal of 43 years earlier. The following May he opened France's first military base in the Persian Gulf area with the stationing of forces in the United Arab Emirates. Then in Nov. 2010 he and the UK prime minister signed a 50-year Anglo-French defence and security co-operation agreement.

Sarkozy's political fortunes declined markedly in 2010. In March the UMP endured heavy losses in regional elections, and in June the government announced deep public spending cuts, including unpopular pension reforms, to reduce the high level of public debt. Then in July prosecutors started an inquiry into alleged illegal financial donations by Liliane Bettencourt, heiress to the L'Oreal cosmetics business empire, to Sarkozy's presidential election campaign. Meanwhile, the deportation from France of illegal Roma immigrants back to Romania and Bulgaria, which began in Aug., attracted international media coverage and was strongly criticized by the EU justice commissioner. Attention in Sept. and Oct. was focused on trade union-led action against the government's pension reforms. However, despite several waves of disruptive strikes and street protests, the French parliament gave its final approval to legislation raising the retirement age from 60 to 62 at the end of Oct. In Nov. Sarkozy carried out a minor reshuffle of his cabinet, retaining Prime Minister François Fillon but replacing Bernard Kouchner as foreign minister.

Sarkozy was one of ten candidates who participated in the first round of voting in the 2012 presidential elections. Coming second, he faced the Socialist Party candidate François Hollande in the run-off but failed to be re-elected for a second term. Conceding to Hollande, Sarkozy announced that he would retire from politics.

Later Life

Despite being charged with corruption and abuses of power by a French court in July 2014, Sarkozy announced his intention to return to politics and run as a candidate for the UMP leadership at party elections held in Nov. He subsequently took 65.4% of the vote against two other candidates and assumed the presidency of the centre-right party for the second time later the same month. The case against his alleged influencing of public officials and misreporting of campaign funds had been suspended the previous month.

In Aug. 2016 Sarkozy announced his candidacy for the French presidential race in 2017. However, 3 months later he lost in the first round of the primary of the Republicans—which was founded in May 2015 as the successor to the UMP.

Sarney, José (Brazil)

Introduction

José Sarney was president of Brazil from 1985 to 1990. His attempts to consolidate pro-democracy reforms were hampered by crippling economic and social problems.

Early Life

Born in 1930 in Maranhão state, José Sarney entered politics as a federal representative in 1955. He became Maranhão state governor in 1965 and then president of the Social Democratic Party in 1970. Failing to secure the approval of the military government, his attempts to return to the governorship of Maranhão in 1974 and 1978 were vetoed.

He became vice president following the 1985 elections, which saw the end of 21 years of military rule. On the death of president-elect Tancredo Neves in April 1985, Sarney was sworn in as president.

Career Peak

Sarney was confronted by massive economic problems, a hangover from the years of military rule. Foreign debt, inflation and unemployment were all at unmanageable levels. Price and wage freezes set out in the Cruzado Plan succeeded briefly in bringing down inflation, but during his period in office Sarney had to implement four austerity programmes. In the presidential run-off of Dec. 1989 voters backed the two candidates who had vociferously criticized the Sarney presidency, Fernando Collor and Luís Inácio Lula da Silva.

Later Life

Sarney remained a senator until Feb. 2015, serving as president of the federal senate on three occasions.

Sata, Michael Chilufya (Zambia)

Introduction

Michael Sata was head of state between Sept. 2011 and Oct. 2014 when he passed away whilst still in office. He presided over a buoyant economy but was criticized for his alleged political bullying and imperious style.

Early Life

Born in 1937, Sata was raised in Mpika in the Northern Province of what was then Northern Rhodesia. Before entering politics he worked as a policeman, railwayman and trade unionist. After Zambia won independence in 1964 he became a member of the ruling United National Independence Party until joining the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) in 1991. In the 1990s he variously served as minister for local government, health and labour, as well as minister without portfolio.

When Levy Mwanawasa was chosen as the MMD's 2001 presidential candidate, Sata left to form the Patriotic Front. However, he made little impact at the polls and in parliamentary elections his new party won only a single seat. He stood for the presidency in 2006, finishing second behind Mwanawasa who secured a second term. Sata was arrested for making a false declaration of his assets when registering for the campaign but the charge was dropped. In 2007 he was deported on arrival in neighbouring Malawi on allegations that he was plotting a coup. Later the same year his passport was withdrawn by the Zambian authorities, who accused him of bypassing regulations.

After an apparent reconciliation with President Mwanawasa in May 2008, Sata suffered a heart attack. When Mwanawasa died in Aug. that year, Sata was banned from attending the funeral. On 30 Aug. 2008 he was unanimously chosen as the Patriotic Front's presidential candidate but lost to Rupiah Banda of the MMD.

At the presidential poll on 23 Sept. 2011, Sata gained 42% of the vote against Banda's 35% after a campaign marred by violence. Sata was sworn in to office in Lusaka within hours of the results being declared. His victory ended two decades of MMD rule.

Career Peak

Sata campaigned on promises to help the nation's poor and fight corruption, and pledged to reinstate a 25% windfall tax on mining revenues abolished by the MMD in 2009. He has also encouraged foreign investment while demanding improved working conditions, having criticized the employment practices of companies from China, a heavy investor in Zambia's mining industries.

Having previously expressed his admiration for Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, Sata (known as 'King Cobra' for his fiery rhetoric) has been accused of political authoritarianism and intimidation.

Sata died somewhat unexpectedly in the United Kingdom on 28 Oct. 2014. His public appearances had decreased dramatically since June, and he had been receiving treatment at a hospital in London for an undisclosed medical condition. His vice-president Guy Scott was sworn in as acting president the following day.

Sato, Eisaku (Japan)

Introduction

Eisaku Sato was Japan's longest serving prime minister (1964–72). He was a prime mover in Japan's development as a leading economic and political power.

Early Life

Sato was born in 1901. He graduated in law at Tokyo Imperial University in 1924. Elected as a member of the Diet in 1945–74, he was leader of the Liberal Democrat Party from 1950. He was Minister of Construction 1952–53; Finance minister 1957–60 and Minister of Nuclear Science, energy and technology, 1960–64.

Career Peak

During his premiership, Sato stabilized South Korean–Japanese relations and in 1972 regained from the US sovereign rights over Okinawa and the Ryuku Islands. Discontent over permission for US forces to remain on the islands resulted in Sato's resignation.

Later Lifer

In 1974, Sato received the Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to limiting the spread of nuclear weapons. Sato died in Tokyo on 3 June 1975.

were fraudulent. The civil war resumed and though a tenuous peace was established in 1994, by 1998 the fighting had escalated once again. On this occasion the conflict was initiated by the government in response to what it regarded as UNITA's wilful failure to adhere to the UN peace agreement.

The MPLA denounced UNITA as a treacherous and unreliable adversary, but conceded that the future of peace in Angola depended upon gaining support from Savimbi. Styling itself as the champion of the disenfranchised rural peasantry, support for UNITA was made all too clear in the 1992 election. Having recognized this the government made some peaceful overtures towards Savimbi, offering an amnesty to him and a pardon to his troops. Savimbi continued with UNITA's offensive and was killed by government forces on 22 Feb. 2002. Hopes that Savimbi's demise would prompt renewed efforts for peace were rewarded when a ceasefire was signed in April 2002.

Savimbi, Jonas (Angola)

Introduction

Jonas Savimbi led the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) group, in opposition to the post-independence government of Angola. During this time the group conducted guerrilla insurgencies against the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which met with a mix of international support and condemnation. A mysterious and unpredictable figure in political life, Savimbi was instrumental in both restoring peace and provoking war.

Early Life

Savimbi was born on 3 Aug. 1934. The son of a railroad stationmaster, he was educated at mission schools, winning a scholarship to study abroad. He studied medicine at the University of Lisbon, and then later travelled to Lausanne in Switzerland where he studied political science. In 1965 Savimbi and 11 other pro-independence militants left for China where they were trained in guerrilla warfare. On Mao Zedong's advice they decided to conduct a guerrilla campaign to secure Angola's liberation from Portugal. In March 1966 Savimbi formed the UNITA after entering the country in secret. He was briefly detained by Zambian authorities the following year and sent into exile in Cairo. On his return in 1968 he installed himself and his followers deep within the jungle and began to wage war against the colonial rulers. He was the only leader of a nationalist movement to remain in Angola throughout the conflict with Portugal.

Savimbi was present at the Mombasa Conference in 1975 when he agreed with the other two Angolan nationalist leaders, Agostinho Neto and Holden Roberto, to create an independent democratic Angola. Only 12 days later on 15 Jan. 1975, the Portuguese president, Costa Gomes, and the three nationalist leaders signed the Alvor accords which granted Angola independence.

Career Peak

Almost immediately the three factions began to squabble for power, and by June 1975 the stability of the country was at risk. There were massacres in Luanda. Following the failure of talks to resolve the escalating conflict, Savimbi and his followers abandoned the city of Huambo and returned to the bush. UNITA based its headquarters in the southeast of Angola, relying on the Ovimbundu, the largest tribal group in the country, for support.

Savimbi made several visits abroad to canvas international support for UNITA, at various times obtaining backing from South Africa, China and the USA to oppose the Marxist MPLA regime. He was recognized as a freedom fighter by President Ronald Reagan in 1986.

In 1991 Savimbi signed a peace agreement with the MPLA that ended the violence and culminated in Angola's first nationwide elections in 1992. After a turnout of 91% of registered voters, UNITA won 34% compared to the MPLA's 54%. In the presidential poll the results were closer still. Dos Santos of the MPLA secured 49.6%, while Savimbi polled 40.7%. The narrow defeat prompted Savimbi to reject the UN monitored election, claiming the results

Sayasone, Choummaly (Laos)

Introduction

Choummaly Sayasone was elected president in June 2006, succeeding his long-time mentor, Khamtay Siphandone. Part of the Lao ruling elite for decades, Sayasone had previously served as vice president and minister of national defence. He was re-elected by the National Assembly in June 2011.

Early Life

Born on 6 March 1936 into a farming family in Vat Neua village, Attopeu province, Sayasone took up arms with the revolutionary Pathet Lao guerrilla forces in 1954. While fighting in Houaphan province in 1955, he joined the People's Revolutionary Party. A successful soldier, Sayasone became deputy head of a regiment of Pathet Lao forces in 1959. He also held a variety of posts within the party hierarchy and was appointed head of the military department in 1972.

When the Pathet Lao took over government in 1975, he worked as a close ally of Khamtay Siphandone, minister of national defence and deputy prime minister. Sayasone became Siphandone's deputy at the defence ministry in 1982 and was promoted to minister of national defence in 1991. Sayasone became vice president in 2001 and on 21 March 2006 he was elected secretary general of the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos. On Siphandone's retirement as president, the National Assembly chose Sayasone as his successor in June 2006.

Career Peak

Sayasone has continued his predecessor's policies, including the banning of rival political parties and tight control of the media. Some economic liberalization has nevertheless been under way since Laos joined ASEAN in 1997, including the opening of a stock market in Vientiane in Jan. 2011. Sayasone was re-elected for a further 5-year term in June 2011. In July 2012 Hillary Clinton made the first visit to Laos by a US secretary of state since the 1950s.

Sayasone did not seek re-election at the 10th LPRP Congress in Jan. 2016 and retired from public life.

Schmidt, Helmut (Germany)

Introduction

Helmut Schmidt was Chancellor of West Germany between 1974–82 and Vice Chairman of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) from 1968–83. He oversaw the continued strength of the West German economy throughout the 1970s both as Minister of Finance and then Chancellor. In retirement he

remained influential on the international political scene and edited the respected political review *Die Zeit* (The Times).

Early Life

Schmidt was born on 23 Dec. 1918 in Hamburg. During World War II he served on both the Eastern and Western Fronts and towards the war's end he was captured by British troops and detained in Belgium. After the war he studied Economics at the University of Hamburg and became involved in the Social Democrat movement, becoming Chairman of the Socialist Students' League in 1947.

In 1949 he was employed in the Department of Transport Management for Hamburg. In 1953 he left municipal government to enter parliament (*Bundestag*), serving for 8 years before losing his seat and returning to Hamburg's state administration in the Ministry of the Interior. Within a few months of taking this post he had to deal with the effects of extensive flooding in the area, which did much to revive his political profile. In 1965 he won re-election to the *Bundestag*. He took the job of Vice Chairman of the SPD in 1968 and, in the coalition of Chancellor Brandt, was appointed Defence Minister. In 1972 he was moved to the Ministry of Finance before succeeding Willy Brandt, who had resigned following a spy scandal, on 16 May 1974.

Career Peak

As both Finance Minister and Chancellor, Schmidt had to contend with a worldwide downturn in the economy, caused chiefly by the Middle Eastern oil crises of 1973 and 1979. Inflation increased, public welfare suffered and unemployment tripled during his tenure, yet he managed re-election in 1976 and 1980. By the early 1980s inflation was under control with resumed economic growth.

Schmidt's period in office was troubled by terrorist activity, particularly by the Baader-Meinhof Gang, a group with vague humanitarian aims. While it had generated support during the early 1970s, it soon descended into calculated acts of terrorism that resulted in numerous deaths. Several leaders were imprisoned but terrorist activity continued throughout the decade, culminating with the hi-jacking of a Lufthansa jet in late 1977 by Palestinian militants who demanded the release of their Baader-Meinhof allies. The aircraft was taken to Mogadishu in Somalia, and Schmidt, facing a highly sensitive issue, sent in a specially trained police squad. Three hi-jackers were killed but all the hostages emerged unharmed. As the news broke, three of the imprisoned Baader-Meinhof gang committed suicide.

Schmidt continued Brandt's efforts to promote relations with East Germany and the Soviet Union. He also attempted to heal old wounds between France and Germany, promoting economic co-operation among the Western European nations and between West Germany and the USA. As early as 1978 he was advocating European Monetary Union. In 1979 he attended a major summit with US President Jimmy Carter, French President Giscard d'Estaing and British Prime Minister James Callaghan. Discussions were held on the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and what NATO's response should be to Soviet plans to deploy missiles aimed at Western targets. China and its changing world role was also an important topic.

Energy and the environment became major concerns on Germany's domestic scene throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. The Green Party emerged in the late-1970s. By 1980 it was making gains in *Länder* elections and threatening to impact on federal elections. A number of the SPD's left wing members subsequently defected to the new party. The German economy experienced a downturn in the 1980s, as did most other Western economies, but Schmidt refused to sanction cuts in the welfare budget as many economists were demanding. In response the Free Democratic Party left Schmidt's coalition government, leaving the Chancellor without a workable majority. Following a vote of no confidence by the *Bundestag* on 1 Oct. 1982, Schmidt resigned, to be replaced by Helmut Kohl who went on to win the federal elections of 1983.

Later Life

Schmidt remained in the *Bundestag* until his retirement in Sept. 1986. Between 1983–89 he was publisher of *Die Zeit*, a respected weekly political newspaper. A multi-linguist, he continued to write for other publications and also wrote several political works. He has remained an influential and respected voice on the international political scene. He died aged 96 on 10 Nov. 2015.

Schmitt, Pál (Hungary)

Introduction

Pál Schmitt was sworn in as president on 6 Aug. 2010. Schmitt first achieved fame as a sportsman, winning Olympic gold in fencing. He entered politics in the 1980s. Seen as a less interventionist president than his predecessor, he declared that he would not use the largely ceremonial role to obstruct government business. After being stripped of his doctorate over plagiarism, Schmitt resigned in April 2012.

Early Life

Schmitt was born in Budapest on 13 May 1942 and graduated from the city's university as a student of economics. Having started fencing competitively in his early teens, Schmitt went on to win the team épée gold medals at the 1968 and 1972 Olympic Games. He also won team and individual world championships before retiring from fencing in 1977. As a sports administrator, he was appointed the government's undersecretary of sports in 1981, a position he held until 1990, when he became president of the Hungarian Olympic Committee. He subsequently held a succession of posts with the International Olympic Committee.

In 1993 Schmitt was named the ambassador to Spain, later becoming ambassador to Switzerland. In 2002 he unsuccessfully ran for the mayorship of Budapest. Although an independent, his candidacy was supported by the centre-right Fidesz party. The following year, he was named deputy president of the party. In 2004 Schmitt was elected to the European Parliament at the head of the Fidesz list, and in July 2009 was confirmed as one of the parliament's 14 vice presidents.

In the aftermath of Hungary's parliamentary election in April 2010, Schmitt became speaker. He was then selected as the joint presidential nominee of Fidesz-MPSz and its Christian Democratic partners. In the presidential election, held among members of the national assembly, he defeated András Balogh of the Socialist Party by 263 votes to 59.

Career Peak

László Sólyom, Schmitt's predecessor as president, clashed with parties on both sides of the political divide by regularly sending laws back to parliament for reconsideration. Schmitt distanced himself from such an interpretation of the presidential role, stating that he did not want to impede policies approved by parliament. He pledged to work to promote public health, sports, education, the Hungarian language and civil solidarity.

Hungary assumed the European Union rotating presidency on 1 Jan. 2011, at a time when the EU was struggling to come to terms with the sovereign debt crises in several member states. The passage of a controversial media law in Hungary, entitling the government to force journalists to reveal sources under certain circumstances, drew questions about the country's suitability to head the EU. The government responded by amending the legislation to meet EU concerns.

In April 2011 Schmitt signed a revised Hungarian constitution into law. The following year Semmelweis University stripped Schmitt of his doctorate after it found that large parts of his thesis were plagiarized. Facing calls to stand down, Schmitt announced his resignation on 2 April 2012.

Later Life

In Jan. 2016 Schmitt was appointed chairman of Budapest's bid for the 2024 Summer Olympic Games.

Schröder, Gerhard (Germany)

Introduction

Schröder became Germany's chancellor in Oct. 1998, ending 16 years of Christian Democrat rule under Helmut Kohl. Schröder, claiming the political

centre, was seen as a leading exponent of 'third way' politics, along with Tony Blair in the UK and Bill Clinton in the US. His government declined in popularity during its first year as the economy contracted. In addition, he caused unease among several of his European partners by his proposals for a 'European Federation'. He was re-elected chancellor in 2002, narrowly defeating Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) candidate Edmund Stoiber. He left office in Nov. 2005 having been narrowly defeated for the chancellorship by the CDU's Angela Merkel.

Early Life

Schröder was born on 7 April 1944 in Mossenburg, Lower Saxony. His father was killed during World War II and his mother worked as a cleaner while raising five children. Schröder left school at 14 to find employment. He obtained his school certificates by attending evening classes, and in 1976 he graduated from Goettingen University with a degree in law. From 1978–90 he had a private practice in Hanover.

Having become active within the Social Democratic Party (SPD) following his studies, Schröder was appointed to lead the Young Socialists in 1978. Two years later, regarded as on the far-left of the party, he won a seat in the German parliament. In 1986 he was appointed to the national executive body of the SPD, and in 1990 became prime minister of Lower Saxony.

During the course of the 1980s and 1990s, he moved from the political left to the centre, establishing links within the German business community. In 1996 he married his fourth wife. In April 1998, following his success in regional elections, Schröder was nominated as the SPD's candidate for the chancellorship in the Sept. elections. Youthfully vibrant in comparison with Helmut Kohl, Schröder promised to upkeep Germany's expansive welfare provisions while improving conditions for business. The SPD emerged from the elections as the biggest party, and Schröder was elected chancellor by parliament on 27 Oct. 1998.

Career Peak

In Oct. 1998 Schröder agreed a coalition with the Greens, which entitled the junior partner to fill certain key government posts including foreign affairs and the environment. His centrist stance soon brought him into conflict with senior colleagues on the left, most notably the finance minister, Oskar Lafontaine, the candidate for the chancellorship at the 1990 elections and SPD national chairman since 1995. Their disputes ultimately led to Lafontaine's resignation in March 1999, with Schröder replacing him as party leader.

Lafontaine was replaced by Hans Eichel, who oversaw a rapid series of market reforms, of the type traditionally associated with the CDU. However, the coalition failed in their chief aim of reducing unemployment and consequently they suffered a decline in popularity, with losses in European, state and local elections.

On the international scene, Schröder caused disquiet among European partners including France and the UK in 2001 when he set out his vision of a European Federation. Among his proposals was the conversion of the European Council into the European parliament's 'upper house'. Further delineation of policy areas to be decided centrally, nationally and regionally; joint financing of agricultural subsidies by the EU and relevant states. In the aftermath of the 11 Sept. terrorist attacks, he offered broad support to US initiatives, sending troops to Afghanistan as part of the international peace-keeping force. At the end of 2001 Bonn hosted UN brokered talks on the future of Afghanistan. However, he refused to support proposals for a US-led attack on Iraq, stating in Aug. 2002 that 'under my leadership Germany will not be available for adventures.' Relations with both the UK and US deteriorated further in 2003 when, along with France, Russia and China, Germany was among the most critical opponents of the US-led invasion that saw Saddam Hussein's regime deposed in April. The split between Washington and what it regarded as 'Old Europe' posed long-term questions over the role of the UN, NATO and the EU on the international stage. However, in May 2003 Germany voted to accept a UN resolution on Iraq's future jointly proposed by the US, UK and Spain. In return for the immediate ending of sanctions, the UN was to co-operate with the occupying forces to form a new government.

In the build up to the 2002 elections, Schröder had to contend with a poor economic climate and high unemployment. His party was hit by scandal in July 2002 when his defence minister, Rudolf Sharping, resigned over allegations of financial irregularity. In Aug. 2002 Schröder announced that tax cuts scheduled for Jan. 2003 would be postponed as a result of extensive flooding estimated to have caused €10 bn. of damage. However, Schröder retained significant public support. His proposals for a modernization of Germany's

immigration policy, partly in response to the growing need to expand the country's worker base in order to support an aging population, was well received. In addition, his market reforms were viewed favourably by the business community although his failure to reduce unemployment was widely attacked. In June 2003 Schröder won support from his party for a series of social and economic reforms, including a cut in pension and health care spending, lower unemployment benefits for those under 55 and greater employer freedom to dismiss staff. In the same month he announced income tax cuts intended to encourage consumer spending to kickstart the economy. It was hoped the cuts would increase the income of average earners by 10% per year.

At the elections of Sept. 2002, Schröder's SPD finished neck and neck with the CDU/CSU, the party of his chief opponent for the chancellorship, Edmund Stoiber. Both parties achieved a 38.5% share of the vote, with the SPD gaining 3 seats more than its rival. The strong showing of the Greens, Schröder's coalition allies, secured him a further term in office. In Oct. 2002 Schröder appointed Wolfgang Clement, the Social Democrat leader of North Rhine-Westphalia, as leader of the new labour and economics 'super-ministry'. He replaced the former economy and labour ministers. The new ministry's main task was to combat unemployment and reform the labour market.

In state elections in Feb. 2003 the SPD lost ground in Schröder's traditional strongholds of Lower Saxony and Hessen, while the CDU increased its standing in the *Bundesrat*. The results were considered a reaction to his unpopular economic measures and lack of success in revitalizing the economy and labour market.

During the Iraq war in 2003 Schröder opposed the US-led military invasion, leading to arguably the lowest point in post-war German-US relations. He regarded the war as untenable without a specific UN Security Council resolution. Schröder's relationship with Bush was strained but subsequently improved.

In Feb. 2004 Schröder resigned as chairman of his party as a result of criticism of his economic reform agenda. That same month Schröder, Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac met in Berlin to talk about economic challenges in Europe. They called for a EU economic reform 'tsar' to make Europe more globally competitive. Other European countries regarded the meeting as elitist, excluding other members from decision-making.

In Aug. and Sept. 2004 there were large popular protests in the east of the country against planned cuts in welfare benefits and labour reforms. In May 2005, during which parliament ratified the EU constitution, the SPD performed badly in regional elections in North Rhein-Westphalia. Schröder called for general elections to be brought forward to Sept. 2005. In a close-fought contest neither Schröder or Angela Merkel of the CDU would concede defeat in their fight for the chancellorship. Several weeks of talks followed as both tried to form a workable coalition. In early Oct. Schröder announced that Merkel would head a grand coalition including both parties and that he would leave politics.

Later Life

In Dec. 2005 Schröder announced he was joining the advisory board of a company overseeing construction of a Euro-Baltic Sea gas pipeline worth several billion euros. Schröder had signed Germany up to the project while chancellor, leading to allegations of conflict of interest. He also joined the media firm Ringier AG as an adviser for international political affairs. In Sept. 2017 he became chairman of Rosneft, Russia's biggest oil producer.

Schüssel, Wolfgang (Austria)

Introduction

A former lawyer, Schüssel came through the ranks of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) to become, on 4 Feb. 2000, Austria's first centre-right chancellor in 30 years. He achieved this in a controversial alliance with Jörg Haider's far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ). A pro-European moderate, his resistance to EU diplomatic sanctions (imposed in response to the FPÖ presence in government) in his first few months of office transformed him into a dominant political figure. His coalition collapsed in Sept. 2002 when the FPÖ succumbed to internal wranglings. In new elections in Nov. 2002 he led the

ÖVP to sweeping gains but revived the coalition with the FPÖ. After electoral defeat in 2006 he left office in Jan. 2007.

Early Life

Schüssel was born 7 June 1945 in Vienna and educated at Schottengymnasium until 1963. Having gained a PhD in law from Vienna University in 1968, he was secretary to the ÖVP parliamentary group until 1975 and then secretary-general of the Austrian Economic Federation (a post he retained until 1991). He was elected a member of the National Council in 1979, serving as leader of the Group of Economic Federation parliamentary delegates, deputy chairman of the parliamentary ÖVP and deputy chairman of the parliamentary finance committee before his appointment as minister of economic affairs in April 1989. In April 1995 he was elected party leader (following the slide in his party's popularity in the 1994 elections) and assumed the federal posts of vice chancellor and foreign minister in the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government.

Career Peak

Schüssel first announced that he would take the ÖVP into opposition after it was beaten into third place (albeit by a few hundred votes) by the right-wing FPÖ in the Oct. 1999 elections. However, in Feb. 2000 he made a controversial strategic move to include the FPÖ in a coalition government, although it was emphasized that the ÖVP did not embrace that party's more extreme policies. As a result Austria was boycotted diplomatically by its European Union partners. Schüssel did not relent and in Sept. 2000 the EU lifted its sanctions, by which time Haider had resigned as official FPÖ leader and Schüssel's political standing in Europe had been strengthened.

Schüssel's government initiated tough policy measures to reform the public sector (notably the *proporz* system under which public-sector appointments were shared between party supporters), to reduce the budget deficit and to accelerate privatization. However, he was vulnerable to tensions with his coalition partners on issues such as EU enlargement and immigration.

In Sept. 2002 two FPÖ ministers resigned their government posts and the coalition government collapsed. Schüssel declared his readiness to form a new administration with any of the three main opposition parties, but the Social Democrats (the second biggest party) ruled out an agreement. He therefore called new elections, which were held on 24 Nov. 2002 and won by the ÖVP, and revived the ruling alliance with the FPÖ. However, the coalition's stability was again undermined in April 2005 as Jörg Haider and his supporters left the FPÖ to form a new political party.

At the elections of Oct. 2006 the SPÖ defeated the ÖVP and the two parties set about forming a coalition under the leadership of Alfred Gusenbauer (head of the SPÖ), who took office as chancellor in Jan. 2007. When the interior minister Liese Prokop died suddenly on 21 Dec. 2006, Schüssel was sworn in as her interim replacement on 2 Jan. until a new government was formed 9 days later.

Schuster, Rudolf (Slovakia)

Introduction

In June 1999 Rudolf Schuster assumed the post of president, which had been vacant since the resignation of Michal Kováč in March 1998. Schuster was Slovakia's first directly elected president and has strongly supported entry into the EU and NATO. He held office for nearly 5 years, being defeated in the presidential election of April 2004.

Early Life

Schuster was born on 4 Jan. 1934 in Košice, then part of Czechoslovakia. In 1959 he graduated in civil engineering from the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava. The following year he became a designer at the Regional Institute for Agricultural Projects in Bratislava and was an assistant at the Institute of Hydrology and Hydraulics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava.

In 1962 Schuster began working for the East Slovakian Iron and Steel Works. In 1964 he joined the Czechoslovakian Communist Party (KSČ), remaining a member until the party's demise in 1990. In 1974 he was

appointed vice chairman of the national committee of Košice with responsibility for services. Five years later he took over the local economy portfolio, and in 1983 he became the city mayor, a position he held until 1986.

From 1986 until 1989 he was chairman of the East Slovak regional national committee before taking the chairmanship of the Slovak national council, a post he held for a year. Serving as an ambassador in Canada between 1990–92, the following year he became foreign affairs minister. In 1994 he returned as mayor of Košice.

When incumbent president Michal Kováč stood down in March 1998 no candidate was able to secure the necessary 60% support from parliament to succeed him. Constitutional changes were promulgated allowing for the direct election of the president. Having resigned his mayorship, Schuster stood in the elections of May 1999, defeating Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar after a rancorous campaign. He was sworn in on 15 June 1999.

Career Peak

The presidency is principally a ceremonial post and Schuster has repeatedly stressed that he is non-partisan. He is a strong advocate for entry into the EU and NATO and has encouraged the necessary reforms to facilitate admission. In 2002 Slovakia was invited to join both organizations in 2004.

In May 2001 Schuster gave a speech to parliament in which he condemned the government, a wide coalition beset by in-fighting, for its failure to undertake economic reform. In June 2001 he underwent bowel surgery in Austria and took several months to recuperate. He was defeated in the 2004 presidential election, coming fourth of six candidates.

Scotty, Ludwig (Nauru)

Introduction

Scotty was president of Nauru, the world's smallest republic, from June 2004 until Dec. 2007, having previously held the post for part of 2003. He attempted to push through financial and legislative reforms necessary to stave off bankruptcy and build the foundations of a sustainable economy. He left his post after losing a vote of confidence.

Early Life

Ludwig Derangadage Scotty was born on 20 June 1948 in Anabar, in the north of Nauru, then a UN Trust Territory under Australian administration. He completed his secondary education in 1964 and studied law at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands. Returning to Nauru, which gained independence on 31 Jan. 1968, he held several prominent positions including chairman of the Bank of Nauru and member of the executive committee of Air Nauru. The 1970s saw political stability under president Hammer DeRoburt and unprecedented prosperity from the export of the island's valuable phosphorous deposits.

Scotty was elected as one of 18 members of parliament on 15 March 1983, representing the Anabar constituency. He served as parliamentary speaker from the late 1990s and briefly held the ministerial portfolio for health in 2003. During the caretaker administration of Derog Gioura, Scotty was elected president by ten parliamentary votes to seven, defeating the former president, Kinza Clodamur. He was sworn in on 28 May 2003.

Career Peak

With the national phosphate reserves exhausted, Scotty introduced sweeping reforms and unpopular austerity measures to stave off bankruptcy. Following a vote of no confidence on 8 Aug. 2003, he was ousted and replaced by René Harris. Harris himself then lost a vote of confidence and Scotty regained the presidency in June 2004. When the government failed to pass a reform budget by a designated deadline, Scotty dissolved parliament and called a general election for 23 Oct. 2004 and was re-elected unopposed. The reform-minded parliament subsequently cut government spending and tightened regulations in Nauru's offshore banking industry. Longer-term goals included rehabilitating the devastated environment and developing alternative sources of revenue.

In May 2005 his administration agreed to restore diplomatic ties with Taiwan in a move which angered the People's Republic of China. In Nov.

2007 Scotty narrowly survived a vote of no confidence, raised against him for his continued support of the foreign minister, David Adeang, who had been accused of misconduct. A second confidence motion was brought a month later which Scotty failed to defeat and he was subsequently ousted.

Later Life

In Nov. 2010 Scotty was elected Speaker of Parliament for the second time. He resigned in April 2013 amid increasing parliamentary deadlock only to be elected for a third time following elections in June of that year. He lost his parliamentary seat in the elections of July 2016.

Sellal, Abdelmalek (Algeria)

Introduction

Abdelmalek Sellal became prime minister in Sept. 2012. He was appointed by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika following the resignation of Ahmed Ouyahia.

Early Life

Sellal was born in Aug. 1948 in Constantine, Algeria. He finished his secondary education at the National College of Administration and became an adviser to the prefect of Guelma province. He then took a post at the ministry of education and subsequently served as prefect of several Algerian provinces.

Sellal was Algeria's ambassador to Hungary when, in 1998, he was named minister of the interior. In 1999 he was moved to the ministry of youth and sports, then to the ministry of public works in 2001, the ministry of transport in 2002 and the ministry of water in 2004 where he stayed until 2012.

Sellal guided Bouteflika's presidential re-election campaigns in 2004 and 2009. Following the resignation of Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia in 2012 after 4 years in office, Bouteflika appointed Sellal to the premiership.

Career Peak

Seen as a technocrat, Sellal does not belong to any political party. On taking office in 2012 he maintained much of his predecessor's cabinet and pledged to continue the reform programme laid out by President Bouteflika. In March 2014 Sellal resigned from the premiership in order to run Bouteflika's campaign for re-election. He was replaced by the then energy and mines minister, Youcef Yousfi, who became acting prime minister. However, Sellal returned to the post after Bouteflika was successfully elected to a fourth term as president in April 2014. As a long-standing presidential stalwart, as expected Sellal kept his prime ministerial position in a major cabinet reshuffle carried out by Bouteflika in May 2015. Following the victory of the National Liberation Front in the parliamentary election of May 2017, Abdelmajjid Tebboune took office as prime minister on 25 May.

Senghor, Léopold Sédar (Senegal)

Introduction

A poet and writer, Léopold Sédar Senghor was the first president of independent Senegal from 1960–80. He was a leading advocate of the concept of *negritude*, which acknowledged and celebrated the contributions, achievements and aspirations of black Africa. Conscious of the risk of creating a splintered and weak Africa in the post-colonial era, he favoured African federalism and fought for continuing ties with France after Senegalese independence. Espousing broadly socialist principals adapted for African culture, he resigned mid-way through his fifth term in office as a widely respected figure on the international stage.

Early Life

Senghor was born on 9 Oct. 1906 in Joal, a coastal town, the son of a successful trader. His father was from the Serer tribe. After schooling in Senegal, Senghor continued his studies in Paris. He was a French teacher in France in the years leading up to World War II. His association with the Martinican poet Aimé Césaire led to the development of their *negritude* philosophy.

Having obtained French nationality Senghor joined the French army in 1939, was captured in 1940 and spent 2 years in German concentration camps. These experiences heavily influenced his first collection of poems (*Chants d'ombre/Songs of Shadows*), published in 1945.

In the same year he was elected to the French constituent assembly and in 1946 became one of Senegal's two deputies at the French national assembly. Originally a member of the Parti Socialiste Français (French Socialist Party), in 1948 he left to found the Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais (Senegalese Democratic Bloc/BDS) and was also leader of the Indépendants d'Outremer faction (Independents from Overseas) in the French assembly. The BDS achieved election success in Senegal in 1951 and 1952, while Senghor served in the governments of Edgar Faure and De Gaulle.

When France granted several African nations self-rule during the mid-1950s, Senghor helped to promote African federalism. This led to the creation of the Mali Federation in 1959, which included the modern states of Senegal, Mali, Benin and Burkina Faso until its collapse the following year. In 1960 Senghor was appointed president of independent Senegal.

Career Peak

As President, Senghor looked to implement democratic socialist principals adapted to the African experience. He introduced rural reform, established multi-party politics and fought corruption. He survived an attempted coup by his former ally Mamadou Dia in 1962.

In foreign policy he favoured a continuing relationship with France and closer ties with other independent African nations. Dakar hosted the World Festival of Negro Arts in 1966. He made primary education compulsory and free. Though French was the official medium in schools, he incorporated the ethnic languages of Wolof, Sérère, Diola, Peul, Mandingue and Sarakholé into the curriculum.

Senghor was the Christian leader of a largely Muslim nation and though Senegal did not suffer the same intertribal conflict as many of its neighbours, racial tensions were a growing problem throughout the 1970s. He resigned in Dec. 1980, having been re-elected for a fifth term, and was succeeded by his prime minister Abdou Diouf.

Later Life

Senghor was first married in 1948, to Ginette Eboué with whom he had two children. After they divorced, he married Collette Hubert, with whom he spent his retirement. He became a member of the L'Académie Française (The French Academy) in 1983, the first black man to do so. He died on 20 Dec. 2001.

Sevele, Fred (Tonga)

Introduction

Fred Sevele was appointed Tonga's first 'citizen' prime minister in March 2006 by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV. With a background in business, Sevele aimed to boost the economy by developing the fishing and tourism sectors. Although an advocate of greater democracy, his early tenure was marked by civil disorder and the imposition of a state of emergency. His second term began in 2008 with plans to create a parliament with elected members and a cabinet drawn from the Legislative Assembly.

Early Life

Feleti 'Fred' Vaka'uta Sevele was born in 1945 in the Kingdom of Tonga and educated at Apifo'ou College, Tonga, followed by St John's College on Ovalau, Fiji Islands and the Marist Brothers High School on Suva, Fiji Islands. He later studied economic geography at the University of Canterbury,

New Zealand, receiving his PhD in 1972. He went on to establish numerous businesses in Tonga, becoming one of the archipelago's most successful entrepreneurs. By the late 1990s he was a prominent supporter of the pro-democracy movement.

In March 1999 Sevele was elected as one of nine people's representatives to the Legislative Assembly, winning re-election in 2002 and 2005. In March 2005 King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV named Sevele as minister of labour, commerce and industries, in line with new guidelines requiring four cabinet ministers to be appointed from the elected members. Sevele won plaudits for negotiating Tonga's entry into the World Trade Organization.

When the prime minister, HRH Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, unexpectedly resigned on 11 Feb. 2006 after 6 years in the post, the king appointed Sevele as acting prime minister. No official reason was given for 'Ulukalala's departure but it followed 3 years of political upheaval that saw the collapse of Royal Tongan Airlines, a strike by civil servants and budgetary shortfalls. On 30 March 2006 the king announced that Sevele had been appointed Tonga's first non-aristocratic prime minister.

Career Peak

Sevele stated his determination to make better use of local resources and rely less on overseas aid and assistance programmes. He was also expected to push for greater democracy, particularly in the wake of the death in Sept. 2006 of King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV and the succession of his eldest son as King Tupou V. However, impatience at the pace of reform led in Nov. 2006 to rioting in the capital, resulting in eight deaths, extensive commercial damage and the declaration of a state of emergency. In mid-2007 a tripartite committee of nobles, ministers and people's representatives was established to find a consensus on political reform and to make recommendations to parliament.

In polling for the nine elected seats in the 33-member Legislative Assembly in April 2008, pro-democracy candidates were returned in the majority of them, indicating growing popular support for faster political reform. The government proposed increasing the number of directly elected parliamentarians from 2010 and diluting the power of the monarchy, recommendations upheld by a constitutional review committee in Nov. 2009. In 2010 Sevele decided not to seek re-election and stood down following the Nov. elections. He was succeeded by Lord Tu'ivakano.

Sezer, Ahmet Necdet (Turkey)

Introduction

In April 2000 the Turkish Grand National Assembly rejected a constitutional amendment allowing Süleyman Demirel a second term of office as president. Sezer, at the time the president of the Constitutional Court, was sworn in as the tenth president of the republic on 16 May 2000. A staunch secularist and supporter of freedom of expression, he was the first president in modern Turkish history to have been neither an active politician nor a military commander. Sezer left office in Aug. 2007 when Abdullah Gül was eventually appointed to succeed him.

Early Life

Ahmet Necdet Sezer was born in Afyon on 13 Sept. 1941. He attended Afyon High School and read law at the University of Ankara. After completion of military service he returned to his legal career and became a supervisory judge at the court of appeals in Ankara. In 1978 he received a master's degree in civil law. Five years later he was elected to the High Court. His political influence increased in 1988 when President Kenan Evren appointed him to the Constitutional Court. Sezer became Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court in Jan. 1998. He won the presidential election after a third ballot in May 2000.

Career Peak

Despite winning Bülent Ecevit's backing for the presidency, Sezer came into conflict with the prime minister after he vetoed two bills, one allowing for the dismissal of public employees deemed to have been subversive and the second privatizing several state-owned banks. His first official foreign engagement came on 23 June 2000 when he made a controversial visit to

the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (recognized only by Turkey), underlining Turkey's support for the Turkish Cypriots. During his first few months in office, Sezer also made clear his commitment to maintaining the country's secular status and ensuring Turkish entry to the EU. However, the failure in March 2003 of the leaders of the Greek and Turkish sectors of Cyprus to agree on UN proposals for the island's reunification put Turkey's own ambitions to join the EU at risk, since it would not be able to recognize one of the member states (Greek Cyprus).

Turkey underwent a constitutional crisis in 2002 when the Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the Nov. general elections but its leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was ineligible for a parliamentary seat (and therefore the premiership) because of a conviction received under a defunct religious law. The AKP's deputy leader, Abdullah Gül, was named prime minister. In Dec. 2002, after pressure to call a referendum which he was likely to lose, Sezer agreed to constitutional changes which would allow Erdoğan to stand for a parliamentary seat and so become eligible for the premiership. Erdoğan returned to parliament in a by-election in March 2003 and was subsequently appointed prime minister.

In March 2003 Turkey authorized limited assistance to the USA during the war with Iraq and was rewarded with substantial aid. However, Turkey's deployment of troops in Kurdish-held northern Iraq to block any attempts to establish a Kurdish separatist state caused international unease. In April 2005 Sezer made an official visit to Syria, despite objections from the US government regarding the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon. He stated that the purpose of the visit was to strengthen bilateral ties and contribute to peace and stability in the region.

In mid-2005 Sezer came into conflict with parliament by blocking amendments to a new penal code which eased restrictions on Islamic teaching. His presidential veto was subsequently overturned. In May 2006 he denounced the assassination of a prominent judge by an Islamist gunman as an attack on the secular republic.

Sezer's term of office was scheduled to expire in May 2007. Abdullah Gül, the foreign minister, was proposed as his presidential successor in April 2007. However, Gül was unable to gain the required number of votes in parliament and his candidacy was opposed by the army who saw his Muslim background as a threat to the country's secular status. Sezer's term was extended until after parliamentary elections held in July 2007. Gül was eventually elected and sworn in on 28 Aug.

Shamir, Yitzhak (Israel)

Introduction

Yitzhak Shamir was twice prime minister, from 1983–84 and 1986–92, so becoming Israel's second longest serving prime minister after David Ben-Gurion.

Early Life

Yitzhak Shamir was born Icchak Jazernicki on 22 Oct. 1915 in Ruzhany, Poland, and was educated in a Hebrew secondary school in Białystok. A Zionist, he emigrated to Palestine in 1935, while members of his family who remained in Poland were killed in the Holocaust.

He took the Hebrew name 'shamir' after emigrating and joined the Zionist militia Lehi (also known as the Stern Gang), eventually becoming one of its leaders. He was implicated in plots to assassinate both Lord Moyne, the British minister for Middle East affairs, and the UN negotiator, Count Folke Bernadotte. Shamir twice escaped after being captured by the authorities, the second time avoiding internment in Eritrea and taking refuge in France. He returned to the newly independent Israel in 1948, working for Mossad (the secret service) between 1955 and 1965.

In 1970 he joined the Herut Party (which later became Likud) and won a seat in the Knesset in 1973, rising rapidly through the party ranks to become chairman of the Herut executive. In 1977, after Likud had won power, Shamir was appointed speaker of the Knesset and became foreign minister in 1980. After Menachem Begin's sudden retirement in Oct. 1983, he succeeded him as prime minister.

Career Peak

Shamir held the post until Sept. 1984 and then entered into a rotation agreement that saw Avoda's leader, Shimon Peres, take office for the first half of a new 4-year term after an inconclusive election. Shamir took over prime minister in 1986 and continued in the role after winning the election of 1988.

An advocate of assertive Zionism, Shamir oversaw expansive settlement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Jewish population in the Occupied Territories increased by nearly 30% while he was in office. He deployed thousands of troops to quell the Palestinian *intifada* (uprising) that began in Dec. 1987, though violence dragged on until 1991 against a backdrop of mounting global concern.

In 1991 Shamir secured the good will of Washington when he did not retaliate against Iraq after Saddam Hussein fired missiles on Tel Aviv. Meanwhile, Shamir campaigned in favour of *aliya* (immigration of Jews to Israel), particularly from former Soviet territories. 350,000 immigrants arrived during 1990–91 alone, with Operation Solomon airlifting 14,000 Ethiopian Jews overnight following a change of regime in Ethiopia.

Later Life

After Likud lost the 1992 election to Yitzhak Rabin's Labour, Shamir resigned the party leadership. However, he remained in the Knesset until 1996, becoming a vocal critic of his Likud successor, Binyamin Netanyahu. He died on 30 June 2012.

in Mogadishu in Aug. Shabab militants nevertheless continued to attack TFG targets in Somalia and also made incursions into Kenya to abduct foreign nationals. In response, Kenya launched a cross-border military offensive against the Shabab in Oct. 2011.

Another major problem for the TFG was the increasing incidence and range of piracy in the seas off Somalia. Many foreign navies were deployed to patrol the area to deter Somali pirates but recorded hijackings continued to rise.

In Oct. 2010 Ahmed appointed Mohamed Abdulahi Mohamed as prime minister in place of Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke. Mohamed was in turn replaced by Abdiweli Mohamed Ali in June 2011 as a condition of the Kampala Accord signed between Ahmed and the speaker of the transitional parliament to end months of political infighting between them. The Accord extended their respective terms in office for a further year, deferring elections for a state president and parliamentary speaker until Aug. 2012.

Meanwhile, in mid-2011 the United Nations formally declared a famine across five areas of Somalia.

Ahmed was beaten in the Sept. 2012 presidential run-off by Hassan Sheikh Mohamud by 190 votes to 70 in parliament. He conceded defeat during a live broadcast, stating that he was 'satisfied' with his time in power and glad to be witnessing the first fair election in Mogadishu in 42 years.

Sharif, Nawaz (Pakistan)

Introduction

Nawaz Sharif became prime minister in June 2013. A wealthy industrialist, he has been a key political figure in the country for over 30 years. Head of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), he was previously prime minister from 1990–93 and 1997–99.

Early Life

Sharif was born on 25 Dec. 1949 in Lahore, Punjab, where his father Muhammad Sharif had founded the Ittefaq Group/Sharif Group conglomerate. Sharif studied at the Government University College (Lahore) before graduating from Punjab University Law College. He then joined the Ittefaq Group.

He entered provincial politics in the 1970s and joined the PML around the time that the Ittefaq steel business was nationalized by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In 1981, during the rule of Gen. Zia ul-Haq who returned the steel business to the family, Sharif joined the Punjab Advisory Council, serving as finance minister and, from 1985, chief minister. As leader of the PML, the largest party in the Islamic Democratic Alliance, he unsuccessfully ran against Benazir Bhutto in the 1988 general election.

In 1990 Bhutto was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan for alleged corruption. Sharif was subsequently elected prime minister and pursued a privatization programme. He also drew international attention to the Kashmir conflict, announced a nuclear development programme and introduced a number of Islamic laws.

In 1993 Ishaq Khan dismissed Sharif and Bhutto returned, only to be dismissed again in 1996.

Sharif was re-elected premier in a landslide victory. During his second tenure he brought in constitutional amendments curbing the president's power. After he attempted to block the appointment of five Supreme Court judges, a constitutional crisis ensued that ended in the resignation of the president, Farooq Leghari, and the suspension of the Chief Justice.

In 1998 Sharif ordered nuclear tests that prompted sanctions from the West, pushing the country close to bankruptcy. In 1999 he signed the Lahore Declaration with India in a bid to avert a nuclear arms race. His second premiership ended in a bloodless military coup led by Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Sharif was subsequently convicted of hijacking, terrorism and corruption. Facing the death sentence, he agreed to go into exile for 10 years and retreat from political life after the Saudi Arabian authorities helped negotiate a deal.

In 2007 Sharif returned to Pakistan and a year later contested the 2008 elections, during which Benazir Bhutto was assassinated. The Pakistan People's Party, led by Bhutto's widow Asif Ali Zardari, triumphed at the polls, and Zardari and Sharif together impeached Musharraf in Aug. 2008. Sharif

Sharif Sheikh Ahmed (Somalia)

Introduction

In Jan. 2009 Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed was elected president of Somalia at the head of a Transitional Federal Government (TFG).

Early Life

Ahmed was born in 1964 in the Mahaday district, northeast of Mogadishu. He comes from a section of the Abgaal clan of Hawiye, which dominates central-southern Somalia. He studied at a school attached to the local mosque before attending the Egyptian-run Sheikh Sufi Institute, associated with Cairo's Al Azhar University, in Mogadishu. In the 1990s Ahmed studied in Sudan and at the Open University in Libya, graduating in Islamic Sharia and Law in 1998 before returning to Somalia.

He became head of an Islamic court in Jowhar in 2002 but fled to Mogadishu in 2003 after forces led by the warlord Mohammed Dheere (a future mayor of Jowhar and a TFG ally) attacked the region. In Mogadishu Ahmed taught at Jubba Secondary School and became a central organizer of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). In mid-2006 the ICU took control of the capital and Ahmed emerged as ICU chairman, working alongside Hassan Dahir Aweys. For 6 months the ICU controlled large swathes of southern and central Somalia, establishing varying degrees of Sharia law, reopening Mogadishu's sea- and airports and quelling piracy along the coast. In Dec. 2006, backed by Ethiopian forces, the TFG expelled the ICU and Ahmed fled to Kenya.

In Eritrea in 2007, Ahmed, Aweys and anti-TFG elements formed the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS). However, in 2008 Ahmed entered UN-brokered talks with the TFG in Djibouti and split from ARS hardliners including Aweys. Ahmed's supporters joined with the TFG to form a parliament that elected him president of Somalia in Jan. 2009.

Career Peak

Throughout Ahmed's term in office Somalia has remained in turmoil from civil war, with thousands of civilians fleeing the capital and several million dependent on food aid. In June 2009 he declared a state of emergency as the Islamist insurgency intensified. In Sept. that year the Shahab Islamist group, controlling most of the south of the country, proclaimed its allegiance to Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda. Shahab rebel action against the TFG continued in 2010, but in 2011 government and African Union forces made significant military gains and Shabab troops pulled out of their positions

successfully reinstated several judges and the courts overturned his previous convictions. He led the PML-N to victory at the 2013 general election.

Career Peak

Sharif campaigned on pledges to stem electricity shortages, improve infrastructure, rebuild the economy, nurture better relations with India and fight corruption. Other major challenges have included attempting to rein in the stifling political influence of the Pakistani military and countering insurgent Taliban operations.

In Sept. 2013 Sharif accepted a US\$6.7 bn. IMF loan in return for economic reforms, including further privatization. In early 2014 he launched several power generation projects. Also in early 2014 peace talks were initiated with the Taliban despite ongoing violence. However, these talks collapsed in June following a terrorist assault on Karachi international airport, after which the army launched a new offensive in the tribal region of North Waziristan. Retaliatory action by the Taliban included an attack on a military-run school in Peshawar in Dec. 2014 that killed 145 people, mainly children, and an assault on a Shia mosque in Shikarpur in Jan. 2015 claiming over 60 lives. More attacks in 2016, particularly in Peshawar, Lahore and Quetta that resulted in scores of deaths, underlined Pakistan's continued vulnerability to Islamist extremism.

Relations with India remained frigid in the wake of the election as prime minister in May 2014 of Narendra Modi, a Hindu nationalist, and sporadic military clashes have continued over the disputed state of Kashmir.

In July 2017 the Supreme Court of Pakistan disqualified Sharif from public office over corruption allegations. Before leaving office he nominated Shahid Abbasi, also of the PML-N, as interim prime minister. On 1 Aug. Abbasi was confirmed by lawmakers with 221 of 339 votes.

Sharon, Ariel (Israel)

Introduction

Former soldier, conservative politician and prominent 'hawk' in the Likud Party until Nov. 2005, Ariel Sharon was elected prime minister on 6 Feb. 2001 as Israeli voters moved sharply to the right under the impact of the renewed Palestinian uprising. Retaining power in the elections of 2003, he continued to take an uncompromising line towards Israeli security. However, at the same time he pursued his plan for Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip and some of the West Bank, completed in Sept. 2005, and sought to negotiate with the more moderate mainstream Palestinian leadership following the death of Yasser Arafat in Nov. 2004. In Nov. 2005, facing continuing discontent from within Likud over his policies towards the occupied territories and with his government fractured by the new Labour leader's refusal to continue in the coalition, Sharon formed a new centrist party called Kadima to fight early elections scheduled for March 2006. However, after suffering a stroke in Jan. 2006 he was declared temporarily unable to rule. Deputy prime minister Ehud Olmert was confirmed as acting prime minister on 4 Jan. 2006.

Early Life

Sharon was born in 1928 to Russian parents who emigrated to Palestine at the end of the First World War. As a young man he joined the Jewish Haganah underground defence organization and fought in the 1948–49 war following the creation of the Jewish state. Pursuing a military career, he rose to the rank of brigadier-general before retiring from military service after the 1973 Yom Kippur war.

Career Peak

Sharon served as a security adviser to Prime Minister Rabin before joining Menachem Begin's Likud government which came to power in 1977. From 1977–81 he was minister of agriculture. In June 1982, as minister of defence, he masterminded Israel's invasion of Lebanon and advance to Beirut, a strike which ended in the expulsion of Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). In Sept. 1982 about 2,000 Palestinians in the refugee camps of Chatilla and Sabra near Beirut were massacred by Lebanese Christian Phalangist, an atrocity for which Sharon was held indirectly responsible by

an Israeli investigating commission. He relinquished the defence ministry in Feb. 1983 but remained in Begin's cabinet as a minister without portfolio.

From 1984–90 he was minister of trade and industry, and then minister of housing from 1990–92 promoting Jewish settlement building in the occupied territories. In the 1996–99 Likud government he served as minister of national infrastructure and later as minister of foreign affairs. Sharon succeeded Binyamin Netanyahu as Likud leader after the party's electoral defeat in May 1999. In Sept. 2000 he visited Temple Mount in East Jerusalem in a provocative demonstration of Israeli sovereignty over Muslim holy sites. This action triggered a renewed Palestinian uprising, in turn reigniting deep-seated Israeli fears over security. In Feb. 2001, campaigning against further territorial or political concessions and promising reprisals against Palestinian disorder, Sharon became prime minister in a landslide electoral victory.

His early premiership saw no end to the cycle of violence and no progress in the peace process. Tensions between Israelis and Palestinians increased as suicide bomb attacks on Israeli cities were countered with Israeli military reprisals against Palestinian targets. Sharon's reluctance to negotiate with Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, was reinforced by President Bush's outline for a settlement in June 2002, which advocated a change of Palestinian leadership. In Jan. 2003 Sharon placed a travel ban on Palestinian officials, effectively barring them from attending peace talks in the UK. The UN, EU, Jordan, Egypt, Russia and Saudi Arabia were all due to attend the talks. Sharon had previously outlined a plan to grant Palestine around 40% of the West Bank, albeit demilitarized with Israeli control over all points of entry and exit and over airspace. Negotiations would not begin until Palestinian violence ended and Arafat was removed from power. The Palestinian authorities rejected the proposals.

In Oct. 2002 the government's main coalition partner, the Labour Party, resigned following disputes over budget proposals. Sharon's attempts to form a new coalition with far right nationalist parties failed, and despite surviving a confidence vote on 4 Nov., he called early elections for Jan. 2003. In addition to a leadership challenge by Netanyahu, Sharon's standing was affected by accusations of financial impropriety involving his 1999 campaign funds. However, campaigning on security and defence, Likud increased its Knesset representation from 19 to 37 seats, while the opposition Labour Party fell from 23 to 19. With Labour's leader Amram Mitzna having refused to join a government, Sharon struggled to form a broad-based coalition administration. However, in Feb. 2003 he secured the support of the Shinui Party and the National Religious Party to provide him with a parliamentary majority.

In April 2003 the 'Roadmap to Peace', produced by the UN, EU, USA and Russia, was published. The document called for an immediate ceasefire, an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian towns, a clampdown on Palestinian militants and the dismantling of Israeli settlements built since 2001. It set out proposals for the establishment of an independent, democratic Palestinian state as early as 2005. The following month the Israeli cabinet accepted the 'road map' (albeit with 14 'reservations') Sharon sparked criticism from sections of Likud when he said that the Israeli 'occupation' of the Palestinian-administered territories was 'the worst thing for Israel, for the Palestinians and the Israeli economy'. It represented a rare acknowledgement that the Israeli presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was an occupation.

In July 2003, following a ceasefire with three main Palestinian militant groups (Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Fatah), Sharon's government agreed to the release of 540 Palestinians. Israeli checkpoints in Ramallah and Hebron were dismantled and 8,000 workers from the Gaza Strip, Bethlehem and Tulkarem were admitted into Israel. However, the following month the USA threatened to withdraw loan guarantees worth US\$10 bn. in response to Sharon's refusal to stop building a 600 km-long 'security fence' around the West Bank, which he claimed was essential to prevent Palestinian suicide attacks. The approval of 600 more settlement homes in the West Bank, announced in Oct. 2003, further antagonized the Palestinian leadership and the USA and was criticized by the liberal Israeli media.

Sharon and his government faced the possibility of UN censure after authorizing an attack on 'terrorist camps' in Syria in Oct. 2003 in retaliation for a suicide bombing in Haifa. But Syria's attempts to draw up a UN Security Council resolution condemning the attack failed. The USA, though opposed to Israel's actions, refused to support Syria, which it has threatened with sanctions. Syria responded by threatening an offensive against Israel (the two states are still officially at war) if its territory is again attacked.

Against the background of continuing violence, Sharon announced his plan in Feb. 2004 for an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip (where approximately 8,500 Jews were settled) and northern areas of the West Bank. President Bush gave his support in April to the Israeli disengagement plan, but in May 2004 59.5% of the ruling Likud party voted against Sharon's

proposals. Despite continuing opposition from within his Likud party and his government, Sharon won the approval of the Knesset in Oct. 2004 for disengagement, and in Dec. persuaded Likud to endorse his formation of a new coalition including the Labour Party. Yasser Arafat's death in Nov. 2004 meanwhile resulted in the accession to power of a more moderate mainstream Palestinian leadership under Mahmoud Abbas, who was elected president of the Palestinian Authority in Jan. 2005. Guarded optimism about a revival of the peace process followed a declaration in Feb. by Sharon and Abbas of a cessation of hostilities.

From late June 2005 clashes between Jewish settlers and Israeli security forces erupted ahead of the Gaza/West Bank evacuation, and the fragile ceasefire with the Palestinians was undermined by a suicide bombing in the Israeli town of Netanya in July. Nevertheless, the disengagement was completed in Sept., prompting the resignation from Sharon's government of Binyamin Netanyahu who vowed to challenge the prime minister for the Likud leadership. There was also a resurgence of fighting from Sept. between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces in the occupied territories.

A new Labour leader, Amir Peretz, was elected in early Nov. and declared his intention to withdraw the party from Sharon's coalition government, triggering an early election to be held in March 2006. Later in Nov., in a major shift in Israel's political landscape, Sharon quit the Likud party to contest the elections at the head of a new centrist party called Kadima (meaning Forward).

On 4 Jan. 2006 Sharon suffered a massive haemorrhagic stroke and fell into a coma. He remained unconscious for the next 8 years. Despite his absence, Kadima, led by acting prime minister Ehud Olmert, won the largest number of seats in the Knesset at elections held on 28 March 2006. He died at the age of 85 on 11 Jan. 2014.

Shevardnadze, Eduard (Georgia)

Introduction

Eduard Amvrosievich Shevardnadze became Georgia's head of state in 1992 and was elected president in 1995 and 2000. Soviet foreign minister during the Gorbachev era, his tenure as Georgian leader was marked by hostilities in the breakaway province of Abkhazia.

Early Life

Shevardnadze was born on 25 Jan. 1928 in Mamati, a village in the Lanchkuti region of Georgia. He joined the Soviet Communist Party in 1946 and was prominent in the Communist Youth League, serving as first secretary of the Georgian branch between 1957 and 1961. He graduated in history from the Kutaisi Pedagogical Institute in 1959 and had a successful career in the civilian police, becoming chief of police in 1965.

He left the post in 1972 when he was appointed first secretary of the Georgian Communists. From 1976 he sat on the central committee of the Soviet Communist party, becoming a full member of the Politburo and Soviet foreign minister in 1985. Alongside former Russian president Mikhail Gorbachev he gained Western trust and an international profile. He played prominent roles in the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and arms negotiations with the US and did not stand in the way of the dismantling of East European communism. Domestically, he believed in Gorbachev's programmes of reform and when he sensed a slowdown in the pace of change in late 1990, he resigned his post and his party membership.

In 1991 he returned to lead the Soviet foreign ministry, having distanced himself from Gorbachev during the attempted hard-line Moscow coup earlier in the year. He sought to preserve the Soviet Union as a collection of sovereign states, but as its end became inevitable he turned his attention to Georgia. Along with other reformers, he established the Democratic Reform Movement. With President Zviad Gamsakhurdia ousted in 1992, Shevardnadze, chairman of the state council, was elected parliamentary speaker and became the effective head of state in Oct. 1992.

Career Peak

Shevardnadze's international standing won him recognition from Western leaders and Georgia became a member of the Organization for Security and

Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the IMF and the UN. Shevardnadze was set on Georgia joining NATO and eventually the European Union. In compliance with OSCE demands, he proposed the abolition of the death penalty, passed by parliament in 1997.

Secessionist movements dominated Shevardnadze's leadership. South Ossetia (Tskhinvali), which refused to acknowledge the authority of Tbilisi, agreed in June 1992 to a ceasefire and joint peacekeeping. Shevardnadze deplored the actions of his predecessor, stating that the abolition of Ossetian autonomy was a serious mistake. Calls for secession in the province of Abkhazia developed into civil war. In 1993 Russian-backed troops were sent in to the breakaway territory, obliging Georgia to join the Commonwealth of Independent States. Shevardnadze conceded a ceasefire in July 1993, despite domestic opposition. However, the ceasefire was broken in Sept. by Abkhaz forces (probably supported by the Russian military), who expelled the over two thirds of the population, comprising Georgians, Armenians, Russians and Greeks. Shevardnadze left the constitutional future of South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Adjara unspecified in Georgia's 1995 constitution. 1997 negotiations with the Ossetian leader, Lyudvig Chibirov, failed to break the stalemate. In March 2001 Georgia and Abkhazia signed a peace accord but fighting erupted again in Oct. 2001.

In 1993 Gamsakhurdia was killed attempting to oust Shevardnadze, against whom assassination attempts were made in Aug. 1995 and Feb. 1998. He was elected president of Georgia in Nov. 1995 and re-elected in the presidential elections of April 2000, campaigning on an anti-corruption ticket. In April 2000 Shevardnadze attempted to foster reconciliation by granting an amnesty to over 200 prisoners, including supporters of Gamsakhurdia.

Shevardnadze's relationship with the Russian leadership was complicated by his role in the dismantling of the Soviet Union. He repeatedly accused Russia of destabilizing the Caucasus region by encouraging the self-determination of minority groups. In Feb. 1999 he threatened to withdraw from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) security pact. Refusing to patrol the Pankissi Gorge area, close to the border with Chechnya, the Russians accused him of harbouring rebel fighters. Russian President Vladimir Putin threatened military action in Sept. 2002 if Georgia refused to act against Chechen rebels. A month later the two leaders met in Moldova and agreed to joint patrols on the shared border.

Adjara, the autonomous republic in Georgia's southwest, was a frequent headache for Shevardnadze, especially the Adjaran leader, Aslan Abashidze, who led the main opposition party, the Union for Georgian Revival. Adjara's constitutional reform in July 2001, without the consultation of Tbilisi, sparked fears of secessionist intentions. Later that year Abashidze further provoked the central government by organizing local elections in Adjara. Tbilisi was forced to follow suit to prevent the fragmentation of the electoral system.

In Nov. 2001 popular protests broke out against Shevardnadze over a raid by security forces on the Rustavi-2 television station, renowned for its criticism of his regime. Looking for allies, Shevardnadze visited Abashidze, previously his main opponent, in the Adjaran capital, Batumi. A deal was struck and Abashidze drummed up support for the president abroad, most notably from Russia. Nevertheless, Shevardnadze subsequently sacked his government and appointed a new cabinet. Nino Burdzhaneladze, a former protégée of the president, was elected speaker of parliament—the second highest office in Georgia—demonstrating the increasing unity of the opposition. Shevardnadze's position was threatened after the rigged parliamentary elections of Nov. 2003. Peaceful demonstrations in Tbilisi, led by the opposition leader Mikhail Saakashvili, began on 4 Nov. Again Shevardnadze looked for support from Abashidze, known to despise Saakashvili and his associates. The president's choice of ally further alienated the opposition; Saakashvili accused him of striking a deal with Abashidze and Putin to protect his leadership with force. Protests continued daily until Shevardnadze's resignation on 23 Nov. Burdzhaneladze, as speaker, became acting president and offered protection to the ousted president and his family.

Later Life

Following his departure from politics in 2003, Shevardnadze spent the remainder of his life in quiet retirement. Despite continuing to receive journalists and guests at his home in Tbilisi, he eventually withdrew from public life owing to failing health. He died on 7 July 2014.

Shinawatra, Thaksin (Thailand)

Introduction

Thaksin Shinawatra took office as prime minister of Thailand in Feb. 2001, having previously been a senior police officer and the founder of a telecommunications and computing corporation. In Feb. 2005, reflecting his wide popular appeal, he became the country's first democratically-elected premier to complete a 4-year term and win re-election. However, his popularity declined amid allegations of corruption and his troubled government was deposed by the military in Sept. 2006.

Early Life

Thaksin Shinawatra was born on 26 July 1949 in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai. His family had a silk, bus and cinema business. He entered the Police Cadet School, from which he emerged as the top graduate in 1973. Winning a scholarship to continue his education in the USA, he gained a master's degree and PhD in criminal justice studies. Returning to Thailand, he continued his career in the police force.

In 1982 Thaksin began a computer dealership business with his wife, supplying the police with computer software. Five years later he resigned from the police to concentrate on his business interests. His Shinawatra Company eventually became the Shin Corporation, the leading player in telecommunications in Thailand, with a majority stake in the country's biggest mobile phone operator and its own communications satellites. In 1990 Thaksin became the wealthiest businessman in Thailand.

During the early 1990s Thaksin spoke of the need to clean up the political system. Although not an elected politician, he was nominated in Nov. 1994 to serve in the coalition government led by Chuan Leekpai of the Democrat Party (PP). Thaksin became foreign minister, resigning all his business positions to prove that he had 'clean hands'. Thaksin held office until Feb. 1995. In May 1995 he became leader of the Democrat Party, and in July returned to government as deputy prime minister, before resigning in Aug. 1996. From Aug.–Nov. 1997 he was deputy prime minister in another short-lived coalition. In 1998 Thaksin founded his own populist party, the Thai Rak Thai (TRT), which won 248 out of 500 seats in parliamentary elections in Jan. 2001, then the biggest margin of victory in Thai political history.

Career Peak

Thaksin took office as prime minister on 9 Feb. 2001, pledging to run the country as efficiently as his own business. However, he remained a controversial figure. He faced charges of falsely declaring his assets. His credibility was also shaken by his support for the claims of four men who announced they had discovered a mystery treasure trove of US bonds—the men were later charged with attempting to trade fake US bonds with a face value of US\$24.7 bn. and Thaksin's government had to admit it had been taken in by the hoax.

Thaksin promised economic reform and clean government, introducing decentralized decision-making and encouraging Thai companies to use Thai, rather than multinational, agencies. He launched a programme of populist policies, including debt relief for farmers and subsidized healthcare schemes. However, economic recovery was slow and Thaksin was accused by his critics of being less than totally committed to the democratic process. A government crackdown on the Thai drugs trade which saw between 1,000 and 2,000 people killed in early 2003 prompted concern from the UN. Thaksin's hard-line policy in 2004 towards violence in the southern and largely Muslim provinces was also criticized by human rights groups. He nevertheless won support for his handling of the relief effort in the wake of the Indian Ocean tsunami in Dec. 2004, which devastated communities on the western coast of southern Thailand, and for his promise to eradicate poverty in the country if he was re-elected. His party was re-elected in Feb. 2005 with a landslide majority of 375 parliamentary seats, although it lost all seats in the three main southern provinces to the opposition.

However, allegations of corruption and abuse of power continued to grow. In Feb. 2006 anti-Thaksin street rallies began after it emerged that the Shinawatra family had sold its share of the Shin Corporation to Temasek Holdings, a Singaporean company. Protesters accused him of exploiting tax regulations and of selling an important national asset to foreign investors.

Following two impeachment attempts, Thaksin called a snap election for 2 April 2006. The main opposition parties boycotted the polls and a large number of voters registered a 'no vote'. When Thaksin appeared on television to announce a TRT victory, protests escalated.

On 4 April 2006 Thaksin announced that he would step down as prime minister and called for national unity. He handed power over to his deputy, Chidchai Vanasatidya, but returned as premier in May following judicial nullification of the April election results. On 19 Sept. 2006, while Thaksin was on a visit to New York, the military overthrew his government in a bloodless coup and established a Council for Democratic Reform under the leadership of Sonthi Boonyaratkalin, promising an orderly return to civilian rule.

Later Life

Thaksin and his family took up residency in the United Kingdom in the aftermath of the coup, where he took over ownership of Manchester City Football Club. In 2007 Thailand's constitutional court banned Shinawatra from political office for 5 years when it was discovered that the TRT had violated electoral regulations. However, the election to power of Thaksin's close ally Samak Sundaravej in Jan. 2008 demonstrated that the former prime minister retains a considerable influence over Thai politics. In Sept. 2008 his brother-in-law, Somchai Wongsawat, became prime minister. The following month the high court in Bangkok sentenced Thaksin to 2 years imprisonment *in absentia* for a 2003 property deal involving his then wife prompting the British authorities to revoke his visa.

Thaksin's supporters formed the anti-government United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) following the 2006 coup. Known as 'red shirts' they have received financial support from the former prime minister and are responsible for instigating numerous attempts to topple the government. In April 2009 a state of emergency was declared owing to UDD protests against prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva.

In Feb. 2010 Thaksin was stripped of US\$1.4 bn. assets after he was found guilty on five accounts of corruption by the Thai Supreme Court sparking more red shirt protests. Peaceful demonstrations began in March but escalated in violence until they were eventually broken up in mid-May in a government crackdown. An arrest warrant was issued for Thaksin on terrorist charges on 25 May after he was accused of stoking anti-government violence.

Shinawatra, Yingluck (Thailand)

Introduction

Yingluck Shinawatra became prime minister in Aug. 2011 after leading the Pheu Thai Party (PTP) to a landslide victory. The younger sister of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, she was the country's first female premier.

Early Life

Yingluck was born in June 1967 in the northern province of Chiang Mai, the youngest of nine children. Her father, Lert Shinawatra, was a businessman and MP while her mother, Yindi Ramingwong, was the daughter of Princess Jantip Na Chiang Mai. In 1988 Yingluck graduated in public administration from Chiang Mai University and in 1991 completed a master's degree at Kentucky State University in the USA.

She joined Shinawatra Directories Co. in 1993, one of a number of businesses run by her brother, Thaksin. In 1994 she worked with Rainbow Media before returning to the family business as general productions manager and, from 1997, vice-president.

In 1999 Thaksin's businesses were brought together under Shin Corporation and in 2002 Yingluck became CEO of the group's flagship company and Thailand's biggest mobile phone enterprise, AIS (Advance Info Service). She resigned in 2006 when Shin Corporation was sold to Temasek Holdings and took over as executive president of the family-owned property development company, SC Asset. She also served on the committee of the Thaicom Foundation, which provides educational opportunities for underprivileged children.

Thaksin was elected prime minister in 2001 but was ousted in a military coup in Sept. 2006. His party was dissolved by the constitutional court in 2007 and he has subsequently spent much of his time in exile. However, his followers established the Pheu Thai Party (PTP) in 2008 and convinced Yingluck, a political newcomer, to run in the July 2011 elections. The PTP won a majority in parliament and elected Yingluck prime minister the following month.

Career Peak

Expected to continue the economic liberalization pursued by her brother, Yingluck surrounded herself with a team of long-established political operators. Among her key challenges was addressing the country's long-standing political instability, which had resulted in violent social clashes in April 2009 and April–May 2010. She pledged to support an Independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission, although work on reconciliation legislation and a proposed amnesty provoked opposition through 2012 from urban protesters fearful that it would pave the way for Thaksin's return to power. She also promised to eliminate poverty by 2020, cut corporate tax and raise the minimum wage. In addition, she backed proposals for free public Wi-Fi access and a computer for every school child.

In Nov. 2012 she survived a parliamentary no-confidence motion in the wake of a major anti-government demonstration in Bangkok. Political discontent nevertheless continued through 2013, aggravated by a cut in rice subsidies. In response to further violent street protests at the end of the year, Yingluck called for early elections on 2 Feb. 2014. Opposition parties boycotted and disrupted the polling, resulting in incomplete and disputed results that were invalidated by the Constitutional Court in March.

In early May 2014 Yingluck appeared before Thailand's Constitutional Court facing corruption charges relating to abuses of power—specifically the illegal transfer of the chief of national security to another post in 2011. She was found guilty and was subsequently removed from power. The National Anti-Corruption Commission had also begun an investigation into allegations that millions of farmers had not been compensated under a government rice-pledging scheme. If found guilty, Yingluck could face a sentence of 10 years imprisonment. In Jan. 2015 she was banned from politics for 5 years by the ruling military junta. The following month she was formally charged by a state-appointed prosecutor over corruption surrounding the rice-pledging scheme.

Shipley, Jenny (New Zealand)

Introduction

Liberal in her social policy and right-wing in her economics, Shipley was New Zealand's first woman prime minister between Dec. 1997–Dec. 1999. Having organized a coup against National leader Jim Bolger, she unsuccessfully steered a minority government into the 1999 election. Famously pragmatic and often controversial, she has been compared to Margaret Thatcher.

Early Life

Born at Gore on South Island on 4 Feb. 1952, Shipley was educated in Blenheim and Christchurch, where she qualified as a primary school teacher in 1971. She worked in local schools until 1976, and later tutored at Lincoln College from 1983–87. Having joined the National Party in 1975, the same year as her marriage, Shipley's political interests developed through her experience as a young mother in rural Ashburton. She served on the executive of the local Plunkett centre for community nursing and child care (1979–84), joined educational and agricultural committees, and was president of the playcentre movement between 1980–82. From 1983 until 1987, Shipley served as a Malvern county councillor, while holding various local and regional positions within the National Party. In the 1987 election, she stood successfully for parliament, increasing National's majority in Ashburton from 500 to 5,000. Shipley continues to hold this constituency, now renamed Rakaia. Her first term, during which she was opposition spokesperson on social welfare, was uneventful; 3 years later, when Labour lost power, Shipley was swiftly appointed to Jim Bolger's new cabinet.

As social welfare minister between 1990–93, Shipley curbed state benefits, particularly for parents, in an attempt to reduce the NZ\$50 bn. national debt. As Minister of Health from 1993–96, she provoked further controversy by setting up an internal market in the health service and increasing patient costs. At the same time, as Minister of Women's Affairs between 1990–96, she cut prescription charges for contraceptive pills. She campaigned against domestic violence. In the year following National's 1996 re-election, she exchanged her women's affairs portfolio for state services, transport, state-owned enterprises, Radio New Zealand and accident rehabilitation and compensation insurance. Returning to women's affairs in 1997, she aspired to the party leadership, considering Bolger's methods too cautious. While he attended the Commonwealth heads of government conference at Edinburgh, Scotland, in Nov. 1997, Shipley mustered party support to force his resignation.

Career Peak

As prime minister from 8 Dec. 1997–5 Dec. 1999, Shipley oversaw economic growth despite the 1998 Asian crisis and break up of the coalition government. In Jan. 1999 she attracted government ministers from 20 countries to a high profile 'ministerial on ice' in Antarctica to promote the continent's conservation. However, National's support slumped at the Nov. election, 3 days after Shipley had fired her immigration minister, Tuariki John Delamere. Delamere had illegally granted residency to Chinese investors. National was voted into opposition, with Shipley continuing to lead despite a minor heart attack in June 2000. Shipley was replaced as leader of the National Party, and consequently as leader of the opposition, by Bill English in Oct. 2001.

Shushkevich, Stanislau Stanislavovich (Belarus)

Introduction

The chairman of the Supreme Soviet between 1990–94, Stanislau Shushkevich was Belarus' first post-Soviet leader. At the head of a communist-dominated parliament mainly appointed before independence, Shushkevich's moves towards a free-market economy were rejected and he was forced to resign.

Early Life

Shushkevich was born on 15 Dec. 1934 in Minsk. The son of a poet killed in the Stalinist purges, he studied physics and embarked on an academic career, becoming the vice-chancellor of the Belarus State University. He joined the Communist party but only became actively involved in politics after the Chernobyl disaster of 1986.

Career Peak

In 1990 he was elected to the Supreme Soviet, becoming first deputy chairman. His nationalist tendencies, such as promoting the Belarusian language, gained him support. However, as one of the original signatories of the Commonwealth of Independent States, he garnered the opposition of the pro-Russian parliament by refusing to sign the security treaty which would have jeopardized Belarus' sovereignty and neutrality. He strongly disagreed with his prime minister Vyacheslau Kebich over policy. His wish to implement a free-market economy lacked support, and in Jan. 1994 an anti-corruption committee was set up, headed by Alyaksandr Lukashenka, which targeted Shushkevich. A vote of no confidence held in the same month was supported by 209 votes to 36, and he was forced to resign. Two months later, parliament held its first presidential elections in which Shushkevich stood against Kebich and Lukashenka. Taking just 10% of the vote, Shushkevich was succeeded by Lukashenka.

Later Life

Opposed to his successor and his increasingly autocratic tendencies, Shushkevich rejected Lukashenka's 1996 referendum which gave the leader

increased power. Shushkevich was a key member of the Charter 97 pro-democracy movement and in 1998 became leader of the Belarusian Social Democratic Assembly. In 1999 he called on Russia to stop supporting the government of Lukashenka.

Sigurðardóttir, Jóhanna (Iceland)

Introduction

Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir became prime minister in Jan. 2009 following economic crisis and the collapse of Geir Haarde's administration. Heading a coalition including her centre-left Social Democratic Alliance (SF) along with the Left-Green Movement (VG), she became the country's first female leader. She announced in Sept. 2012 that she would retire from politics at the end of her term of office in 2013. After the election of April 2013 she remained prime minister until the two main opposition parties established a coalition.

Early Life

Sigurðardóttir was born on 4 Oct. 1942 in Reykjavík. After studying business at Iceland's Commercial College, she undertook a varied career that included flight attendant, trade union organizer and office administrator. In 1978 she entered *Alþingi* (Parliament) as the Social Democratic Party representative for the Reykjavík constituency. Subsequent boundary changes saw her become the MP for Reykjavík South and then for the North. In 1979 and from 1983–84 she was the speaker of the *Alþingi* and from 1987–94 she was minister of social affairs but resigned and made an unsuccessful run for her party's leadership.

She subsequently left the Social Democrats to form a new party, the National Movement, which won four seats at the 1995 general election. It merged 5 years later with her old party and two others to form the SF in a bid to end the dominance of the Independence Party (ISF). In 2007 the Alliance joined the Independence Party in a coalition headed by Haarde. Sigurðardóttir was reappointed to the social affairs portfolio. Working on behalf of the elderly, disabled and disadvantaged, she retained high personal approval ratings even in the depths of the national financial crisis in 2008.

When the country's independent banking system collapsed in late 2008, Haarde and his cabinet came under pressure to resign. On 23 Jan. 2009 Haarde called elections for early May but within 3 days the coalition had fallen apart. Talks between the SF and the ISF to form a new coalition failed and Alliance turned instead to the Left-Green Movement. With SF leader Ingibjörg Gísladóttir suffering ill health, Sigurðardóttir was proposed for prime minister. By the end of the month VG had agreed to form a coalition ahead of a general election scheduled for 25 April.

Career Peak

Sigurðardóttir's appointment received international media coverage as she became not only the first woman premier of Iceland but also the world's first openly gay head of government. She led her party to victory at the April 2009 general election, receiving 29.8% of the vote.

Her major challenge was to restore economic stability. In Feb. 2009 she engineered the removal of the central bank head, former prime minister Davíð Oddsson, who was widely blamed for the banking collapse. In July 2009 her government applied for EU membership, with negotiations beginning a year later despite an ongoing dispute with the UK and the Netherlands over compensation relating to the banking collapse. When a proposal to solve the issue was rejected by referendum in April 2011, the opposition Independence Party tabled a no-confidence motion against Sigurðardóttir and her government, which she narrowly survived. The dispute was subsequently referred to the European Free Trade Association Surveillance Authority.

Meanwhile, in April and May 2010 ash clouds from an Icelandic volcano led to unprecedented bans on flights and airport closures across Europe, causing disruption and heavy financial losses.

In the wake of the 2008 financial collapse, voters in a consultative referendum in Oct. 2012 supported a new draft constitution prepared by a council of 25 ordinary citizens. It advocated more direct democracy and greater control of the country's natural resources, such as fish and geothermal energy.

Sigurðardóttir was succeeded by Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson of the Progressive Party, who formed a coalition with the Independence Party 4 weeks after the election of April 2013.

Sihanouk, Norodom (Cambodia)

Introduction

HM Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk Varman was the king of Cambodia from 1941 to 1955 and 1993 to 2004. First coming to the throne in 1941, he won autonomy for his country within the French Union 8 years later. Full independence followed in 1953. Deposed in a US-backed coup in 1970, he returned to power in 1975 at the behest of the Khmer Rouge but was imprisoned a year later. He led a coalition government in exile during the 1980s and in 1993, following free elections, was re-crowned king for life.

Early Life

Norodom Sihanouk was born in Phnom Penh on 31 Oct. 1922 and educated in Saigon and Paris. He was crowned king, at the age of 19, on 26 April 1941 by the governor-general of French Indochina after the death of King Sisowath Monivong.

Career Peak

Later that year the Japanese invaded South-East Asia including all of French Indochina. The Japanese supported Sihanouk's claim to the throne and allowed French representatives to administrate Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Simultaneously they supported the Khmer Issarak (Free Khmer) partisans and anti-French Cambodian guerrillas. In 1945, recognising that they would lose control over Indochina, the Japanese ordered Sihanouk to declare Cambodia's independence from France.

After the war Sihanouk (1949) achieved autonomy within the French Union. The country's first elections were held in 1950 but Sihanouk dissolved the assembly and ruled by decree. The following year he became Prime Minister and appointed a cabinet consisting largely of royal family nominees. He then campaigned for complete independence, which was granted in 1953.

During the Vietnam War Sihanouk attempted to follow a neutral course but broke off diplomatic relations with the USA after Cambodians were killed in United States and South Vietnamese incursions. In 1970 his policy of neutrality ended abruptly when he was deposed in a US supported coup led by Gen. Lon Nol. He established a government in exile in Beijing and appealed to Cambodian forces to drive out the Americans. One of the first groups to answer this appeal was the Khmer Rouge, a radical communist guerrilla movement. Sihanouk returned as Head of State when, in 1975, the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, won control of the country, but was placed under house arrest in 1976. In Jan. 1979, with the Khmer losing power, Sihanouk was released. After denouncing the recent Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia he moved swiftly to distance himself from the Khmer Rouge.

In 1982 Sihanouk became president of a coalition government-in-exile comprising his Neutralist party, the Khmer Rouge and the anticommunist Khmer People's National Liberation Front (FUNCINPEC). In 1991 he was elected president of Cambodia's Supreme National Council.

In May 1993 the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) presided over the country's first free elections in which 90% of registered voters went to the polls. FUNCINPEC candidates won 58 of the available 120 assembly seats. A coalition government with Prince Norodom Ranariddh (Sihanouk's son) and Hun Sen as joint premiers was established. In Sept. 1993 Sihanouk was again crowned king of Cambodia and head of State for life.

On 24 Sept. 1995 Sihanouk promulgated a new constitution including his own authority to that of constitutional monarch. He abdicated in Oct. 2004, despite there being no provision for this in the constitution, on grounds of health.

Later Life

Following his abdication Sihanouk assumed the title of 'king-father' a position in which he retains much of his power. He died on 15 Oct. 2012 at the age of 89, having been in poor health for several years.

Sikua, Derek (Solomon Islands)

Introduction

Derek Sikua took office in Dec. 2007 to become the Solomon Islands' 13th prime minister since independence in 1978. He defeated the foreign minister, Patteson Oti, in the parliamentary poll.

Early Life

Derek Sikua was born on 10 Sept. 1959 in Ngalitavethi Village, East Tasiboko, Guadalcanal Province. He worked as a teacher and deputy principal from 1982–86 and graduated in education from the University of Southern Queensland (Australia) in 1985. He then took a master's degree in educational policy and administration at Monash University (Australia) and a PhD in educational decentralization at the University of Waikato (New Zealand).

Between 1993 and 1997 Sikua worked at the ministry of education and human resources development, devising and implementing educational policy in the Solomon Islands. From 1997–98 he was permanent secretary in the ministry of forests, environment and conservation. From 2003–05 he returned to the ministry of education and human resources development as permanent secretary, and from 2006 also served as chairman of the Solomon Islands national commission for UNESCO.

Career Peak

Sikua entered parliament on 5 April 2006, representing the North East Guadalcanal constituency in the government of Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare. On 4 May 2006 he was appointed minister for education and human resources, a post he held until Nov. 2007. On 13 Dec. 2007 Sikua led a parliamentary motion of no confidence against Sogavare. Supported by seven other cabinet ministers and one backbencher, Sikua defected from the government.

The events leading to the no-confidence vote sparked the formation of the Coalition for National Unity and Rural Advancement under Sikua's leadership. On 20 Dec. he defeated Patteson Oti, the foreign affairs minister, by 32 votes to 15 to be elected prime minister. Sikua pledged to work towards economic reform (particularly rural development), to regulate the logging industry and to hold consultations on a new federal constitution. In Aug. 2008 he defeated a no-confidence motion brought by opposition members.

In April 2009 the government announced austerity measures as the effects of the global economic crisis depressed demand for commodity exports and reduced revenues.

Despite Sikua retaining his seat in the Aug. 2010 parliamentary election, he was not nominated to contest the premiership. He was succeeded by Danny Philip on 25 Aug. following the latter's victory in the leadership contest.

Later Life

Sikua returned to public office in Dec. 2014 when he was named education and human resource development minister by newly appointed prime minister Manasseh Sogavare, who was also making a return to government having served two previous terms as premier. However, Sikua resigned in Oct. 2015 alongside six other ministers amid concerns over Sogavare's leadership style.

Simitis, Konstantinos (Greece)

Introduction

Konstantinos Simitis became prime minister for the first time in Jan. 1996. The success of his party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), in the general election of April 2000 returned him to office for a second term. He promised further integration within the European Union and was a keen advocate of monetary union. He resigned from office before the general elections of March 2004.

Early Life

Simitis was born in Athens on 23 June 1936. His father was a lawyer and left-wing politician. He studied law at the University of Marburg in Germany, and later received a doctorate in jurisprudence. At the start of the 1960s he read economics and political science at the London School of Economics and embarked on an academic career. When, in 1967, a right-wing military dictatorship headed by Giorgios Papadopoulos seized power in Greece, Simitis chose to remain in Germany to avoid persecution. In exile he was an active member of several clandestine political organizations and wrote articles protesting against the junta. In 1974 he returned to Greece in the aftermath of the coup that ended Papadopoulos' regime. Having helped to establish PASOK as a legitimate political party, albeit with limited appeal, Simitis continued his academic career. In 1981 his party came to power for the first time and Simitis was elected to represent Piraeus. He went on to hold various ministerial portfolios, including those of education and religious affairs, agriculture and energy, industry, technology and commerce. He occupied the latter post until 1995 when the incumbent prime minister, Andreas Papandreu, fell ill and retired from politics. In Jan. 1996 his fellow MPs chose Simitis to succeed Papandreu.

Career Peak

In his first term of office Simitis steered PASOK towards the political centre, seeking to distance the party from its traditional socialist roots. To prepare the Greek economy for European monetary union, he supported gradual privatization and a moderate foreign policy. His slow but steady political style and fondness for statistics earned him the nickname of 'the book-keeper'. However, despite the absence of the political dynamism that characterized his predecessor, Simitis was largely successful in his efforts to improve the economy. He was re-elected for a second term, albeit on a reduced majority, in April 2000.

International relations with the UK and Dutch governments were strained in April 2002 when 14 British and Dutch plane spotters were sentenced to 1–3 years imprisonment for recording information about Greek military planes while on holiday, although they were later released. Later Simitis played a leading role in UN-brokered peace talks for Cyprus but failed to reach an agreement on the island's future with his Turkish and Northern Cypriot counterparts.

In Jan. 2004, with PASOK behind in opinion polls, Simitis called elections for March but announced that he would not be seeking re-election. PASOK was defeated, winning 117 seats to New Democracy's 165. Simitis left office on 10 March.

Simpson-Miller, Portia (Jamaica)

Introduction

Portia Simpson-Miller was sworn in as prime minister for a second time on 5 Jan. 2012 after the People's National Party defeated the Jamaica Labour Party in elections held on 29 Dec. 2011. She previously served in the post from 30 March 2006 to 11 Sept. 2007. A member of the Council of Women World Leaders, Simpson-Miller was her country's first democratically elected female leader on taking office in 2006.

Early Life

Portia Simpson-Miller was born on 12 Dec. 1945 in Wood Hall, St Catherine's Parish, Jamaica. She was educated at St Martin's High School and the Union Institute, Miami, USA, where she graduated with a degree in public administration. She entered politics as a councillor for the left-leaning PNP in 1974, winning the inner-city seat of Trench Town West in the Kingston & St Andrew Corporation.

In 1977 she was appointed parliamentary secretary in the ministry of local government and the following year was elected vice-president of the PNP, a post she held for the next 27 years. Despite the PNP's crushing defeat in the 1980 general election, she retained her councillor's seat and from 1983–89 served as the party spokesperson on women's affairs and pensions, social security and consumer affairs.

In the 1989 general election, when Michael Manley returned the PNP to power, Simpson-Miller was elected MP for South West St Andrew and was appointed minister of labour, social security and sport. Following Manley's resignation in 1992 she unsuccessfully challenged P. J. Patterson for the premiership. Promoted to minister for tourism and sport in 2000, Simpson-Miller won plaudits for her work to rebuild the tourism sector in the wake of the 11 Sept. 2001 attacks on the USA.

Following the general election of Oct. 2002 she regained the local government portfolio in an expanded ministry of local government, community development and sport. On 25 Feb. 2006 she narrowly defeated Peter Phillips to succeed Patterson as head of the PNP and become prime minister-elect. She was sworn into office on 30 March 2006. During her 18 months as premier Simpson-Miller sought to tackle poverty and crime. However, with unemployment running at 9% and crime still endemic, Simpson-Miller's PNP was narrowly defeated by the Labour Party in the parliamentary elections of Sept. 2007, ending 18 years of PNP rule. The following year, Simpson-Miller's leadership of the PNP was challenged by Peter Phillips but she defeated her rival and continued to lead the party in opposition.

Simpson-Miller performed strongly on the 2011 election campaign trail, with her charismatic populism widely credited with swinging public opinion in favour of the PNP. In what had been predicted to be a tight election, she led her party to a landslide win, taking 42 of 63 available seats and ensuring the two-thirds majority necessary to alter the constitution.

Career Peak

Simpson-Miller's priorities were to slash the rising rate of unemployment and tackle the massive debt-to-GDP ratio. She said that she would consider reviewing Jamaica's controversial criminalization of homosexuality, while in June 2014 her government announced plans to decriminalize the possession of marijuana and its use for medicinal purposes (which was subsequently approved by parliament in Feb. 2015). An avowed republican, she has stated her intention to move towards the severance of ties with the UK, although any such decision must be ratified by popular referendum. Simpson-Miller assumed the defence portfolio upon taking office as prime minister.

Simpson-Miller's term as prime minister ended in March 2016 following her party's defeat at elections held the previous month.

Singh, Manmohan (India)

Introduction

After three decades as a civil servant, the former academic and economist was sworn in as India's first Sikh prime minister on 22 May 2004. His appointment followed the general election victory of the Indian National Congress (INC) over the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; Indian People's Party) and Sonia Gandhi's unexpected rejection of the top job. A low-profile technocrat and adviser throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Singh came to the fore in 1991 when he was appointed finance minister in the cabinet of P. V. Narasimha Rao. India was in severe financial crisis and Singh was credited with bringing about a recovery, becoming known as the 'architect of India's economic reform'. His coalition won an emphatic victory at the 2009 elections, coming close to securing an absolute majority in parliament. In Jan. 2014 he announced that he would step down after nearly 10 years in office following the parliamentary elections scheduled for April–May 2014.

Early Life

Manmohan Singh was born in Gah, West Punjab (now in Pakistan), on 26 Sept. 1932, the son of a shopkeeper. He was educated at Punjab University in Chandigarh and also attended the universities of Cambridge and Oxford in England on scholarships, winning Cambridge's prestigious Adam Smith Prize in 1956. Returning to India as an economics lecturer, he remained at Punjab University before being made professor in 1963. Three years later he joined UNCTAD (the UN Conference on Trade and Development) at the United Nations Secretariat in New York, as economic affairs officer. In 1969 Singh returned to India to the University of Delhi as professor of international trade.

Cutting short his academic career in 1971, Singh joined Indira Gandhi's New Congress Party-led government to serve as an economic adviser to the ministry of foreign trade and, from 1972–76, as chief economic adviser in the finance ministry. Stronger ties with the USSR, which influenced Indian economic policy and brought in new aid agreements, marked this period. In 1976 Singh became director of the Reserve Bank of India, a post he held for 4 years. From 1982–85 he was its governor and then deputy chairman of the Planning Commission from 1985–87, undertaking various assignments at the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank. He was first selected for the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of parliament) in 1991, representing the Congress.

In 1991, with India in financial crisis, Singh was appointed finance minister in P. V. Narasimha Rao's cabinet. Foreign exchange reserves were nearly exhausted and the country was close to defaulting on its international debt. Singh brought in an ambitious and unprecedented economic reform programme. He slashed red tape, simplified the tax system and ended the 'license Raj' regulations that forced businesses to get government approval for most decisions. He also devalued the rupee, cut subsidies for domestically produced goods, and privatized some state-run companies. Singh spoke of wanting to 'release the innovative, entrepreneurial spirit which was always there in India in such a manner that our economy would grow at a much faster pace, sooner than most people believed.' The programme worked; industry picked up, inflation was checked, and growth rates remained consistently high through the 1990s (his policies were broadly continued by the BJP-led coalition after they were elected in 1996).

Career Peak

When Singh was sworn in as prime minister on 22 May 2004, he took on a healthy economy. GDP growth was at 7%, foreign exchange reserves were comfortable at US\$118 bn. and inflation stood at just 4%. However, hundreds of millions of Indians were still living in poverty and Singh faced a tough task in bringing about improvements in living standards, while balancing the demands of leftist and communist parties in the coalition. His first address as prime minister called for 'economic reforms with a human face' stressing the need to achieve friendly relations with neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan. Although Singh has a reputation for honesty and even-handedness, there were some questions about his lack of election-winning political experience—he had failed to win a seat in the Lok Sabha (Lower House) elections for South Delhi in 1999.

While India's economy continued to perform strongly, Singh's early premiership had to contend with the devastating effects of a number of severe natural disasters, including the tsunami across the Indian Ocean in Dec. 2004 which hit coastal communities in the south of the country and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, floods and landslides in Maharashtra in July 2005 and an earthquake in Kashmir in Oct. 2005.

Terrorism has remained a serious problem for the government. Bomb attacks on commuter trains and railway stations in Mumbai in July 2006 killed about 200 people. This atrocity, blamed by India on Pakistan's intelligence services, threatened to undermine previous improvements in the volatile relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. A further terrorist bomb attack in Feb. 2007 on a train travelling from New Delhi to Lahore in Pakistan killed about 70 people. Terrorist incidents continued in 2008, particularly in Nov. when suspected Islamic extremists launched a co-ordinated series of attacks on prominent landmarks in India's commercial capital, Mumbai, killing civilians with grenades and machine guns and taking foreign hostages before being overcome by the security forces. The slaughter, in which some 190 people died, led to the resignation of the home affairs minister. India blamed militants from Pakistan for the atrocity, leading Singh's government to lodge a formal protest. Bilateral talks between the two countries resumed following Singh's positive meeting with his Pakistani counterpart in April 2010 at a summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation in Bhutan and, despite further terrorist attacks in Mumbai and Delhi in July and Sept. 2011, the two leaders met again in Nov. pledging to open a fresh chapter in bilateral relations. Singh has nevertheless continued to insist that Pakistan do more to dismantle terror organizations operating from its territory.

Although India is not party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Singh signed a controversial agreement with the USA in March 2006 giving India access to civilian nuclear energy technology in return for having its nuclear sites inspected. The deal was approved by the US Congress in Dec. 2006 but was stalled by political opposition within the Indian parliament. In July 2008 left-wing parties withdrew their parliamentary support for Singh's

government, but it survived a no-confidence vote that cleared the way for it to try and finalize the agreement. In the USA the deal was signed into law in Oct. In the same month, Singh signed a security co-operation agreement with Japan.

Following the victory at the general election in April and May 2009 of the United Progressive Alliance (of which the INC won nearly 80% of the vote), Singh became only the second Indian prime minister after Indira Gandhi to hold office for two consecutive terms. Since then, although the economy has continued to prosper, Singh has faced considerable domestic criticism for his handling of a series of high-profile corruption scandals, for the poor organization that plagued the preparations for the Commonwealth Games staged in New Delhi in Oct. 2010, and for controversial retail sector reform plans (which were approved by parliament in Dec. 2012). There have also been protests in Andhra Pradesh both for and against the government's proposal to create a separate state called Telangana (which was approved in Feb. 2014), as well as disquiet over a high court ruling that one of the most bitterly contested religious sites in India at Ayodhya should be divided between Muslims and Hindus.

In 2012 the INC suffered several poor results in state elections. Deteriorating relations with some coalition allies prompted Singh to conduct an extensive cabinet reshuffle in Oct. that saw Salman Khurshid appointed foreign minister, only the third Muslim to hold the position in India's history. Meanwhile Pranab Mukherjee, a senior INC figure and former finance minister, was elected in July 2012 as the new national president by the federal and state assemblies. The INC endured heavy defeats by the BJP in four state elections in Dec. 2013 and in Jan. 2014 Singh announced his decision to stand down at the pending general election. He was succeeded as prime minister by Narendra Modi, who successfully led the BJP to a parliamentary majority in elections held in April–May 2014.

Siniora, Fouad (Lebanon)

Introduction

Fouad Siniora became prime minister of a Western-backed government in July 2005, shortly after the assassination of his predecessor, Rafiq al-Hariri, and the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanese territory.

Early Life

Born into a Sunni Muslim family in Sidon in 1943, Siniora studied business before a career in international finance. In 1982 he went to work for Rafiq al-Hariri, a successful businessman and the future prime minister. He would later be finance minister in al-Hariri's five cabinets.

Al-Hariri's assassination (with suspected Syrian involvement) in Feb. 2005 led to political unrest, the resignation of Omar Karame's Lebanese government and Syria's troop withdrawal from Lebanon. Subsequent parliamentary elections were dominated by the anti-Syrian opposition bloc led by Saad al-Hariri (son of Rafiq), resulting in Siniora becoming prime minister. Sworn into office in July 2005, his coalition government included a representative of the militant anti-Israeli Hizbollah movement for the first time.

Career Peak

Siniora aimed to improve relations with Syria, restore domestic security and implement electoral and economic reform. Despite large public debt, signs of an economic upturn followed the relatively smooth transition of power though bombings aimed at political and civilian targets continued throughout 2005. He struggled to maintain authority in 2006 amid hostilities between Hizbollah and Israeli forces that caused many Lebanese civilian casualties, a refugee crisis and extensive infrastructure damage before a ceasefire was declared in Aug. In Nov. Hizbollah and the Shia Amal movement withdrew their ministers from the cabinet after their call for more representation was rejected. Sectarian tensions were heightened by the assassination of Pierre Gemayel, an anti-Syrian government minister. Siniora refused to resign despite mass demonstrations by Christian and Shia Muslim opposition protesters in Dec. seeking a more representative national unity government.

Political paralysis persisted through 2007, aggravated by fighting during May–Sept. between the Lebanese army and Palestinian militants in the Nahr

al-Bared refugee camp and by the assassinations of two anti-Syrian MPs. In Nov. 2007, in the absence of a parliamentary vote to elect a successor to President Emile Lahoud, Siniora's cabinet assumed the powers of the presidency until Gen. Michel Suleiman took office in May 2008 in the wake of serious clashes between Hizbollah and pro-government factions. At the end of that month Siniora was reappointed as prime minister and in July formed a new unity government. In Oct. Lebanon and Syria signed an accord formalizing diplomatic ties for the first time since both countries achieved independence.

Following the ruling 14 March Alliance's victory in the June 2009 parliamentary elections, its leader Saad Hariri, son of the assassinated former prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri, was named prime minister designate and given the task of composing a unity government. In Sept. Hariri stepped down after his initial cabinet line-up was rejected by the Hizbollah-led opposition but was subsequently renominated prime minister by Siniora. On 9 Nov. Siniora stood down and Hariri and his cabinet took office.

Siphandone, Khamtay (Laos)

Introduction

Having served as prime minister from 1991–98, army general Khamtay Siphandone then served two terms as president, being re-elected in March 2001 before resigning in 2006.

Early Life

Born on 8 Feb. 1924 in Champassak province, Siphandone joined the Lao revolutionary movement in 1947. In 1952 he became a member of the central committee of the Lao Issara (Free Laos) movement, and between 1952–54 was chairman of the committee of the Central Region. His membership of the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos began in 1956, whilst serving as chief of staff of the Pathet Lao forces. He was soon a member of the central party committee and rapidly became head of its office. In 1960 he took charge of military affairs of the central party committee and became commander-in-chief of the Pathet Lao forces. When the Pathet Lao took over the government in 1975 he was appointed deputy prime minister, minister of national defence and commander-in-chief of the Lao People's Army. He served in all three positions concurrently until the early 1990s. On 15 Aug. 1991 he was elected prime minister. Seven years later he was voted president by the National Assembly.

Career Peak

After becoming president, Siphandone did little to further democracy in the country. He kept tight restrictions on the media, although some opening of the economy and society followed Laos' entry into the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1997. Laos' hosting of the 2004 ASEAN summit received strong support from the president.

In March 2006 Siphandone was replaced as leader of the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos by Vice President Choummali Saignason. As expected Siphandone also gave up the presidency, formally leaving office on 8 June 2006, after assembly election held at the end of April.

Smith, Ian (Zimbabwe)

Introduction

Ian Smith became prime minister of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1964 and declared independence from Britain the following year. His refusal to negotiate a transition to black majority rule resulted in the country's international isolation and a devastating civil war with black nationalists. He lost office in 1979 shortly before Robert Mugabe took control of the newly-established Zimbabwe, but he has remained a vocal critic of the Mugabe regime.

Early Life

Ian Douglas Smith, whose father was a butcher, was born on 8 April 1919 in Selukwe, Rhodesia (now Shurugwi, Zimbabwe). He attended Rhodes University in South Africa but his studies in commerce were interrupted by World War II, during which he served in the Royal Air Force and was shot down over Italy. Having completed his degree he entered the Southern Rhodesia Assembly in 1948 as the member for Selukwe and 5 years later he went to the federal parliament as the United Federal Party member for Midlands. Within 2 years he had been appointed Chief Whip but Smith fell out with the party as it moved towards increased black representation.

Career Peak

In response Smith helped found the Rhodesian Front in 1961, which achieved election victory the following year by espousing policies of white supremacy and national independence. Smith was deputy to Prime Minister Winston Field but succeeded him as Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia (which had once again become a self-governing British colony following the break up of the federation with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1963) in April 1964. Early in his tenure the arrest of a group of black nationalists led to civil unrest which was forcefully put down by the authorities.

He continued to oppose proposed constitutional changes that would ultimately allow for a black-dominated government, refusing to budge at a Commonwealth Conference in 1964. Despite international pressure to reconsider, on 11 Nov. 1965 he made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on behalf of Rhodesia, later claiming it was a course of action he had not wanted to take. Britain imposed retaliatory sanctions and persuaded the UN to do likewise. Smith in turn withdrew Rhodesia from the Commonwealth and declared a republic on 2 March 1970.

There followed a bloody civil war, characterized by guerrilla tactics which cost thousands of lives. One of the principal rebel groups was the Patriotic Front, headed by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, the future president of Zimbabwe. As the violence continued unabated, the economy went into steep decline, suffering from the sanctions, increased government expenditure on military resources and the exodus of large numbers of whites.

In 1977, with conditions in the country worsening, Smith agreed to talks with Bishop Muzorewa, leader of the United African Council and more moderate than Mugabe and Nkomo. Negotiations led the following year to proposals for a transitional government and black enfranchisement in return for certain guarantees concerning white property and rights. Smith was to be a part of the Transitional Executive Council and served as Prime Minister until May 1979. He continued as a minister until the end of the year, remaining leader of the Republican Front until 1987 and leaving government only in 1988.

Later Life

In May 2000 it was reported that Smith's farm had been seized by blacks during a Mugabe-sponsored programme of land reclamation by war veterans. Smith countered by suggesting that he would consider standing for government if he 'could be of some use to my country'. He died on 20 Nov. 2007.

Soares, Mário (Portugal)

Introduction

Mário Alberto Nobre Lopes Soares was twice prime minister (1976–78; 1983–85) and twice president (1985–96), representing the Partido Socialista Português (PSP). He was the first democratically elected leader since 1926. A political activist and opponent of the Salazar dictatorship, he is, along with Salazar, one of the two most influential political figures of twentieth century Portugal. He refounded the PSP, twice resolved economic crises resulting from years of dictatorship and provisional governments and led Portugal into the EU.

Early Life

Soares was born on 7 Dec. 1924 in Lisbon. He was the son of João Soares, a liberal republican and minister in the First Republic (1910–26), who was a

strong opponent of the Salazar dictatorship. His father's political views strongly influenced Soares. In 1943 he joined the communist dominated Movimento de Unidade Nacional Anti-Fascista (National Anti-Fascist Movement). He took a first degree in philosophy at the Universidade de Lisboa, where he became politically active. Because of his political views, Soares was unable to get teaching work and so took a second degree in law. After graduating in 1957 he worked to defend political dissidents.

Soares supported the unsuccessful opposition candidate General Humberto Delgado in the 1958 presidential elections. After being involved in several opposition movements, Soares became leader of the Acção Socialista Portuguesa (Portuguese Socialist Action), of which he was co-founder in 1964. Soares continued to defend political opponents. In 1968 he represented the Delgado family following the General's assassination by the PVDE secret police (Policia de Vigilancia e Defesa do Estado) in Spain in 1965. Consequently, Soares was immediately imprisoned without trial in the infamous camp for political prisoners on São Tomé. It was the 13th time he had been arrested by the PVDE.

Following his imprisonment, Soares went to France where he tried to re-establish the PSP. Founded in 1875, the party had been dissolved in 1933 by Salazar. After several failed attempts, the PSP, with the aid of the Socialists International and the German Social Democrats, re-emerged in 1973 at a Socialist conference in West Germany. Uniting with the Communists, the PSP fought to bring down the Portuguese dictatorship. After the 1974 Carnation Revolution, Soares returned to Portugal. His first role was a diplomatic European tour to promote external relations with the newly democratic Portugal. He served as minister of foreign affairs for the first three military-led provisional governments, beginning decolonization talks with Mozambique and Cape Verde, and was a minister without portfolio in the fourth. In 1975 Soares resigned from the fourth government in protest over growing totalitarianism.

Career Peak

In 1976 Soares was elected prime minister in the first post-revolution constitutional government, although the PSP did not win an absolute majority in the assembly. In the same year he was elected vice-president of the Socialist International at the Geneva Conference. Portugal was in serious economic difficulty following years of instability. Near bankruptcy necessitated a large IMF loan. Concurrently, a new constitution was established, including a new civil code and agrarian reforms. In 1977 Soares opened negotiations on Portuguese entry to the EU.

Between 1978–83 Soares was opposition leader. In 1980 he resumed the leadership of the PSP. In 1983 he was elected prime minister as the representative of a coalition between the PSP and the PSD (Partido Social Democrata). During his second term, Soares steered Portugal out of a second economic crisis. He also led Portugal into the EU, signing the Treaty of Ascension in 1985. Portugal officially became a member the following year. In 1985 the PSP/PSD coalition broke down and the PSP lost its assembly majority.

In 1986 Soares was elected to the largely ceremonial position of president with 51.3% of votes, becoming the first Portuguese civilian president to be democratically elected in 60 years. In 1991 he was re-elected with 70.4% of votes.

Later Life

At the end of his second term, Soares turned to international politics. In 1997 he became president of the European Movement. In 1999 he was elected deputy of the European Parliament representing the PSP. He was also president of the Mário Soares Foundation, which sponsors events connected with human rights and international relations. He died at the age of 92 on 7 Jan. 2017.

Sobotka, Bohuslav (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Bohuslav Sobotka took office as prime minister on 29 Jan. 2014. A representative of the centre-left Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), he is a career politician.

Early Life

Sobotka was born on 23 Oct. 1971 in Telnice near Brno, in what was then the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia. He joined the ČSSD in Dec. 1989, at the climax of the Velvet Revolution that ended communist rule in Czechoslovakia, and the following year co-founded the party's youth wing. He graduated from the law faculty of Brno's Masaryk University in 1995.

He entered parliament in 1996 as the ČSSD candidate for the South Bohemian Region, which he has continued to represent. Following the ČSSD's victory in the 2002 parliamentary elections, he was appointed minister of finance by Vladimír Špidla, overseeing solid economic growth in his 4 years in the post and also serving terms as a deputy prime minister. He returned to opposition when the ČSSD coalition was defeated in the 2006 elections.

Despite winning the most seats of any party at the 2010 elections, the ČSSD's inability to form a workable coalition led to the resignation of its leader, Jiří Paroubek. Sobotka succeeded him on an interim basis until he was officially elected party chairman in March 2011. He was soon confronted by a leadership challenge, his handling of which is credited with increasing his popularity among the wider electorate.

Sobotka's reputation as an uncharismatic but reliable figure left him well placed to capitalize on a spying, sex and corruption scandal that engulfed Prime Minister Petr Nečas, triggering a snap parliamentary election in Oct. 2013 from which the ČSSD again emerged as the largest party. Sobotka negotiated a coalition with the recently formed pro-business, populist ANO party, led by billionaire Andrej Babiš, and the Christian Democrats, giving him a majority of 111 seats in the 200-strong Chamber of Deputies.

Career Peak

On coming to power, Sobotka stated that his government's priorities were to stimulate economic growth and employment, as well as 'restoring people's trust in politics'. He also had to navigate a strained relationship with President Miloš Zeman, dating back to Sobotka's refusal to support Zeman's failed 2003 presidential bid. The stability of his coalition has since been bolstered by a recovery of the economy, although the government faced an unsuccessful parliamentary no-confidence motion tabled in May 2015 by opposition parties over alleged conflicts of interest surrounding Andrej Babiš's role as finance minister. Sobotka meanwhile maintained that mandatory migrant quotas would not help to resolve the causes of the European Union's escalating foreign refugee crisis. Following elections to the Senate in Oct. 2016, the ČSSD lost ground but remained the largest party with 25 seats. Following the victory of ANO 2011 in the parliamentary election of Oct. 2017, Andrej Babiš took office as prime minister on 6 Dec.

Sócrates, José (Portugal)

Introduction

José Sócrates was swept into power as Portugal's prime minister following a resounding victory for his Socialist Party (PS) in a snap parliamentary election on 20 Feb. 2005. The former civil engineer is a modernizer who has described himself as a 'market-oriented socialist'. Previously an environment minister, he was committed to sustainable development and championed educational reform and the development of high-tech industries as a way of reviving the country's flagging economy. His economic reforms nevertheless proved controversial, provoking public protests. He retained the premiership following parliamentary elections in Sept. 2009 but resigned in 2011 after parliament rejected his government's austerity measures. In Nov. 2014 Sócrates was arrested following an investigation into alleged corruption, money laundering and tax fraud.

Early Life

José Sócrates Carvalho Pinto de Sousa was born in Vilar de Macada, Alijó, near the northern city of Porto, on 6 Sept. 1957. He attended secondary school in Covilhã in the district of Castelo Branco and went on to study at the Institute of Engineering in Coimbra, before completing a master's degree in medical engineering at the National School of Public Health. Sócrates then worked as a medical engineer for Castelo Branco's municipal authority. He

joined the PS in 1981 and was first elected as a member of the Portuguese assembly in 1987, the year after the government—a Social Democratic Party (PSD)-led coalition—had taken the country into the European Community. In 1991 Sócrates became a member of the National Secretariat of the PS, and was spokesman for the environment.

Following the victory of the Socialists over the centre-right PSD in the 1995 general election, Sócrates held a range of portfolios under Prime Minister António Guterres. He served as secretary of state in the ministry of the environment and territorial planning for 2 years from 1995, before being made deputy minister to Guterres. In Oct. 1999, after Guterres had led the PS to another election win, Sócrates was promoted to minister for the environment, a post he held until the parliamentary elections of March 2002. He gained a reputation for boldness and determination, and is widely regarded as the man who brought the Euro 2004 football tournament to Portugal.

When the Socialists lost power to the PSD, led by José Manuel Durão Barroso, in March 2002, Sócrates remained in the spotlight by taking part in a weekly television debate against Pedro Santana Lopes, then the Social Democratic mayor of Lisbon. Following the resignation of Ferro Rodrigues as leader of the PS in 2004, Sócrates bid for the post of secretary-general, and won the vote of almost 80% of party members in Sept. 2004. Sócrates was again in direct opposition to Santana Lopes, who had taken over as prime minister and leader of the PSD in July 2004 when Barroso resigned to become head of the European Commission. Already unpopular at the time of Barroso's resignation, the PSD-led coalition struggled to improve Portugal's moribund economy. There was also a month-long delay to the start of the school year and disunity over Santana Lopes' plan to introduce tax cuts and public-sector pay rises. By Nov. loss of confidence in Santana Lopes' administration had reached the point where the president, Jorge Sampaio, felt obliged to dissolve parliament and call a snap general election, 2 years ahead of schedule.

Sócrates focused the PS' campaign on the promise to provide disciplined and transparent leadership and pledged to reform the country's education system, alleviate poverty and boost employment. The strategy proved successful—the PS gained 45% of the vote in the elections on 20 Feb. 2005, up from 38% in 2002. With 121 seats in Portugal's 230-seat parliament, it was the first time since the end of the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship in 1974 that the PS had received an outright majority. On 24 Feb. Sócrates was called on by President Sampaio to form a new government, which took office on 12 March 2005.

Career Peak

In his inaugural address as Portugal's prime minister, Sócrates pledged to restore confidence in the country and its institutions. He also vowed to increase the economy's competitiveness while cutting the budget deficit and fulfilling the requirements of the eurozone's stability and growth pact. Sócrates said his model for the country was a 'Nordic social democracy'—a society combining efficient capitalist enterprise with generous social services. Critics nevertheless described Sócrates' vision as unobtainable, pointing out that his economic reforms would lead to further job losses and suggesting that improvements to the education system to provide a labour force adapted to high-tech industries would take many years.

To comply with EU fiscal requirements, the 2006 budget included reforms to pension schemes and public administration wage structures. However, the government continued to struggle with the budget deficit in 2007 and in March there were mass demonstrations and industrial action against Sócrates' economic policies.

Portugal's 6-month presidency of the European Union, which began in July 2007, culminated in the signature in Dec. by the heads of government of the Lisbon Treaty streamlining the institutional structure and operation of the enlarged EU. Parliament then ratified the treaty in April 2008.

Parliamentary elections in Sept. 2009 were contested against a background of economic contraction and uncertainty in the wake of the global financial crisis. The PS was returned as the largest single party but lost its overall majority in the National Assembly. Sócrates continued as prime minister for a second term, but at the head of a minority government which was sworn in on 26 Oct. Portugal's economy and strained public finances caused mounting concern through 2010, along with other vulnerable economies in the eurozone which came under pressure over their sovereign debt levels and budget deficits. Several leading international credit agencies downgraded Portugal's government debt, forcing the Sócrates administration to introduce an unpopular austerity budget in Nov. that prompted trade union calls for a general strike.

On 23 March 2011 Sócrates submitted his resignation to the president after his government's latest austerity package was rejected in parliament. Sócrates remained in office as caretaker prime minister until June when legislative elections took place. After losing the election he resigned as Secretary-General of the Socialist Party.

Sócrates was arrested and charged with corruption, money laundering and tax fraud by a Portuguese court in Nov. 2014. Investigators had questioned a number of suspicious financial transactions made 'without known justification or legal admissibility', and an additional three individuals including Sócrates' personal driver were charged alongside Portugal's former prime minister. His arrest came days after the resignation of incumbent interior minister Miguel Macedo over separate and unrelated corruption allegations.

Sogavare, Manasseh (Solomon Islands)

Introduction

Manasseh Sogavare's first premiership (2000–01) began in the wake of a coup and ended after a controversial attempt to postpone elections. He took office for the second time in May 2006 after the brief tenure of Snyder Rini, when the capital, Honiara, suffered rioting with attacks on the Chinese community. However, Sogavare was ousted again in a parliamentary vote of no confidence on 13 Dec. 2007. He was elected to a third term as prime minister in Nov. 2014 and sworn in the following month.

Early Life

Manasseh Damukana Sogavare was born in 1955 at Gauraisa, northern Papua New Guinea, the son of missionaries from the island of Choiseul in the western Solomons. He was initially educated in Madang Province (PNG) before moving to Honiara in 1965, where he attended high school. He later graduated from the University of the South Pacific at Suva and from New Zealand's Waikato University.

Sogavare pursued a civil service career, becoming chief tax collector. In 1997 he became MP for East Choiseul. Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu appointed him finance minister after the Aug. election that year but dismissed him in July 1998. Tensions grew in 1998 between the indigenous peoples of Guadalcanal island (site of the capital) and long-term residents from Malaita island, who were seen to dominate the civil service. In 2000 Sogavare became leader of the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Ulufa'alu resigned after Malaitan militias seized parliament and Sogavare was chosen to succeed him by MPs.

Sogavare took office on 30 June 2000, forming the Coalition for National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace. Snyder Rini, leader of the Association of Independents, was finance minister. In Oct. 2000 a peace treaty was signed with the militias, followed by a further treaty in Feb. 2001. Parliament was dissolved in Aug. 2001 ahead of scheduled elections but the government attempted to push through a constitutional amendment to extend its mandate by another year. Amid corruption allegations, widespread unrest and trade union pressure for a general strike, Sogavare called elections for 5 Dec. 2001. The PPP won only three seats and Sogavare was succeeded by Sir Allan Kemakeza.

The Social Credit Party, a new party led by Sogavare, ran in the elections of 5 April 2006 on a platform of monetary and financial reform (based on New Zealand's Social Credit Party). Sogavare and his allies attempted to oust Kemakeza's successor, Rini, on 18 April 2006 but, having come third in a parliamentary vote for premier, he switched his allegiance to Rini, in exchange for control of the commerce ministry. Rioting broke out in Honiara in protest at perceived Taiwanese and local Chinese political interference, and much of the city's Chinatown area was destroyed. Following a no-confidence motion, Rini resigned on 26 April and Sogavare was elected prime minister on 4 May. On 5 May he appointed a five-party unity cabinet.

In Oct. 2006 Sogavare survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote following a serious diplomatic dispute with Australia. This related to his claims about the role of Australian security personnel in the April rioting

and to Australia's efforts to effect the extradition of Sogavare's controversial attorney-general for an alleged criminal offence. Government leaders attending a meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in Fiji in Oct. agreed to an independent review of the Australian-led regional peacekeeping force in the Solomon Islands.

On 13 Dec. 2007 Sogavare was defeated in a parliamentary vote after facing criticism for his abrasive style and accusations of damaging the nation's international image. He remained in office in a caretaker capacity until 20 Dec. In 2010, together with other opposition representatives, he launched Our Party, which contested the general elections that year but won only four seats, including his own East Choiseul constituency.

Career Peak

Sogavare was elected to a third term as prime minister in a secret ballot of MPs following a general election held in Nov. 2014 in which the majority of the elected MPs were returned as independents and the then prime minister, Gordon Darcy Lilo, who had taken office in Nov. 2011, unexpectedly lost his seat. Sogavare pledged to rebuild the country's economy with increased foreign investment, to improve public services and to tackle corruption.

In Oct. 2015 seven of Sogavare's senior ministers resigned citing issues with the prime minister's style of leadership and his position as premier has remained insecure amid fluid political allegiances. On 6 Nov. 2017 Sogavare succumbed to a no-confidence vote. The parliament subsequently elected Rick Hou prime minister although Sogavare remained in the government as minister of finance and treasury.

Soilih, Ali (Comoros)

Introduction

Ali Soilih was head of state from 1976–78. His rule was marked by continued hostility between France and the Comoros. His radical attempts to reform the country against a backdrop of economic instability led to diminishing support among the Comoran populace. He was ousted from power in a coup.

Early Life

Soilih was born in Jan. 1937 and studied in Madagascar. Shortly after the Comoros' declaration of independence, Soilih was a third of the triumvirate that supplanted Ahmed Abdullah as head of state on 3 Aug. 1975. Though the motives for the coup remain unclear, it was believed that with Abdullah out of power there was an increased chance of France surrendering control of Mahoré (which had voted to remain a French dependency).

Career Peak

Soilih attempted a break with many traditional Comoran customs and remnants of French colonialism in a bid to modernize the country. This policy included banning the *grand mariage* (an expensive celebration to achieve social and political status), expensive funerals and the wearing of veils. French government archives were destroyed in 1976.

Advocating a secular state, Soilih called for restrictions on the powers of the muftis (Muslim jurists in Islamic Law) and there were frequent raids on mosques and attacks on village elders. Realizing the need to win the support of young people, he lowered the voting age to 14 and founded a revolutionary militia of young people (the Moissy) to implement change.

In foreign policy, relations with France fast deteriorated, particularly over the question of Mahoré sovereignty. Regarding the Chinese cultural revolution as a model for his reform movement, Soilih sought closer ties with China as well as Tanzania (who shared military expertise), Nigeria, North Korea and Saudi Arabia.

International aid followed food crises in 1976–77 but, with the economy weak, there were many public protests. One demonstration, by fishermen in March 1978, led to a massacre. On 12 May 1978 a mercenary force, backed by Abdullah, overthrew Soilih. He died on 29 May, reputedly while trying to escape.

Solís, Luis Guillermo (Costa Rica)

Introduction

Luis Guillermo Solís became president in May 2014. An academic and diplomat, he led the centre-left Citizens' Action Party (PAC) to electoral victory on a platform of combating corruption, developing the national infrastructure and boosting the economy.

Early Life

Born in San José on 25 April 1958, Solís graduated in history from the University of Costa Rica and received a master's degree from Tulane University in New Orleans, USA. He embarked on an academic career, holding research and teaching posts at institutions including the University of Costa Rica and Florida International University.

Having joined the National Liberation Party (PLN), he worked as chief of staff in the foreign ministry from 1986–90 in the government of Óscar Arias. In this post he was involved in regional negotiations to bring peace to Central America. He was director of the Arias Foundation's Center for Peace and Reconciliation from 1992–94 and served as ambassador for Central American affairs from 1994–96. Between 1996 and 1998 he was director general for policy at the foreign ministry.

He held a succession of senior party posts, serving as the PLN's general secretary from 2002–03. However, in 2005 he resigned from the PLN after reporting electoral irregularities and returned to academia. In 2009 he joined the PAC and in 2012 became its presidential candidate, campaigning on promises to fight corruption, invest in infrastructure, improve the provision of health care and social services, and boost the economy. After achieving a surprise victory by 0.9% in the first round of voting in Feb. 2014, he promised to postpone tax increases for 2 years, proposing instead to trim government spending. In April 2014 he won a second round run-off with 77.8% of the vote against Johnny Araya, whose name remained on the ballot paper despite his withdrawal from active campaigning in the weeks leading up to the poll.

Career Peak

Solís took office on 8 May 2014 promising to rebuild confidence in the economy and institutions of governance. His chief challenges were to reduce a widening fiscal deficit and increasing debt stock, and to contain a volatile labour market while contending with a fractious and divided parliament. However, in early 2017 Moody's international credit rating agency downgraded Costa Rica's financial standing, particularly citing the still rising fiscal deficit and government debt payment burden and also the lack of political consensus to implement corrective measures.

In Dec. 2015 the International Court of Justice ruled in Costa Rica's favour in a sovereignty dispute with Nicaragua over a small border area known as Isla Portillo. In May 2018, following the presidential elections run-off that took place in April of the same year, Solís was succeeded as president by his fellow PAC member Carlos Alvarado Quesada.

Early Life

László Sólyom was born in the southern Hungarian city of Pécs on 3 Jan. 1942. In 1965 he graduated in law from the University of Pécs. Later that year he qualified as a librarian at the National Széchenyi Library in Budapest. Between 1966 and 1969 he studied for a doctorate and worked as assistant lecturer at the institute of civil law at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena in East Germany, an institution known as a dissident stronghold. Returning to Budapest in 1969, Sólyom became a fellow of the institute of political and legal sciences at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA). He also worked as a librarian at the library of parliament. In 1978 Sólyom joined the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest as an assistant professor in the department of civil law. Five years later he became a professor at the university. He specialized in the field of the right to privacy, and was largely responsible for the introduction of data protection legislation in Hungary. Sólyom also worked as a legal adviser to some of the country's new and radical civil and environmental organizations during the 1980s, and helped to prevent the construction of the controversial Nagymaros dam on the river Danube.

Sólyom was one of a group of dissident intellectuals that met at the town of Lakitelek in Sept. 1987 and formed the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), which became a fully-fledged political party 6 months later. As a member of the MDF's executive committee, Sólyom participated in roundtable negotiations that precipitated the end of Hungary's Communist regime and the dismantling of the Iron Curtain between Hungary and Austria in May 1989. Sólyom was elected onto the newly-established constitutional court of Hungary on 24 Nov. 1989, and was made the court's chief justice shortly afterwards. He remained in this post for 9 years, playing a key role in strengthening democracy in Hungary. Highly activist, with the power to review and invalidate parliamentary acts, the court did much to promote freedom of opinion and the removal of capital punishment.

When his mandate expired in 1998 Sólyom continued his academic career, lecturing at universities throughout Hungary and internationally, including the University of Cologne (Köln), Germany, where he was visiting professor in 1999 and 2000. He joined numerous boards and committees, including the Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy through Law, the Hungarian Accreditation Commission and the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists. He became a member of the Védegylet (an environmental and civil-society organization) when it was founded in early 2000 and it was this group which nominated him to replace Ferenc Mádl as the country's president in 2005. Backed by the right-leaning opposition MDF and Fidesz, Sólyom went head-to-head with Katalin Szili, the parliamentary speaker and candidate of the Socialist-led coalition government. In a third-round run-off on 7 June 2005, Sólyom emerged victorious with 185 votes to Szili's 182.

Career Peak

Sólyom was inaugurated as president on 5 Aug. 2005. He was critical of some politicians, accusing them of spending their time attacking each other instead of dealing with the key issues at hand. He was succeeded by Pál Schmitt in Aug. 2010.

Sólyom, László (Hungary)

Introduction

As a professor of law and an environmental activist, László Sólyom was closely involved in the negotiations between opposition civic groups and the Communist regime that led to the fall of the Iron Curtain. For most of the 1990s Sólyom was chief justice in Hungary's newly-established constitutional court, overseeing sweeping reforms to the country's legal system. He became president on 5 Aug. 2005.

Somoza Debayle, Anastasio (Nicaragua)

Introduction

Anastasio Somoza Debayle was the last of the Somoza dynasty to hold power in Nicaragua. He was *de facto* leader from 1967 until 1979, when he fled the country following the Sandinista uprising. He held the office of president from 1967 to 1971 and from 1974 until 1979. His rule was characterized by corruption and ruthless political oppression.

Early Life

Somoza Debayle was born on 5 Dec. 1925 in León, Nicaragua, the second son of Anastasio Somoza García, head of the national guard and, from 1936, Nicaragua's president. He was schooled in Florida and studied at New York's La Salle military academy. On his return to Nicaragua in 1946 he joined the national guard and 9 years later became its commander.

Somoza García was assassinated in 1956, having established vast personal wealth and political influence for his family. Somoza Debayle's elder brother, Luis, assumed the presidency, winning an elected term in 1957. He declined to stand for another term in 1963 and instead installed a ruling committee of political allies. Anastasio Somoza Debayle successfully ran for the presidency in the elections of 1967.

Career Peak

Somoza Debayle adopted an aggressive leadership style more reminiscent of his father than his brother. He vigorously suppressed political opposition and oversaw a period of increasing corruption and nepotism. He allowed the military considerable freedom and largely overlooked civil abuses committed by the national guard, thus securing its continued support. With the economy in decline, Somoza Debayle's popular standing declined quickly. The situation was exacerbated in 1970 when he amended the constitution to permit him a further year in government. In 1971 he was persuaded to resign the presidency and install a ruling committee to oversee the drafting of a new constitution. Despite relinquishing his official position, Somoza Debayle remained the *de facto* head of state and government.

In 1972, Managua, the capital, suffered an earthquake that killed 10,000 and displaced 50,000 families. In the aftermath the national guard was accused of looting the city while Somoza Debayle was accused of filtering off several million dollars worth of international aid. Amid an atmosphere of rising tensions martial law was declared and Somoza Debayle was named the government's chief executive. In Sept. 1974 he won the presidency in a disputed election and, under the terms of a new constitution, began a tenure scheduled to last for 7 years.

Somoza Debayle's second period in office was marked by increasingly organized opposition, particularly from the militant Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). The FSLN kidnapped several leading Somoza Debayle associates in late 1974 and successfully negotiated a US\$1 m. ransom, the release of 14 FSLN prisoners and an escape route to Cuba. Somoza Debayle responded by increasing press censorship, authorizing the ruthless suppression of rival political movements and allowing the national guard to terrorize the civilian population. Nonetheless, the rebel movement was invigorated. The US, fearing the country would fall to communism, had been long-time supporters of the Somoza dynasty but when Jimmy Carter became president in 1977 he demanded an improvement in Somoza Debayle's human rights record. When it failed to materialize Carter withdrew military assistance, forcing Somoza Debayle to find new sources for arms procurement, paying prices which the failing economy could not afford.

At home the Broad Opposition Front (FAO), including a group of high-profile business and academic figures known as Los Doce (The Group of 12), was pushing Somoza Debayle for a negotiated settlement. The FSLN, having forged ties with the FAO, orchestrated a national strike in Jan. 1978 when Pedro Chamorro, editor of the leading anti-government newspaper, was murdered. The FSLN then seized the national palace in Aug. 1978 and held over 2,000 officials hostage for 2 days. The FSLN won another large ransom, safe passage out of the country for the kidnappers and the distribution of an FSLN statement through the national media. At the end of 1978 the UN condemned the Somoza Debayle regime for human rights abuses.

During 1978 and 1979 the FSLN seized several individual cities but was each time defeated by concentrated national guard opposition. In May, boosted by weapons from Venezuela, Cuba and Panama, the FSLN launched a nationwide operation and by the end of June had seized control of all major cities except Managua. International opinion decisively turned against Somoza Debayle at this time when the murder by the national guard of an American Broadcasting Company news reporter, Bill Stewart, was caught on camera. With total defeat imminent and the national infrastructure and economy ravaged by the civil war, Somoza Debayle resigned the presidency on 17 July 1979 and went into exile in Florida. The FSLN leader Daniel Ortega succeeded him as president.

Later Life

From Miami, Somoza Debayle went to Paraguay, having smuggled out large sums of money from Nicaragua in the preceding months. In Sept. 1980 he was assassinated in Asunción in what was believed to be a rocket attack by a communist organization.

Spaak, Paul-Henri (Belgium)

Introduction

Twice Belgian prime minister (1938–39, 1947–49), Paul-Henri Spaak was a founder of Benelux, the economic union of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, and a key player in the establishment of the Common Market. His chairmanship of the European Economic Community (1948–50) and the European Coal and Steel Community (1952–54) earned him the nickname 'Mr Europe'.

Early Life

Spaak was born on 25 Jan. 1899 in Schaerbeek, Belgium. His mother was the first female senator in the country's parliament, and he inherited his interest in socialist politics from her. After World War I he studied law in Brussels and continued to practice as a lawyer for 10 years after taking his degree.

Spaak was elected as a Socialist member of the Chamber of Deputies in 1932. He held the post of minister of transport, posts and telegraphs from 1935–36, before becoming foreign minister in 1936. Whilst in the latter position, he secured British and French approval for Belgium's independent foreign policy.

Career Peak

In 1938 he was elected as Belgium's first Socialist prime minister, but resigned from the post the following year. Spaak resumed his role as foreign minister in Hubert Pierlot's government. Which was forced into exile in London when Nazi Germany occupied Belgium. Whilst in London Spaak helped to formulate a plan for a Benelux customs union. He also played a significant role in the drafting of the United Nations Charter in 1945, and was elected to serve as the first president of the United Nations General Assembly in 1946.

In 1947 he was elected prime minister of the coalition government again. During this tenure he brought the Benelux customs union into existence. He also presided over the introduction of female suffrage, and the state's acquisition of the National Bank. In 1948 he signed the Brussels Treaty, enabling the existence of a regional defence alliance between Britain, France and the Benelux nations which was to culminate in the formation of NATO in 1949.

Spaak's socialist and republican sympathies led him to advise Léopold III to abandon his throne in the face of political upheaval. His counsel proved influential and Léopold abdicated in 1951. Having previously been nationalist in inclination, Spaak became increasingly committed to the cause of a unified Europe. In the 1950s he chaired a number of organizations which promoted European political and economic co-operation, including the European Coal and Steel Community, a forerunner of the Common Market. His experience and interest in European integration meant that he played a major role in the 1957 negotiation of the Treaty of Rome, which was to inaugurate the Common Market.

In the same year Spaak became secretary general of NATO, having served as a foreign minister for the previous 3 years. He held this post until 1961 and then resumed political office in Belgium as deputy premier and foreign minister under the leadership of Théo Lefevre.

Later Life

Spaak finally retired from politics in 1966 and for the last 6 years of his life worked in private business, dying in Brussels on 31 July 1972. He continues to be remembered as a founding father of the political, social and economic institutions of the EU.

Spencer, Baldwin (Antigua and Barbuda)

Introduction

Baldwin Spencer is leader of the United Progressive Party (UPP) and took office as prime minister in March 2004, defeating the Antigua Labour Party (ALP), which had held power continuously since 1976.

Early Life

Baldwin Spencer was born on 8 Oct. 1948 in Grays Green, Antigua. After secondary school, he studied social leadership at St Francis Xavier University's Coady International Institute in Nova Scotia. He also obtained a diploma in labour and economic studies from Ruskin College (at Oxford in the UK) and in labour and industrial relations from Oslo University.

In the 1970s Spencer worked as a trade unionist, serving as vice-president and, later, assistant general secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda Workers' Union (AWU). He also served as president of the Caribbean Maritime and Aviation Council.

In 1989 Spencer entered parliament as the United Democratic Party (UNDP) representative for St John's Rural West constituency. In 1991 he became leader of the UNDP and, as leader of the opposition in parliament, formed an alliance with the two other main opposition parties, the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement and the Progressive Labour Movement. They merged in 1992 to form the UPP.

During the 1990s Spencer regularly accused Prime Minister Vere Bird, Sr and his ALP of corruption. The campaign helped exploit rifts within the government and Bird's own son, Lester Bird, called for his father's resignation. Lester Bird took over as prime minister shortly before the general election of March 2004. Spencer led the UPP into the election promising more transparent government, and the party won 12 of 17 seats.

Career Peak

Spencer vowed to combat corruption, develop tourism and foster economic co-operation with other countries. In the first year he introduced legislation to improve government accountability and took steps to de-politicize the government-owned media. However, corruption investigations were hampered by the loss of government files and in 2005 Spencer set up a task-force to tackle organized crime and corruption among officials.

In Oct. 2004 an IMF report concluded that Antigua and Barbuda's economy suffered from high levels of public debt and over-reliance on the government for jobs (accounting for 40% of total employment). Spencer responded in 2005 by launching a drive to expand the tourism industry, taking measures to cut the public service salary bill, and reintroducing income tax. The tourism drive was undermined, however, in July 2008 by the murder of a visiting British couple. Spencer's UPP won a second term by taking 9 of the 17 seats in the parliamentary elections of March 2009.

He pursued closer ties with Brazil, China, India, Russia and neighbouring Caribbean countries (serving as chair of CARICOM in 2004) but was locked in a trade dispute with the USA over intellectual property rights. However, the WTO eventually ruled that Antigua could suspend these rights. This would permit online gambling companies access to the US market.

Spencer's UPP party was defeated at parliamentary elections held on 12 June 2014, and he was subsequently replaced as premier by ABLP leader Gaston Browne.

Špidla, Vladimír (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Following electoral victory for the Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), Vladimír Špidla became prime minister on 12 July 2002. He had replaced incumbent Miloš Zeman as party leader in April 2001. Špidla heads a coalition with

a narrow majority, although he has broad cross-party support in preparing the Czech Republic for entry into the EU. He resigned the premiership on 1 July 2004.

Early Life

Špidla was born on 22 April 1951 in Prague. He graduated in history from the Charles University in Prague. After several manual jobs in a factory, a dairy and backstage of a theatre, he took an administrative role with the cultural department of the Jindřichuv Hradec District national committee and was later an archaeologist with the district museum.

In 1990 he was appointed vice chairman of the Jindřichuv Hradec District national committee with special responsibility for education, health and social issues. In the same year he became a founding member of the ČSSD. From 1991–96 he was director of the local labour office. In 1996 he was made ČSSD spokesman on social and labour affairs and became chairman of the South Bohemian wing of the party, as well as a vice president of the national party.

In April 2001 the prime minister, Miloš Zeman, resigned the party leadership and announced that he would stand down as premier before the elections of 2002. Špidla was elected his successor as chairman of the ČSSD. He led the party to victory at the June 2002 elections, when they won 30.2% of the vote.

Career Peak

A coalition with the centrist Christian Democrats and the Freedom Union gave Špidla 101 of the 200 parliamentary seats. He pledged to prepare the country for entry into the EU and in Oct. 2002 it was confirmed that the Czech Republic could join in 2004. He also promised high levels of welfare spending, ruling out Czech Republic entry into the single currency until 2010 at the earliest. His spending promises risk confrontation with the Freedom Union. Relations with Germany and Austria deteriorated over the Czech parliament's refusal to repeal the Beneš decree, which allowed for the expulsion of 2.5 m. ethnic Germans after the Second World War.

In Aug. 2002 the Czech Republic suffered massive flooding, causing damage estimated at more than US\$2 bn. As a result Špidla was expected to authorize increased borrowing, as parliament rejected a tax increase to help victims. The defence ministry cancelled an order for jet fighters worth US\$2 bn. which were to have brought the country's air defences up to NATO standards. In June 2003 membership of the EU won 77% approval in a national referendum.

Špidla's domestic agenda has focused on EU compliance, specifically the Maastricht criteria for accession to the euro. Špidla aims to reduce the budget deficit to 4% of GDP by 2006. A package of reforms, on which the government had staked its future, was passed by the Chamber of Deputies in Sept. 2003. The reforms included raising the pension age, increasing consumer tax and cutting benefits for illness. However, tensions within the government have developed over the deficit reduction programme. Finance Minister Bohuslav Sobotka opposed wage increases for a raft of public sector employees, including customs officers and firemen, sponsored by Špidla and Interior Minister Stanislav Gross. The reform programme is opposed by trade unions, who see it as unnecessarily severe, and economists, who point to the need for fundamental reform of the social welfare system and for significant reductions in corporate income tax to encourage foreign investment.

Relations with Špidla's predecessor, Miloš Zeman, and his supporters deteriorated after the 2002 parliamentary elections. Špidla opposed Zeman's bid for the presidency, which he lost in the first round. However, Špidla survived an attempt to dislodge him at the party's caucus in 2003. He announced his resignation on 26 June 2004 in the wake of his party's defeat in the June 2004 European Parliament elections and officially resigned on 1 July.

Stalin, Joseph (Russia)

Introduction

As secretary-general of the Communist party, Joseph Stalin was effectively the Soviet Union's head-of-state from 1924–53. He was premier from 1941.

An advocate of Leninism, he rapidly industrialized the economy and enforced agricultural collectivization. He led the Soviet Union to ultimate victory during World War II and was overlord of the communist Eastern Bloc in the aftermath. He encouraged a personality cult and his totalitarian regime relied on terror as its chief weapon of enforcement. The persecution of perceived political enemies, allied to the disastrous effects of agricultural collectivization and the limited benefits of industrialization resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of Soviet citizens. His animosity towards the West propelled the world into the Cold War, the impact of his reign continuing long after his death.

Early Life

Stalin was born as Iosef Vissaryonovich Dzhugashvili on 21 Dec. 1879 in Gori (Georgia), the son of a cobbler and a washerwoman. He trained to be a priest but engaged in underground political activities from 1900, joining the Bolshevik Party 3 years later. In 1904 he married Ekaterina Svanidze, who had one son before dying in 1907.

Frequently arrested for his revolutionary activities, Stalin attended party congresses abroad and worked in the Georgian party press. In 1912, having adopted the name Stalin (derived from the Russian word for *steel*), he went to St Petersburg and was elected to the party's central committee. In 1913 he was sent into Siberian exile for 4 years. He became editor of *Pravda*, and when the Bolsheviks took power in Nov. 1917, he became the people's commissar of nationalities and a state inspector. Succeeding to the job of party secretary in 1922, he was in the strongest position to take over from Lenin as party leader, ahead of his chief rivals Leon Trotsky, Lev Kamenev and Grigory Zinoviev. The last two ruled briefly with Stalin in a three-pronged leadership following Lenin's death.

Career Peak

Between 1924 and 1929 Stalin forced out other leading Bolsheviks. Trotsky was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1929. Stalin's command economy led to agricultural collectivization and industrialization at all costs. Working with the credo that the end justifies the means, millions died of starvation between 1932 and 1934. His 5 year plans (first applied in 1928) were implemented ruthlessly. Political repression and terror reached their height in the 1930s. In public trials, a large number of prominent politicians including Nikolai Bukharin (a leading policy adviser who assisted in drafting the 1936 constitution), Kamenev, Zinoviev and Marshall Mikhail Tukhachevsky (a leading military figure), were charged with conspiring to overthrow the regime and executed. Others who opposed Stalin's methods met a similar fate or were sent to concentration camps where up to 10 m. peasants are believed to have died. Stalin's second wife, Nadezhda Alliluyeva, with whom he had two children, committed suicide in 1932.

Stalin's foreign policy in the 1930s focused initially on alliances with Britain and France against Nazi Germany but culminated in the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939. He then made several incursions into Eastern Europe in a bid to strengthen his Western borders. The German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, however, brought an abrupt end to the policy of appeasement. Stalin took charge of the counter offensives, directing the gruelling battles of Stalingrad in 1942 and Kursk in 1943, eventually forcing the Germans to capitulate.

At the Tehran and Yalta Conferences, in talks with the US President Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Stalin managed to gain Western recognition of a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. The Baltic States and large tracts of land from neighbouring countries were annexed into the Soviet Union, while Poland, Czechoslovakia, eastern Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Romania all fell under indirect rule from Moscow. In 1949 the Soviet Union exploded a nuclear bomb, a precursor to the intensification of East-West mistrust and fear over the next 40 years.

Stalin's final years were marked by increasing paranoia. His command over the Eastern Bloc was brought into question, particularly by the independent action of General Tito's Yugoslavia. There followed a period of terror reminiscent of the 1930s. Show trials were again common, while Andrei Zhdanov was the chief henchman responsible for controlling the cultural and philosophical climate of Soviet life.

Stalin died suddenly on 5 March 1953. His body was placed next to Lenin's in the Red Square mausoleum but was later removed. His successor Nikita Khrushchev took the unprecedented action of denouncing the worst excesses of Stalin's reign at the 1956 party congress.

Stanishev, Sergey (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Sergey Stanishev, leader of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), emerged as prime minister of Bulgaria in Aug. 2005 after a closely-fought general election and weeks of negotiations. The Soviet-educated son of a high-ranking official from the communist era, Stanishev spearheaded sweeping reforms to the BSP. He was committed to liberalizing the economy and succeeded in steering the country into the EU in 2007. His chief challenges were to hold together the three-party Coalition for Bulgaria while creating jobs and tackling poverty and crime.

Early Life

Sergey Dimitrievich Stanishev was born on 5 May 1966 in Kherson in the Soviet Republic of Ukraine to a Russian mother and a Bulgarian father, a high-ranking official in the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP). While studying history at Moscow State University (MGU) in the mid- to late-1980s, he was the Moscow correspondent of *Krugozor*, then Bulgaria's main dissident newspaper. Stanishev remained at MGU after his graduation in 1989 to study for a PhD in late-19th century Russian politics. On his return to Bulgaria in 1994 he worked as a freelance journalist specializing in foreign-policy issues. A year later, under the BSP-led government of Zhan Videnov, he was appointed senior analyst at the department of foreign policy and international affairs within the BSP's supreme council. In 1996, against a backdrop of economic crisis and severe food shortages which culminated in the resignation of Videnov's cabinet, Stanishev was promoted to director of the BSP's department for foreign policy and international affairs, a position he held for 4 years. He continued his studies at the School of Political Studies in Moscow in 1998 and later specialized in international relations at the London School of Economics (1999–2000).

Under the guidance of Georgi Parvanov, the reformist leader of the BSP, Stanishev became more closely involved in the party's organization. Elected to its supreme council in May 2000, he stood in the legislative elections of June 2001 and, despite a generally poor showing by the BSP, went on to represent the town of Rousse in parliament. Following the election of Parvanov as president in Nov. 2001, Stanishev was voted chairman of the BSP and chairman of the parliamentary group of the BSP-led Coalition for Bulgaria. Although inexperienced, he was credited with reforming the structure of the party and updating its image, attracting younger members. Having been re-elected BSP chairman in June 2002, he forged alliances with other European socialist parties, and the BSP became a member of Socialist International in Oct. 2003.

In the run-up to the general election of 25 June 2005, Stanishev criticized Simeon II's ruling National Movement (NMS) for failing to improve living standards. Parvanov promised to boost wages and pensions by 20%, spend more on health and social services and create more than 200,000 new jobs. He won the seat of the port city of Bourgas but the BSP-led coalition claimed an insufficient cut of the overall vote to rule alone and political deadlock ensued. On 27 July parliament chose Stanishev as prime minister in a coalition with the NMS but voted against his proposed cabinet, leading to further wrangling. Under pressure from the EU, a coalition of the BSP, the NMS and the ethnic-Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) was formed. On 16 Aug. Stanishev received 168 parliamentary votes (against 67) and was sworn in as prime minister the same day.

Career Peak

As well as ensuring Bulgaria's accession to the EU, which took place on 1 Jan. 2007, Stanishev's priorities as prime minister included sustaining economic growth, reforming the judiciary and introducing measures against crime and corruption. However, gangland shootings continued and anti-corruption drives did not produce convincing results, prompting censure by the European Commission and the suspension in July 2008 of EU aid payments.

At parliamentary elections on 5 July 2009 the coalition led by the Bulgarian Socialist Party won only 40 seats compared to the 116 taken by Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria. The mayor of Sofia, Boyko Borisov, was named prime minister delegate and succeeded Stanishev on 27 July.

Later Life

Stanishev has remained active in European politics following his term as prime minister and is currently president of the Party of European Socialists European political party—a position he has held since Nov. 2011.

Stephanopoulos, Constantinos Dimitriou (Greece)

Introduction

A veteran, centre-right politician, Stephanopoulos was elected by parliament to the mainly ceremonial office of president of the Hellenic Republic in 1995 and again in 2000. He was the first president to have been elected to two consecutive terms since the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974.

Early Life

Stephanopoulos was born on 15 Aug. 1926 in Patras. Following his graduation from the University of Athens, he practised as a lawyer in Patras from 1954–74, often representing opponents of the military junta. He first entered parliament for the constituency of Achaia in 1964 as a National Radical Union candidate. However, in 1974 he joined the New Democracy (ND) party founded by Constantine Karamanlis. After election to the party's central committee, he held several ministerial positions (with responsibility successively for commerce, interior affairs, social affairs, and as secretary of state to the prime minister) in the post-dictatorship governments from 1974–81. After losing two party leadership contests—in 1981 following the ND's general election defeat and in 1984 following the party's poor performance in the European Parliament elections—Stephanopoulos resigned in Sept. 1985 to form a right-wing splinter grouping, the Democratic Renewal Party, with other dissident ND members. He retreated into semi retirement after dissolving the party in 1994 when it failed to win representation in the elections to the European Parliament. However, he remained a respected public figure.

Career Peak

Nominated as a presidential candidate by the rightwing, populist Political Spring movement, but also backed by the ruling Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), Stephanopoulos was elected president by the Chamber of Deputies on 8 March 1995. He was re-elected on 8 Feb. 2000 with a sweeping majority, receiving 269 of the 300 parliamentary votes, the largest margin of victory in a presidential poll since the military dictatorship. Stephanopoulos was replaced with Karolos Papoulias after his second 5-year term ended on 11 March 2005.

Later Life

Stephanopoulos died on 20 Nov. 2016 at the age of 90 after a short illness.

Stephen, Marcus (Nauru)

Introduction

Marcus Stephen became president in Dec. 2007 after a vote of no confidence against the previous incumbent, Ludwig Scotty. Stephen had served as education and finance minister from 2003–04 and represented Nauru on the International Whaling Commission (IWC) from 2005. He was re-elected by parliament in Nov. 2010. In Nov. 2011 Stephen resigned following corruption claims from opposition members of parliament.

Early Life

Born in Nauru on 1 Oct. 1969, Marcus Stephen attended secondary school and university in Australia. After completing his education, he returned to Nauru and played Australian rules football before switching to weightlifting. His success in the sport led to the establishment of the Nauru Weightlifting Federation in 1989. Stephen subsequently represented Nauru in the 1996 and 2000 Olympics, won a series of gold and silver medals in four successive Commonwealth Games and was a runner-up in the 1999 World Championship. He was appointed treasurer of the Nauru Olympic Committee in 1997. On 3 May 2003 he was elected to parliament, representing the constituency of Ewa and Anetan.

Stephen served as education and finance minister in the government of René Harris from Aug. 2003–June 2004. He was re-elected to parliament in Oct. 2004, when he served under President Ludwig Scotty. When Nauru joined the IWC in June 2005, Stephen was nominated as a delegate for Nauru. Following parliamentary elections in Aug. 2007, he stood as a presidential candidate but lost out to Scotty. Allegations of corruption within the Scotty government led to a vote of no confidence in Nov. 2007, supported by Stephen. Scotty survived the vote but on 19 Dec. 2007 a second vote forced his resignation, paving the way for Stephen to become president.

Career Peak

Stephen took office promising transparency in public affairs. Dr. Kieren Keke, who had been instrumental in bringing the votes of no confidence against Scotty, was appointed foreign minister. Early indications suggested Stephen was likely to maintain the financial reform programme and tighter banking regulations brought in by Scotty. The beginning of 2008 saw a deterioration in the economic climate when a controversial Australian immigrants' detention centre was closed. The island had hosted the centre, which generated 20% of GDP, for 7 years. Replacing this income source was an urgent priority. Longer term challenges included a fundamental rebuilding of the economy and reparation of the environment.

In April 2008 a snap parliamentary election called by Stephen resulted in a win for his supporters, and at the parliament's first sitting he was re-elected as president. Further inconclusive parliamentary elections in April and June 2010 resulted in a political impasse, with the government continuing in a caretaker capacity until Nov. when Stephen was finally confirmed as president by parliament for another 3-year term. However, his second term proved short-lived. The opposition accused the president of seeking to illegally profit from a phosphate deal and on 10 Nov. 2011 Stephen announced his resignation.

Later Life

Stephen returned to the cabinet in June 2012 when he was appointed minister for commerce, industry and the environment.

Stevenson, Adlai E. (United States of America)

Introduction

Adlai Ewing Stevenson was Governor of Illinois from 1949–53 and an unsuccessful Democratic Presidential candidate in 1952 and 1956 (on both occasions losing to Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower). From 1961–65 he served as the US ambassador to the United Nations, playing an important role in helping defuse the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Early Life

Born in Los Angeles on 5 Feb. 1900, Stevenson had politics in his blood—his grandfather having served as Vice-President from 1893–97. After studying at Princeton and Northwestern University, Stevenson began practicing law in Chicago in 1926.

In 1932 President Roosevelt appointed Stevenson special counsel to the Agricultural Adjustment Agency. Throughout the 1930s Stevenson, an anti-isolationist, was also chairman of the Chicago chapter of the Committee to

Defend America by Aiding the Allies and head of the Civil Rights Committee of the Chicago Bar Association. From 1941 until 1944, Stevenson was special assistant to Frank Knox, the secretary of the Navy. In 1945 he was appointed senior advisor of the American delegation that met in San Francisco and then London to found the United Nations.

Career Peak

In 1948 Stevenson was elected governor of Illinois by the then largest majority in the state's history. He increased state aid for schools, improved the state highway system and attacked organized gambling. Persuaded to accept a draft nomination as Democratic presidential candidate in 1952, Stevenson fought an energetic campaign but was easily defeated by war hero Dwight D. Eisenhower by 442 electoral college votes to 89.

Maintaining his interest in foreign affairs, Stevenson secured the Democratic nomination for the 1956 election on the first ballot at the Democratic National Convention. However he once again lost to Eisenhower, this time by an even greater margin. His emphasis on foreign affairs and his proposal to end H-bomb testing contributed to the scale of his defeat.

Later Life

After John F. Kennedy was elected president in 1960, Stevenson was appointed US ambassador to the United Nations. His influence on the Kennedy and Johnson administrations led to the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, and he played an active role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, when he persuaded many UN member countries to support America's stance or remain neutral. Stevenson died in London of a heart attack on 14 July 1965.

Stoltenberg, Jens (Norway)

Introduction

Jens Stoltenberg became prime minister of Norway for a second time on 17 Oct. 2005, following the victory of his centre-left coalition in parliamentary elections, having previously held the office from 2000–01. He was returned to power again in elections in Sept. 2009 and served a 4-year term before his Labour Party and its coalition allies lost power in the elections of Sept. 2013.

Early Life

Jens Stoltenberg was born in Oslo on 16 March 1959, the son of politicians. He studied economics at Oslo University, where he joined the Norwegian Labour Party (Det Norske Arbeiderpartiet, DNA). In 1985 he was appointed leader of the Labour Youth League and from 1985–89 was vice president of the International Union of Socialist Youth. He also worked briefly at the National Statistics Office and was an economics lecturer at Oslo University before serving for 2 years as leader of the Oslo Labour Party (1990–92). He was also a state secretary at the department of the environment at this time.

Elected a member of the Storting (parliament) for Oslo in the Sept. 1993 general election, Stoltenberg served as minister of trade and energy from 1993–96 and oversaw Norway's accession to the European Economic Area in 1994. In Oct. 1996 he was made minister of finance, a post he held for a year until the DNA lost power to the conservative Christian People's Party, led by Kjell Magne Bondevik. Bondevik, who attempted to govern with a coalition which held a slim majority, resigned in March 2000 and Stoltenberg (by now deputy leader of the DNA) was asked to form a government as the youngest prime minister in Norway's history.

Career Peak

Stoltenberg controversially ushered in reforms to the welfare state that included the part-privatization of several state-owned services. In the parliamentary elections of Sept. 2001 the party suffered a heavy defeat and Bondevik returned as prime minister of a centre-right coalition. A DNA party leadership battle between Stoltenberg and Jagland (leader since 1992) ensued with Stoltenberg emerging victorious.

Thanks to burgeoning oil and gas exports and high international prices, the economy prospered under Bondevik but the DNA's campaign in the run-

up to the Sept. 2005 parliamentary elections centred on increased funding for education, health and care of the elderly. In partnership with the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party, the DNA took 87 of 169 seats. Stoltenberg was sworn in to office on 17 Oct. 2005.

Stoltenberg vowed to reform the welfare system while creating conditions for Norway to develop as a knowledge-based economy. He also pledged sustainable management of the country's fish and energy resources. In 2006 his administration approved the expansion of oil exploration in the Barents Sea and also the merger of Norway's two largest energy companies, Statoil and Norsk Hydro (with the government having a controlling stake in the combined group). Stoltenberg withdrew the small contingent of Norwegian troops from Iraq, but promised to increase the country's participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions elsewhere in the world.

In Sept. 2009 his centre-left coalition was returned to power in parliamentary elections, with the DNA (renamed the Labour Party/AP in April 2011) marginally increasing its share of the vote.

In July 2011 the government was confronted with an unprecedented act of violence in Norway as a right-wing extremist set off a bomb in central Oslo, killing eight people, before going on a shooting rampage at a political youth camp run by Stoltenberg's AP near the capital and murdering another 69 victims. The perpetrator was sentenced to the maximum allowable prison term in Aug. 2012.

In Sept. 2012 Stoltenberg carried out an extensive cabinet reshuffle as he entered the final year of his term before elections scheduled for Sept. 2013. The changes included the appointment to the culture portfolio of Hadia Tajik, who became Norway's youngest-ever cabinet member and first Muslim minister.

Stoltenberg sought re-election at the 2013 elections, but his Red–Green coalition failed to secure a majority, despite the Labour Party winning most seats and the highest share of the vote. He was succeeded as prime minister on 16 Oct. 2013 by Erna Solberg.

Later Life

In March 2014 Stoltenberg was named as the next Secretary General of NATO. He took over from Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark on 1 Oct. 2014.

Straujuma, Laimdota (Latvia)

Introduction

On 6 Jan. 2014 Laimdota Straujuma was appointed as Latvia's first female prime minister by President Andris Bērziņš following the resignation of Valdis Dombrovskis in Nov. 2013. She is an economist and civil servant who was previously minister for agriculture.

Early Life

Straujuma was born on 24 Feb. 1951. She read mathematics and physics at the University of Latvia from 1968–73 and undertook post-graduate studies in agricultural economics at the Institute of Economics of the Latvian Academy of Sciences in 1987. In 1992 she completed her doctorate and in 1996 studied business management at the University of Central Lancashire in England.

After working with the Latvian Agricultural Consulting and Educational Support Centre in the 1990s, Straujuma entered government in 1999 as deputy secretary of state in the ministry for agriculture. From 2000–06 she served as its secretary of state and was also a member of the council of the Mortgage and Land Bank of Latvia from 2002–07. She was secretary of state of the ministry for regional development and local government from 2006 until 2010, then spent a year as deputy state secretary of the ministry of environmental protection and regional development. Between Oct. 2011 and Jan. 2014 she was minister for agriculture.

In Nov. 2013 Dombrovskis resigned as premier after the collapse of a supermarket roof in Riga. Straujuma was nominated by the Unity-led coalition as his replacement.

Career Peak

Straujuma stated that her centre-right government would continue the tight fiscal policies of the previous administration—which had seen Latvia become one of the fastest-growing economies in the eurozone—in the run-up to the general election scheduled for Oct. 2014. In March 2014 she condemned Russia's intervention in Ukrainian territory, which also heightened Latvian concerns over Russian intentions towards the Balkan states. At the Oct. poll her pro-European stance contributed to the coalition's re-election with a clear parliamentary majority. In Jan. 2015 Latvia assumed the rotating 6-month presidency of the European Union.

Amid infighting within the government, Straujuma announced her resignation in Dec. 2015, citing a need for 'new ideas, a new contribution and a new energy'. However, she remained in the position until Māris Kučinskis of the Union of Greens and Farmers was sworn in as her replacement in Feb. 2016.

Stroessner, Alfredo (Paraguay)

Introduction

Alfredo Stroessner ruled Paraguay for 35 years as a military dictator. He seized power in a coup in 1954 and led the country until he in turn was deposed in Feb. 1989. During his dictatorship he suppressed all opposition and was implicated in numerous human rights abuses and even genocide.

Early Life

The son of a German immigrant, Alfredo Stroessner was born on 3 Nov. 1912, in Encarnación, Paraguay. He attended the Military College in Asunción, and was granted a commission into the Paraguayan army in 1932. He fought in the Chaco War against Bolivia (1932–35), winning two medals during the conflict and gaining the respect of his troops through his courage and leadership. He rose through the ranks to general and in 1951 became the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Career Peak

Through his position in the armed forces, Stroessner orchestrated a coup d'état against President Federico Chávez in May 1954, forcing his resignation. Once elected candidate for the Colorado Party, he assumed the presidency later that year after an election in which only he was eligible.

His regime achieved some success through modernization: the main roads were paved, there was a significant increase in the number of schools and colleges, the Catholic University of Asunción was founded, the Itaipú Dam hydro-electric power plant (the world's largest) was built and many remote areas were colonized and populated. He stabilized the currency and reduced inflation but also spent a high proportion of the national budget on the military to maintain his authority.

New constitutions were passed in 1967 and 1977 to legitimize his eight successive election victories. Opposition was repressed nationally and in the government: Stroessner's control of the armed forces and use of secret police meant that detractors faced possible torture, exile and death.

In the early morning of 3 Feb. 1989 General Andrés Rodríguez led a coup against the 76-year-old dictator in a bid to take the country towards democracy and allowed Stroessner (his father-in-law) 12 h to leave. He was accepted into Brazil where he lives in exile.

Later Life

In Dec. 1992, Dr. Martín Almeda, a Paraguayan lawyer and human rights activist, stumbled upon a mass of documents relating to one of the most controversial aspects of Stroessner's reign: his involvement of Paraguay in Operation Condor. This was a reciprocal agreement between the dictators of South America's Southern Cone countries (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay) to work together in the elimination or suppression of perceived leftist activity in the area during the 1970s and 80s. The files document thousands of human rights abuses and illegal arrests and extraditions conducted under Stroessner.

Despite repeated extradition requests, and the discovery of yet more files in Feb. 2002, Stroessner remained in political asylum in Brazil. He died on 16 Aug. 2006 after a long period of ill health.

Stuart, Freundel (Barbados)

Introduction

Freundel Stuart was sworn into office in Oct. 2010 after the death of David Thompson, having served as acting prime minister since May that year when Thompson took a leave of absence. In Feb. 2013 he led his Democratic Labour Party to electoral victory.

Early Life

Freundel Jerome Stuart was born on 27 April 1951 in the parish of St Philip. He was educated at Christ Church Boys' Foundation School. He later taught history and Spanish at the Princess Margaret Secondary School in St Philip. In 1970 he joined the Democratic Labour Party (DLP) but did not stand for election until the 1990s.

Stuart graduated in history and political science from the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill in 1975. He gained further degrees in law and was called to the Barbados Bar in 1984. Beginning in criminal law, he later switched to the civil code.

In 1994 Stuart won the seat of St Philip South which he subsequently lost at the 1999 election. From 2003–07 he served in the Senate but in 2008 returned to the lower house after winning the constituency of St Michael South. He was also admitted to the Inner Bar and appointed Queen's Counsel. Stuart joined the Thompson administration as minister of home affairs and was later appointed attorney general and deputy prime minister.

In May 2010 Stuart was named acting prime minister when Thompson took leave because of ill health. On 23 Oct. 2010, after Thompson's death from cancer, Stuart was selected by the DLP as his successor.

Career Peak

Upon taking office, Stuart made few changes to the cabinet except for the appointment of Adriel Brathwaite as attorney general and minister of home affairs. Stuart has largely followed his predecessor's programme, which aims to tackle poverty, unemployment and housing shortages. On 20 Jan. 2011 the government was boosted when Mara Thompson, David Thompson's widow, won the by-election for her late husband's St John seat by an overwhelming majority.

At the general election of 21 Feb. 2013 the DLP won 16 of the 30 parliamentary seats, securing Stuart a mandate for a full term in office. Polls prior to the election had suggested the DLP were running behind the opposition Barbados Labour Party, which took 14 seats. After the opposition Barbados Labour Party won all 30 House of Assembly seats at the May 2018 general election Stuart was replaced as prime minister by Mia Mottley, who became the country's first female prime minister.

Stubb, Alexander (Finland)

Introduction

Alexander Stubb became prime minister in June 2014, when he took over as leader of the ruling right-of-centre National Coalition Party at the head of a coalition government. In April 2015 his party was defeated in parliamentary elections, after which his tenure continued in a caretaker capacity until a new coalition took office nearly 6 weeks later.

Early Life

Stubb was born on 1 April 1968 in Helsinki. After finishing his military service, he graduated in 1993 in political science from Furman University,

South Carolina, USA. He then undertook graduate studies in French and European Affairs at, respectively, the Sorbonne in Paris, France and the College of Europe in Belgium, before completing a doctorate in 1999 on integration in the EU at the London School of Economics in England.

He then worked as a researcher at the Finnish ministry of foreign affairs and at the Academy of Finland. From 1999–2001 he was a member of the Finnish team negotiating the EU Treaty of Nice, which paved the way for the Union's eastward expansion. From 2001 he was an adviser to the president of the European Commission, and in 2003–04 served as a delegate on intergovernmental negotiations on the European Convention (on the Future of Europe). Between 2004 and 2008 he was a member of the European Parliament for the National Coalition Party, serving as vice-president of the committee on the internal market and consumer protection. In 2006 he produced a report on the cost of translation services to the EU.

In April 2008 Stubb was appointed Finland's foreign minister, in which role he chaired the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) during its monitoring role in the 2008 conflict in Georgia. Elected to the Finnish parliament for the first time in 2011, he was appointed minister for European affairs and foreign trade, consolidating his reputation as a champion of liberal economics. In April 2014, following Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's decision to resign, he entered the contest for his party's leadership, winning after a second round by 500 votes to 349. He then set about forming a five-party coalition and was appointed premier by President Sauli Niinistö on 24 June 2014.

Career Peak

On assuming office, Stubb was faced with maintaining economic stability in the face of significant pressures and managing delicate relations with neighbouring Russia. He pledged to implement reforms and tax cuts to reinvigorate the economy, while strongly advocating Finland's accession to NATO.

He succeeded by Juha Sipilä, who formed a coalition after his Centre Party won the elections of April 2015 in which the National Coalition Party came third. Stubb joined Sipilä's government as finance minister.

Stubb was ousted as leader of the National Coalition Party in June 2016 following a vote at the party congress. Petteri Orpo took over as leader of the party and replaced Stubb as finance minister.

Suárez González, Adolfo (Spain)

Introduction

Adolfo Suárez González was prime minister of Spain between 1976–81. Originally representing the Movimiento Nacional (National Movement), he won the 1977 elections as head of the Unión Centro Democrático (Union of the Democratic Centre Party; UCD). He was instrumental in Spain's transition from the Franco regime to democracy.

Early Life

González was born on 25 Sept. 1932 in Cebreros, Avila. The son of a civil servant, Suárez studied law at the University of Salamanca and later at the University of Madrid. He held various posts within the Movimiento Nacional before entering a career in national television and radio. He was director-general of the national broadcasting network from 1965 to 1973. He held key positions in the Movimiento Nacional as civil governor and then as head of the party in Segovia. In 1975 he became the party's secretary-general and in Dec. of that year achieved cabinet rank.

Career Peak

Between 1975–6, directly after Franco's death, the head of government was Arias Navarro. Unable to guide Spain's transition to democracy, and amid public demonstrations of discontent, Navarro resigned in July 1976. King Juan Carlos appointed Suárez as his successor. The King's choice provoked some surprise. At this time Suárez was relatively unknown, having worked mainly in provincial politics. The scepticism surrounding Suárez's appointment derived from his history with Franco's Movimiento Nacional and his close connections to the Catholic group Opus Dei, an organization with close ties to the Franco regime. But Suárez took every opportunity to prove his democratic credentials.

In 1976 the government implemented a law to allow workers to organize their own unions. The following year, Suárez revoked the Law of Association, which had outlawed opposition parties. Ten political parties were acknowledged including the UCD, The Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist Party; PCE) and the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party; PSOE). The first democratic elections in Spain for over 40 years took place in June 1977 and were won by Suárez representing the UCD. This party, set up by Suárez, was a coalition of centre groups. In 1978 Spain was established as a democratic parliamentary monarchy.

Suárez's government moved even further away from Franco's regime by acknowledging the Basque and Catalan regions. In 1978 both regions were given provisional autonomy which was confirmed in 1980. Nevertheless, several regions demanded further autonomy. Basque terrorism became a serious problem and the death toll in 1980 ran to one political assassination every 3 days. Meanwhile, the PSOE was gaining support. In the 1979 elections, Suárez lost overall majority.

The introduction of the new constitution was the highpoint of Suárez's premiership. After they had achieved this goal, the constituent groups within the UCD became increasingly fractious. Suárez found his time taken up with trying to resolve these squabbles. His popularity was further affected when he appeased the Andalusian Socialist party by promising the region's autonomy. Finally the in-party squabbling became too destructive and Suárez resigned as prime minister in Jan. 1981. He was replaced by Leopoldo Calve Sotelo.

Over the 4 years as Spain's premier Suárez effected a remarkable transition towards democracy. Yet, at the time of his resignation Spanish democracy was still vulnerable. The following month saw the last resistance of Francoist sympathizers who tried to stage a coup. Civil Guards led by Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero invaded parliament on 23 Feb. and General Milans del Bosch ordered his tanks onto the streets of Valencia. The coup was quickly put down. In the elections of 1982 the UCD lost power to the PSOE led by Felipe González.

Later Life

After his resignation Suárez founded the Democratic and Social Centre. Over the next few years he vacillated between left and rightwing politics. In 1992 he retired from politics. He died on 23 March 2014 following a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. Spain subsequently renamed Madrid-Barajas airport 'Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport' in honour of him.

Suharto, Mohamed (Indonesia)

Introduction

Mohamed (Thojib N. *also* Raden) Suharto was a military commander and Indonesian president from 1967 until 1998. He presided over the rapid growth of the country's economy while maintaining a dictatorial and often corrupt grip on government.

Early Life

Suharto was born at Kemu (Kemuju) Argamulija, Java on 8 June 1921. He was trained at the Dutch colonial military school in Gombong (Java), fought as commander of a Japanese-sponsored local army (1943–45) and was instrumental in the struggle for independence (1945–49) against Dutch colonial rule. In 1965 he became Indonesia's chief of army staff. The same year, Suharto repressed a communist coup led by Lt. Col Untung. On 11 March 1967 Suharto forced President Sukarno to sign an executive order, handing him supreme authority. The next day Sukarno was stripped of all political power and Suharto was installed as acting president.

Career Peak

Suharto's first move was to end territorial disputes with Malaysia and re-establish links with the United Nations. Suharto was influential in establishing the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). His economic policies resulted in a stabilisation of the rupiah, the expansion of manufacturing and the encouragement of foreign investment. The collapse of the oil boom in the mid 1980s destabilised the growing economy and led to

inflation. Corruption and cronyism, which typified Suharto's rule, led to social unrest. Riots erupted on 12 May 1998 throughout the archipelago, resulting in the deaths of more than 500 people and the widespread destruction of property. On 21 May, after the Indonesian parliament threatened impeachment proceedings, Suharto resigned ending 32 years of autocratic rule. The 61-year-old Vice President, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie took over the presidency.

Later Life

In Aug. 2000 Suharto was charged with corruption and stealing more than US\$500 m. from the state. The charges coincided with Forbes Magazine's naming of Suharto as the sixth wealthiest man in the world. By Dec. 2001 his ailing health led to a period of hospitalization and in 2006 judges ruled he was too ill to stand trial. He died on 27 Jan. 2008.

Sukarno, Achmad (Indonesia)

Introduction

Achmad Sukarno (Soekarno) was the founding member of the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI; Indonesian National Party) and independent Indonesia's first president from 1949 until 1966. He was instrumental in the struggle for Indonesian independence and became popularly known as Bung (brother or comrade) Karno.

Early Life

Achmad Sukarno was born on 6 June 1901 in Surabaya, East Java. His interest in politics was kindled whilst studying at Hogere Burger School in Surabaya and lodging at the home of Omar Said Tjokroaminoto, a prominent social and religious leader and founding member of Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association). Sukarno exhibited a natural flair for languages which would become instrumental in his rise to power, mastering Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, Arabic, Dutch, German, French, English and, later, Japanese.

In 1927, after graduating with a degree in civil engineering Sukarno, and colleagues from the nationalist 'General Study Club', founded the Indonesian Nationalist Association that was to become the PNI. The success of this new movement was to hinge on its bipartisan approach to the struggle for independence and its move away from the call to establish an exclusively communist or Islamic state. The PNI adopted a militant policy of non-cooperation with the Dutch East Indies Government. The movement's initial success was short lived with Sukarno, now Chairman, being arrested, tried and convicted to 4 years' imprisonment for public order offences. Sukarno was released from prison in 1931 to find that the struggle for independence had lost momentum. The PNI disbanded and reformed as Partindo. In 1933 Sukarno was arrested again and exiled to Flores and later at Bengkulu (Benkulen or Bencoolen) in Southern Sumatra.

World War II, the Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies and the surrender of the colonial forces in March 1942 changed the backdrop against which the struggle for independence was played. Sukarno welcomed the Japanese as liberators who, in turn, made him their chief advisor. It soon became apparent to many that the Japanese, far from instigating the plan of 'Great East Asia Co-prosperity' as promised, had merely replaced one form of subjugation with their own brand of colonialism. With their supply lines in disarray and increased Indonesian nationalist insurgency the Japanese placed the civil administration of the country in Sukarno's hands. On 17 Aug. 1945, only 2 days after Japan's surrender, Sukarno declared Indonesia's independence.

Career Peak

Sukarno became the first president and chief executive of the new Republic. Mohammad Hatta was his vice-president On 5 Sept. 1945 the first cabinet was formed and Sukarno instated Indonesia's first constitution. A national philosophical ideology, it was called Pancasila and consisted of five guiding principles: belief in one supreme; just and civilised humanitarianism; Indonesian unity; popular sovereignty governed by wise policies arrived at through deliberation and representation; social justice for all Indonesian people. It has subsequently become part of the standard curriculum, and all organisations in Indonesia are required to adopt Pancasila as their guiding ideology.

The fledgling republic soon came under threat from their erstwhile Dutch overlords. Fighting with Dutch forces lasted until 1949 until the Dutch agreed to pass sovereignty to the Federal Republic of Indonesia on 27 Dec. The triumphant Sukarno arrived in Jakarta on 28 Dec. and established his government in the palace of the Dutch governor-general.

Many could only stand and watch as Sukarno indulged himself in a whirlwind round of parties, dances and receptions. The economy faltered. Sukarno disposed of parliamentary democracy with its 60 political parties. In 1959, with popular and military support, he instituted the so-called 'Guided Democracy' and 'Guided Economy'. An executive-dominated electoral system with all parties reorganised into 11 groupings. In 1963 Sukarno declared himself president for life. On 20 Jan. 1965 Sukarno officially withdrew Indonesia from the United Nations in protest of the UN's support for the British-sponsored Federation of Malaysia, calling it 'an imperialist plot of encirclement.'

An attempted communist coup d'état of Oct. 1965, led by Lt. Col Untung, was brutally quashed by Sukarno's commander of the army, Lt. Col. Mohamed Suharto. Sukarno was forced to sign an executive order on 11 March 1967 handing supreme authority to Suharto. The next day Sukarno was stripped of all political power and Suharto was installed as acting president.

Later Life

Sukarno died on 21 June 1970, under house arrest and with a kidney ailment. More than 500,000 people turned out to pay their last respects in Jakarta. He was buried next to his mother at Biltar, East Java.

Suleiman, Michel (Lebanon)

Introduction

Gen. Michel Suleiman was sworn into office on 25 May 2008, filling a vacuum created when Emile Lahoud's term ended in Nov. 2007. Suleiman was appointed as a 'compromise candidate' after negotiations between the Siniora Western-backed government at that time and the Hizbollah-led opposition.

Early Life

Michel Suleiman was born in Amsheet on 21 Nov. 1948 to a prominent Maronite Christian family. He joined the armed forces in 1967 and graduated from Lebanon's Military Academy in 1970. He went on to complete a degree in political and administrative sciences at the Lebanese University.

Suleiman rose rapidly through the ranks of the armed forces at a time when Syria played a dominant role in Lebanon's military. On 21 Dec. 1998 he was appointed commander of the armed forces when Emile Lahoud left the post to take over the presidency. During his tenure Suleiman managed to maintain the military's non-partisan status and built good relationships with all sides. Following the Feb. 2005 assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri, Suleiman refused to crack down on anti-Syrian demonstrations or sanction military intervention. His stance was credited with paving the way to Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. Suleiman also ensured that the military stood back when Hizbollah and Israel fought a 34-day war in 2006 and oversaw a successful operation against Fatah al-Islam militants at the Nahr el-Bared refugee camp in 2007.

On 25 May 2008 Suleiman won the presidency with 118 of 127 parliamentary votes after Qatari-brokered talks on Lebanon's political future. His appointment ended 6 months of political deadlock, with the government and opposition agreeing to a power-sharing deal.

Career Peak

Suleiman reappointed pro-Western Fouad Siniora as prime minister on 28 May 2008 and invited him to form a national unity cabinet. In Oct. 2008 Lebanon and Syria established diplomatic ties. However, Suleiman still faced formidable challenges, including the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution calling for all militias in Lebanon to be disarmed. Following general elections in June 2009 in which the pro-Western 14 March Alliance won a majority of seats in the National Assembly, Suleiman

designated Alliance leader Saad al-Hariri as the new prime minister. Al-Hariri eventually succeeded in forming a national unity government in Nov. that year but it collapsed in Jan. 2011 after Hizbollah withdrew support and Najib Mikati was appointed prime minister-designate by Suleiman.

Only after 5 months was Mikati able to successfully negotiate the composition of a new administration, for which he relied on Hizbollah's backing. Mikati's government resigned in March 2013 amid disagreements over the organization of parliamentary elections that were scheduled for June. Polling was then postponed at the end of May until Nov. 2014, in view of concerns over the deteriorating security situation in neighbouring Syria. Suleiman nominated Tamman Salam as prime minister-designate in April, but his attempts to form a new government proved unsuccessful until Feb. 2014, during which time Mikati and his ministers remained in office in a caretaker capacity.

Suleiman's constitutionally mandated 6-year term in office ended on 25 May 2014. Since the constitution also prohibits successive presidential terms, the Lebanese parliament was forced to convene to appoint a successor. Suleiman's powers were ultimately transferred to incumbent prime minister Tammam Salam on an interim basis after parliament failed to elect a new president by that date.

Syngman Rhee (South Korea)

Introduction

Syngman Rhee was the first President of Korea. Much of his life was spent in the USA, and his western education and Christianity are often at odds with his Korean nationalism and ever-increasing authoritarianism as President.

Early Life

Rhee was born to a prosperous family on 26 March 1875. A gifted pupil, he received a traditional Confucian education before he was enrolled at a Methodist college. As a student he became a nationalist and converted to Christianity. But his anti-monarchical views, as a member of the Independence Club, attracted the attention of the government. Rhee was arrested in 1898 and imprisoned for 6 years.

After his release, Rhee went to the United States to continue his studies. Eventually he enrolled at Princeton and became the first Korean to graduate from that institution with a PhD. In 1910 he returned to Korea just as the Japanese occupation was beginning. As a nationalist, his activities again fell foul of the authorities and Rhee went back to the United States in 1912.

Rhee remained in America until the end of World War II, leading the Korean campaign for independence. In 1919 a provisional Korean government in exile was formed, with Rhee as its President. He retained the leadership of the independence movement until 1939 when younger exiles in China took over the provisional government. However, Rhee based in Washington, D.C. had the ear of the U.S. government and, when the Japanese occupation of Korea ended in 1945, the Americans installed him as head of the provisional government in Seoul.

Career Peak

In office Rhee showed the ruthlessness that characterized his rule. He founded a political movement that won the first elections in the south of the newly partitioned Korea in 1948. The murder of his rivals, in which he was not directly implicated, cleared the way to Rhee's election as first President of (South) Korea in 1948. He soon banned the opposition party and had its leader tried and executed. Rhee assumed near-dictatorial powers.

When the Korean War broke out in 1950 Rhee sought international assistance to repel the Communist invasion from the north. A US-led UN force was deployed in Korea, but Rhee pursued his own ends when he realised it would not reconquer North Korea. Rhee broke the agreement that had been negotiated with the North but a renewed attack by Communist forces brought him back to the negotiating table in 1953.

Rhee was re-elected in 1952 during the Korean War, in circumstances that prevented a free and universal poll. He was again returned to power in 1956. In 1960 when it was announced that he had won 90% of the poll, students

took to the streets. Their protests were put down with heavy casualties, but Rhee's hold on power lost all legitimacy. He went into exile in Hawaii where he died on 19 July 1965.

Szydło, Beata (Poland)

Introduction

Beata Szydło took office as prime minister on 16 Nov. 2015 following the success of her Law and Justice Party (PiS) at parliamentary elections a month earlier. A protégé of often controversial PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński, Szydło's main challenge was to emerge from his shadow to present a more moderate governing style. However, 1 year on from the election, popular discontent with PiS policies had escalated markedly.

Early Life

Szydło was born on 15 April 1963 in Oświęcim, the daughter of a miner. In 1987 she graduated in ethnography from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. From 1987–95 she worked as ethnographer at the Historical Museum of Kraków, before going on to establish the Libiaskiego Cultural Centre in 1995. In 1997 she became director of the Brzeszczach Cultural Centre, and in 1998 was appointed mayor of Brzeszcze. In her 7-year tenure she served on various regional councils, and in 2004 she participated in an international leadership programme organised by the US Department of State.

In 2005 Szydło joined the PiS, winning election to the Sejm in Sept. that year. She was re-elected to parliament in 2007, 2011 and 2015. On 24 July 2010 she was appointed PiS vice-president, and in Sept. 2014 became party treasurer. She was a leading figure in her party's 2015 presidential and parliamentary election bids, being credited for the management of Andrzej Duda's successful presidential campaign in May. On 20 June 2015 Kaczyński nominated Szydło as the party's prime ministerial candidate and on 9 Nov. her appointment was confirmed. She replaced Ewa Kopacz on 16 Nov.

Career Peak

Szydło was expected to pursue her party's conservative, nationalistic, anti-Russian and eurosceptic line and to introduce legislation to increase family-focused welfare spending, curb immigration, reduce the retirement age and raise the minimum wage. She indicated that her government would break ranks with the EU by refusing to take an EU quota of migrant refugees agreed by the previous administration, citing security concerns in light of the 2015 Paris Islamist terror attacks.

A perceived drift towards government authoritarianism in 2016 then bred an increasing wave of public dissent that included mass protests against plans to limit the powers of the Constitutional Court and to tighten anti-abortion legislation, as well as a parliamentary sit-in by opposition members in Dec. over PiS moves to restrict freedom of assembly and the rights of the press. Despite winning a no-confidence vote on 7 Dec. 2017 her party asked her to resign and chose finance minister Mateusz Morawiecki to replace her as prime minister. He was sworn in 4 days later, with Szydło remaining in the government as deputy prime minister.

Tadić, Boris (Serbia)

Introduction

Boris Tadić became president of Serbia and Montenegro on 11 July 2004, having narrowly defeated the right-wing nationalist, Tomislav Nikolić, in a run-off. The pro-Western, reform-minded politician had been an anti-communist activist and was central to the opposition campaign to bring down Slobodan Milošević in the late 1990s. Advocating integration in the European Union and free market reforms, he was re-elected in Feb. 2008, again defeating Nikolić but only by a slim margin. He resigned in April 2012 in order to stand in the presidential election a month later but was defeated by Nikolić in a run-off.

Early Life

Boris Tadić was born in Sarajevo on 15 Jan. 1958, the son of the philosopher and dissident, Ljubomir Tadić. He attended school in Belgrade and graduated in psychology from the University of Belgrade. During his student years Tadić was convicted for anti-communist political activities. After further study and research in psychology at the University, he became a clinical psychologist in the army.

In 1990, amid the collapse of communism, Yugoslavia was in deep economic recession and nationalism was growing among the constituent republics. Tadić joined the centrist Democratic Party (DS), becoming secretary of the general committee and party vice-president. He was a close ally of Zoran Đinđić, who became president of the party in 1993. In the winter of 1996–97 Tadić and Đinđić helped organize the mass street demonstrations against the attempts by Milošević to annul the victory of the Zajedno (Together) bloc in municipal elections across Serbia.

In 2002 Tadić became telecommunications minister in the Democratic Opposition of Serbia ruling coalition of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, led by Đinđić who had become prime minister in Dec. 2000 after Milošević's fall. Tadić was then appointed minister of defence in the newly-declared Serbia and Montenegro in March 2003 (days before Đinđić's assassination).

He took over the presidency of the DS in Feb. 2004 and stood in the first round of the presidential election, winning 27.6% of the vote. In his campaign he stood on a democratic, pro-European and reform-minded platform. He narrowly defeated Nikolić in the second round with 53.7% of the vote and was sworn in on 11 July 2004.

Career Peak

At his inauguration Tadić expressed his hopes of leading the country into the EU, urging the Union to begin negotiations on a stabilization and association agreement (SAA). He pledged to co-operate with the UN war crimes tribunal and said he was committed to the idea of a democratic solution for the province of Kosovo, based on UN Security Council resolution 1244. This resolution of 1999 recognized Kosovo as an autonomous constituent of Yugoslavia (as it then was) while acknowledging its status as a UN protectorate.

Talks on an SAA with the EU finally began in Oct. 2005 but were suspended in May 2006 after the country's repeated failures to hand over Ratko Mladić, the Bosnian Serb commander wanted on genocide charges for the 1995 massacre of 8,000 Muslims in Srebrenica. NATO, however, did admit Serbia to its Partnership for Peace programme in Dec. of that year.

Following Montenegro's declaration of independence on 4 June 2006, the government declared Serbia the legal successor to the union of Serbia and Montenegro. Shortly afterwards Tadić expressed his desire for mutual co-operation and friendship between the two countries.

Tadić's re-election as president in Feb. 2008 was welcomed by the EU, which pledged more support for his bid to join the Union. However, judgment of his second term was likely to rest on a lasting settlement of the status of Kosovo. In Feb. 2008 the province unilaterally declared itself an independent state, but this move was denounced by Serb opinion and was not universally recognized abroad. (The International Court of Justice subsequently ruled in July 2010 that Kosovo's declaration had not been illegal despite Serbia's assertion that its territorial integrity was violated.) Disagreements within the Serbian coalition government over policy towards the EU in the wake of Kosovo's declaration led Tadić in March 2008 to accept calls for fresh parliamentary elections. After a bitter campaign, no party won an outright advantage in the elections in May. Tadić asked Mirko Cvetković, a pro-European independent, to try to form a government and in July his new coalition was approved by parliament and sworn in.

Also in July 2008, the former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić, who had been sought for war crimes for almost 13 years, was arrested in Belgrade and transferred to The Hague to stand trial.

In April 2008 the EU eventually signed an SAA with Serbia as a first step towards eventual membership, but implementation was hindered by a Dutch veto because of the continuing failure to arrest Mladić. In Dec. 2009 this veto was lifted (although the lack of further progress in detaining war criminals remained contentious), at which time Serbia submitted a formal application to join the Union. In Oct. 2010 EU foreign ministers agreed to progress the application to the European Commission.

Serbia's economy contracted sharply in the first half of 2009 in the wake of the global financial crisis. In response, the International Monetary Fund approved a stand-by arrangement in May worth almost €3 bn. (covering more than 2 years), and in Oct. 2009 Russia granted a €1 bn. loan to help cover Serbia's budget deficit.

In March 2010 Serbia's parliament passed a resolution formally apologizing for the 1995 Srebrenica massacre. Then, in July, the Croatian president visited Belgrade, heralding an improvement in bilateral relations that was further encouraged by Tadić's visit in Nov. to the Croatian city of Vukovar, the site of wartime civilian killings by Serb forces.

Significant developments in 2011 included the eventual arrest of Mladić in May and of Goran Hadžić, a Croatian war crimes suspect, in July. On 1 March 2012 Serbia was granted formal EU candidate status. To secure approval, Serbia made several concessions in the preceding months towards Kosovo, which had declared independence from Serbia in 2008. However, Belgrade refused to acknowledge Kosovo as a sovereign state and ongoing conflict over Kosovo's status is expected to prove an obstacle to Serbia's full accession to the EU.

Tadić resigned the presidency on 5 April 2012 to stand for a third term in office at elections brought forward to 6 May to coincide with parliamentary elections. The constitution allows for only two consecutive presidential terms. Tadić led after the first round of voting but came second in the run-off with Tomislav Nikolić on 20 May 2012.

Taki Abdoukarim, Mohamed (Comoros)

Introduction

Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim was elected president of the Comoros in 1996.

Early Life

Born in 1936, Taki was educated in Madagascar and France. With his engineering qualification, he was made minister of public utilities under the renowned pre-independence leader Said Mohamed Cheikh. In 1970 he became minister of development.

Taki was arrested in April 1977 in connection with the coup against Soilih but was released in May 1978. Under Ahmed Abdallah Abdereman, he was secretary general with responsibility for pushing through one-party legislation. In 1984, he broke with Abdallah and fled to France.

After the assassination of Abdallah in 1989, Taki returned to the Comoros to run in the presidential elections of Feb./March 1990. As leader of the Union Nationale pour la Démocratie aux Comores (UNDC/National Union for Democracy in Comoros), Taki obtained 44.7% of votes but was defeated by Saïd Mohamed Dhojar. In Nov. 1991, Taki agreed to form a government with Djojar. In Jan. 1992 the new transitional government was formed under the leadership of Taki but 6 months later he was dismissed and returned to France.

Career Peak

In the March 1996 presidential elections, Taki won 64% of the vote after several ballots. In April 1996 he dissolved the national assembly and appointed a new governor for each island, all from the UNDC. In June 1996, Taki received the backing of French President Chirac to develop Comoran education and public finance, as well as the judicial and health systems.

Taki pushed for a new constitution to extend the jurisdiction of the presidency, to introduce a new national flag to reinforce Islam and to reintroduce Islamic Sharia's Law (including public executions). It was approved by a constitutional committee in Oct. 1996, though boycotted by some opposition parties.

Legislative elections of late 1996 were tainted by allegations of fraud. The RND (Rassemblement National pour le Développement/National Union for Development, including UNDC and other pro-government parties) won a majority of seats.

Secessionist movements gathered strength on the islands of Nzwani and Mwali, while opposition to Taki's attempts to centralize power mounted. Both islands declared their independence in Aug. 1997 and appointed their own administrations. Taki ordered the invasion of Nzwani in Sept. 1997 but after battles in which more than 100 people were killed, the rebel government remained in place. Subsequent attempts at reconciliation, guided by the Organisation of Africa Unity, failed. With the question of the islands'

sovereignty still unresolved, Taki died on 6 Nov. 1998, reportedly from a heart attack. He was succeeded by Tadjidine Ben Said Massounde.

Talabani, Jalal (Iraq)

Introduction

Jalal Talabani, an experienced Iraqi Kurdish politician, was named state president of Iraq on 6 April 2005 by the Iraqi National Assembly. He was elected by parliament to a second term in April 2006 and re-elected in Nov. 2010. He was previously the founder and secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and later a prominent member of the Iraqi Governing Council which was established following the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Early Life

Jalal Talabani was born in Kelkan, Irbil province in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1933. He attended the Law College in Baghdad from 1952–55 before being forced to leave because of his political activities as a young member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Following the Iraqi revolution in 1958 and the overthrow of the monarchy, Talabani rejoined the college, and graduated in 1959. He subsequently served in the Iraqi army before working as a journalist.

When the Kurdish north launched an armed uprising against the Iraqi government in Sept. 1961, Talabani joined the forces led by Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani (the *peshmerga*) and fought in the Kirkuk and As-Sulaymaniyah areas. He also led Kurdish diplomatic delegations to Europe and the Middle East and negotiated with the secular Ba'ath party, whose members dominated Iraq's governing council following a coup led by Abdul Salam Aref in Feb. 1963.

By 1964, when profound disagreements were emerging within the KDP, Talabani established a more secular, urban and left-leaning faction, criticizing al-Barzani for 'conservative and tribal' politics. Factional divisions throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s occasionally erupted into armed confrontations. Although deals that secured some autonomy for the Kurds were struck between the KDP and the ruling Ba'ath party, arguments broke out over access to the region's oil supplies and whether Kurds could maintain an army. When the Kurdish revolt collapsed in 1975 (partly as a result of Iran withdrawing its support), Talabani formed a new party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

The PUK opposed the Ba'ath party's enforced resettlement of Kurds to Arab areas of Iraq in the late 1970s, and there were also numerous armed confrontations with the KDP. In the aftermath of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons attack that killed around 5,000 Kurds at Halabja in 1988 and the subsequent military action that led to more than 100,000 Kurds fleeing to Turkey, Talabani made efforts to bring unity to Kurdish politics. He improved relations between the PUK and the KDP (then led by Mas'ud al-Barzani) and later formed the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, seeking international support for Kurdish autonomy.

Following elections in the haven created for Kurds by the Western alliance after the first Gulf War, a PUK-KDP joint administration was formed in 1992. However, tensions resurfaced and led to serious confrontations between the two groups in 1994. Both parties signed a peace deal in Washington, D.C. in 1998 and the accord was cemented in Oct. 2002 when the regional parliament reconvened in a session attended by both parties' MPs.

Following the US-led invasion of Iraq and the fall of Saddam in April 2003, Talabani joined the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), distancing himself from the movement for Kurdish independence and pledging to support Iraqi federalism. In the Iraqi elections on 30 Jan. 2005, a Shia alliance won a slim majority in parliament and the Kurdish coalition came second in the polls. For over 2 months, with the country under sustained attacks from insurgents, both groups argued about the formation of the new government before electing Talabani as the president (a largely ceremonial role) on 6 April 2005.

Career Peak

A presidential council of Talabani and two vice-presidents appointed Ibrahim al-Jaafari, a conservative from the majority Shia community, as prime

minister on 7 April 2005. Talabani promised as president to represent all the country's ethnic and religious groups and to reach out to Iraq's Arab and Islamic neighbours.

Against a backdrop of continuing violence in Iraq, many analysts questioned the strength of the Shia-Kurdish alliance, given that the two groups had little previous common ground beyond resistance against Saddam Hussein. In Oct. 2005 a new Iraqi constitution was approved narrowly in a national referendum, heralding fresh parliamentary elections on 15 Dec. 2005. After months of political deadlock, Iraq's parliament convened on 22 April 2006 to fill the top leadership posts and Talabani was elected by parliament to a second presidential term. On the same day he appointed the Shia politician Nouri al-Maliki as prime minister designate after the latter was nominated by his Shia coalition, the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA).

Following the restoration of Iraqi-Syrian diplomatic ties in Nov. 2006, Talabani became the first Iraqi head of state to visit Damascus for 30 years in Jan. 2007.

In Nov. 2010 Talabani was again re-elected as president by the National Assembly on the second ballot. He then tasked Prime Minister al-Maliki with forming a new coalition government and bringing to an end the political stalemate prevailing since inconclusive parliamentary elections the previous March.

In Dec. 2012 Talabani underwent medical treatment and rehabilitation in Germany after suffering a stroke. He returned to Iraq in July 2014, but did not contest the indirect presidential election that took place that month. With large swathes of Iraqi territory under control of the jihadist group the Islamic State and the country in a state of political crisis, Talabani's term as president ended on 24 July 2014 when he was replaced by Fuad Masum. He died in Berlin of a brain hemorrhage on 3 Oct. 2017 aged 83.

Tantawi, Mohamed Hussein (Egypt)

Introduction

Mohamed Hussein Tantawi became the de facto leader of Egypt on 11 Feb. 2011 after Hosni Mubarak resigned as president following mass demonstrations calling for him to step down. He served as Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces until a new president was elected and took office in June 2012.

Early Life

Mohamed Hussein Tantawi Soliman was born on 31 Oct. 1935 to a Nubian family. He joined the army as an infantryman and received his officer's commission in 1956 after completing a master's degree in military science at the High War College at Nasser High Military Academy.

Tantawi served in the Sinai War of 1956, the 6-Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Rising through the ranks, he was assigned as a military attaché to Pakistan and Afghanistan. In 1991, following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Tantawi served as head of the Armed Forces Operation Room, a part of the Gulf War coalition forces. For his service, he received Kuwait Liberation medals from Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In 1991 he was appointed minister of defence and military production, and in 1993 was made field marshal. Two years later he became commander-in-chief of the Egyptian armed forces. Known as a traditionalist, Tantawi was a Mubarak supporter.

On 31 Jan. 2011, following Mubarak's sacking of the entire cabinet in the face of popular protests, Tantawi was named deputy prime minister while retaining the defence and military production portfolios. On 11 Feb. 2011 Mubarak resigned as president and handed authority over to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, headed by Tantawi. Although seen as part of the old regime, Tantawi was largely untarnished by the human rights abuses committed by the intelligence and police agencies. The military council was to govern the country alongside the supreme constitutional court until the election of a new parliament and president.

Career Peak

Following a referendum on 19 March 2011 that saw a 77% vote in favour of amendments to the 1971 constitution, Tantawi was mandated to oversee the

preparation and conduct of fresh parliamentary and presidential elections. Ahead of the elections, his aim was to reassure Egypt's allies that it remained committed to pre-existing alliances and treaties, notably with the USA and Israel. As the year progressed, however, Tantawi and the military faced growing discontent among pro-democracy activists demanding the immediate transfer of political power to a civilian administration. Despite renewed violent clashes in Cairo and other cities between demonstrators and security forces, the military council pressed ahead with its schedule for national parliamentary elections in stages from Nov. 2011 to Jan. 2012.

Moderate Islamists aligned to the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party emerged as the strongest political force in the elections and were predominant in the new parliament that held its inaugural session on 23 Jan. Tantawi and the military council relinquished power following the election of Mohamed Morsi as new state president in June 2012.

Taylor, Charles (Liberia)

Introduction

Charles Taylor became president after an election landslide in 1997. Having founded the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) while in exile, he overthrew the government of Samuel Doe in 1990. There followed a long and bloody civil war; fighting between government and rebel forces dominated Taylor's presidency. Having been indicted for war crimes in Sierra Leone, Taylor eventually agreed to relinquish power to a transitional government and an ECOWAS peacekeeping force on 11 Aug. 2003.

Early Life

Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor was born on 28 Jan. 1948 in Arthington, Liberia to a Liberian mother and American father. He travelled to the US in 1972 and graduated in economics from Bentley College in Watham, Massachusetts in 1977. During this period he became active in the Union of Liberian Associations and went on to serve as the national president.

Liberian President William Tolbert met Taylor during a visit to the US in 1979 when Taylor co-ordinated protests against the president. Tolbert nonetheless invited Taylor to talks in Liberia the following year. Taylor arrived in early 1980 and in April Tolbert was killed during an army coup led by Samuel K. Doe. Doe appointed himself president and adopted emergency powers. The presidency had traditionally gone to members of Liberia's ruling Americo-Liberian class, descended from black slaves who settled in Liberia from the US in the nineteenth century. Doe was the country's first president from indigenous stock. Many Americo-Liberians fled but, despite his own Americo-Liberian background, Taylor became a prominent figure in Doe's administration, heading the state purchasing agency.

In 1983 Taylor fled to the US, having been accused of embezzling government funds. Twelve months later he was arrested by the US authorities and imprisoned pending extradition. However, in March 1985 he escaped and left the country. Taylor found refuge in Libya, where he formed the NPFL. With a force estimated at less than 500 Taylor launched an invasion into Liberia from neighbouring Sierra Leone on 24 Dec. 1989. Having secured the support of large sections of the rural population, NPFL troops made incursions into the capital, Monrovia, in July 1990 and Doe was executed. However, the NPFL began to fragment, with General Prince Johnson leading a breakaway faction.

A long civil war ensued, characterized by atrocities on both sides against civilians. 200,000 people died and over 1 m. others were displaced in the fighting which spilled over the border into Sierra Leone. ECOWAS troops were brought in to establish a peace while former US President Jimmy Carter brokered a ceasefire and worked towards a long-term settlement, establishing a six-man ruling council in a bid to return Liberia to democracy.

National elections were scheduled for 1997. Armed with significant financial reserves as well as control of the state radio, Taylor was accused by opponents of bribing the electorate in the build-up to the election. Nonetheless, international observers declared the elections free and Taylor became president with 75.3% of the vote.

Career Peak

Taylor had to contend with a collapsed infrastructure and an economy ravaged by years of war. In addition, thousands of disaffected war veterans, unemployed and without access to essential health care, were becoming an increasingly important political voice. In the early weeks of his tenure Taylor won international support by establishing a national reconciliation policy and by offering senior government positions to non-NPFL members.

However, unresolved domestic and regional conflicts soon re-emerged. In Jan. 1999 Nigeria and Ghana accused Taylor of providing backing to rebels in Sierra Leone. In April rebel forces from Guinea made incursions into the country. Guerrilla fighting with rebels in Liberia's north escalated while at the same time the UK and USA threatened to cut aid unless Taylor withdrew support for Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front. In late 2000 Taylor accused Guinea of launching attacks on Liberian villages in the border region and supporting Liberian rebel groups.

In May 2001 the UN imposed an arms embargo in response to Liberia's weapons for diamonds trade with rebels in Sierra Leone. Diamond exports were forbidden and movement of senior government figures restricted. The government launched renewed attacks on rebels in the north and in Feb. 2002 Taylor declared a state of emergency. In Sept. 2002 the state of emergency was lifted and Taylor permitted political gatherings. Several leading opposition factions undertook talks with the aim of forming a united alliance to fight Taylor at elections scheduled for 2003.

By March 2003 the situation had rapidly deteriorated and the army was involved in fighting with rebels within 10 miles of Monrovia and at locations throughout the country. Taylor told the UN that as a result he had been forced to contravene its embargo by recommencing weapons imports. As well as large numbers of fatalities, the renewed fighting created tens of thousands more refugees.

In April 2003 Taylor and Côte d'Ivoire's President Laurent Gbagbo agreed to greater co-ordination of military patrols on their shared border in a bid to counter rebel incursions. The two governments had previously accused one another of providing backing to rebel movements.

In June 2003 Taylor was indicted for war crimes because of his alleged support for Sierra Leone's rebel movement. Later in the same month Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (Lurd), Liberia's largest rebel group, attempted a coup against Taylor. Several days of fierce fighting in Monrovia, the capital, left 300 civilians dead, 1,000 injured and 250,000 displaced before a ceasefire was called. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for an international peacekeeping force while US President George W. Bush urged Taylor to relinquish power. In July 2003 Taylor accepted an offer of asylum from Nigeria but insisted he would not leave the country until he could guarantee an orderly handover of power.

In Aug. 2003 the UN adopted a resolution drafted by the US calling for the immediate deployment of an ECOWAS peacekeeping force, to be replaced by a full UN force on 1 Oct. The first of 1,500 Nigerian troops began arriving on 4 Aug. 2003, with 2,000 troops from other ECOWAS states to follow. Taylor relinquished office on 11 Aug. 2003. He left Liberia for exile in Nigeria.

Later Life

In April 2012 Taylor was found guilty of aiding and abetting rebels in Sierra Leone during the 1991–2002 civil war and was convicted on 11 charges of 11 war crimes and crimes against humanity. Taylor was sentenced to 50 years in jail by a UN-backed war crimes court the following month.

Telavi, Willy (Tuvalu)

Introduction

Tuvalu's long-standing police commissioner, Willy Telavi, was first elected to parliament in 2006 and served as minister for home affairs. He was elected prime minister in Dec. 2010 following a vote of no confidence in the previous incumbent, Maatia Toafa.

Early Life

Willy Telavi was born on Nanumea, the north-westernmost of Tuvalu's nine islands. He completed a diploma in legal studies at the University of the South Pacific in 1999 and received a master's degree in international management from the University of the Northern Territory (now Charles Darwin University), Australia, in 2000.

Between 1993 and 2009 he served as Tuvalu's police commissioner and in 2006 he was elected to the 15-member parliament as one of two representatives of Nanumea. He was appointed minister of home affairs in the government of Apisai Telemia, a position he retained following the general election of Sept. 2010 when Maatia Toafa became prime minister.

Toafa's premiership soon came under pressure amid widespread concerns that the government could no longer cover the full costs of medical treatment for patients needing to go abroad. When a motion of no confidence in Toafa was tabled in Dec. 2010 Telavi, along with two other MPs, withdrew his support from the prime minister and joined the opposition, enabling the motion to be carried and parliament to be dissolved. Willy Telavi was elected premier on 24 Dec. 2010.

Career Peak

Telavi's administration came under pressure in early Jan. 2011 when protesters from the island of Nukufetau peacefully demanded the resignation of Lotoala Metia, the finance and economic development minister, after he allegedly snubbed a meeting with island elders. On 13 Jan., following a protest on the main island of Funafuti that was supported by five members of the opposition and appeared to be linked to a campaign for another change in government, Telavi declared a state of emergency—the first in the nation's history—and imposed a 14-day ban on public gatherings. Metia was placed under police guard and the country's naval patrol boat was deployed to guard the coastline near Telavi's home and those of other government ministers.

In Aug. 2012 Telavi agreed to stop letting ships owned by Iran operate under its national flag, having been accused by the USA of breaking international sanctions on Iranian oil trading.

In June 2013 the government lost its parliamentary majority in a by-election. Despite Telavi's attempts to stay in power by avoiding a no-confidence vote, the Governor-General removed him from office on 1 Aug. Enele Sopoaga succeeded Telavi as caretaker leader the same day and was sworn in as prime minister on 5 Aug. following a parliamentary ballot.

Ter-Petrosyan, Levon (Armenia)

Introduction

Armenia's first democratically-elected president, Levon Ter-Petrosyan resigned after 6 years in power when conflict over the issue of disputed territory in Nagorno-Karabakh reached crisis point.

Early Life

Ter-Petrosyan was born in 1945 in Syria, where his father was involved in establishing the Syrian and Lebanese Communist parties. Ter-Petrosyan learned several languages, including Russian, Arabic and French, before completing a degree in history at Yerevan State University in Armenia. He later received a doctorate in Oriental Studies in Leningrad (now St Petersburg). Serving in the Soviet Red Army, Ter-Petrosyan reached the rank of lieutenant.

In 1988 he was arrested for involvement with the Karabakh Committee, an informal organisation aimed at the unification of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, a disputed territory located between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Later the Committee became the Armenian Nationalist Movement and Ter-Petrosyan its leader.

In 1990 he was elected chairman of the Armenian Supreme Soviet and in 1991 became president.

Career Peak

In spite of early moves towards a more democratic system, Ter-Petrosyan caused controversy by placing restrictions on the press and, in Dec. 1994, by banning the Armenian Revolutionary Federation on the grounds that it harboured a clandestine terrorist group and that its structure contradicted Armenian law. The elections of 1996 were blighted by the military suppression of popular demonstrations following allegations of ballot-rigging and voting irregularities.

From Armenia's declaration of independence in 1991, Ter-Petrosyan's time in power was dogged by increasingly violent conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, a region with an ethnic Armenian majority. The Azeri army occupied large areas of the region in 1992 but fierce fighting led up to a 1994 ceasefire between Azerbaijan and the forces of the self-proclaimed Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (RNK). A peace process began, brokered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and in 1997 President Levon Ter-Petrosyan appointed Robert Kocharyan, the former president of the RNK, prime minister despite Kocharyan only having recently obtained citizenship. With the country split on an appropriate course of action regarding Nagorno-Karabakh, Ter-Petrosyan resigned in Feb. 1998 and was succeeded by Robert Kocharyan.

Later Life

Ter-Petrosyan rarely appeared in public following his resignation, but returned to politics in 2008 when he contested that year's presidential election, finishing second. He founded the Armenian National Congress coalition later that year which he led through the 2012 parliamentary elections.

Than Shwe (Myanmar)

Introduction

Than Shwe became head of state and government in 1992. Political oppression under his military regime attracted international condemnation while the economy was blighted by corruption and bad management. Than Shwe did not stand for president following parliamentary elections in Nov. 2010.

Early Life

Than Shwe was born on 2 Feb. 1933 in Kyaukse. After working initially as a postman he had a decorated army career before succeeding Saw Maung in 1992 as chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), prime minister and minister of defence.

Career Peak

Than Shwe's political legitimacy was challenged by Aung San Suu Kyi, who had led the National League for Democracy (NLD) to victory in free elections of 1990. The military refused to recognize the result and instead continued to oppress the NLD, including imposing repeated terms of house arrest on Aung San Suu Kyi. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. In 1997 the SLORC reconstituted itself as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

In foreign policy, the oppressive nature of Than Shwe's dictatorship saw Myanmar increasingly isolated, although the country was accepted into ASEAN in 1997 and closer relations with Bangladesh were fostered from 2002. Also in 2002 the international community expressed concern at Than Shwe's deal with Russia to develop nuclear facilities. The USA, EU, China and IAEA all raised doubts over Myanmar's ability to ensure the safety of such enterprises, while the NLD suggested that it could lead to the development of nuclear arms.

The renewed detention of Aung San Suu Kyi in May 2003 provoked further hostility from the international community and unprecedented public criticism from ASEAN. Fresh sanctions were imposed by the USA and the EU.

From May–July 2004 a national convention was reconvened for the first time since 1996 to draw up a new constitution. It met again intermittently between Feb. 2005 and Jan. 2006, with a further session beginning in Oct. 2006. However, without the participation of the main opposition and ethnic

minority groups, independent observers questioned the validity of the process. UN concern about the junta's policies prompted the preparation of a critical Security Council resolution but this was vetoed by China and Russia in Jan. 2007.

In Sept. 2007 the government declared that constitutional talks were complete and closed the national convention. Buddhist monks then led a series of pro-democracy demonstrations in Yangon and other cities that provoked a violent response from the authorities and mass detentions. The UN Security Council condemned the military crackdown and the EU adopted tighter sanctions. In April 2008 the government published the proposed new constitution, which reserved 25% of parliamentary seats for the military and banned Aung San Suu Kyi from holding office. In a subsequent national referendum in May, the government claimed that 93% of voters endorsed the constitution.

The referendum took place amid a humanitarian crisis, following a cyclone that hit the south of the country. By the end of May 2008 about 145,000 people were thought to have died, with thousands more made homeless. The effects of the disaster were exacerbated by restrictions imposed on international relief efforts by Than Shwe's regime, which played down the scale of the devastation.

In Aug. 2009 tougher sanctions were imposed on Myanmar by the international community after Aung San Suu Kyi's detention was extended. In Oct., however, she met with a minister from the military government in the first such contact for 2 years and was also allowed to meet Western diplomats.

In March 2010 the government announced new party registration laws in preparation for national and state elections. However, the NLD considered them too restrictive. The elections took place in Nov., resulting in an overwhelming victory for the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party, although opposition groups claimed widespread fraud and international observers condemned the poll. A week later, Aung San Suu Kyi was once more released from house arrest, having been prevented from taking any part in the electoral process.

In Feb. 2011 the new parliament named Thein Sein, previously the prime minister, as the new state president. In March 2011 the SPDC was dissolved and a month later he retired from the military. Although it was believed that Than Shwe would continue to pull strings after his proclaimed retirement he seems to have completely retired from politics.

Thapa, Surya Bahadur (Nepal)

Introduction

Veteran politician Surya Bahadur Thapa was prime minister of Nepal five times: 1963–64, 1965–69, 1979–83, 1997–98 and June 2003–June 2004. He took up the role for the fifth time following the forced departure of King Gyanendra's leader of choice, Lokendra Bahadur Chand, in June 2003. Thapa stepped in amidst widespread unrest, as demonstrators accused the king of unconstitutionally dismissing the government and appointing Chand. Despite promising elections, Thapa failed to appease the opposition, who demanded the recall of parliament, and was abandoned by his own party.

Early Life

Born on the 21 March 1928, Surya Bahadur Thapa became involved in politics while at Allahabad University. Starting his career in 1958 as chairman of the advisory council, he became minister of agriculture, forest and industry in 1960 before his first appointment as prime minister in 1963. Filling this post three times under the executive monarchy that held power for 30 years, Thapa was also elected prime minister at the head of a coalition in 1997, following the return of democratic elections in 1990.

Thapa's 2003 appointment came at a time of political tension. King Gyanendra succeeded his brother Birendra in 2001, following the massacre of Birendra and several other members of the royal family by Crown Prince Dipendra. Gyanendra dismissed his coalition government in Oct. 2002 to replace it with one headed by Lokendra Bhadur Chand. Chand was forced to resign following popular outcry. Gyanendra held talks with the leaders of a number of parties who had been critical of the Chand appointment but overruled their recommendation to appoint Thapa. Critics claimed Thapa's

appointment would further delay elections and thus bolster the power of left-wing parties eager for the dissolution of the monarchy.

Career Peak

Thapa, like his predecessor Chand, was a member of the conservative Rashtriya Prahanta Party (RPP) and advocated a broad-based alliance between the palace and parliamentary parties. His primary concern was to return stability to the political system and oversee peace talks between the government and Maoist rebels, whose campaign of violence began in the mid-1990s.

Following his appointment as prime minister, Thapa stated his intention to form an all-party government but appointed a cabinet made up entirely of RPP members. He retained several key portfolios himself including home, defence, and foreign affairs. Months of demonstrations were organized by an implacable opposition, which demanded that parliament be recalled. Thapa's failure to do this or to create a broad-based coalition led to the RPP central committee demanding his resignation in Nov. 2003. Thanks to royal support, Thapa remained in office but by early 2004 his position had become untenable. He resigned on 2 June 2004 and was replaced with Sher Bahadur Deuba, who had led the 2002 coalition government.

Later Life

Thapa died from respiratory failure on 15 April 2015 at the age of 87.

Thatcher, Margaret (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

Margaret Hilda Thatcher (*née* Roberts) was the Conservative British Prime Minister from 1979 until 1990. Britain's first female Prime Minister and the longest serving of the twentieth century, her political philosophy and personalized style of leadership came to be known as Thatcherism.

Early Life

Thatcher was born on 13 Oct. 1925 in Grantham, Lincolnshire in the east Midlands of England. Her father was a grocer and influential figure in local politics, holding the office of Mayor of Grantham. Margaret left local grammar school to study Chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford. She became President of the University Conservative Association and worked as a research chemist from 1947–51. In 1950 and 1951 she failed in attempts to enter the House of Commons, was then called to the Bar in 1953 and worked as a barrister specializing in tax law until 1959. Meanwhile, she had married a wealthy business man, Dennis Thatcher, in 1951 and had given birth to twins in 1953.

1959 saw her become Member of Parliament for Finchley in north London. Harold Macmillan appointed her joint parliamentary secretary for the ministry of pensions and national insurance in 1961, a post she held until Labour came to power 3 years later. She then became opposition spokesman for education and when Edward Heath's Conservatives returned to government in 1970, she was made secretary of state for education and science, during which time she received the nickname 'Ma Thatcher, Milk Snatcher' after withdrawing the right to free school milk.

Following the Conservatives' loss at the 1974 general election, Thatcher challenged Heath for the party leadership on 4 Feb. 1975. Defeating him and one other opponent by taking 130 of 265 votes, she went into a second ballot a week later against four new opponents, claiming victory with 110 from 228 votes. On 3 May 1979, following the 'winter of discontent' when Britain was paralysed by union-led mass strike action, she won a convincing victory at the general election. Ten years earlier she had stated that 'no woman in my time will be prime minister'. From the outset of her tenure, Thatcher ruled her cabinet and party strictly, modelling herself as 'the Iron Lady' and leading a backlash against the 'wets' the Conservatives' more liberal wing.

Career Peak

Thatcher's political ideology was underpinned by the ideas that the government's role in society should be tightly restricted and that emphasis should be placed on individual responsibility. In economic terms, she believed in monetarist theories, controlling the flow of money and imposing high interest rates as the cure for high inflation. Public spending and taxation were cut and certain market mechanisms were introduced into the public education and health systems. Thatcher also undertook a sweeping programme of privatization, which saw numerous industries removed from public hands, including gas, steel, civil aviation and telecommunications. Trade Union powers were reduced and local government (including the Greater London Council) had their authority cut. Later, the policy of allowing tenants to purchase their council homes was put into place.

On the international stage Thatcher encouraged the close relationship between Britain and the US and had good personal relationships with both Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. She voiced the necessity for Britain to retain its own nuclear deterrent, and with regard to the Irish question she believed that for Britain to relinquish any power in the region would be a threat to British sovereignty. The IRA bombing of the Grand Hotel in Brighton during the Conservative party conference of 1984, which almost killed her and her cabinet, only strengthened her conviction. She also took a firm stance against the Argentinian invasion of the British-held Falkland Islands in 1982, sending over armed forces who reclaimed the islands to much popular acclaim. However, Thatcher's attitude towards the European Union, which always reflected her considerable mistrust of the institution, was highly controversial and would ultimately be instrumental in her downfall.

By the general election of 1983, the Conservative economic policy was yet to reap its rewards. Unemployment was around the 3 m. mark, up from just over 1 m. in 1979, and social unrest had been illustrated by violent inner-city riots, notably during 1981 at Brixton in London and Toxteth in Liverpool. However, faced with Michael Foot's Labour Party in utter disarray, and in the midst of post-Falklands euphoria, she won the election of 1983 with ease. During her second term the City and service industries boomed and the economy flourished from 1985 onwards, although manufacturing industries had been severely depleted and many regions felt few of the benefits evident in London and the southeast. Her conflict with the trade unions came to a head with the year long miners' strike of 1984, from which she eventually emerged victorious. She claimed a third term at the general election of 1987 against Neil Kinnock's Labour, a term during which the European question would dominate.

While the country was in a mid-economic boom at the start of the third term, by 1990 it was about to experience severe recession. In addition, Thatcher had lost her long-time chancellor, Nigel Lawson, in 1989 in a dispute over her reliance on her economic adviser, Sir Alan Walters. She had also taken the highly unpopular decision to replace local rates with a new community charge, commonly known as the poll tax. On 31 March 1990 fierce rioting took place around Trafalgar Square in the heart of London. Thatcher, famed for her quote of 1980 that 'the lady's not for turning' was not prepared to backtrack and her support within the party was further strained. However, it was her open hostility to the European Union that set in train the events leading to her downfall.

Her European-friendly foreign secretary, Geoffrey Howe, resigned his post in Oct. 1990. In his resignation speech, he condemned her autocratic leadership and European stance. His speech led the way for a leadership challenge, which Michael Heseltine duly took up. Though she defeated him in the first ballot of 20 Nov. 1990 by 204 votes to 152, it was not enough to avoid a second ballot. She was persuaded to resign and back John Major, who won the second ballot a week later.

Later Life

Thatcher became Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven in 1992, taking her seat in the House of Lords, and she remained a considerable background presence throughout John Major's period in office. After her resignation she established the Thatcher Foundation, which aims to promote her political ideology, and wrote two volumes of memoirs. Her strong-willed style of leadership was summed up by her own assertion that 'I'm extraordinarily patient provided I get my own way in the end.' She had a number of small strokes in 2002 and subsequently suffered from dementia. She died on 8 April 2013 at the age of 87 following a stroke.

Thinley, Jigme (Bhutan)

Introduction

Jigme Thinley, a civil servant and former government minister, became Bhutan's first ever democratically elected prime minister on 24 March 2008.

Early Life

Jigme Yoser Thinley was born in 1952 in Bumthang, northern Bhutan and educated at Dr. Graham's Homes in Kalimpong, northeastern India. He graduated from St Stephen's College at the University of Delhi and subsequently earned a master's degree in public administration from Penn State University in the USA. He later studied manpower planning and management at Manchester University in the UK.

Having joined Bhutan's civil service in 1974 as a trainee officer in the ministry of home affairs, Thinley went on to hold a range of posts including, in 1990, administrator of Bhutan's six eastern districts. He became a secretary in the ministry of home affairs in 1992 and was promoted to deputy minister in 1994. In the same year he was appointed as Bhutan's permanent representative to the UN and other international organizations.

Career Peak

From July 1998 to July 1999 and again from Aug. 2003 to Aug. 2004, Thinley was the royal appointee as prime minister. He also served as minister of foreign affairs between 1998 and 2003. In March 2008, in the run-up to Bhutan's first multi-party elections, Thinley stood as leader of the new DPT. The party won 45 of the 47 seats in the National Assembly, making Thinley the country's first democratically elected premier. He took office on 9 April 2008, promising to make democracy a success and to provide a transparent and corruption-free government.

The DPT lost the parliamentary election in 2013 to the People's Democratic Party and Tshering Tobgay succeeded Thinley as prime minister on 27 July. Subsequently, Thinley also resigned from the parliament.

Thomas, Tillman (Grenada)

Introduction

Tillman Thomas was appointed prime minister on 9 July 2008, ending 13 years of rule by Keith Mitchell and his New National Party. As leader of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Thomas gained advantage from the reaction against Mitchell's increasingly autocratic rule. A veteran legislator and one-time political prisoner, Thomas promised to fashion a more open and inclusive government.

Early Life

Thomas was born in 1945 in Hermitage in St Patrick, Grenada's northernmost parish. A graduate of the University of West Indies and Trinidad's Hugh Wooding Law School, he began his career as an attorney. He was imprisoned on political grounds in 1981 during the Marxist and Cuba-aligned regime of Maurice Bishop, who had come to power following a coup. Thomas was released in 1983 following a military invasion by US and Caribbean troops.

In 1984 Thomas was elected to the House of Representatives as the New National Party member for St Patrick East. In 1987 he was one of the founding members of the NDC, serving for 6 years as its assistant general secretary. Despite losing his seat at the 1990 general election, Thomas was appointed minister of works, communications and public utilities in 1991. He subsequently served as minister of finance and as minister of tourism, culture, civil aviation and sports.

Following the NDC's failure to gain a single seat in the 1999 general election, Thomas was appointed party leader. The NDC came close to gaining power in 2003, winning seven of the 15 available seats, with Thomas reclaiming St Patrick East. As leader of the opposition, he accused Mitchell

of mismanagement and played upon voter frustration with rising prices and a tourist-based economy struggling to recover from the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

Career Peak

The NDC won a resounding victory at the 2008 general election, taking 11 of the 15 seats. One of Thomas' first actions was to repeal the national reconstruction levy, a tax of 3% on income over EC\$1,000 per month imposed in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. Thomas has also promised free school books for all primary and secondary schools. He vowed to create a more participatory government focusing on improving the economy and lowering the cost of living for Grenada's poorest families.

The NDC suffered a historic defeat and lost all of its seats in the House of Representatives at the general election held in Feb. 2013. Thomas continued as the party leader.

Thompson, David (Barbados)

Introduction

David Thompson, the leader of the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), became prime minister in Jan. 2008 after leading his party to victory in a general election. Claiming 20 out of 30 available seats, the DLP returned to power after 14 years in opposition.

Early Life

David John Howard Thompson was born on 25 Dec. 1961 in London to Barbadian parents. He was educated at Combermere School before graduating in law from the University of the West Indies in 1984. While a student Thompson was active within the Young Democrats, the youth wing of the DLP, serving as its president from 1980–82. Thompson went on to the Hugh Wooding Law School at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad, obtaining his Legal Education Certificate. In 1986 he joined Trident Chambers, the chambers of Errol Barrow, Barbados' first prime minister. Between 1986 and 1988 Thompson was a part-time tutor at the University of the West Indies.

Following Barrow's death in 1987, Thompson won the by-election for Barrow's constituency of St John, which he has represented ever since. He was also selected as general secretary of the DLP, a position he retained until 1994. In 1991 he joined the cabinet of Prime Minister Lloyd Sandiford, in charge of the community development and culture portfolios. He moved to the ministry of finance in 1992 as minister of state. From 1993–94 he was minister of finance and oversaw the implementation of IMF structural reforms, and an overhaul of the sugar industry and offshore sector.

In 1994 Thompson became leader of the DLP after Sandiford lost a motion of no confidence. Thompson saw his party defeated in the general elections of 1994 and 1999 before he resigned as party head in Sept. 2001. He returned to his legal practice where he specialized in corporate, insurance, international business and property law. In Jan. 2006 he took up the DLP leadership again following the defection from the DLP of Clyde Mascoll, a former party leader. Thompson was widely lauded for his efforts to restore public confidence in the party. On 15 Jan. 2008 he was re-elected to his St John constituency with 84% of the vote and led his party to electoral victory.

Career Peak

In addition to the premiership, Thompson took over the portfolios of finance, economic affairs and development (which he later relinquished), labour, civil service and energy. He had campaigned on a platform of improving health care and transport infrastructure while fighting the rising cost of living. Although the collapse of a major Caribbean insurance conglomerate in early 2009 precipitated a financial crisis in Barbados, Thompson survived a consequent parliamentary motion of no confidence in March over his handling of the emergency.

Having suffered bouts of illness since March 2010, Thompson appointed his deputy Freundal Stuart acting prime minister in May while he underwent medical tests. He reassumed his post in Aug. but in Sept. revealed that he had

been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. On 23 Oct. he died from his illness at the age of 48. Stuart succeeded him as prime minister.

Thorn, Gaston (Luxembourg)

Introduction

Leader of the Social Democratic Party, Gaston Thorn became prime minister in Jan. 1974 and headed a Liberal-Socialist coalition until 1979. He succeeded Pierre Warner who had been premier for 15 years.

Early Life

Gaston Egmond Thorn was born in Luxembourg City on 3 Sept. 1928. During the Second World War he was arrested for his resistance activities and spent several months in a concentration camp. He subsequently studied law at universities in France and Switzerland and was admitted to the Bar of Luxembourg. He became president of both the National Union of Students of Luxembourg and the International Student Conference.

Thorn served as deputy mayor of Luxembourg City from 1951 to 1963. In 1959 he was elected to the national legislature and also took a seat in the European parliament, which he held for 10 years. In 1961 he became chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party and 8 years later was appointed foreign minister and foreign trade minister, portfolios he held until 1980.

Career Peak

From 1974 to 1979 Thorn served as prime minister, leading a Liberal-Socialist coalition that ended 75 years of rule by the Christian Social Party. An advocate of European integration, in 1975–76 he also held the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly.

Later Life

After losing the 1979 national election, Thorn served as deputy prime minister in the Christian Social-Democratic coalition of Pierre Warner. He was also given the foreign affairs, foreign trade, economic affairs and justice portfolios. He then served 4 years as head of the Commission of the European Economic Community from 1981. Leaving front-line politics in 1985 to focus on business, he became chairman of Luxembourg's biggest media company and president of the Banque Internationale de Luxembourg. He remained politically active as president of the and the, while also sitting on the (which seeks to foster closer ties between Western Europe, Japan and North America) and the pro-European Committee.

Thorn died on 26 Aug. 2007.

Thorning-Schmidt, Helle (Denmark)

Introduction

Helle Thorning-Schmidt took office on 3 Oct. 2011, heading a Social Democrat-led coalition. She was the country's first female prime minister.

Early Life

Born on 14 Dec. 1966 in Rødovre, Helle Thorning-Schmidt completed her early education at Ishøj Gymnasium, Copenhagen. From 1987–94 she studied political science at the University of Copenhagen. In 1992 she was selected by the ministry of foreign affairs to attend the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, where she obtained a master's degree in European studies, specialising in policy and public administration. While in Belgium she became involved with the Social Democrats there and joined the Danish Social Democrats in 1993.

From 1994–97 Thorning-Schmidt headed the party's secretariat in the European Parliament. She then joined the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions as a consultant before being elected to the European Parliament as a

member of the Party of European Socialists in 1999. She subsequently sat on the employment and social committee and co-founded the Campaign for Parliament Reform (CPR).

In Feb. 2005 Thorning-Schmidt won a seat in the Folketing. On 12 April 2005 she was elected leader of the Social Democrats following Mogens Lykketoft's resignation. At the 2007 general election Thorning-Schmidt campaigned on relaxing immigration regulations, increasing welfare spending and ensuring that 45% of Denmark's energy requirements are met by renewable sources by 2025.

Despite electoral defeat, Thorning-Schmidt kept her post and the Social Democrats remained the largest opposition party. In 2011 she campaigned to raise taxes for high earners, increase public spending and liberalize immigration policies. Her centre-left coalition secured a narrow victory at the general election.

Career Peak

Thorning-Schmidt's primary aim on taking office was to revitalize the economy by creating jobs via education, green energy and infrastructure projects. However, building consensus within her coalition has been a challenge. Attempts to review aspects of the welfare state, including a tax reform package agreed with the centre-right opposition, led to a slump in public support for the Social Democrats in the first year of her premiership. Nevertheless, the party fared better than expected in local elections in Nov. 2013, retaining control of Copenhagen and other larger cities with the highest share of the vote. Denmark's 6-month presidency of the European Union from Jan.–June 2012 was dominated by the debt crisis in the eurozone, of which Denmark is not a member.

Frequent reports of ministerial sleaze or incompetence, as well as ongoing tensions between the coalition partners, prompted Thorning-Schmidt to carry out cabinet reshuffles in Aug. and Dec. 2013 before the Socialist People's Party withdrew from the government in Jan. 2014 in a dispute over planned private investment in a state-owned energy company.

Thorning-Schmidt led her Social Democrats to the largest share of seats at the June 2015 general elections. However, she resigned as prime minister and party leader following the opposition Blue bloc's overall victory and was replaced by her predecessor, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, who returned to power 4 years after his defeat at the previous election.

Later Life

In Jan. 2016 Thorning-Schmidt was appointed as Chief Executive of Save the Children International.

Timofti, Nicolae (Moldova)

Introduction

Nicolae Timofti was sworn in as president on 23 March 2012 after the Constitutional Court confirmed the results of the previous week's parliamentary poll. He secured his appointment with 62 votes in the 101-seat parliament—one vote more than the minimum required—ending nearly 3 years of political deadlock. He left office in Dec. 2016.

Early Life

Nicolae Timofti was born on 22 Dec. 1948 in Ciutulești, north-eastern Moldova. Graduating in law from Moldova State University, Chișinău, in 1972, he completed 2 years national service in the Soviet Army. Having then pursued a legal career, in 2003 he was appointed to the Chișinău court of appeal and 2 years later was posted to the supreme court of justice. In 2011 he became president of the supreme council of magistrates.

In 1996 he joined the court of appeal and later became its president. In 2003 he was appointed to the Chișinău court of appeal and was made a member of the supreme council of magistrates. Two years later he was posted to the supreme court of justice and in 2011 became president of the supreme council of magistrates.

Timofti was nominated for the presidency in early 2012 by the pro-European ruling Alliance for European Integration coalition. On 16 March 2012 he was elected into office by parliament, though the vote was boycotted

by the opposition Communist Party. He was the first permanently-appointed president since the end of Vladimir Voronin's tenure in 2009.

Career Peak

Timofti, considered by many as a neutral figure in Moldovan politics, pledged to fight corruption and support democratic and free-market reforms. Nonetheless, some critics accuse him of failing to overhaul the notoriously corrupt judiciary while holding senior judicial positions.

Timofti has supported Moldova's application for EU membership (progress towards which saw the signature of an Association Agreement in June 2014) and has sought to maintain relations with Russia, despite the latter's hostility to closer Moldovan-EU ties and concerns over Russian territorial designs on the breakaway region of Transnistria.

In March 2013 the prime minister, Vladimir Filat, resigned after his government lost a confidence vote. The foreign minister, Iurie Leancă, was then sworn in as acting prime minister in April 2013 before parliamentary elections in Nov. 2014 returned a majority for pro-EU parties, although the pro-Russian Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova emerged as the largest single group. In Feb. 2015 Timofti designated a new prime minister, Chiril Gaburici of the Liberal Democratic Party. He subsequently resigned in June and was replaced the following month by Valeriu Streleț, also a Liberal Democrat. However, in Oct. parliament dismissed his government in a no-confidence vote and Gheorghe Brega of the Liberal Party briefly took over as acting prime minister before Timofti nominated Ion Sturza, a former premier, in his place in Dec. However, in Jan. 2016 Sturza withdrew his candidacy, as did his successor Ion Paduraru, before Timofti's next nominee, Pavel Filip, and his government were confirmed in office.

Timofti did not contest the presidential election of Nov. 2016—the first direct presidential election for 20 years—and left office on 23 Dec. that year.

Tindemans, Leo (Belgium)

Introduction

Leo Tindemans was involved in Belgian and European politics for nearly 40 years from 1961, serving as Belgium's prime minister, minister of foreign affairs and minister of state as well as holding the presidency of the European People's Party and the co-presidency of the ACP-EC Joint Assembly.

Early Life

Leo Tindemans was born on 16 April 1922 and was educated at the State University of Ghent and the Catholic University of Louvain. He took a master's degree in Business and Consular Sciences, as well as in Politics and Social Sciences.

Tindemans was elected as a CVP member of the Chamber of Deputies in 1961. From 1965–73 he was the secretary general of the European Union of Christian Democrats, and during this time he also held various ministerial positions within the Belgian government—he was to be the minister of community affairs from 1968–71, minister of agriculture and the self-employed from 1972–73 and deputy prime minister (1973–74).

Career Peak

Tindemans was elected prime minister in 1974. He completed one term of office and commenced another before a dispute broke out with members of his coalition on restructuring Belgium into a federal state with separate assemblies for its different language communities. Unable to reach agreement, Tindemans tendered his resignation on 10 Oct. 1979.

Later Life

Tindemans attached great importance to securing international peace, promoting human rights and furthering European integration; his recent career reflects these passions. He was the president of the European People's Party (or EPP, a pan-European alliance of Christian Democrat politicians) from 1976–85, during which time he also served as Belgium's foreign minister. Upon finishing his tenure as a minister in 1989, he became a member of the European Parliament and co-president of the ACP-EC Joint Assembly, a role

he continued in until 1992 when he was named president of the EPP Group. He found time to devote himself to several EU commissions, including ones for foreign affairs, social and defence policy and a subcommission dealing with security and nuclear disarmament. He was also the author credited with the 1997 Report of the International Commission on the Balkans which made recommendations on human rights, the conduct of war and the role that the European Union could play in bringing peace to the troubled region.

Tindemans died on 26 Dec. 2014 aged 92. He was widely regarded as one of Europe's most accomplished and experienced statesmen.

Tito, Josip Broz (Serbia)

Introduction

Josip Broz was leader of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia) from the end of World War II until 1980, becoming President in 1953 and remaining in the post until his death. He pursued domestic policies independent of the Soviet Union and in terms of foreign policy he promoted a policy of active non-alignment, a system in which he strove to avoid traditional East or West alliances. He introduced federalist government to Yugoslavia which he was able to hold together by the force of his personality but which would ultimately lead to the collapse of the Yugoslavian state after his death.

Early Life

Josip Broz was born on 7 May 1892 in Kumrovec, near Zagreb (part of Croatia and then also part of the Austro-Hungarian empire). His father was Croat while his mother was from Slovenia. Broz trained as a locksmith and became involved with the Social Democratic Party of Croatia-Slavonia when he was 18. He served with the Austro-Hungarian army when World War I began but was captured by Russian forces on the Eastern Front in 1915. During spells in military hospitals and prisoner of war camps he was exposed to Bolshevik ideology and went on to fight for the Red Army during the Russian Revolution. He also married a Russian woman during this period.

He returned to Croatia around 1920, finding employment as a metal-worker and was active in the Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP). Throughout the 1920s he acted as a trade union leader and political agitator and in 1928 he was arrested after a number of bombs had been found in his possession. He presented a spirited defence of communism at his trial but he was nonetheless imprisoned, being released in March 1934. His years of incarceration had seen a clampdown on the YCP by Alexander I and his authorities but Milan Gorkić, the party's exiled leader, drafted Broz into the Politburo. It was around this time that Broz took on the underground name of Tito.

Tito went to Moscow in 1935 to work for the Comintern but was back in Yugoslavia by 1937. Stalin purged the YCP shortly afterwards, with Gorkić one of a number of high-profile casualties. Tito was installed as Secretary General, with Muscovite blessing, in 1939 supported by a new hierarchy of political allies. The Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia in 1941 and Tito responded by mobilizing a guerrilla resistance movement, becoming Marshal in 1943.

A rival resistance movement was also in operation, the Serb-based Chetniks headed by Dragoljub Mihailović, who were loyal to the exiled royal government. By Sept. 1943 Tito's army had overpowered them and in Nov. 1943 he announced the creation of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, with himself as head of a provisional government. Western governments gave him recognition, the exiled royal government was forced to co-operate with Tito and following elections of dubious legality in Nov. 1945 the monarchy was abolished and Tito was installed as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of a communist-dominated government.

Career Peak

In the aftermath of the war Tito instigated a number of Stalinist-style purges, carried out by a secret police force headed by his ally Alexander Ranković, and organized numerous show trials of opponents. However, Tito was conscious that his power base, unlike that of the other Eastern Bloc leaders, had not relied on Soviet might to install it and as such he aimed to pursue policies

independent of Moscow. He nationalized industry and initiated a centrally planned economy but, while requiring large contributions from farmers, he did not attempt wholesale agricultural collectivization. By 1948, insisting on an independent line, Tito had come into open conflict with Stalin and, after a failed bid to purge the YCP leadership, Stalin expelled Yugoslavia from the Cominform. In 1953 Tito introduced a new constitution, the provisions of which included his installation as President of Yugoslavia (a post which would be conferred upon him for life by the terms of the 1974 constitution).

Economic and military support was granted to Yugoslavia by the West, who were aware of the potential advantages of establishing closer ties with a disenchanting and independently-minded Eastern Bloc country. By the early 1950s, assisted by Vice President Edvard Kardelj and Minister of Propaganda Milovan Djilas, Tito was developing a form of self-government for workers that relied less on the centralized authorities of the Soviet model of socialism. He also moved much power away from the Yugoslav federal authorities and towards the constituent republics.

Tito's Yugoslavia followed an independent foreign policy that would ultimately develop into the policy of non-alignment. Having grown closer to the West during the late Stalin years, Krushchev's arrival paved the way for a potential reconciliation with the Soviet Union. However, the Hungarian uprising and its subsequent repression in 1956 by Soviet forces brought Tito into conflict with Moscow once again and relations were frequently cool over the coming years. Negotiations began with India and Egypt to establish a network of nations not only neutral but 'actively non-aligned'.

The decentralization of power within Yugoslavia resulted in heightened domestic tension throughout the 1960s and 1970s as old nationalist rivalries surfaced. The most dramatic incarnation of the problem was the Croatian Spring of 1971 when Tito responded to dangerously increasing nationalist sentiments by purging the region's leadership. In 1974 he promulgated a new constitution (one of many during his time in power) which sought to equalize the standing of the 6 republics (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Montenegro) and 2 autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina) by measures such as a rotating presidency to come into force after his death.

By the 1970s Yugoslavia's economy was suffering from the combined effects of external debt, inflation and faltering productivity. The constitutional reforms had also displeased Croatia and Serbia, who felt their power as the largest republics was being whittled away to the benefit of smaller neighbours. Nationalism remained a problem with the result that Tito increased restrictions on freedom of expression, when once the nation's cultural liberalism had set it apart from many other communist states. He died in Ljubljana (then in Yugoslavia and now in Slovenia) on 4 May 1980. Without his strength of leadership the problems of nationalism escalated and Yugoslavia went on to tear itself apart within 12 years of his death.

Toafa, Maatia (Tuvalu)

Introduction

Maatia Toafa became prime minister in 2004, succeeding Saufatu Sopanga. The threat posed by global warming to low-lying Tuvalu was among the most pressing issues he faced. He left office in Aug. 2006 but became prime minister again in Sept. 2010.

Early Life

Toafa was born on 1 May 1954. He was schooled in Kiribati and in 1978 graduated in business studies from the Co-operative Education Centre based at Suva in the Fiji Islands. He later studied at the International Co-operative College at Loughborough in the UK and gained an MBA in 1997 from Suva's University of the South Pacific.

From 1976–96 he worked for the Tuvalu Co-operative Society, eventually holding the post of general manager. In 1997 he became a project officer with the Pacific Islands forum secretariat, based in the Fiji Islands, a post he held for 5 years.

In Aug. 2003 he was named deputy prime minister with responsibility for works, communications and transport. In Aug. 2004 the government of Prime Minister Saufatu Sopanga lost a parliamentary vote of confidence and Toafa was appointed acting prime minister. The appointment was confirmed by

parliamentary vote and he was sworn in on 11 Oct. 2004. As prime minister, he automatically assumed responsibility for the foreign relations portfolio.

Career Peak

Climate change was of ongoing concern for Toafa's administration. At only four metres above sea level at its highest point, his government faced fears that Tuvalu could become the first nation state to be submerged by rising sea levels caused by global warming. In Oct. 2005 Toafa voiced his support for a UN proposal to designate those fleeing environmental catastrophes as refugees. In June 2005 Toafa protested that Australia and New Zealand should not pressurize Tuvalu into ending its support of sustainable whale hunting.

Toafa oversaw an extensive review of the constitution which some commentators believed could eventually lead to a referendum on Queen Elizabeth II's continuing role as head of state.

At elections held in Aug. 2006, Toafa was the only member of his cabinet to retain a parliamentary seat and he was succeeded as prime minister on 14 Aug. by Apisai Ielemia.

In Sept. 2010 he beat Kausea Natano by one vote to regain the premiership. However, on 21 Dec. 2010, after only 3 months in power, Toafa and his government were ousted in a vote of no confidence by eight votes to seven. The motion was reportedly initiated owing to MPs' concerns over the budget and a debt Toafa owed to the government for machinery hire. Willy Telavi, the former home affairs minister who had crossed the floor in the vote of no confidence, was elected prime minister 3 days later.

Toledo, Alejandro (Peru)

Introduction

A former economist for the World Bank, President Alejandro Toledo represented the Possible Peru (Perú Posible) party. Elected in July 2001, Toledo took over from interim president Valentín Paniagua, following the resignation of former president Alberto Fujimori in Nov. 2000 amid corruption allegations. The first elected president of indigenous origin, Toledo pledged to combat widespread poverty, invigorate the economy and eradicate government corruption.

Early Life

Toledo was born on 28 March 1946 in Cabana, a small Andean village. From a large, poor family, he grew up in the coastal town of Chimbote where his parents had moved to find work in the fishing business. The young Toledo worked at odd jobs including shoeshining. While studying in San Pedro, he took to politics while writing for *La Prensa* newspaper. On winning a scholarship, he studied economics at San Francisco University and completed a doctorate in human resources at Stanford University in the USA. He then worked as an economics advisor for international organizations including the UN, the World Bank and the International Labour Organization in Geneva.

On his return to Peru, he became actively involved in politics. Representing Peru Possible, a mix of left and centre politicians, he fought his first presidential campaign in 1995 when he received 4% of the vote. In his second attempt in 2000 he competed against Fujimori, who was running for a third consecutive term. Gaining only 23% of votes, Toledo withdrew from the presidential race accusing the Fujimori camp of vote rigging. Fujimori's third term was short-lived and the autocratic leader resigned a few months later. Having gone into exile in Japan, he was subsequently charged in Peru with treason.

Toledo fought his third election against the former president, Alan García, who represented the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance. During Toledo's electoral campaign he exploited his indigenous roots, aiming to attract those Peruvians who had suffered discrimination by the European elite. Toledo's wife, the Belgian anthropologist Elaine Karp, delivered campaign speeches in Quechua (the main indigenous language). Toledo claimed that during García's 1985–90 rule Peruvians had been subjected to food rationing caused by hyperinflation, corruption, terrorism and army brutality and that human rights had suffered. García fought back accusing Toledo of financing his campaign with laundered money. Videotapes collected by Fujimori's former spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos, imprisoned from 2002 for abuse of power, reveal that corruption, bribery and blackmail were endemic in the previous government.

After the first round of voting in April 2001, Toledo was ahead of García, but without a clear majority. In the run-off García conceded to Toledo. International observers agreed the election had been free and democratic.

Career Peak

Following his inauguration, Toledo attended a religious ceremony in his honour at the ancient Inca citadel Machu Picchu. He pledged to combat the country's endemic poverty by boosting industry and agriculture and kick-starting the flagging economy. He aimed to continue the free-market policies of Fujimori in order to attract foreign investors, and hoped to create 1 m. jobs over 5 years. Owing to Lima's overwhelming economic and political domination, Toledo also promised decentralization. During his presidency, his government achieved sustained growth in the economy, but his efforts to reduce poverty did not make a significant impact and he encountered difficulties in implementing institutional reforms. Corruption and other scandals dampened Toledo's personal popularity, and in Jan. 2005 a former army officer, Ollanta Humala, and his nationalist followers staged a brief but unsuccessful rebellion in the south of the country, calling on Toledo to resign. In May 2005 a commission found the president guilty of electoral fraud, although Congress later voted not to impeach him.

In 2005–06 Toledo's reputation was further damaged through professional and personal scandal. In Aug. 2005 his approval fell to just 7% and in Feb. 2006 his nephew was given a suspended prison sentence after being found guilty of rape. Toledo subsequently decided not to run in the 2006 presidential elections. He was succeeded on 28 July 2006 by former president Alan García.

Later Life

Toledo then returned to the United States and joined the Brookings Institution as a non-resident senior fellow in 2009. In Dec. 2010 he announced his candidacy for the 2011 presidential election, but only won 15.6% of votes cast. In Feb. 2017 a Peruvian court issued an international arrest warrant for Toledo, who was accused of accepting US\$20 m. in bribes from a Brazilian construction firm.

Tomeing, Litokwa (Marshall Islands)

Introduction

Litokwa Tomeing was elected president by a parliamentary vote on 7 Jan. 2008, beating Kessai Note by 18 votes to 15. On 14 Jan. Tomeing and his cabinet of ten ministers were sworn in.

Early Life

Tomeing was born on 14 Oct. 1937 on Wotje Atoll in the Ratak Chain of the Marshall Islands, where he is a traditional chief. In 1999 he was elected as speaker of the *Nitijela*, the lower house of the legislature, where he served for 8 years.

Initially a member of the United Democratic Party, in Nov. 2007 Tomeing defected to the opposition United People's Party–Aelon Kein Ad (UPP/AKA) coalition. The election of Nov. 2007 was won narrowly by the UPP although the poll was widely criticized for chaotic organization. The results were tested in the courts and several recounts held. When parliament met to select the president in Jan. 2008, Tomeing defeated the incumbent Kessai Note.

Career Peak

Tomeing emphasized the need to promote *Mantin Majol* (a system of traditional customs) in everyday life. He pledged to reform the electoral system and in Feb. 2008 set up a commission to investigate the events of Nov. 2007. He also secured a multi-million dollar grant to re-establish the national airline.

Tomeing had claimed to favour closer links with China so it was thought his election may have signalled a departure from the Marshall Islands' pro-Taiwan policy. However, his choice as foreign minister was the since-dismissed Tony deBrum, who had held the same post when the Marshall

Islands first recognized Taiwan in 1998. On 29 Jan. Tomeing reaffirmed diplomatic ties at a meeting with the then Taiwanese Vice President, Annette Lu, during her visit to the Marshall Islands. Tomeing's relationship with the USA, the Islands' biggest aid donor, was expected to come under strain over American use of a long-range missile testing base on Kwajalein Atoll.

In Feb. 2009 cabinet ministers objected to Tomeing's sacking of Tony de Brum (UPP) as foreign minister. Relations within the government were further strained when he replaced other UPP ministers by UDP ones in a reshuffle. At the instigation of his rival former president Kessai Note (UDP), a parliamentary vote of no-confidence was held on 21 Oct. 2009, the third he faced in 1 year. Tomeing lost by 17 votes to 15. He was succeeded by Ruben Zackhras who took the office on a temporary basis until a presidential election was held on 26 Oct. The speaker Jurelang Zedkaia was elected after receiving 17 votes against 15 for Kessai Note.

Topi, Bamir (Albania)

Introduction

Bamir Myrteza Topi was sworn in as president in July 2007 after four rounds of voting, succeeding the Socialist Party's Alfred Moisiu. A former minister of agriculture and chairman of the Democratic Party of Albania (PD) parliamentary group, Topi is no longer formally linked to any political party.

Early Life

Topi was born in April 1957 in Tirana. After graduating in veterinary medicine at the Tirana Agricultural University, he moved to the neighbouring town of Petrela to continue studies in toxicology and pharmacology. In 1984 he took up a position as a researcher at the Institute of Veterinary Studies. From 1987–90 he left the Institute for Italy, where he completed a doctorate in molecular biology. His return to Albania coincided with the first large scale anti-communist protests. Topi became the Veterinary Institute's director, lecturing in toxicology and pharmacology until 1995 when he was conferred a professorship.

Topi entered professional politics in 1996, winning an Assembly seat as a PD candidate before being appointed minister of food and agriculture. In 1997 accusations of fraud and civil unrest briefly forced the PD, led by Sali Berisha, out of power. Topi remained loyal to Berisha and in July 2001 was elected PD candidate for Tirana and appointed to lead the PD caucus in parliament. In Dec. he was appointed party vice president.

In March 2007 Topi was announced as the PD candidate for the presidential election later in the year. While attracting support from the Christian Democrat and Republican parties, he faced fierce opposition from the Socialists. After failing to achieve the required three-fifths majority in three successive polls, the Assembly elected Topi president on 20 July 2007 in the penultimate round of scheduled voting. Topi resigned his party affiliation before being sworn in on 24 July.

Career Peak

Chief among Topi's objectives as president was driving forward Albania's campaign to join the European Union and NATO. In 2006 the government had signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU, and Topi subsequently negotiated a relaxation of the EU's visa conditions for Albania from Jan. 2008. Albania secured an invitation to membership of NATO in April 2008 and became a member in April 2009. In the same month Albania's application to join the EU was submitted. The issue of the independence of predominantly Albanian Kosovo has also taken centre stage, with Topi maintaining a supportive stance for the province's unilateral declaration of separation from Serbia in Feb. 2008.

At the domestic level, with the EU pushing for a tougher line on corruption, Topi was confronted in Oct. 2007 with a corruption scandal when several ministers were arrested on charges of embezzlement.

Topi decided not to stand for a second term and was succeeded as president by Bujar Nishani in July 2012.

Topolánek, Mirek (Czech Republic)

Introduction

Mirek Topolánek succeeded Jiří Paroubek as prime minister in Aug. 2006 following inconclusive elections held in June. After his minority centre-right Civic Democrat (ODS) government failed to win a vote of confidence, Topolánek was forced to negotiate with other parties. His coalition took office in Jan. 2007, comprising three parties holding half of parliament's 200 seats. He and his government were forced to resign after losing a parliamentary vote of confidence in March 2009.

Early Life

Mirek Topolánek was born on 15 May 1956 in Vsetín. He studied engineering at the University of Technology in Brno before undertaking corporate management training at the Management Centre in Čelákovice. He worked as a designer for a mining company, OKD Ostrava, from 1980–87 and then as a design management specialist for Eneroprojekt Prague until 1991. He was a member of the city council of Ostrava-Poruba from 1990–94 and became a senator in the Czech parliament in 1995. He served as deputy chairman of the Senate committee for economy, agriculture and transport, and then as deputy chairman of the Senate from 2002–04.

Topolánek ran for election in 2006 on a platform of reforming public finances and the welfare system and cutting bureaucracy. The election held in June saw the ODS emerge as the biggest party but with insufficient seats to form a workable government. After 2 months of political wrangling, Topolánek took office in Aug. but lost a vote of confidence. He returned in Jan. 2007 as head of a coalition of the ODS, the centrist Christian Democrats and the Green Party.

Career Peak

Topolánek's advocacy of EU reform, especially the deregulation of internal markets and the importance of equality for all member states in a revised EU constitution, took on added weight as the Czech Republic assumed the 6-month presidency of the Union in Jan. 2009.

In July 2008 Topolánek's government signed an agreement allowing the USA to base components of its planned missile defence system in the Czech Republic, despite widespread public opposition. Topolánek has argued that the facility will increase the security of the Republic and Europe as a whole, but his stance has provoked Russian hostility.

On 8 May 2009 Topolánek stood down as prime minister.

Torrijos Espino, Martín Erasto (Panama)

Introduction

Martín Torrijos became president in Sept. 2004, his election campaign having focused heavily on the legacy of his father, the former military dictator Omar Torrijos. Martín Torrijos promised to overhaul the social security system and fight corruption, and in 2006 launched a project to expand the Panama Canal, creating thousands of new jobs. He chose not to stand for re-election in May 2009 and left office on 1 July.

Early Life

Torrijos was born on 18 July 1963 in Panama City, the son of Omar Torrijos, who came to power in a military coup and served as *de facto* president from 1968–81. Omar Torrijos won popularity by negotiating a deal with US President Jimmy Carter in 1977 to transfer control of the Panama Canal to Panama in 1999.

In 1977 Martín Torrijos attended the St John's Military Academy in Wisconsin, USA. During the summer of 1979 he participated in the anti-Somoza movement in Nicaragua. Graduating in economics and political

science from the Texas A&M University in 1988, on returning to Panama he became heavily involved in the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD).

A successful businessman, in 1994 he was appointed deputy minister for justice and the interior in Ernesto Pérez Balladares' cabinet. At the 1999 presidential election Torrijos stood as the PRD candidate, but was defeated by the Arnulfist Party candidate Mireya Moscoso, the wife of Arnulfo Arias who had been deposed by Omar Torrijos in 1968. Moscoso's government was accused of corruption and ineptitude and soon lost public backing.

Meanwhile, Torrijos was acting as economic adviser to numerous international companies while overseeing a restructuring of the PRD. As the PRD candidate at the 2004 elections he pledged to fight corruption and unemployment while improving the social security system, and regularly evoked the memory of his father, popularly regarded as the liberator of the Panama Canal. Martín Torrijos was elected to the presidency with 47.5% of the vote on 2 May 2004 and was sworn in on 1 Sept.

Career Peak

In the weeks before Torrijos took office, Moscoso pardoned four Cuban exiles who had been accused of attempting to assassinate Cuban president Fidel Castro. Havana immediately cut diplomatic ties, as did Venezuela. On taking office Torrijos set about normalizing relations and ties were restored in Nov. 2004.

In May 2005 Torrijos began his social security reforms by announcing plans to raise pension contributions and increase the retirement age. Several weeks of popular protest ensued. He also promised that proposals to modernize the Panama Canal, including a US\$5 bn. canal-widening project, would be put to popular referendum. In a bid to distance himself from the excesses of his father's rule, he promised an investigation into alleged human rights abuses during Omar Torrijos' time in office.

As promised, the referendum on expansion of the Panama Canal took place in Oct. 2006 and was approved by nearly 80% of voters. The US\$5.25 bn. project, expected to be completed by 2014, will widen and deepen the waterway to double shipping capacity. In Dec. 2006 Panama and the USA reached agreement on a free trade deal.

Torrijos handed over power to Ricardo Martinelli of the Alliance for Change on 1 July 2009.

Touré, Amadou Toumani (Mali)

Introduction

In 2002 Amadou Toumani Touré won Mali's election to become the country's second democratically-elected president. He had previously acted as head of state in 1991 when, as an army general, he overthrew military leader Moussa Traoré. He was re-elected in April 2007. Following a coup in March 2012, Touré was ousted from power and went into hiding.

Early Life

Amadou Toumani Touré was born on 4 Nov. 1948 in Mopti. From 1966–69 he studied at Badalabougou Standard Secondary School in Bamako with the intention of becoming a teacher. However, he abandoned teaching in favour of military training and joined the army, enrolling at the Kita-Inter Military College. He then trained in the former USSR and France before joining the parachute corps as a commander in 1984.

Touré led a coup in 1991 against Moussa Traoré after the latter's security forces killed more than a hundred pro-democracy demonstrators. In 1992 Touré handed power back to the newly-elected president Alpha Oumar Konaré, ending 23 years of military dictatorship and earning himself the nickname 'soldier of Democracy'.

Having retired from the army in Sept. 2001, he decided to return to politics as an independent presidential candidate in 2002, beating Soumaïla Cissé in the second round of elections.

Career Peak

Touré took office with the support of 22 minor parties and a number of other groups. He pledged to promote education and youth employment and created a children's foundation. He also pledged to ease poverty and improve the

health system. In Aug. 2005 he launched a food security website, developed in conjunction with the Malian food security commission and designed to monitor and improve the country's food distribution capacity. Touré was returned for a second term in April 2007 and the ruling pro-president Alliance for Democracy and Progress coalition won parliamentary elections in July that year.

In June 2006 his government signed an Algerian-brokered peace agreement with Tuareg rebels seeking greater autonomy for the north of the country. Despite these peace overtures, however, attacks involving suspected Tuareg insurgents continued until early 2009 when the government claimed to have taken control of Tuareg bases and some 700 rebels surrendered their weapons.

Following the resignation of Prime Minister Modibo Sidibé, Touré appointed Cissé Mariam Sidibe Kaïdama his successor in April 2011. In June 2011 Touré announced that he would not stand in the 2012 presidential election. However, in March 2012, a few months before his scheduled departure from office, a military coup forced him into hiding. The coup leader, Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo, proclaimed himself chairman of the National Committee for the Restoration of Democracy and State.

Trajkovski, Boris (Macedonia)

Introduction

A lawyer and former deputy foreign minister, Trajkovski was elected Macedonia's president in 1999. He represented the centre-right nationalist Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE), and sought to steer Macedonia towards EU and NATO membership. His main challenge was resolving the conflict between ethnic Albanian rebel groups and Macedonian forces that threatened to escalate into civil war.

Early Life

Trajkovski was born on 25 June 1956 in Strumica, southeastern Macedonia. After studying law at university in the capital Skopje, he read theology at a Protestant college in the US. He then made a career in commercial law, working until 1997 for a construction company in Skopje. He joined the VMRO-DPMNE in 1992 and in Jan. 1999 was appointed deputy foreign minister in Ljubcho Georgievski's government. At this time, regional tensions escalated with the war in Kosovo. Thousands of Kosovan ethnic Albanian refugees attempted to cross a closed border to find protection in Macedonia. Trajkovski favoured opening the border, despite the threat of exacerbating tensions between the majority ethnic Slav population and the large minority ethnic Albanian population. The refugees were allowed entry, although most left at the end of the crisis (June 1999).

Career Peak

In the presidential election held between 31 Oct. and 5 Dec. 1999 Trajkovski stood as the VMRO-DPMNE candidate. Despite trailing the Social Democrat candidate Tito Petkovski after the first round, Trajkovski's moderate stance on ethnic Albanians gained him 52.9% of votes in the run-off. He succeeded Kiro Gligorov to become the second president of independent Macedonia, with his fellow party member Ljubčo Georgievski as prime minister.

As president he attempted to raise the international profile of Macedonia, calling for more Western support in return for Macedonia's cooperation during the Kosovan crisis. Border tensions continued throughout 2000. In March 2001 there were a series of clashes between government forces and ethnic Albanian separatists near the border between Macedonia and Kosovo. As violence escalated Macedonia found itself on the brink of civil war. In May 2001 the government gave ethnic Albanian rebels a 'final warning' to end their uprising. A number of Macedonian soldiers were killed in clashes with the rebels, and following reverses in the military campaign the commander of the Macedonian army, Jovan Andreovski, resigned in June 2001. As the crisis worsened, a stand-off within the government between the Macedonian and the ethnic Albanian parties was only resolved after mediation between Trajkovski and Javier Solana, the EU's foreign and security policy chief. In Aug. 2001 a peace accord was negotiated giving more constitutional rights to

ethnic Albanians (Albanian was made an official language June 2002) in return for guerrilla disarmament. Despite a cessation of violence, NATO continued its presence in the region. Tensions surfaced once more during parliamentary elections in Sept. 2002 in which Trajkovski's VMRO-DPMNE was defeated. Prime Minister Georgievski stood down and in Nov. 2002 the representative of the 'Together for Macedonia' coalition—and leader of the Social Democratic League of Macedonia—Branko Crvenkovski was made prime minister.

Keen to secure Macedonia's eventual membership of the EU and NATO, in Feb. 2004 Trajkovski signed a formal application for EU membership. A few days later, on 26 Feb. 2004, he was killed in a plane crash in Bosnia-Herzegovina. An international investigation concluded the crash was accidental, caused by pilot error.

Tran Duc Luong (Vietnam)

Introduction

The presidency of Vietnam is the least powerful of the three great offices of state. The Prime Minister and the Secretary General of the Communist Party hold effective power. Tran Duc Luong held this largely ceremonial post from 1997–2006.

Early Life

Tran Duc Luong was born in central coastal region of Vietnam on 5 May 1937. Too young to have taken part in the struggle against the country's French colonial rulers, Luong was nevertheless politically conscious and opted for North Vietnam when the country was divided into a Communist North and a pro-Western South by the Geneva Agreement of 1954.

Luong became a geology technician, and in 1970 he was appointed deputy director of geological map department at the (national) Mining and Geology College. Promoted to become General Director, he was responsible for the 1:200,000 geological map project of Vietnam. In 1981, he was sent to the Soviet Union to study economic management.

Luong joined the Communist Party in 1959 and helped run a number of youth groups. In 1964, he became cell secretary for his geology group and then was active for the party in various roles. Having completed a training course for senior Party officials in 1976, it was only a matter of time before he was selected for election to the (single-party) National Assembly. As a National Assembly member from 1981, Luong held a series of governmental scientific posts, including Deputy Chairman, and, later Chairman, of the National Assembly Science and Technology Commission. In 1987, Luong was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and in 1996 he was elected to the Party Central Committee and to the Politburo.

Career Peak

In Sept. 1997, Luong was elected President. His ability to speak French, English and Russian were considered useful tools in his efforts to represent his country's interests in the world context. On 24 June 2006 he resigned, along with Prime Minister Phan Van Khai and Assembly Speaker Nguyen Van An. The three left, unable to guarantee re-election to the politburo, claiming they were making way for a new generation of politicians in line with party policy.

Traoré, Dioncounda (Mali)

Introduction

Dioncounda Traoré was sworn in as interim president on 8 April 2012, ending a brief period of military rule after the removal of the former president, Amadou Toumani Touré, in a coup on 21 March. As parliamentary speaker, Traoré was next in the constitutional succession after Touré's enforced resignation.

Early Life

Dioncounda Traoré was born in Kati on 23 Feb. 1942, the son of army colonel Sékou Traoré. He read mathematics in Moscow from 1963 to 1965 before continuing his studies at the University of Algiers. He was later awarded a doctorate from the University of Nice. He started work as a teacher at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Bamako in 1977 but was jailed in 1980 for his trade union activities.

A militant trade unionist and pro-democracy activist throughout the 1980s, Traoré was a founding member of the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA), a coalition of opponents to the dictatorship of Moussa Traoré. After Moussa Traoré was overthrown in 1991, ADEMA evolved into ADEMA-PASJ (African Party for Solidarity and Justice), with Dioncounda Traoré elected the party's second vice-president.

After Mali's first democratic elections, Traoré was appointed to the council of ministers by President Alpha Oumar Konaré in June 1992. He variously held the portfolios for public works, defence and foreign affairs before resigning from the council in 1997 to take his place in the National Assembly as the representative for Nara.

In 2000 Ibrahim Boubacar Kéïta resigned as prime minister and leader of ADEMA-PASJ, with Traoré elected to succeed him in the party post. In 2007 Traoré became president of the National Assembly but fled Mali during the 2012 coup. He returned when the junta, led by Capt. Amadou Haya Sanogo, agreed to an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)-brokered handover to an interim administration. The junta nevertheless retained considerable power and influence.

Career Peak

In the period between the military coup and Traoré's installation as interim president, Tuareg and militant Islamist insurgents made significant gains in the country's north, culminating in a declaration of independence in April 2012. While the claim went unrecognized internationally, Traoré entered office under pressure to prevent the spread of insurgency to neighbouring regions. Preparations for military action against the rebel groups in the north, with the aid of ECOWAS forces and with United Nations and African Union backing, proceeded slowly over the following months. However, tensions between the civilian government and junta, which led in Dec. to Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra's forced resignation by the junta and the appointment of Diango Cissoko as premier by Traoré, threatened to undermine plans for intervention and prompted international demands for a restoration of constitutional rule.

Ibrahim Kéïta won the presidential elections held in the summer of 2013 and succeeded Traoré as president in Sept.

Trimble, David (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom)

Introduction

David Trimble, first minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly from 1998 until June 2001 and again from Nov. 2001 until Oct. 2002, was leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) from 1995 to 2005. He was a member of the British parliament from 1990 to 2005. On his election to the party leadership it was believed that Trimble would peddle a Unionist hardline but he soon proved himself a pragmatic negotiator in search of peace. His role in brokering the 1998 Good Friday Agreement earned him a share of the Nobel Peace Prize. However, opposition increased within his own party, notably over IRA arms decommissioning. Trimble resigned as party leader following his party's poor showing at the general election of 2005.

Early Life

Trimble was born on 15 Oct. 1944 in Bangor, County Down. He studied law at Queen's University, Belfast. As a non-practising barrister, he became a law lecturer at Queen's and was known for his strong Unionist tendencies. A prominent member of the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party (VUPP) during the 1970s, he became party deputy leader. In 1977 he joined the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). In 1990 he was elected the UUP MP for Upper Bann.

When James Molyneaux's rule of the party ended in 1995, Trimble stood for the leadership against John Taylor. Trimble was regarded as intransigent by many observers and was noted for his close alliance with the hardline leader of the Ulster Democratic Unionist Party, Ian Paisley, and for his commitment to ensuring the controversial marching rights of the Protestant Orange Order. Upsetting the odds, Trimble was elected UUP leader.

Career Peak

In late 1997 Trimble was present at groundbreaking peace talks that included members of Sinn Féin, the IRA's political arm. Trimble, proving more flexible than widely predicted, was instrumental in concluding the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998. The agreement laid plans for a Northern Ireland Assembly and several cross-border power-sharing institutions. Trimble lost support from large parts of his party and relations with Paisley, who saw the agreement as a sell-out to republicanism, soured. However, the agreement gained widespread support in referenda in both the North and the Republic.

Elections were soon held for the Northern Irish Assembly and the UUP became the biggest party, with Trimble as first minister. The Good Friday Agreement soon came under strain and with it Trimble's authority. On 15 Aug. 1998 the Real IRA, a nationalist paramilitary group, planted a bomb in the town of Omagh, murdering 29 people and injuring several hundred more. In addition, the issue of IRA weapons decommissioning became a major bone of contention. Despite these potential pitfalls, Trimble was awarded the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize in partnership with the nationalist politician John Hume.

The row over IRA decommissioning rumbled on into the summer of 1999 when Trimble and his party refused to sit with Sinn Féin members on the executive. Under the mediating guidance of US Senator George Mitchell, Trimble persuaded his party that the executive could be set up prior to decommissioning. Trimble staked much of his reputation and the goodwill of his party to do this, and when decommissioning was still no closer 3 months later, the UUP pulled out and Peter Mandelson (then the British government's Northern Ireland Minister) suspended the assembly. In March 2000 Trimble survived a challenge to his UUP leadership by the Rev. Martin Smyth, previously leader of the Orange Order. But the party's ruling council put new curbs on Trimble's power to negotiate.

After several months of wrangling, the assembly was reconvened in June 2000, with Trimble back as first minister. A programme of decommissioning was yet to be agreed and tensions increased following the publication in Nov. 2000 of Chris Patten's report into the reform of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Many unionists believed it to be a further diminution of British sovereignty for little visible return. Various dissident terrorist groups, unionist and nationalist, remained active and Trimble's own party was divided and his hold on power delicate.

In May 2001 Trimble announced his intention to resign as first minister at the end of June if the decommissioning issue was still unresolved. When no progress was made he carried out his threat and by so doing also put deputy first minister Seamus Mallon (of the Social Democratic and Labour Party) out of office. Trimble nominated trade minister Sir Reg Empey (UUP) to take over his administrative duties, though he did leave the door open for his return as first minister if the pace of negotiations accelerated. Trimble was re-elected first minister in Nov. 2001.

In Oct. 2002 the Northern Irish Assembly executive and the office of first minister was again suspended following allegations of IRA spying at the Northern Ireland Office. Direct rule from London was re-imposed and shortly afterwards the IRA cut off its links with the weapons de-commissioning body. Trimble criticized the suspension, arguing that exclusion of Sinn Féin members would have secured the Assembly's survival.

Later Life

In May 2003 Tony Blair postponed elections to the Northern Irish Assembly. He defended the move on the grounds that Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams' assurance that the IRA would not do anything to undermine the peace process did not provide a specific guarantee. Trimble pronounced his support for Blair's stance, stating that the 'underlying problem that caused the suspension' remained unresolved.

With the issue of IRA arms decommissioning still unresolved, the UUP made a disastrous showing at the 2005 general election. Trimble lost his seat and the party retained only one Westminster seat, while the Democratic Unionist Party of hardliner Rev. Ian Paisley became the biggest Unionist party with nine seats. Trimble resigned as party leader, to be succeeded by Sir

Reg Empey. At the end of July 2005 the IRA announced the end of its armed campaign and ordered its units to dump its arms.

In June 2006 he was made Baron Trimble of Lisnagarvey and gained a seat in the House of Lords. In April 2007 he announced that he was leaving the UUP to join the Conservative Party.

Trudeau, Pierre (Canada)

Introduction

Pierre Elliot Trudeau was the Liberal Prime Minister of Canada from 1968 until 1979 and from 1980 until 1984. A charismatic and flamboyant man, he believed in a federal Canada which embraced ethnic equality and bilingualism. Trained as a lawyer and specializing in civil and labour relations law, he also introduced a number of important constitutional reforms. His years in office were dogged by fluctuating economic fortunes but he became one of the longest serving Western leaders of the second half of the twentieth century.

Early Life

Trudeau was born on 18 Oct. 1919 in the suburbs of Montreal in Quebec to a mother of Scottish descent and a French Canadian father who had made a fortune through his business activities. Trudeau had a Jesuit education before qualifying in Law from the University of Montreal in 1943 and undertaking further studies at Harvard in the USA, the London School of Economics and the Sorbonne in Paris. He then travelled widely before becoming an advisor to the Privy Council in 1949. A year later he set up *Cité Libre*, a critical magazine, with a group of like-minded intellectuals and in 1951 he began in legal practice.

In 1961 he took a law professorship at the University of Montreal while working at the *Institut de recherches en droit public* (Institute of Public Law Research). He left both posts in 1965 upon entering the House of Commons as the Liberal member for Mount Royal, Quebec, the constituency he would serve until his retirement in 1984. He was made Parliamentary Secretary by Prime Minister Lester Pearson in 1966 and Minister of Justice the following year. In this office he oversaw the implementation of a number of liberalizing reforms, notably concerning gun control, divorce, abortion, homosexuality and public lotteries. Pearson resigned the Liberal leadership in 1968 and Trudeau took his place on 6 April following 4 ballots. Within a fortnight, carried along on the tide of "Trudeaumania" that swept the country, he was elected prime minister with a strong majority.

Career Peak

Early in his tenure Trudeau introduced the Official Languages Bill which promoted bilingualism and made it a civil service requirement. However, the question of independence for Quebec remained a thorny issue with matters coming to a head during the October Crisis of 1970. The Front de Libération de Québec (The Quebec Liberation Front) kidnapped a British diplomat, and Trudeau, in co-operation with the Quebec Prime Minister, imposed the controversial War Measures Act, which allowed for sweeping arrests without charges. The diplomat was freed but some 450 people were placed under arrest. Pierre Laporte, a cabinet minister for Quebec, was murdered.

Trudeau already had a reputation for a lively private life when in 1971 he married Margaret Sinclair, who was 30 years his junior. The couple had 3 children but split in 1977 and divorced 7 years later. By the time of the general elections in 1972, Canada was experiencing high unemployment and Trudeau's Liberals only just sneaked victory, relying on the support of the New Democratic Party to form a government. The world oil crisis struck the next year and with public spending remaining high, inflation and unemployment continued to spiral so that in 1975 the government, returned the previous year, had to introduce wage and price controls.

The economy failed to pick up and at the general elections of May 1979 the Liberals were defeated by the Conservatives under Joseph Clarke. Trudeau announced his retirement but was persuaded into a re-think and was victorious again at the elections of 3 May 1980. On 20 May a referendum was held in Quebec to decide the issue of French separatism but, with the help of

Trudeau, the notion was soundly defeated. He then set about constitutional reforms, the most important of which were the Canadian Charter of Rights and independence from the British parliament. The proposed constitution won a large majority in the Commons and was passed on 2 Dec. 1981, with Queen Elizabeth II assenting to it on 4 April 1982. In addition, in 1984 Canada became officially bilingual.

On the international stage, Trudeau had normalized relations with China early in his first spell as Prime Minister. He also sought to reduce involvement with Nato, improve ties with the European Economic Community (despite the increase in its offshore fishing jurisdiction antagonizing Spain), become more active within the UN and the Commonwealth and pursue a *détente* with the Soviet Union. His relationship with the USA was variable. He was aware of the necessity for co-operation but did not want Canada to be dependent on its powerful neighbour. In the last years of his time in office, Trudeau espoused the need for dialogue between wealthy and developing nations, and also campaigned for an international reduction in nuclear weapons and a thawing in the Cold War.

Later Life

Trudeau retired from government on 29 Feb. 1984 to be replaced by John Turner. He returned to legal practice, received the Companion of the Order of Canada in 1985 and in 1993 he published his memoirs. He died in Montreal on 28 Sept. 2000.

Truman, Harry S. (United States of America)

Introduction

Harry S. Truman was the 33rd President of the United States, taking office in April 1945 on the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt and serving one full term after winning the 1948 election before he decided not to run for presidential office again. Remembered for taking the decision to drop atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Truman also led the United States through the early years of the Cold War and into combat in Korea.

Early Life

Born in Lamar, Montana on 8 May 1884 Truman's family was too poor to send him to college. In his late teens and early twenties he did jobs on the railroads and then for a bank before working on the family farm with his father for 11 years.

During this time Truman became involved in the local Democratic Party. In World War I his leadership qualities began to take shape when he served in France as a captain in the American Expeditionary Forces. Truman returned to the United States in 1919 and married Elizabeth Wallace. The couple based themselves in Kansas City and started a clothes shop, which went bust during the Great Depression, leaving Truman penniless. Truman turned to politics and won election as a judge in the Jackson county court in 1922. By 1934 he was a presiding judge and in 1936 he ran for a seat in the US Senate.

Truman was an unwavering advocate of Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'New Deal' policies, which helped him win this election. Re-election to the senate followed in 1940 and Truman made a name for himself through his work as Head of the Special Committee to investigate the National Defense Program. He also continued to support Roosevelt's domestic and foreign policies. This brought him to the president's attention and, in the lead up to the 1944 election, Truman was persuaded to run against Henry Wallace, who had been a relatively unpopular deputy to Roosevelt, for the vice-presidential nomination. Truman duly defeated Wallace and helped Roosevelt win an unprecedented fourth presidential election victory.

Career Peak

A few months later, on 12 April 1945, Truman found himself catapulted into the position of President after Roosevelt's death. Germany's unconditional

surrender in World War II came several weeks later and Truman was plunged into a crucial decision as to how to bring about Japanese surrender. Threatening 'a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth', the new President authorized dropping atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 Aug. 1945.

Truman reasoned that it would hasten the end of war and save lives, although some commentators speculated that he was also intending to send a message to the Soviet Union as he sought to assert the United States' status in a post-war world order. Unconditional Japanese surrender from Emperor Hirohito duly arrived on 14 Aug. with Truman declaring: 'This is the day we have been waiting for since Pearl Harbor'.

Over the next few years Truman became heavily involved with international affairs as he sought to help map out the international political map in a way that would limit Soviet influence in Europe. Truman favoured a 'get-tough' policy towards the Soviet Union. In March 1947 he introduced the Truman doctrine, a \$400 m. aid package for the Turkish and Greek governments which signalled his determination to shake off the last vestiges of US isolationism. In June he denounced the communist coup in Hungary as 'an outrage'. Meanwhile, the Marshall Plan, also introduced that year, sought to offer economic aid to areas of Europe impoverished by the war. Several countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Poland and Finland, elected to remain in the Soviet sphere of influence by not taking part in the scheme.

At home Truman continued Roosevelt's new deal policies, which he re-branded the 'fair deal'. However many of his proposals were obstructed by Congress and Truman succeeded in winning few significant domestic victories. As a consequence, he was given little chance of winning the 1948 presidential election against Republican opponent Thomas E. Dewey. Truman campaigned vigorously and tirelessly, stressing that the Republican dominated Congress of 1947-48 had been a 'do-nothing' body that had blocked his attempts at legislation and reform in the areas of civil rights and labour management.

Exit polls predicted a landslide Dewey victory and the Chicago Tribune even went to press on the day after the election with a first edition headlined 'Dewey defeats Truman'. However, Truman pulled off a shock victory, defeating his opponent by a margin of around 1.2 m. votes and 303 electoral college votes to 189.

In his first full term in office, Truman's domestic policy was hampered by tactical coalitions between southern-based Democrats and conservative Republicans, although he did secure the passage of the important 1949 Housing Act. Foreign policy continued to define Truman's presidency. In March 1949, he took the United States into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), an alliance of 8 Western countries intended to act as a deterrent against possible acts of military aggression. From 25 June 1950, Truman became even more involved in foreign affairs after Communist North Korea invaded South Korea. A day later the president offered immediate American air and naval support to the South, a decision that was ratified by the United Nations Security Council at a meeting that was boycotted by the Soviet Union.

However difficulties soon arose between Truman and his commander in the war, General Douglas MacArthur. Initially, MacArthur's men drove the North Koreans out of South Korea after landing at Inchon in Sept. 1950. However, when the Chinese entered the conflict on 16 Sept. the situation became more complicated.

Truman was determined not to allow the conflict to escalate into World War III, while MacArthur, with considerable support from many Republicans, argued that combat should be widened through direct attacks on China. Truman repeatedly warned MacArthur not to make any public political statements, however eventually, on 1 April 1951, he felt compelled to fire the general, arguing that US policy in the Far East should be dictated by the aim of preventing further conflict.

Truman's authority was severely weakened by the episode. After clashes with Senator Joseph R. McCarthy over his 'witch-hunt' of American communists, Truman decided not to stand for re-election in the 1952 presidential election. Democratic candidate Adlai E. Stevenson subsequently lost the White House to his Republican opponent Dwight D. Eisenhower, a popular military hero who had been appointed supreme commander of NATO by Truman in 1950.

Later Life

In political retirement, Truman travelled widely and published two volumes of memoirs in 1955 and 1956. He died on 6 Dec. 1972 in Kansas City, Montana.

Truong Tan Sang (Vietnam)

Introduction

Truong Tan Sang was elected to the largely ceremonial post of president in July 2011 at the Communist Party's 11th national congress, replacing Nguyen Minh Triet. Truong tan Sang is a former head of the party secretariat and party secretary for Ho Chi Minh City.

Early Life

Truong Tan Sang was born in My Hanh in the Duc Hoa district of Long An province, on 21 Jan. 1949. Between 1966 and 1968 he was leader of the youth student movement P.K.2, and from 1969 until 1971, while a party committee member, was youth union secretary and managed a secret armed group in Duc Hoa town.

In 1971 he was captured by the South Vietnamese and was detained in Bien Hoa prison in the Phu Quoc island district. He was released in 1973 under the terms of the Paris Peace Accords. Between April 1975 and Oct. 1978 he worked at the Gia Dinh Trade Union, serving as deputy head of the Ho Chi Minh City new economic zone development department and as secretary of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (with responsibility for the city plantations and new economic zones).

Between 1978 and 1983 he held posts including director of the Van Hai Farm and alternate member of the Ho Chi Minh City party committee. From 1983 to 1986 he headed the Ho Chi Minh forestry department and the new economic zone development department. He was also Ho Chi Minh's party committee member in charge of youth volunteer forces and was promoted to the standing board of the city's party committee. In 1992 he became party chairman for Ho Chi Minh and in 1996 joined the Politburo as its 14th-ranked member.

Between 1999 and 2000 he was party secretary for Ho Chi Minh and in April 2001 was promoted to 10th position in the national party and head of its economic commission. In April 2006 he rose to fifth position and headed the party's secretariat. In Oct. 2009 he was named second in the party hierarchy and in July 2011 the National Assembly overwhelmingly elected him national president.

Career Peak

On taking office, against the backdrop of the ongoing dispute with China over the Spratly Islands, Sang pledged to defend Vietnam's independence and territorial integrity. Despite clashes between Chinese naval boats and Vietnamese oil exploration vessels resulting in the Vietnamese navy conducting live-fire exercises, Sang vowed to resolve the dispute peacefully. In Oct. 2011 he travelled to India to solicit diplomatic support, strengthen economic ties and seek military assistance.

Faced by a weakening economy, with Asia's highest inflation rate in 2011 at over 20%, Sang underlined his support for the 5-year socio-economic reform agenda agreed at the 11th National Congress in Jan. 2011. Despite ongoing reports of human rights abuses, including the imprisonment of religious activists, Sang's government forged ties with both India and the USA.

Following the completion of his 5 year term as president in 2016, Sang was replaced by Tran Dai Quang.

Tsang, Donald (Hong Kong, China)

Introduction

Donald Tsang became Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region following the resignation of Tung Chee-Hwa in early 2005. During a long career as a civil servant, Tsang specialized in economic issues and was finance secretary after the transfer to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. After 45 years in government and 7 years as Chief Executive, Tsang stood down in 2012.

Early Life

Donald Yam-Kuen Tsang was born in Hong Kong on 7 Oct. 1944, the son of an officer in the Royal Hong Kong police force. Having completed his secondary education at the Roman Catholic Wah Yan College, Tsang worked as a sales representative for a US pharmaceutical firm, Pfizer Corporation, before entering the civil service in 1967. He served in various departments, including a 3-year stint from 1974 in the finance branch. He later spent a year at the Asian Development Bank in Manila working on water supply and railway development projects in the Philippines and Bangladesh. In 1981 he left for the USA to take a master's degree in public administration at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

As deputy secretary of the general duties department from 1985–89, Tsang was responsible for implementing the Sino-British Joint Declaration, signed in Dec. 1984, which paved the way for Hong Kong's absorption into the People's Republic of China (PRC). The agreement stipulated that Hong Kong's economic, legal and social systems would be preserved for 50 years. Tsang became the director-general of trade in 1991, responsible for all aspects of trade negotiation and administration, and 2 years later was promoted to secretary for the treasury, with responsibility for taxation and resource allocation.

In 1995 Tsang was appointed financial secretary, the first ethnic Chinese person to hold the position in 150 years of British rule. Following Hong Kong's transition to its Special Administrative Region status on 1 July 1997, he retained the position in the administration of Chief Executive Tung Che Hwa. Tsang won plaudits for his role in steering Hong Kong through the Asian financial crisis of 1998, notably with a bold stock market intervention to ward off attacks on the currency by international speculators.

Tsang's relative popularity contrasted with the growing dissatisfaction at Tung's leadership, both in Hong Kong and Beijing. Particularly damaging was a national security bill that prompted mass protests in mid-2003 and demands for Tung's resignation. Later that year Tsang proposed a system of greater popular representation in Hong Kong but the reforms were rejected by the legislature, which believed they did not go far enough. When Tung resigned on health grounds in March 2005, Tsang took over as acting chief executive. He was declared the permanent chief executive without contest and took office on 24 June 2005.

Career Peak

Although Tsang faced widespread criticism for the failure of his democratic reforms, he won praise for his stewardship of the economy with unemployment falling to a 7-year low in 2007. On 25 March 2007 Tsang overwhelmingly defeated Alan Leong to retain his position as chief executive for a new 5-year term. Under Tsang, Hong Kong weathered the global financial crisis relatively well. Although Tsang's introduction of a minimum wage bill and a bill to ban anticompetitive practices were heralded as significant achievements, he was criticized for failing to address the city's widening wealth gap. Unable by law to seek a third term, he was succeeded by Leung Chun-ying on 1 July 2012. Tsang's final months in office were marred by scandal, including accepting hospitality from local tycoons.

Later Life

In Feb. 2017 Tsang was sentenced to 20 months' imprisonment for misconduct in public office.

Tsiranana, Philibert (Madagascar)

Introduction

A leading figure in Madagascar's move to independence, Philibert Tsiranana was president from 1960–72 representing the Parti Social Démocrate de Madagascar (PSD). Insurrections and violence at the end of his term forced him to hand over power to General Gabriel Ramanantsoa.

Early Life

Tsiranana was born on the 18 Oct. 1910 in the northwestern town of Ambarikorano. After his primary and secondary education, he attended the

Tananarive Teacher Training College, graduating in 1930. In 1946 he went to study in Montpellier. He was one of the founders of the Parti des D sh rit s de Madagascar (PDM; the Disinherited of Madagascar Party). He came back to Madagascar in 1952 and eventually sided with moderate nationalists who were in favour of independence.

Career Peak

In 1956 he founded the PSD. He was elected deputy and represented his country in the French national assembly. When the autonomous Malagasy Republic was proclaimed in Oct. 1958, he headed the provisional government. Standing against Assembly President Norbert Zafimahova in the 1959 election, Tsiranana was elected president. Full independence was granted on 26 June 1960. He retained close economic and political ties with the French government.

Over the next 12 years the PSD, led by Tsiranana, retained control of Madagascar and dominated government. The regime strongly favoured the *c tiers*, or people from the coast, over inland peoples such as the Merina. Tsiranana was re-elected in 1965, and then as sole candidate in the presidential elections of Jan. 1972, he was re-elected with 99.9% of votes. In May 1972, following a resurgence of violent anti-government protest, he relinquished power to General Gabriel Ramanantsoa, the Merina head of Madagascar's armed forces, who became prime minister. Tsiranana resigned as president in Oct. 1972.

Later Life

In 1975 Tsiranana's proposal for a 'Council of Wise Men' under his presidency was rejected. Following his refusal to support incoming president Didier Ratsiraka, the PSM was dissolved and Tsiranana's political career ended. He died in April 1978.

Tsvangirai, Morgan (Zimbabwe)

Introduction

Morgan Tsvangirai is leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the only significant opposition to President Robert Mugabe's regime since independence was established in 1980. Tsvangirai became an increasingly credible alternative to Mugabe as dissatisfaction with the ever more authoritarian regime and its vast mishandling of the national economy grew. This electoral viability made Tsvangirai and his supporters a target for violence and intimidation, culminating in the nationwide bloodshed that followed the disputed 2008 presidential elections. Subsequently, however, the implementation of a power-sharing agreement brokered with Mugabe under international pressure led to Tsvangirai's inauguration as executive prime minister of a unity government in Feb. 2009. Despite some progress in Zimbabwe's economic fortunes, political instability has nevertheless persisted and Tsvangirai's ability to carry out his executive functions has been impeded.

Early Life

Tsvangirai was born in 1952 in Buhera, then part of Southern Rhodesia. He left school at 16 and took a job in a textile factory and then at a nickel mine in Bindura, eventually becoming general foreman and branch chairman of the Associated Mineworkers' Union (AMU). A strong supporter of Mugabe's ZANU-PF, Tsvangirai was brought into the first post-independence government. However, Tsvangirai's lack of direct involvement in the guerrilla war that led to the end of minority white rule in 1980 has been used against him by Mugabe's supporters.

In 1985 Tsvangirai left to become vice president of the AMU, having been voted onto the national executive 2 years earlier. In 1987 he was named secretary-general of the Southern Africa Miners' Federation. After a period studying in the UK, Tsvangirai was named general secretary of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in 1988. Six years later he became secretary general of the Southern African Trade Union co-ordinating council.

Under his leadership the ZCTU began to dissent from the ZANU-PF line. In the late-1980s and early-1990s Tsvangirai and Mugabe repeatedly clashed, notably over a programme of structural reform adopted by Mugabe. Though

in line with IMF demands, Tsvangirai condemned the programme as an attack on workers' rights. He led several mass protests against the proposals, which forced Mugabe to back down. Tsvangirai was later jailed on unproven charges of being a South African spy.

Over the course of the 1990s the ZCTU became the focus of opposition to Mugabe's government. In Sept. 1999 Tsvangirai formed the MDC to formally challenge the dominance of ZANU-PF. In Feb. 2000 the MDC co-ordinated the defeat in a referendum of a government-championed constitutional amendment that would have extended Mugabe's personal power. It represented Mugabe's first significant defeat in a public vote since taking office. In Sept. 2000 Tsvangirai was charged with treason for comments made against Mugabe but the charges were later judged to be unconstitutional.

At the parliamentary elections of June 2000 the MDC won 57 of 150 seats, only five behind ZANU-PF. Mugabe's pre-election campaign received widespread international condemnation as white-owned farms were illegally seized and opposition supporters intimidated. Tsvangirai was defeated at the presidential elections of March 2002, winning 42.1% against Mugabe's 56.1%. However, observers claimed the elections failed to meet oppositional standards and it was widely believed that Tsvangirai would have triumphed in a free vote.

Shortly before the election a video tape was exhibited allegedly showing Tsvangirai discussing an assassination attempt against Mugabe. Tsvangirai was charged with treason, carrying a possible death sentence, and his trial began in Feb. 2003. In June 2003 he called for mass action against Mugabe via a general strike and anti-government rallies. The MDC was targeted by government forces in the preceding weeks and Tsvangirai was arrested and subjected to new treason charges. He was acquitted of all charges in 2004.

Mugabe's regime met with international condemnation in March 2007 when Tsvangirai suffered serious head injuries whilst in police custody. More than 50 opposition leaders were arrested during a prayer meeting although no-one was charged. In June Tsvangirai toured Western Europe with rival opposition leader Arthur Mutambara, calling on European politicians to support their struggle for democracy.

In the general election of 29 March 2008 the MDC gained a majority in the House of Assembly, removing ZANU-PF from overall parliamentary control for the first time since Zimbabwe gained independence. Tsvangirai claimed the largest number of votes in the presidential election of the same date, winning 47.9% of the ballot against 43.2% for President Mugabe (according to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission). However, the margin of victory was disputed, with the MDC claiming that Tsvangirai had gained the absolute majority required to avoid a second round run-off against the incumbent. These claims were rejected by the government and a run-off was scheduled for 27 June. There followed a sustained campaign of intimidation and violence against supporters of Tsvangirai. The MDC reported the death of 85 and the displacement of 200,000 of its followers over the following weeks. Five days before the ballot, having been forced to take refuge in the Dutch embassy, Tsvangirai withdrew from the race, professing that he could no longer force the Zimbabwean people to 'suffer this torture'. Over the following days he appealed to the international community, contending that 'the words of indignation from global leaders [must] be backed by the moral rectitude of military force'. Nevertheless, he subsequently entered into talks with Mugabe in Aug. 2008, which resulted in a deal the following month that provided for Mugabe to remain as president with Tsvangirai taking the premiership.

Career Peak

Implementation of the power-sharing deal was hampered by disagreements over the allocation of ministerial portfolios in a unity government until the end of Jan. 2009 when Tsvangirai accepted an arrangement giving the Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai/MDC-T and the Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara/MDC-M 16 and four posts respectively in a 35-member cabinet. On 11 Feb. Tsvangirai was sworn in as prime minister. However, there remained deep-seated domestic and international reservations about the viability of the new government, given the animosity between prime minister and president, Mugabe's autocratic track record and the conspicuous absence of the pro-Mugabe leaders of the security forces from Tsvangirai's inauguration ceremony.

With the finance portfolio under MDC control, the use of foreign currency was authorized, effectively replacing the worthless Zimbabwean dollar by the US dollar and South African rand and helping to bring about an end to years of hyperinflation. During a tour of the USA and Europe in June 2009, Tsvangirai successfully lobbied Western donors and the IMF to restore aid

for essential services, although they refused to lift sanctions or release more substantive aid until the new administration had undertaken political and other reforms.

However, progress towards a new constitution was hindered by further political wrangling and in Oct. 2009 Tsvangirai temporarily boycotted meetings of the cabinet in protest at Mugabe's failure to honour agreements. The MDC meanwhile continued to face violence and intimidation from ZANU-PF supporters.

In Jan. 2010 Tsvangirai again urged the easing of targeted international sanctions in recognition of the unity government's economic record. The EU made some concessions in 2011 and 2012 but continued to express concern at political intimidation in Zimbabwe. Meanwhile, relations between Tsvangirai and Mugabe deteriorated further as the latter sought to sideline the prime minister and maintain control over executive decision-making. In Oct. 2012, against a background of rising violence directed against the MDC and its supporters in the approach to elections expected before the end of 2013, Tsvangirai once more threatened to withdraw from the unity government. On 6 March 2009 Tsvangirai survived a car crash in which his wife, Susan, died.

In July 2013 Tsvangirai lost a presidential election to Mugabe and the MDC also suffered a heavy defeat in the legislative elections. Mugabe appointed a new cabinet consisting only of ZANU-PF ministers—the post of prime minister was abolished altogether. Tsvangirai died from cancer on 14 Feb. 2018 aged 65.

Tu'ivakano (Tonga)

Introduction

Lord Tu'ivakano became prime minister in Dec. 2010 after winning a majority in the Legislative Assembly. His victory came as a blow to pro-democracy hopes that recent reforms would reduce the influence of the traditional power brokers.

Early Life

Lord Tu'ivakano was born Siale 'Ataongo Kaho on 15 Jan. 1952 in Niutoua, in the Western District of Tongatapu. He was educated in New Zealand at Three Kings School, Auckland, and at Wesley College, Paerata. In 1974 he graduated with a diploma in teaching from Ardmore Teachers' College, Auckland.

On his return to Tonga in 1975, Tu'ivakano joined the staff at of Tonga High School before moving to the physical education department of the ministry of education. In 1980 he was appointed head of the youth, sports and culture division, where he developed a physical health curriculum for primary schools.

On his father's death in Jan. 1986 he became the 17th Lord Tu'ivakano and inherited four estates in Tongatapu. In 1991 he graduated in political science from Flinders University in South Australia. The following year he returned to the ministry of education as senior education officer for youth, sport and culture but resigned in 1996 when he entered parliament as a Nobles' Representative for the island of Tongatapu.

From 2002–04 Tu'ivakano served as speaker of the Legislative Assembly and in March 2005 joined the cabinet as minister for works. Following a reshuffle in May 2006 he was given the portfolio of training, employment, youth and sport. In the Nov. 2010 elections he was re-elected as representative for Tongatapu and, following constitutional reforms, became the first prime minister elected by parliament, winning 14 of the 26 votes cast in a secret ballot. He was sworn into office on 22 Dec. 2010.

Career Peak

Tu'ivakano's election was regarded as a victory for traditionalists over the pro-democracy movement. He was expected to put the revitalization of the agriculture and tourism sectors at the heart of his premiership and to spur manufacturing growth. However, in Oct. 2012 he narrowly survived a parliamentary no confidence motion after the opposition accused his government of misappropriating funds. In Jan. 2014 he dismissed Lisiate 'Akolo as finance minister over disagreements on the budget and replaced him with 'Aisake Valu Eke.

Tu'ivakano's term ended on 30 Dec. 2014 after parliament elected? Akilisi Pōhiva to the premiership.

Tudjman, Franjo (Croatia)

Introduction

Franjo Tudjman was Croatia's President from 1990–99. A nationalist, he helped found the Croatian Democratic Communist Party (later the Croatian Democratic Union/HDZ) in 1989 and declared Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. A vicious war with Yugoslavia ensued but Tudjman succeeded in gaining international recognition for his new country and ultimately re-claimed all territory that had been lost to Slobodan Milošević's regime. Tudjman's authoritarian regime and civil rights violations encountered much foreign opposition.

Early Life

Tudjman was born on 14 May 1922 in Veliko Trgovišće, Croatia. During World War II he fought with Tito's partisan anti-Fascist army and after the war he was employed by the Yugoslav army's Political Section. Between 1955–57 he was stationed in Belgrade, studying at the Higher Military Academy. By 1960 he was a major general. However, his passion for political and military history led to his resignation the following year to head the Institute of the History of the Workers' Movement. In 1963 he was employed at the University of Zagreb, where he taught political history and gained his doctorate in 1965.

In the same year he entered Croatia's parliament where he advocated Croatian nationalism. Two years later he antagonized Tito and the communist hierarchy by claiming that the Yugoslav communists had fabricated statistics concerning the number of deaths at the hands of the region's Nazi collaborators (the Ustasha) in World War II. He was expelled from the Communist Party and lost his political positions. He then played an active role in the 'Croatian Spring' of 1969–71, which sought cultural reform and nationalist expression. For this he was imprisoned by Tito, serving 1 year.

He was sentenced to a further 3 years in jail in the early 1980s for his criticism of the government following Tito's death, and was designated a 'Prisoner of Conscience' by Amnesty International. He had other civil liberties removed, including his right to travel abroad, and suffered a number of heart attacks. In Feb. 1989, as the movement for reform took hold throughout the Eastern Bloc, Tudjman established the HDZ and called for a looser confederal Yugoslavia. The party received legal recognition and won a landslide at Croatia's elections of April 1990, with Tudjman becoming President.

Career Peak

As his hopes for the confederation died, Tudjman unilaterally declared independence on 25 June 1991. When fighting broke out between Serbs and Croats within Croatia, Milošević sent in an army that claimed around one third of the new nation's territory. The international community recognized Croatia and sent in UN troops to secure peace. Lightning strikes by Tudjman's troops in July and Aug. 1995 reclaimed most of the lost land and expelled swathes of the Serb population.

Tudjman's regime came under UN criticism for its conduct in the war in Bosnia in 1993, and for its refusal to accept displaced Serbs back into Croatia. Moreover, while the elections of 1992, 1995 and 1997 that confirmed him as president were deemed free and legal by international observers, his control of the national media was considered to give him an unfair advantage. The Croatian economy struggled during Tudjman's tenure, partly because of war and regional instability but also because of mismanagement. He oversaw the transition from a central to a market economy but the standard of living remained low.

His authoritarian style of leadership, his treatment of the Serb minority and his refusal to co-operate with war crimes tribunals provoked international wrath on a number of occasions. Croatia was banned from several UN and NATO projects as well as the EU PHARE Programme, providing aid in Central and Eastern Europe, while the World Bank withheld financial assistance. Some observers claimed that Tudjman was a dangerous maverick who

wished to establish a Greater Croatia in the Balkan region, but others regarded his regime as a counterweight to Milošević in Yugoslavia. Tudjman died on 10 Dec. 1999 in Zagreb from stomach cancer. He left a wife, Anika Zumber, and three children.

Tudose, Mihai (Romania)

Introduction

Mihai Tudose was appointed prime minister on 26 June 2017. He replaced his Social Democratic Party (PSD) colleague Sorin Grindeanu, who was ousted through a vote of no confidence in parliament after 6 months in office.

Early Life

Tudose was born on 6 March 1967 in the southeastern port city of Brăila on the River Danube. He read law at the Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University in Bucharest (1991–95) and became a member of the PSDR (later rebranded the PSD in 2001) in 1992. From 1992–96 he served as a technical adviser to the PSD's parliamentary group and rose through the party ranks.

In 1999 Tudose was appointed as a local councillor for Brăila; he also took on work as a commercial lawyer for a company in the city. In 2000 he was elected member of parliament for Brăila, serving consecutive terms ever since. While an MP he furthered his academic credentials with multiple postgraduate studies, including a doctorate from the National Academy of Intelligence Mihai Viteazul in 2010 that he rescinded in 2016 following allegations of plagiarism.

From 2014–15 Tudose served as minister of the economy under Victor Ponta. He lost the post in a reshuffle after Ponta's resignation but stayed on as PSD vice-president alongside new leader Liviu Dragnea. In 2015 he won a fifth term as MP for Brăila. After the PSD's victory in the Dec. 2016 elections, Tudose was reinstated as minister of the economy, working alongside Grindeanu. However, when Grindeanu was ousted at the instigation of his own party, Tudose was appointed premier.

Career Peak

Tudose took office in the heat of political turmoil and public hostility towards official tolerance of corruption (Grindeanu's downfall having followed what was perceived as a failed attempt to weaken anti-corruption laws). He oversaw a major tax code overhaul promised by the PSD and in Jan. 2018 income tax was cut from 16% to 10%, while social tax and VAT contributions were also reformed. However, he was forced to resign on 15 Jan. 2018 when his party retracted support in the wake of his inflammatory comments about the autonomy aspirations of the Székely (Hungarian) ethnic community in Romania. He was succeeded by Viorica Dăncilă.

Tung Chee-hwa (Hong Kong, China)

Introduction

On 1 July 1997 Shanghai-born Tung Chee-hwa became the first chief executive of the post-colonial Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region). Appointed by China to uphold the official policy of 'one country, two systems', his objective of keeping Hong Kong prosperous and stable was made more difficult by a series of financial crises. As a conduit between British and Chinese sovereignty and in a government of limited democracy, he came under criticism for his perceived pro-Beijing stance and approach to human rights.

Early Life

Born in Shanghai on 29 May 1937, Tung Chee-hwa's family left for Hong Kong in 1947 where he completed secondary school. Having received a BSc in marine engineering from the University of Liverpool in 1960, Tung's career began in business and he worked for General Electric in the United States until 1969.

In 1979, 10 years after his return to Hong Kong, Tung took over the chairmanship of the family-owned Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL). In 1985 he was invited by Beijing to join the Basic Law Consultative Committee, which was to outline Hong Kong's constitution. After the death of his father, C.Y. Tung, in 1986, the OOCL faced bankruptcy and it has been alleged that it was the Chinese government that paid off its debts.

1992 marked the start of Tung's political career. He joined governor Chris Patten's Executive Council, where he remained until 1996. A member of the Preparatory Committee, which was designed to facilitate the transition of power, he resigned in 1995, stating a conflict of interest. On 16 Dec. 1996 Tung was formally appointed chief executive designate by the Central People's Government; a position which he assumed on 1 July 1997.

Career Peak

Tung's early leadership was dominated by the 1997 Asian economic crisis. The crash of the Hang Seng Index, the Hong Kong stock exchange, in Oct. 1997 led to an unprecedented level of direct government intervention in the country's free-market economy. Two years later, the territory met its first constitutional test when, at the Hong Kong government's request, Beijing reinterpreted a decision made by the Court of Final Appeal over the right of abode.

In the midst of a global downturn, Tung was reappointed to a second 5-year term in Feb. 2002. Worries over increased state control and diminished levels of human rights amplified in June 2002 with the trial of 12 members of the Falun Gong, the banned Chinese spiritual movement, and the introduction of a civil service governed by ministers appointed by Tung. The outbreak of the SARS virus in 2003 aggravated an already battered economy; its alleged mishandling and protest over the proposed anti-subversion bill led to calls for Tung's resignation. As a result, Tung vowed to increase his accountability through improved communication with political parties, community leaders and the media. In Sept. 2003 he announced that the anti-subversion bill would be shelved and promised public consultation in framing future bills concerning security. However, on 10 March 2005 he announced his resignation and cited poor health for his decision.

Tunku Abdul Rahman (Malaysia)

Introduction

Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra was the first, and only, prime minister of independent Malaya and, in many ways, the creator of the federation of Malaysia, of which he was also the first premier. He is an honoured figure in the history of his country, and the new administrative capital of Malaysia, Putrajaya, is named after him.

Early Life

Tunku (Prince) Abdul Rahman Putra was born on 8 Feb. 1903, in Kedah state. He was the 20th child of Sultan Abdul-Hamid of Kedah, who reigned from 1881 to 1943. Educated in Malaya and in Thailand, he was sent to England in 1920 to complete his education. He won a place at St Catherine's College, Cambridge, but the racial prejudice he encountered in England determined him to win independence for the Malays from British rule.

Abdul Rahman graduated in 1925, and went to study law in the Inner Temple. He founded an association for Malay students in Britain but before completing his legal studies, returned to Malaya in 1930 to join the civil service. In 1935 he was given administrative responsibility for a district of Kedah. When the Japanese invaded in 1941, they ceded Kedah to Thailand. The Thais appointed the Tunku as Supervisor of Education for Kedah, a post he held until British rule was restored in 1945. Determined to complete his legal studies, he returned to the Inns of Court in London in 1947 and qualified in 1949.

Abdul Rahman went back to Malaya to work in the Malay federal legal department. At the same time, he became chairman of the United Malays United Organisation (UMNO) in his home state of Kedah. When the national chairman resigned in 1951, Abdul Rahman gave up his legal career and was appointed leader of the party. In this capacity, he sought to unite the various peoples of Malaya and in 1953 incorporated the Malayan Chinese

Association (MCA) into a new political alliance. In 1955, he was also instrumental in persuading the Malayan Indian Congress into the alliance. In July 1955, in Malaya's first general election, he led the alliance to victory in 51 of the 52 seats contested. He was subsequently appointed chief minister and home minister.

Career Peak

In Sept. 1955, the new chief minister of Malaya held talks to end the insurgency by Communist guerrillas that had begun in the late 1940s. The talks failed, but Abdul Rahman continued in his efforts to accommodate the guerrillas who were finally crushed by military in 1960. His government strove to weld together the different states and peoples of the federation and to create a sense of national unity.

On 31 Aug. 1957 he led Malaya to independence and became both prime minister and foreign minister. In 1960 he proposed an enlarged federation, including Singapore, Brunei, British North Borneo (Sabah) and Sarawak. In July 1963, the new federation, Malaysia, was formed, but Brunei stayed out and Singapore withdrew in Aug. 1965. The inclusion of Sabah and Sarawak was opposed by the Philippines and Indonesia and a period of confrontation with Indonesia followed in Borneo.

By 1969 Malaysia's neighbours had become reconciled to the enlarged federation, but underlying tensions between the principal ethnic groups in Malaysia surfaced in riots between ethnic Chinese and Malays. In Sept. 1970, when the violence had ended Abdul Rahman resigned.

Later Life

In retirement, Abdul Rahman continued to emphasize national unity, tolerance and co-operation between the various ethnic groups of Malaysia. He published books and articles. In 1988 he accused premier Mahathir Mohamed of authoritarianism. He died on 6 Dec. 1990.

Turchynov, Oleksandr (Ukraine)

Introduction

Oleksandr Turchynov became acting president in Feb. 2014 after his predecessor, Viktor Yanukovich, fled the country following mass demonstrations. An established member of Ukraine's political elite, he is not recognized by Russia, which annexed the Crimean peninsula soon after his appointment.

Early Life

Turchynov was born in the eastern city of Dnipropetrovsk on 31 March 1964. He graduated from the city's Metallurgical Institute in 1986 before entering politics as a member of Komsomol, the Soviet Communist Party's youth organization.

It was as a leader of the party's liberalizing wing, the Democratic Platform, that he first met Leonid Kuchma, the future prime minister and president but then head of a missile manufacturer based in Dnipropetrovsk. As premier, Kuchma appointed Turchynov as his economics aide in 1993. In the same year Turchynov and Pavlo Lazarenko, a business associate of the oligarch Yuliya Tymoshenko, founded the Hromada Party. Turchynov was elected to parliament in 1998 but Hromada collapsed the following year when Lazarenko fled amid an investigation into embezzlement during his prime ministerial tenure from 1996–97.

Turchynov and Tymoshenko reacted by creating the Fatherland party that opposed Kuchma—by then president—and his designated successor, Viktor Yanukovich. In the lead-up to the 2004 presidential election, Turchynov worked as campaign co-ordinator for Viktor Yushchenko, whose defeat by Yanukovich prompted allegations of vote-rigging that triggered the Orange Revolution. With Tymoshenko installed as prime minister under Yushchenko, Turchynov was appointed head of the Ukraine Security Service in Feb. 2005. In 2007 he became deputy prime minister.

He stood for the mayoralty of Kyiv in May 2008 but came a distant second to the incumbent, Leonid Chernovetskyi. In 2010 Turchynov briefly served as interim prime minister after Tymoshenko's defeat in the presidential election. With Tymoshenko in jail following conviction for abuse of power, Turchynov was prominent in the demonstrations against Viktor Yanukovich that erupted

in Nov. 2013. For his role, he was placed under investigation by the security services but in the wake of Yanukovich's flight from the country he was elected parliamentary speaker on 22 Feb. 2014 and interim president the following day.

Career Peak

Turchynov angered many who had protested for root and branch reform when he told crowds gathered in Kyiv's Maidan (one of the main squares) that they had achieved their aims with the defeat of Yanukovich.

Within days of his taking office, Russia had wrestled control of the Crimean peninsula. Speaking with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 21 March 2014, Turchynov said that Ukraine would never accept the seizure of its territory. On 26 March 2014 he submitted a bill to parliament to allow foreign forces access to Ukrainian territory for military exercises.

On 7 June 2014 he was succeeded as president by Petro Poroshenko, who had won early elections held on 25 May.

Later Life

On 16 Dec. 2014 Turchynov was appointed secretary of the National Security and Defense Council.

Türk, Danilo (Slovenia)

Introduction

Danilo Türk was sworn in as president in Dec. 2007 after winning 68% of votes cast in the second round of the presidential election. Backed by the centre-left opposition, Türk assumed office just 10 days before the country took over the revolving 6-month presidency of the European Union (the first former communist state to do so).

Early Life

Türk was born on 19 Feb. 1952 in Maribor. He graduated in law from the University of Ljubljana in 1975 and started working as the secretary of the commission for minorities and migrants of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Slovenia (SZDL). He also became involved with Amnesty International, acting as an adviser on human rights cases in the former Yugoslavia. In 1978 he obtained his master's degree in law from the University of Belgrade and returned to the University of Ljubljana as an academic assistant, teaching international law. Returning to his work for the SZDL, he served as its chairman until 1981. Türk was elected vice-chairman of the UN working group on the right to development in 1981 and held the post until 1984.

He obtained his law doctorate from the University of Ljubljana in 1982 and became assistant professor at the university's faculty of law in Dec. that year. From 1983–92 he headed the university's institute of international law and international relations. From 1984–92 he was a member of the UN sub-commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities, becoming its chairman in 1991. In 1987 Türk helped establish the Human Rights Council in Slovenia, later becoming the vice-president. He was also promoted to the post of associate professor in 1987.

Following Slovenia's declaration of independence, Türk served in the Slovenian delegation at the Conference of Yugoslavia from July 1991–Aug. 1992. From 11 Sept. 1992 he represented Slovenia at the United Nations. During his ambassadorship Slovenia was elected to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period of 1998–99 and held the presidency on two occasions (Aug. 1998 and Nov. 1999). He left his post as ambassador on 31 Jan. 2000 to become assistant secretary-general for political affairs at the United Nations. For the next 5 years Türk was closely involved in trying to solve crises in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and Haiti.

Türk returned to teaching international law at the University of Ljubljana in 2005 and in May 2006 was appointed vice-dean of the faculty of law. He formalized his candidacy for the presidency in June 2007 and was placed second in the first round of voting on 21 Oct. 2007, claiming 24.5% of the vote. In the run-off on 11 Nov. 2007 Türk beat his opponent, the centre-right candidate Lojze Peterle, in a landslide victory. He was sworn in on 22 Dec.

Career Peak

Although the role of the president is largely ceremonial, Türk had influence over defence and foreign policy. His long diplomatic experience assisted the smooth running of Slovenia's EU presidency from Jan.–June 2008. In domestic politics, he pledged 'constructive, co-ordinated and balanced co-operation with the government and parliament'. In Sept. 2011 the Social Democrat-led coalition government collapsed after losing a parliamentary confidence vote, prompting Türk to call early elections in Dec. in which the centre-left Positive Slovenia, led by Zoran Janković, emerged as the largest grouping. However, Janković's candidacy for the premiership was rejected by parliament, with former prime minister Janez Janša of the Slovenian Democratic Party taking the position instead in Feb. 2012.

Türk stood for re-election in the 2012 presidential elections but lost to Borut Pahor in the second round.

Turner, John Napier (Canada)

Introduction

John Napier Turner was the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada from 1984 to 1989 and Canadian Prime Minister for 3 months in 1984.

Early Life

Born in Richmond, London of an English father and Canadian mother, Turner's family emigrated to Canada in 1932 with the death of his father. Settling first in Rossland, British Columbia, Turner received his early education in Ottawa after his mother was offered a job with the Tariff Board.

When Turner's mother married a wealthy Vancouver businessman, Frank Mackenzie Ross, the family moved West, and Turner enrolled at the University of British Columbia.

Graduating in political science he went on to study in Paris and as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, earning a law degree in 1952 and a master's in 1957.

He made his first political steps in 1957 after Liberal cabinet minister CD Howe asked him to help in the election campaign. His involvement with the party continued until he was persuaded to seek the nomination for the riding of St-Laurent-St-Georges in 1962—a seat he won at the June election.

Despite joining a vocal group of young Liberals, dubbed 'the Young Turks' advocating reforms in party policy, Turner's rise continued unabated with his appointment to his first cabinet post in 1965 as minister without portfolio.

Having worked for several corporations, he won election to the House of Commons as a Liberal in 1962 and was given his first cabinet post in 1965.

After losing in his bid for the leadership of the Liberal Party in 1968 to Pierre Trudeau, Turner served as justice minister and then in 1972 as minister of finance.

As finance minister in a minority government, his budgets had to be acceptable to one or other of the opposition parties, a task he failed in 1974, leading to a general election.

Although continuing as finance minister he became increasingly disillusioned with the position and seeing no alternatives in the cabinet, he abruptly resigned from his ministerial position in Sept. 1975, and parliament itself in Feb. 1976. He returned to corporate law for the next 8 years, working for the Toronto firm McMillan Binch.

Career Peak

Turner stood for leadership of the party again in 1984 after Trudeau announced he would not be seeking re-election. Despite winning the leadership vote, with strong support in the party, he inherited serious problems and having gambled on an early election to take advantage of his new popularity as leader, his brief tenure as Prime Minister was ended by the party's routing at the hands of the Conservatives in the 1984 elections.

Whilst in opposition, Turner fought hard against the free trade agreements being negotiated by the government, but failed to convince the electorate, narrowly losing the 1988 general election.

Later Life

Resigning from politics in 1989, Turner returned to his legal career.

Tusk, Donald (Poland)

Introduction

Donald Tusk became prime minister on 9 Nov. 2007 following his party's resounding victory in parliamentary elections. The former Solidarity activist has taken a pro-business stance and has been keen to establish closer relations with EU neighbours. He began a second term following elections in Oct. 2011.

Early Life

Donald Franciszek Tusk was born on 22 April 1957 in Gdańsk. His family is part of the city's long-established minority Kashubian community. Following his secondary education he attended the University of Gdańsk where he studied history. A long-time critic of the communist administration, Tusk helped to establish the student committee of the Solidarity movement, which grew out of the nationwide industrial unrest centred on the Gdańsk shipyard during the summer of 1980. He subsequently co-founded the Independent Polish Students' Association (NZS). Following the authorities' crackdown on Solidarity in 1981, Tusk and other activists were forced into the shadows. He earned a living as a builder, an experience subsequently presented as evidence of his empathy with 'ordinary people'.

In the late 1980s Tusk left Solidarity to join the nascent liberal movement and in 1991 joined the Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD), which contested the first multi-party elections in Oct. 1991 on a free-market platform calling for privatization, freedom of movement and accession to the EU. Tusk took one of the KLD's 37 seats in the Sejm. Although he was re-elected as a deputy in the 1993 elections, the KLD fared poorly and in March 1994 merged with the Democratic Union to form a new centre-right party, Freedom Union (UW). The party secured 13.4% of the vote in the 1997 elections, becoming the junior partner in Jerzy Buzek's coalition government. Tusk was elected to the Senate, where from 1998–2001 he served as vice-speaker.

Having failed to win the chairmanship of the UW in 2000, Tusk resigned from the party. He joined Andrzej Olechowski (who had performed creditably in the 2000 presidential contest) and Maciej Płażyński in establishing the secular, liberal Civic Platform (PO) in early 2001, with Płażyński at the helm. The PO performed strongly in the 2001 elections, taking 65 seats in the Sejm and becoming the largest opposition party to Leszek Miller's government. In June 2003 Tusk became the PO's chairman. He was a vocal critic of the left-leaning SLD government, particularly its economic policies. His standing improved as the SLD became mired in corruption scandals but he failed in his 2005 bid for the presidency, losing to Lech Kaczyński of the socially conservative, nationalist Law and Justice Party. Later in 2005 the PO suffered further electoral defeat to Law and Justice, led by Jarosław Kaczyński (Lech's twin brother), who became prime minister.

Tusk remained leader of the PO and took a more aggressive approach in the run-up to the early election called for Oct. 2007. The election followed the collapse of the Law and Justice-led coalition amid allegations of corruption. Tusk accused Kaczyński of incompetence on international relations—notably deteriorating relations with Germany—and of failing to prevent the mass movement of Poles to Britain and Ireland in search of work. Tusk campaigned on a platform to speed up privatization, lower taxes and reduce business bureaucracy to encourage investors.

In parliamentary elections on 21 Oct. 2007 the PO emerged victorious, taking around 41% of the vote against 32% for Law and Justice. Tusk took office as prime minister on 16 Nov. and his cabinet won a confidence vote in the Sejm on 24 Nov. 2007.

Career Peak

Tusk pledged to create jobs and promote economic development by cutting bureaucracy and regulation. However, the global financial downturn in 2008 undermined Poland's growth prospects, prompting the government to launch an economic stimulus programme in Dec. that year and to negotiate a one-year US\$20.6 bn. credit line with the International Monetary Fund which was

approved in May 2009. In July 2010 Tusk's political position was strengthened by the election of the PO's candidate, Bronisław Komorowski, as state president in place of Lech Kaczyński, who had been killed in an air crash the previous April.

On the international stage, Tusk oversaw the withdrawal in Oct. 2008 of Poland's last troops stationed in Iraq, fulfilling a key electoral pledge. However, plans agreed in 2008 for Poland to host a controversial missile defence shield for the USA were effectively abandoned in Sept. 2009 when the US president announced the scrapping of key elements of the system. Despite the Polish government's disappointment at the decision, Tusk insisted that the USA and Poland would remain close allies. In July 2011 Poland assumed the EU's 6-month rotating presidency for the first time since the country's accession to the organization in 2004.

In Oct. 2011 Tusk's PO was returned to power as the largest party in national parliamentary elections. However, having introduced unpopular fiscal measures in May 2012—including increasing the retirement age—his administration lost ground in opinion polls to the opposition Law and Justice Party. In Oct. that year the government narrowly won a parliamentary vote of confidence after pledging US\$95 bn. in infrastructure and other investments to boost growth. In 2013 Tusk's administration survived further parliamentary confidence votes but anti-government sentiment continued over unpopular fiscal measures, particularly reform of the pension system. In Nov. Tusk reshuffled his cabinet, including replacing the finance minister, in an effort to revive his political standing.

Tusk was appointed the next president of the European Council in Aug. 2014 and took office on 1 Dec. 2014, succeeding Herman Van Rompuy. He resigned as prime minister on 9 Sept. 2014, and was subsequently succeeded by Ewa Kopacz (also of the PO) who was sworn in as premier on 22 Sept.

Tutu, Desmond (South Africa)

Introduction

A leader of the South African religious community, Desmond Mpilo Tutu used his position to campaign against apartheid. Internationally respected, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his advocacy of non-violent protest. After the abolition of apartheid, he was appointed president of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1995.

Early Life

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was born in Klerksdorp, Transvaal in 1931. His father was a teacher. In 1954 he graduated from the University of South Africa and became a schoolteacher. After 3 years of teaching he began to study theology. He was ordained an Anglican priest in 1960, and lectured at a seminary in Johannesburg. During the years 1962–66 Tutu studied theology at Kings College, London where he obtained a master's degree. From 1972–5 he served as an assistant director for the World Council of Churches.

Career Peak

In 1975 he was made dean of St Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg. Tutu was the first black person to hold such a position. In 1978 he was appointed general secretary of the South African Council of Churches to speak on behalf of the black South African majority. Unlike many other anti-apartheid campaigners, Tutu always advocated victory by non-violent means, and to this end he favoured the imposition of economic sanctions on South Africa.

In 1984 Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The following year he became Johannesburg's first black bishop and in 1986 he was elected the first black archbishop of Cape Town. This made Tutu the primate of the Anglican Church in South Africa. Following the collapse of apartheid Tutu became Chairman of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (created in 1995), a body that called upon South Africans of all races to confess their past in the racial turmoil of the apartheid era. The fact that Tutu did not excuse outrages committed in the cause of liberation brought him into dispute with the ruling ANC.

Later Life

Tutu retired from the primacy of the Anglican church in South Africa in 1996. He has published a collection of his lectures (*The Divine Intention*) and a separate collection of his sermons entitled *Hope and Suffering*.

Tymoshenko, Yuliya (Ukraine)

Introduction

Yuliya Tymoshenko, Ukraine's first female prime minister, took office for the second time in Dec. 2007. She was first appointed in Jan. 2005 by President Viktor Yushchenko after campaigning for him in the 'Orange Revolution'. However, she was sacked in Sept. 2005 amid allegations of financial irregularities. She returned to office in 2007 as part of a coalition with Yushchenko's party. A popular but controversial figure, Tymoshenko promoted Ukrainian entry into the EU and pledged to fight corruption in business and public life. She was forced out of office on 3 March 2010 after losing a parliamentary vote of no confidence.

Early Life

Yuliya Volodymyrivna Grigyan was born on 27 Nov. 1960 in Dnipropetrovsk, in the east of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine. After marrying Oleksandr Tymoshenko in 1979 and studying economics at Dnipropetrovsk State University, she worked from 1984–89 as an engineer and economist at the Vladimir Ilyich Lenin machinery plant. After economic liberalization began in 1989, she established a successful chain of video-rental stores. Following Ukrainian independence in 1991, Tymoshenko ran several energy companies in which her family had major interests. From 1995–97 she was president of United Energy Systems of Ukraine (UESU), the country's main importer of natural gas from Russia.

Tymoshenko was elected to represent Kirovohradska province in central Ukraine in 1996, and was re-elected in 1998, when she was also appointed chair of the parliamentary budget committee. From 1999–2001 she served as vice prime minister with responsibility for energy in Viktor Yushchenko's government. Tymoshenko built a reputation as a reformer, ending corrupt practices in the energy sector, and was closely involved with negotiations to pay off Ukraine's debts to Russia. In 2001 she was sacked by President Kuchma and accused of smuggling, forgery and tax evasion offences during her presidency of UESU, all of which she denied.

Following a vote of no confidence in Prime Minister Yushchenko, Tymoshenko united four opposition parties—the Batkivschyna (Motherland) party, Sobor, the Ukrainian Republican Party (URP) and the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USDP)—into the Yuliya Tymoshenko Election Bloc. The bloc won 7.2% of the vote in parliamentary elections in March 2002. Tymoshenko backed Yushchenko in the 2004 presidential election and played a leading role in the 'Orange Revolution' when tens of thousands of protesters swept into Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities on 21 Nov. 2004 after Viktor Yanukovich was controversially declared to have beaten Yushchenko in a run-off. Amid allegations of vote-rigging, the Supreme Court forced a re-run which Yushchenko won in Jan. 2005. He nominated Tymoshenko as his acting prime minister; she was confirmed in the post on 4 Feb. 2005.

Tymoshenko supported Yushchenko's ambitions for Ukraine to join the EU, and introduced some economic and political reforms. However, political infighting and attacks on her integrity culminated in her sacking, along with the rest of the cabinet, in Sept. 2005. She was vocal in opposition and in 2006 her party took second place in the parliamentary elections, behind Yanukovich's Party of Regions. After prolonged negotiations, and a power struggle between Yushchenko and newly appointed prime minister Yanukovich, snap elections were called for Sept. 2007. A coalition between Tymoshenko's party and Yushchenko's Our Ukraine emerged as narrow winners. Tymoshenko was eventually elected prime minister by a margin of one vote in the parliament.

Career Peak

After taking office on 18 Dec. 2007, Tymoshenko supported moves to combat corruption and implement financial reforms. Her other challenges included

upgrading the country's gas transport system, maintaining good relations with Russia and building links with the EU. However, continuing political rivalry with Yushchenko undermined the government, which collapsed in Sept. 2008 amid policy differences towards Russia and Ukraine's economic deterioration. A further parliamentary election was averted when Tymoshenko re-formed the coalition in Dec., although her soured relationship with the president remained an obstacle to effective administration. In Jan. 2009 she and Prime Minister Putin of Russia signed a formal agreement in Moscow ending a damaging dispute over gas prices and sales that had also disrupted onward supplies to Europe. In Feb. 2009 she and her cabinet survived a no-confidence motion in parliament.

Tymoshenko ran for president in the 2010 elections but was defeated by a narrow margin in the second round by Viktor Yanukovich. She challenged the results resulting in their suspension on 17 Feb. pending a full electoral inquiry. However, claiming insurmountable judicial prejudice in favour of her opponent, she dropped the case a few days later. Consequently, Yanukovich was sworn in as president in 25 Feb. although Tymoshenko refused to recognize his authority and vowed not to stand down as prime minister. But on 3 March parliament passed a vote of no confidence in her administration with 243 of 450 votes in favour. She was succeeded by Oleksandr Turchynov who was appointed in an acting capacity by President Yanukovich until the formation of a new government could be finalized.

Later Life

Tymoshenko was arrested in Aug. 2011 on charges of abuse of power over the natural gas contract signed with Russia in 2009. She was jailed for contempt of court for her behaviour during the trial and in Oct. 2011 the former premier was sentenced to seven years in prison. Tymoshenko was ordered to repay the state gas company, Naftogaz, approximately US\$190 m. The EU condemned the verdict as politically motivated.

In April 2012 she went on hunger strike after accusing staff at the prison of beating her during an attempt to move her to a hospital where she would be treated by Ukrainian doctors. She ended the hunger strike 3 weeks later after being moved to a hospital to be treated by a German doctor. She went on hunger strike again in Oct. 2012 to protest against alleged vote-rigging in the parliamentary elections the previous day, but also ended that after meeting with a team of German doctors.

Following Viktor Yanyukovich's impeachment in Feb. 2014, Tymoshenko was released from prison. She is eligible to run for office after parliament decriminalized the procedure under which she was convicted.

Ulbricht, Walter (Germany)

Introduction

Walter Ulbricht was one of the leading founders of communist East Germany at the end of World War II. He was First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party from 1950 until 1971 and Head of State from 1960 until his death in 1973. A hard-liner who kept faith with Leninist and Stalinist principles, Ulbricht imposed a highly centralized economy with heavy restrictions on civil liberties. He was responsible for the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

Early Life

The son of a tailor, Ulbricht was born on 30 June 1893 in Leipzig. Starting as a carpenter's apprentice, by the age of 13 he was active in the Socialist Youth Movement. At 17 he enrolled in the Union of Woodworkers and in 1912 he joined the Socialist Party, aligning himself with the radical wing. With the onset of World War I he fought on the Eastern Front but deserted twice. In the aftermath of war he was instrumental in setting up the German Communist Party (KPD).

After a period of training in the Soviet Union he was elected to the Reichstag in 1928 to represent South Westphalia. The previous year had seen him appointed to the KPD's Central Committee. When the Nazis came to power Ulbricht was forced into exile, returning to the USSR. He retained his links with the KPD and also worked for Comintern as a single-minded promoter of Stalinist orthodoxy. Between 1936–38 he fought in the Spanish Civil War. After the German invasion of the USSR in 1941 he was once again

in Moscow but returned to Germany in 1945 to take a leading role in the government of the Soviet zone. In 1946, the KPD merged with the Socialist Party to form the Socialist Unity Party (SED).

In Oct. 1949 the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was established and Ulbricht was made Deputy Prime Minister. In 1950 he became General Secretary (a post which was later changed to First Secretary) of the SED. He embarked on a programme of nationalization and agricultural collectivization. In June 1953 there was a strike in East Berlin in protest against plans for increased industrial output. When the protest spread Soviet troops were brought in to establish order. Over 20 people were killed and many more injured. The following year the GDR was recognized as a sovereign state by the Soviet Union and joined the Warsaw Pact in 1955.

Career Peak

There followed a degree of relaxation in communist rule within the GDR but from 1958 Ulbricht returned to the hardline. When President Wilhelm Pieck died in 1960 he was not replaced. Ulbricht became Chairman of the Council of State and, as effective head of state, increased his already formidable power base to impose ever-stricter rule. As disenchanting East Germans fled to West Berlin (some 3 m. crossed the border in the 16 years after the war) Ulbricht decided on a barrier between East and West, the Berlin Wall. On 13 Aug. 1961 a barbed wire fence was put up, later to be replaced by a 3 m-high concrete barrier. The wall became the most potent symbol of the ideological divide between the communist East and the capitalist West.

Despite Ulbricht's close ties with Moscow, his relationship with Leonid Brezhnev was not always easy. Ulbricht resigned as SED Chairman in May 1971, ostensibly because of failing health but almost certainly as a result of political manoeuvring within the Soviet Union.

Later Life

Ulbricht remained Chairman of the State Council until his death, but with his power strongly reduced. He died in East Berlin on 1 Aug. 1973.

Ulmanis, Guntis (Latvia)

Introduction

Guntis Ulmanis was Latvian president from 1993–99. The first post-independence leader, Ulmanis strove to make Latvia eligible for EU and NATO membership.

Early Life

Born in Riga on 13 Sept. 1939, Ulmanis was a nephew of Karlis Ulmanis, the last pre-Soviet president. Two years later, his family was deported to Krasnoyarsk, Siberia where they were held for 5 years. The family then settled in northwestern Latvia. After studying economics at the Latvian State University, Ulmanis served 2 years in the Soviet army from 1963–65. On leaving the service, he joined the communist party and worked as an economist in Riga's local administration. In 1989 he left the communist party and 3 years later joined the board of the Bank of Latvia. At the same time he was made honorary president of the centre-right Farmers' Union Party.

Career Peak

Elected to parliament in June 1993, a month later Ulmanis was elected president with 53 votes to 35, replacing the head of the Supreme Council (1990–93) Anatolijs Gorbunovs. He was re-elected in 1996 with 53 votes to 44. As the first elected president of independent Latvia, Ulmanis was keen to promote Latvia's language and culture and to make the country eligible for EU and NATO membership. As a first step, Latvia joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme in 1994 and in 1996 imposed a moratorium on the death penalty, which was abolished for ordinary crimes in 1999. Ulmanis also had to weather difficult relations with Russia. In 1994 he and Boris Yeltsin agreed to the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia, which helped ease tensions. But disputes continued regarding the large Russian-speaking minority living in Latvia and the country's strict citizen laws. In the face of increasing criticism from Russia (who threatened to impose sanctions) and the OSCE,

Ulmanis was forced to review the law forcing Russian speakers to pass a Latvian language test before becoming eligible for citizenship. In a referendum in 1998, 53% voted to relax the law. Constitutionally barred from standing for a third term, in 1999 he was replaced by Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga.

Later Life

Ulmanis worked in party politics as honorary president of the Farmers' Union Party until 2001 when he joined the new right-wing party New Era, created by the president of the Bank of Latvia, Einarš Repše.

Ungureanu, Mihai-Răzvan (Romania)

Introduction

Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, a former head of Romania's intelligence agency, became prime minister on 9 Feb. 2012, the youngest premier in the country's history. His appointment followed the resignation of Emil Boc after weeks of violent protests against government austerity measures. Ungureanu's priorities were to boost the economy while implementing conditions demanded by the IMF's bail-out package. In May 2012, Ungureanu was replaced by Victor Ponta after his government lost a no-confidence vote.

Early Life

Ungureanu was born on 22 Sept. 1968 in Iași, Romania. He graduated in history and philosophy from Iași's Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in 1992 and took a master's degree in Hebrew Studies at St Cross College, Oxford University in the UK the following year. He then returned to Iași University to lecture and write his doctorate on Romanian social history.

Ungureanu joined Romania's diplomatic service in 1998 and, from 2001, was the country's special envoy at the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in Vienna. From 2003–04 he was a co-ordinator at the Vienna-based South-East European Co-operative Initiative.

A member of the centre-right National Liberal Party (PNL) that became part of the Justice and Truth Alliance, Ungureanu was appointed minister of foreign affairs in Dec. 2004 by President Traian Băsescu (whose bid for the presidency had been supported by the PNL). Ungureanu was key to negotiations securing Romania's membership of the European Union on 1 Jan. 2007. A month later he was asked by the prime minister, Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu, to resign following a row over Romanian workers detained by coalition forces in Iraq.

After a brief spell in the political wilderness, in Nov. 2007 MPs voted for Ungureanu to lead the Foreign Intelligence Service (SIE). When the prime minister, Emil Boc, resigned in early Feb. 2012 amid violent protests over cuts in public spending, the president turned to Ungureanu, whose proposed government was approved by MPs on 9 Feb. 2012.

Career Peak

Ungureanu pledged to continue the austerity drive that secured an IMF bail-out in 2010, although he hinted that the government may increase pensions and wages should the economy pick up. However, after less than 3 months in office, opposition parties seized on widespread discontent over austerity measures and the government lost a no-confidence vote. Ungureanu was replaced by the left-wing opposition leader Victor Ponta on 7 May 2012.

Uribe Vélez, Álvaro (Colombia)

Introduction

Álvaro Uribe Vélez was elected president of Colombia in May 2002 in an outright first-round victory. An independent candidate, his hardline mandate

of combating left-wing guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries found popularity with the electorate after attempts at peace talks by his predecessor Andrés Pastrana had failed. He was re-elected in May 2006.

Early Life

Uribe was born on 4 July 1952 in Medellín. After completing a law degree at the Universidad de Antioquia, he studied management at Harvard University in the USA and worked as an associate professor at Oxford University in England.

At the age of 24 he began working for Medellín Public Works, following which he was secretary general of the labour ministry (1977–78), worked for the civil aeronautics department (1980–82) and was then mayor of Medellín. He was a member of the Senate from 1986–94. His career in his native region continued between 1995–97 when he served as governor of the Antioquia region. As such he streamlined the local government department and increased spending on education, health and road infrastructure. He set up the 'Convivirs' security networks which diminished the presence of the left-wing guerrilla Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC; Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces) in Antioquia. But he was criticized for allowing the right-wing paramilitary Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC; United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia) to take advantage of the reduced FARC profile.

Uribe's hardline view on guerrilla activity in part stemmed from his father's assassination in 1983 by FARC members during a bungled kidnapping attempt. Combatting terrorism was made the central issue of his 2002 presidential campaign. Peace talks between incumbent president Pastrana and FARC leaders had failed to stem violence and kidnappings, and Uribe's pledge to forcefully oppose terrorist activity was well received among voters. Violence increased in the lead-up to the polls, including numerous assassination attempts on Uribe and the kidnapping of the independent candidate Ingrid Betancourt. The election itself passed relatively peacefully and, with a turnout of 47%, Uribe beat the Colombian Liberal Party candidate Horacio Serpa by 53% of votes to 32%. Despite a military presence of 20,000, Uribe's inauguration in Aug. 2002 was marred by explosions around Bogotá which killed 20 people and injured 60.

Career Peak

On election Uribe planned to double the size of the army and create a 1 m-strong civil militia. He also sought to amend the constitution to allow for martial law and states of siege. His plans received a positive response from the USA, with the possibility of increased military aid, although FARC promised to resist the government forces. Unlike his predecessor, Uribe demanded a full FARC ceasefire and halt in kidnappings before any peace talks could be brokered. FARC demanded control of two southern provinces, Caquetá and Putumayo, in return. Although Uribe also targeted terrorism by the smaller left-wing Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN; National Liberation Army) and the AUC, the latter responded positively to the president's election and formal peace talks began in mid-2003, leading to an AUC commitment to demobilize in exchange for amnesty.

In July 2005 the 'justice and peace' law won congressional approval, making generous concessions to illegal fighters in return for laying down their arms. Human rights groups have been critical of the law, however, viewing it as a charter of impunity for war criminals. The government announced in April 2006 that the demobilization of the AUC had been completed.

In 2007 Uribe offered to free guerrilla prisoners and start peace talks with FARC in exchange for the release of hostages, and invited President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela to try and broker a deal. However, Uribe ended Chávez's involvement in Nov. after a series of apparent diplomatic breaches. In 2008 the release of several high-profile FARC hostages was secured and there were signs of reconciliation between Uribe and Chávez, but links with Ecuador were seriously undermined by a cross-border Colombian strike against a FARC target in Ecuadorian territory. Relations with Venezuela were again strained in 2009 by Uribe's agreement to allow US armed forces to use Colombian military bases for joint operations against drug trafficking and guerrillas and by Venezuela's alleged supply of arms to FARC.

In Oct. 2005 the Constitutional Court had upheld an amendment to the constitution allowing presidential re-election and the following month set out conditions under which an incumbent could stand, so allowing Uribe to campaign for a second term in elections which he won in May 2006. He was

formally inaugurated in Aug. that year. Then, in Sept. 2009, the House of Representatives approved the final text of a law to call a referendum on changing the constitution to allow Uribe to run for an unprecedented third consecutive term in presidential elections scheduled for May 2010. However, the Constitutional Court blocked the plans after ruling that they were unconstitutional.

Uribe's other aims during his presidency included tackling corruption, targeting crime and drug trafficking and, on his Antioquia model, reducing expenditure on public administration. The drug trade has been closely linked to guerrilla and paramilitary activities, and in May 2008 the government extradited 14 paramilitary leaders to the USA to stand trial on trafficking charges.

In July 2010 Uribe accused Venezuela of harbouring and protecting FARC and ELN guerrillas, prompting a diplomatic rift between the countries. However, on 7 Aug. Uribe was succeeded by Juan Manuel Santos of the Social National Unity Party who swiftly negotiated a reconciliation with Chávez.

Later Life

Uribe was re-elected to the Senate at the July 2014 elections, 20 years after he had last been a member.

Uribe strongly opposed the peace negotiations with the FARC guerrilla group that began in 2012, refusing to meet with President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC leader Rodrigo 'Timochenko' Londoño during the talks.

Urusemal, Joseph (Micronesia)

Introduction

Elected the sixth president of the Federated States of Micronesia on 11 May 2003, Joseph Urusemal has pledged to tackle poverty and unemployment and reduce the nation's dependence on foreign aid. He has endeavoured to raise international awareness of the threat posed to Micronesia by global climate change, exemplified by the increasing frequency and intensity of storms in the Pacific. Urusemal left office in 2007.

Early Life

Joseph J. Urusemal was born on 19 March 1952, on Woleai, one of the Yap islands in the US-administered Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TPPI). He attended Xavier High School in the Truk islands and graduated from Rockhurst College, Kansas City, Missouri, USA with a BA in administration of justice in 1973. Urusemal then worked for the government of Jackson County for 6 years. In 1982 he returned to Yap, which in 1979 had become part of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and worked as a teacher at the Outer Islands High School. He also served on the education steering committee.

In 1987 Urusemal was elected Yap States' representative to the FSM Congress. In 1991 he was promoted to floor leader in the congress and held membership of the standing committees for health, education and social affairs, resources and development, transportation and communication and judiciary and government operations. He was elected president by congress on 11 May 2003, succeeding Leo Falcam, who had held office since 1999.

Career Peak

Seven months after Urusemal took office a renewed Compact of Free Association with the USA was signed into law. Its terms ensured the survival of US military bases in the FSM in return for financial assistance worth around US\$3.5 bn. to the FSM and the Marshall Islands. Urusemal, who highlighted the need to lessen the FSM's dependency on foreign aid, focused on developing tourism and improving commercial links with Japan and Australia. He pledged to oversee the reform and increased accountability of the Chuuk State (formerly Truk) administration, noted for financial and administrative crises for several years.

Urusemal's term as president ended on 11 May 2007 when congress selected Immanuel 'Manny' Mori, the senator for Chuuk, as his replacement.

Văcăroiu, Nicolae (Romania)

Introduction

Nicolae Văcăroiu was appointed interim president on 20 April 2007, following the suspension of President Traian Băsescu. Văcăroiu had full presidential powers except the authority to dissolve or address parliament or organize a referendum. He left office on 20 May after the reinstatement of Băsescu.

Early Life

Văcăroiu was born outside present-day Romania on 5 Dec. 1943 in Bolhrad, in the Soviet-controlled region of Bessarabia, now in Ukraine. In 1969 he graduated from the Academy of Economic Studies (ASE) in Bucharest. From 1969–72 he worked as an economist with the Design and Planning Institute of Ilfov County, rising to become director of the Economic-Financial Synthesis Directorate of the State Planning Committee. He was director until 1989, when revolution ended communist rule. At this time he was listed as an associate professor with the sociology faculties of Bucharest University and ASE.

Văcăroiu joined Romania's first democratic government and in 1990 was appointed deputy minister of the new ministry of national economics. Subsequently, he was head of the finance ministry's pricing department and finally head of its rates and taxes department, working on the strategy for Romania's transition to a market economy. With experience as chairman of the inter-ministerial committee on foreign trade credit guarantees, he was a key figure in negotiations between Romania, the International Monetary Fund and other international financial bodies.

In 1992 President Ion Iliescu appointed the relatively unknown Văcăroiu prime minister. He represented the minority Democratic National Salvation Front, which evolved into the Social Democratic Party. In a period of political and economic instability, his administration was criticized for its failure to institute reform and to prevent the spread of corruption. However, it did grant the National Bank of Romania a degree of independence and contained inflation. In the 1996 elections, discontent over corruption and slow reform brought defeat for the Social Democratic Party.

Văcăroiu served as senator for Argeş from 1996–2000, as well as chairman of the senate committee on privatizations (1996–99) and deputy chairman of the senate standing bureau (1999–2000). In Nov. 2000 he was re-elected senator of Argeş and appointed co-chair of the Bucharest–Chişinău inter-parliamentary commission. In Dec. 2000 he became senate chairman and was elected deputy chairman of the Social Democratic Party 6 months later. Re-elected chairman of the senate in 2004, he held the post until his appointment as interim president in April 2007.

Career Peak

Văcăroiu took office after accusations of corruption against President Băsescu and Prime Minister Popescu-Tăriceanu. On 19 April 2007 parliament voted to suspend Băsescu for violating the constitution. The constitutional court upheld the decision the following day and, in accordance with Romanian law, appointed Văcăroiu interim president. With the European Union, which Romania joined in 2007, demanding a quick solution, a referendum was scheduled for 19 May to decide whether or not to impeach Băsescu. A majority vote with more than 50% attendance was required for the result to stand.

On taking office, Văcăroiu met Băsescu's aids and heads of government departments. He pledged to meet the supreme defence council to negotiate a series of national security laws. With European Union backing, he also pushed for legislation to establish a national agency for integrity to act as an anti-corruption check on high officials.

Văcăroiu's term of office ended when Băsescu was reinstated on 23 May 2007 after voters rejected attempts to impeach him. Văcăroiu subsequently returned to his position as senate chairman.

Vajpayee, Atal Bihari (India)

Introduction

Previously regarded as an elder statesman whose best days were behind him, Atal Bihari Vajpayee came to power in 1996 when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formed its first coalition government. A former BJP president, his role in Indian politics, at the forefront of the Congress Party's main opposition, often led the party away from its nationalist background towards a more moderate stance. With coalition government emerging as the most viable form of political rule in India, Vajpayee was the first Indian prime minister to manage such a coalition through successive periods in office. His time in office was dominated by fluctuating relations with Pakistan, the future of Kashmir and violent communal unrest. The 2004 elections saw the defeat of Vajpayee's National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the return of a Congress-led government. However, Vajpayee's third period in office was the first full-term non-Congress government since independence.

A renowned poet, Vajpayee had several books published. A bachelor, he has a foster son, Ranjan Bhattacharya, who is politically influential.

Early Life

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was born into an upper caste family in Gwalior (now part of Madhya Pradesh) on 25 Dec. 1924. Educated at Victoria College, Gwalior then D. V. A. College, Kanpur, he took to journalism. In 1947 he became joint editor of *Rashtra Dharma*, a monthly publication tied to right-wing Hindu nationalist party, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

In 1951 he was a founder member of the RSS-linked Bharatiya Jana Sangh party (BJS). In 1950 he made his first attempt to gain a seat in parliament. Defeated in the Lucknow constituency, he became the parliamentary leader of the BJS in 1957 after his successful election to the Lok Sabha where he remained until his appointment in 1962 to the Rajya Sabha. Following the death of Deendayal Upadhyaya in 1968, Vajpayee took over the role of BJS party president.

Under his leadership, the BJS supported the ruling Congress party in the movement towards the secession of East Pakistan (1970–72). Indira Gandhi's declaration of a state of Emergency from June 1975 to April 1977 saw thousands of her political opponents imprisoned, including Vajpayee. Between 1977–79 Vajpayee served as cabinet minister for external affairs becoming the first non-Congress Party foreign minister. During his tenure he was instrumental in establishing closer ties with Pakistan.

In 1980 he became founding president of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Resulting from the failure of the dual-membership concept integral to the Bharatiya Jana Sangh party (sharing membership with the RSS), the newly formed BJP attempted to steer a more liberal path. Poor electoral results—the BJP gained only two parliamentary seats—saw Vajpayee replaced, in 1984, by L. K. Advani, the party's former general secretary. His re-election to the Rajya Sabha indicated an apparent withdrawal from the political limelight.

On 6 Dec. 1992 the razing of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya by a group of Hindu extremists with links to the BJP raised issues over the party's direction. Although Vajpayee went against the tide of implicit support for the act from within the party by condemning the action, the event and the issues surrounding it continue to create political tension for the BJP.

In 1996, after his successful handling of internal dissent within the Gujarat constituency, Vajpayee was called upon to lead the party to an electoral victory as part of a coalition government.

Career Peak

Vajpayee's first period as prime minister and minister of external affairs lasted only 13 days. He returned to office on 19 March 1998, naming L. K. Advani as minister for home affairs. On 11 and 13 May 1998 India carried out a series of five nuclear tests in Pokhara in the desert region of Rajasthan. The tests invoked sanctions from the US and Japan, whilst bolstering public support for Vajpayee. In spite of fears of an arms race between India and Pakistan, Vajpayee's symbolic Lahore bus trip in Feb. 1999 (a journey from Delhi, India, to Lahore, Pakistan, where Vajpayee met former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif) was widely viewed as the first positive move towards closer bilateral relations.

A vote of no-confidence passed in April 1999 ousted Vajpayee by a single vote. Indian President, K. R. Narayanan, requested Vajpayee to remain as caretaker prime minister until parliamentary elections were held. The armed conflict in Kargil between Pakistani-backed militants, Pakistani soldiers and Indian troops refreshed support for the BJP, heightening Vajpayee's popularity. Elections in Sept. and Oct. 1999 brought the BJP into government at the head of a 24-party coalition—the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)—and began Vajpayee's third period in office as prime minister (sworn in 13 Oct. 1999). Vajpayee's electoral campaign was a personality contest with his main rival, Congress Leader Sonia Gandhi. Following dissent in her own party over the issue of her Italian descent, the BJP adopted a populist rhetoric which pointed up differences between foreign and 'home-grown' interests and politics. Pledging further economic liberalization and reform, Vajpayee attracted large support from the middle and upper classes.

His government was hit by scandal in March 2001 when journalists from the Tehelka news agency, posing as arms dealers, offered financial gifts to senior politicians and officials as part of a fake arms deal. The scandal brought the first charges of corruption against Vajpayee's government and prompted the resignation of BJP Leader Bangaru Laxman and Defence Minister George Fernandes. The NDA survived the scandal though this was in no small part thanks to an electorate weary of political instability.

The Agra summit, held 14–16 June 2001 with Pakistan's leader, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, was the first of its kind. Though seen as a serious attempt to normalize relations, the talks were marred by Musharraf's insistence on focusing almost exclusively on the Kashmir issue whilst Vajpayee, displaying a similar tenacity, attempted to draw the Pakistani leader into a dialogue over the issue of cross-border terrorism. Shortly after the summit an invitation was extended to Vajpayee to continue talks in Islamabad. The peace process was interrupted by the events of 11 Sept. 2001 when hijacked planes crashed into New York's World Trade Centre buildings.

Vajpayee was the first leader in South Asia to offer military support to the US. The expectation that the US would in turn offer support to India against terrorism in Kashmir was complicated by US military reliance on Pakistan as a doorway for attacks on Afghanistan. A suicide attack on the state assembly building in Kashmir's summer capital, by Pakistani militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad, killing 38 people, prompted condemnation from western powers. Vajpayee sought to draw parallels between the anti-terrorism coalition mounted by the US and his own country's problems in Kashmir.

Further terrorist attacks, including an attack on the Indian parliament buildings in Delhi in Dec. 2001, led to the collapse of relations between India and Pakistan and military tension along the border continued to mount. Vajpayee took a firm stance throughout the crisis (which reached its high-point in May 2002) yet contributed to easing tensions by making a proposal for joint patrols along the border.

In 2002 Vajpayee faced his most challenging domestic crisis since coming to power when communal violence flared up in the northeastern state of Gujarat. Escalating political tension over the scheduled construction of the temple at Ayodhya led to an arson attack on 27 Feb. killing 58 members of hardline Hindu organization, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). The attack provoked widespread rioting and attacks against Muslims, in which over 900 people were killed. Vajpayee was criticized for not acting quickly enough to deal with the situation.

Allegations of funding for separatists in Kashmir in Feb. 2003 led to tit-for-tat expulsions of the acting high commissioners from Islamabad and Delhi. In March 2003 India and Pakistan held contemporaneous tests of short-range, nuclear-capable missiles. The tests followed shortly after India had blamed Pakistan for a recent massacre of 24 Hindus in Kashmir. In early May 2003 Vajpayee made another attempt to normalize relations with Pakistan by announcing his intention to appoint a high commissioner to Islamabad. This was welcomed by Pakistan, which promised to reciprocate.

In June 2003, during a bridge-building visit to China, Vajpayee conceded recognition of Tibet as an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China and promised to prevent 'anti-China political activities in India' by Tibetans.

Negotiations with Pakistan accelerated during the second half of 2003. By Oct. both governments had agreed to resume transport links and the highly symbolic sporting ties, notably cricket. Vajpayee announced that his government would meet the Kashmiri separatist alliance for the first time and suggested direct road links between the two Kashmiris. Direct flights between Delhi and Lahore were restored in Jan. 2004 after a 2-year suspension. At a meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Lahore in Jan., Vajpayee agreed with Musharraf to hold direct talks on a settlement for Kashmir in Feb. The SAARC meeting also produced an agreement to set up a free trade area from Jan. 2006.

While campaigning in March 2004 for upcoming early elections, Vajpayee declared the end of military conflict with Pakistan and promised increased trade and communication between the two countries. However, the NDA's 22-party coalition was decisively defeated by the Congress party's alliance. Regional BJP allies—in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu—fared badly, as did the BJP in India's poorer states—Bihar and Uttar Pradesh—where the BJP's 'India Shining' slogan failed to win support. Vajpayee left office on 22 May 2004 and was succeeded by Congress' Manmohan Singh, after Sonia Gandhi turned down the premiership. He returned to the Lok Sabha on 2 June as the member for Lucknow. Elected chairman of the BJP parliamentary party, he relinquished the party leadership to L. K. Advani.

Vall, Ely Ould Mohammed (Mauritania)

Introduction

Col. Ely Ould Mohammed Vall deposed Mauritania's President Taya in a bloodless coup in Aug. 2005 and promised to pave the way for genuine multi-party elections within 2 years.

Early Life

Ely Ould Mohammed Vall was born in 1953 in Nouakchott, Mauritania, then part of the Federation of French West Africa. He was educated in Nouakchott and in the French cities of Aix-en-Provence and Le Mans and in 1973 he joined the Meknès military academy in Morocco. While developing his military career, he also studied law. On his return to Mauritania, Vall served in the war against Western Sahara's pro-independence Polisario Front, commanding military posts at Bir-Mogreïn, Oudane and Ain-Benteli. From 1979–81 he commanded the Compagnie du Quartier Général before becoming head of the military district of Rosso.

In 1984, while commander of the military district of Nouakchott, Vall played a key role in the coup led by his ally and fellow military commander, Col. Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya. In Nov. 1985 Vall was appointed director of national security. President Taya legalized opposition parties in 1991 but subsequent multi-party presidential elections were nonetheless criticized for irregularities. Taya's regime became increasingly unpopular and reportedly survived three attempted coups during 2003–04.

With the president attending King Fahd's funeral in Saudi Arabia, Vall led a coup against Taya on 3 Aug. 2005 and appeared to have broad domestic backing. However, Vall came under fire from the exiled opposition amid allegations that he had sanctioned torture in jails under his command.

Career Peak

Vall declared that his governing military council would remain in power for up to 2 years while it created conditions for genuine democratic institutions. The African Union, EU, UN, South Africa and the USA initially denounced Vall's administration as illegitimate. However, in the meantime the international community engaged with the regime in expectation of democratic parliamentary elections, which took place in Nov.–Dec. 2006. There nevertheless remains some scepticism as to whether power will be ceded to civilian rulers, not least because Mauritania is expected to benefit from substantial wealth from its oil and gas reserves in the near future. He died of a heart attack at the age of 64 on 5 May 2017.

Valls, Manuel (France)

Introduction

Manuel Valls was prime minister from April 2014 until Dec. 2016, when he launched an unsuccessful campaign for the presidency. A member of the Socialist Party, he had gained a reputation for toughness as minister of the interior before becoming prime minister in April 2014. Following François

Hollande's decision in Dec. 2016 not to run for re-election, Valls declared himself a candidate for the presidency and resigned as premier.

Early Life

Manuel Carlos Valls was born on 13 Aug. 1962 in Barcelona, to a Spanish father and Swiss mother. He moved to France as a teenager, joined the Socialist Party and studied history at the University of Paris 1, where he was active in the student union movement.

Valls was elected to the regional council for the Île-de-France in 1986, becoming its vice-president in 1998 having served as deputy mayor of Argenteuil-Bezons in 1988. He was elected mayor of Évry in 2001.

In June 2009 Valls announced that he would contest the Socialist candidacy for the 2012 presidential election. Defeated in the first round after winning only 6% of the vote, he immediately endorsed the victor, François Hollande, and served as communications director for his successful presidential campaign.

As minister of the interior from May 2012, Valls adopted tough stances on immigration and crime that alienated wings of his own party but proved popular with the public. After the Socialist Party suffered losses in municipal elections, the incumbent premier, Jean-Marc Ayrault, announced his resignation on 31 March 2014. Hollande appointed Valls as Ayrault's successor the following day.

Career Peak

In his first speech to the National Assembly, Valls announced sweeping tax cuts and labour reforms, as well as swingeing reductions in public expenditure, with the aim of promoting growth and cutting the budget deficit. His economic and social policies were unpopular among many on the left of his party and in Aug. 2014 he overhauled the cabinet in response to three ministerial resignations over government austerity measures. Nonetheless, he survived two parliamentary votes of confidence in his first 6 months in office.

In June 2015 the government survived another confidence vote, which took place after Valls utilized a rarely used constitutional device to force through economic reforms.

In the wake of co-ordinated terrorist attacks across Paris on 13 Nov. 2015 by Islamist extremists, Valls spearheaded the government's security response and the nationwide state of emergency. Following a further devastating attack in Nice in July 2016, for which the Islamic State jihadist movement claimed responsibility, Valls was criticized for claiming that France would forthwith 'have to live with terrorism'.

On 6 Dec. Valls resigned as prime minister to launch his bid for the presidency, and was replaced by Bernard Cazeneuve, the former interior minister. In the Socialist Party presidential primary election held in Jan. 2017, he lost to Benoît Hamon who later received only 6.4% of the total votes cast in the first round of the presidential election.

At the June 2017 parliamentary elections, although he first expressed his willingness to join Emmanuel Macron's party La République en Marche!, he ran for the Socialist Party and won a seat in Évry.

Van Rompuy, Herman (Belgium)

Introduction

Herman Van Rompuy was prime minister from Dec. 2008–Nov. 2009. The leader of the Christian Democratic & Flemish Party (CD&V), Van Rompuy was asked by King Albert II to form a government after the previous administration resigned in the wake of the break-up of Fortis bank.

Early Life

Van Rompuy was born in Oct. 1947 in Etterbeek, in the Brussels-Capital Region. He graduated in philosophy from the University of Leuven in 1968 before studying for a master's degree in economic science.

Beginning his political career as vice-president of the Young Christian People's Party, he graduated in 1978 to become a member of the national bureau of the Christian People's Party. By the end of the 1970s he was serving in the cabinet of Léo Tindemans and in 1980 was appointed director of the

CVP Study Centre. In 1988 he was elected to the Senate and became president of the CVP, serving until his promotion to minister for the budget and deputy prime minister in 1993.

In his 6-year tenure as budget minister Van Rompuy significantly reduced the national debt, which had stood at 130% of GDP when he took office. He criticized the previous government's plans to increase the budget deficit and spend its way out of recession. In 1995 he left the Senate to take up a seat in the Chamber of Representatives.

The heavy defeat of the CVP at the 1999 election, which followed a scandal concerning the contamination of feedstock with dioxins, precipitated a crisis in the party that saw it renamed as the CD&V. After 8 years out of power, the 2007 general election returned the CD&V to government, with Van Rompuy serving as speaker of the Chamber.

On 19 Dec. 2008 Belgium's Supreme Court announced 'strong indications' that the incumbent government had attempted to influence a court decision on the break-up of the financial group Fortis. Albert II accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Yves Leterme's administration and on 28 Dec. asked Van Rompuy to form a government. Van Rompuy was reportedly reluctant to assume the premiership but bowed to pressure from party members eager to prevent the return of ex-prime minister Guy Verhofstadt.

Career Peak

Through most of 2009 Van Rompuy sought to rebuild confidence in the political system, while confronting Belgium's financial crisis and also attempting to diffuse tensions between the Dutch- and French-speaking communities. Then, in Nov., he was selected, with effect from 1 Jan. 2010, for the post of president of the European Council.

Later Life

Van Rompuy's tenure as president of the European Council was dominated by the fallout from the global financial crisis and the pressing need for EU governments to devise mechanisms to deal with sovereign debt problems in a number of eurozone member states.

In Dec. 2012 Van Rompuy, together with the presidents of the European Commission and European Parliament, accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the European Union, which had received the annual award for its advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. In March 2013 he announced that the expiry of his EU mandate at the end of Nov. 2014 would mark the end of his political career. The former prime minister of Poland Donald Tusk subsequently took over from Van Rompuy as president of the European Council.

Vanhanen, Matti (Finland)

Introduction

Matti Vanhanen took over as Finland's prime minister in June 2003 when the 3-month tenure of Anneli Jäätteenmäki ended amid political scandal. A member of the Centre Party like his predecessor, Vanhanen is widely regarded as a cautious and reliable politician. He retained the premiership following parliamentary elections in March 2007.

Early Life

Matti Taneli Vanhanen was born 4 Nov. 1955 in Jyväskylä, Finland. From 1980–83 he was chairman of the Centre Party's youth organization, and in 1989 completed a university degree in political science. His early career as a journalist, working as editor-in-chief of *Kehäsanomat* from 1988–91, won him a reputation as an expert on the European Union. In 1991 he was elected to the Finnish parliament, where he became vice-president of the party and, later, defence minister.

On 18 June 2003 Jäätteenmäki resigned from both her role as prime minister and as leader of the Centre Party, following allegations over her use of information concerning her predecessor, Paavo Lipponen, in the build-up to the elections of March 2003. Jäätteenmäki was in office for just 63 days.

Career Peak

Observers viewed the appointment of Vanhanen as an attempt to restore calm to Finnish national politics and one of his principal tasks was to win back public trust. He initially headed a coalition comprising the Centre Party, the Social Democrats and the Swedish People's Party, and was expected to pursue a similar economic programme to that of Jäätteenmäki. He spoke out against plans for a proposed EU common defence policy, was a leading advocate of ecological and environmental issues, and voiced his opposition to plans to build a fifth nuclear reactor in Finland.

In 2005 a 7-week industrial dispute in the paper mill industry over pay and conditions caused nationwide strikes before being settled by mediation. Losses in export earnings were expected to reach €5 bn. and Vanhanen's government faced considerable losses in tax revenue.

In Oct. 2005 Vanhanen was nominated as the presidential candidate of the Centre Party for the Jan. 2006 election but came third with just under 19% of the vote. During Finland's 6-month presidency of the EU from July–Dec. 2006, he sought to build a wider consensus among Europe's leaders on reviving the stalled EU constitution and on conditions for future membership expansion, particularly in relation to Turkey.

He was re-elected as prime minister by parliament in April 2007, following the Centre's Party's narrow victory in parliamentary polls in March, and formed a new centre-right coalition government with the Swedish People's Party, the National Rally Party and the Green League.

In Sept. 2008 he called for stricter firearms controls after a gunman killed nine students and a teacher at a college in the town of Kauhajokki before taking his own life.

In Oct. 2009 alleged election financing irregularities by the Centre Party led to the tabling of a parliamentary no-confidence motion in Vanhanen's coalition by opposition left-wing parties in Oct. 2009, but this was defeated by 117–27 votes with 56 abstentions. Vanhanen resigned in June 2010 having announced in Dec. 2009 that he would step down as Centre Party leader before its next congress and also as prime minister owing to a forthcoming leg operation. He was succeeded in both positions by Mari Kiviniemi who served as minister for local government and public administration in his cabinet.

Later Life

Shortly after leaving office Vanhanen was appointed managing director of the Finnish Family Firms Association. However, in Nov. 2014 he announced his resignation from the organization and returned as a member of parliament following the April 2015 elections.

Vargas, Getúlio Dornelles (Brazil)

Introduction

Getúlio Dornelles Vargas was twice president of Brazil, from 1930 to 1945 and then from 1951 to 1954. A social and economic reformer, his rule was increasingly authoritarian.

Early Life

Born in 1883 in São Borja, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Vargas was raised on local politics. Having completed a brief stint in the military, he graduated in law in 1908 and entered politics. He served in the national congress from 1922–26 before being appointed finance minister under President de Souza. Two years later he became governor of Rio Grande do Sul. Failing to win the presidency in 1930, he had a prominent role in the revolution of Oct. 1930 which overthrew the republic.

Career Peak

Vargas relied on the support of the military for most of his first period in office. Between 1930 and July 1934 he held the title of provisional president. He was then elected president by the constituent assembly but in Nov. 1937 he dismissed the constitutional government and created the Estado Novo (New State) based on the Portuguese totalitarian model.

With his opponents, notably the communists, removed, Vargas was free to institute radical reforms. Central government was strengthened to reduce the

power of the large landowners. A wider suffrage, including women, expanded the electorate fourfold. Social reforms included the introduction of a minimum wage. Vargas attempted to keep big business on side by promoting rapid industrialization, while his anti-Nazi stance ensured development funding from the US.

Despite popular support, his reforms were only partially successful. Opposition to censorship and a faltering economy led to his overthrow in Oct. 1945. He was elected senator for Rio Grande do Sul later that year but his political profile remained low until he stood as the Labour candidate in the presidential election of 1950. Having regained office, he was unable to hold support for a programme of economic austerity. His government was beset by allegations of corruption and by July 1954 the military was demanding his dismissal. Vargas shot himself on 24 Aug. 1954.

Vejjajiva, Abhisit (Thailand)

Introduction

Abhisit Vejajiva served as prime minister from Dec. 2008–Aug. 2011. His election, which took place 2 weeks after the constitutional court banned three parties from the previous coalition government, was marked by party defections and allegations of vote rigging. Abhisit vowed to restore the economy and rebuild political confidence.

Early Life

Abhisit Vejajiva was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England to a family of wealthy Thai-Chinese physicians on 3 Aug. 1964. He attended Eton College before graduating from St John's College, Oxford with a degree in philosophy, politics and economics. After a brief teaching stint at Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Thailand, Abhisit returned to Oxford where he gained a master's degree in economics. Returning to Thailand, he taught economics at Thammasat University before graduating in law from Ramkhamhaeng University in 1990.

In 1992 Abhisit joined the Democrat Party and became the MP for Bangkok. Rising through the party ranks, he became deputy party leader in 1999 and leader in 2005. In 2006 he led a boycott against snap elections called by the incumbent prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, claiming they lacked legitimacy.

In April 2007 Abhisit campaigned for the premier's office with the slogan 'Putting People First' and an agenda filled with populist policies. Criticized over his muted condemnation of the Sept. 2006 military coup, Abhisit backed the junta's draft constitution as the 'lesser of two evils'. In 2007 and 2008 he lost two parliamentary votes for the premiership before finally winning on 15 Dec. 2008.

Career Peak

Lacking a popular mandate to lead, Abhisit came under intense pressure after taking office. He was accused of deal-brokering in cabinet appointments and faced allegations of corruption before defeating a vote of no confidence on 21 March 2009. Thaksin supporters continued to demand new elections and on 26 March stepped up their protests by surrounding Abhisit's office and calling for his resignation. Anti-government demonstrators also stormed the venue of an ASEAN summit meeting in Pattaya in April (Thailand having begun an 18-month term as chair of the organization in July 2008), forcing its abandonment. Abhisit declared a state of emergency in response and brought in troops in a crackdown on opposition.

In June 2009 parliament approved the government's US\$23 bn. fiscal stimulus plan to boost the economy in the wake of the global financial crisis. In Nov. 2009 a diplomatic row broke out between Thailand and Cambodia over Thaksin's appointment as an economic adviser to the Cambodian government and the rejection of a Thai request for his extradition. However, in Aug. 2010 it was reported that Thaksin had relinquished his role and that the two governments had normalized their relations.

In Feb. 2010 the Supreme Court stripped the Thaksin family of half its estimated US\$1.4 bn. fortune, claiming it was gained through corruption. Thaksin supporters responded the following month by surrounding the prime minister's office and again demanding his resignation. The demonstrations in Bangkok continued into April, leading to violent clashes between protesters

and the military, but ended in May following decisive intervention by the army in which about 90 people were killed and over 2,000 injured. In Dec. 2010 the government lifted the state of emergency in Bangkok and surrounding areas. Also in late 2010 the Constitutional Court dismissed accusations of electoral misconduct that could have resulted in the dissolution of Abhisit's ruling Democrat Party.

In elections held in July 2011, Abhisit's Democrat Party lost to the Pheu Thai Party (PTP) and the Thai parliament subsequently elected Yingluck Shinawatra as Abhisit's successor. Fulfilling an earlier promise made during the election campaign Abhisit stood down as the party leader, but was then re-elected at a party assembly.

Velasco Alvarado, Juan (Peru)

Introduction

General Juan Velasco Alvarado headed a military junta between 1968–75. A socialist, he implemented key socio-economic reforms before failing health ended his rule.

Early Life

Velasco was born in Piura, in North Peru, on 16 June 1910. He trained at the Chorrillos military academy at Lima. After a successful military career, Velasco achieved the rank of general. At this time there was a wave of military discontent. Economic reforms under President Fernando Belaúnde had failed causing growing disillusionment and Belaúnde's pro-USA stance was unpopular. There was a major dispute over the La Brea and Pariña's oilfields in the north of Peru. The people, and the military, were unhappy with the monopoly of the American company, the International Petroleum Co., and its influence over the surrounding regions. Velasco led a bloodless coup and established himself as the head of an all-military government.

Career Peak

Unlike other military dictatorships, Velasco's government was reformist and populist. He set about implementing social and economic reforms aimed at improving the economy and reducing the disparity between the rich and Peru's majority poor by raising levels of education and social security. He also implemented a nationalization programme of transport, electricity, oil, mining and communications. In extensive agrarian reforms, co-operatives were established on formerly private farms. Price controls were imposed and Velasco promoted workers involvement in decision making. To support the large indigenous population, many of whom represented Peru's most poor, he made Quechua Peru's official second language. But he also restricted the freedom of the press.

Velasco reversed Belaúnde's policy of encouraging US influence. He took the disputed oil fields back under Peruvian control, leaving the American owners uncompensated. He banned American fishermen from Peruvian waters, sought a Latin American alliance against the USA and was unmoved when the USA suspended arms sales. Velasco strongly opposed American sanctions of Cuba.

Velasco's first 5 years in power were judged but in 1973 his health failed and his power waned. He continued to run the government for a further 2 years before, amid strikes, he was deposed by his prime minister, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez. The latter continued the military dictatorship, but reversed all of Velasco's reforms. Velasco died on 24 Dec. 1977 and his funeral procession through the streets of Lima was accompanied by a large anti-government protest.

Velasco Ibarra, José María (Ecuador)

Introduction

José María Velasco Ibarra was a major political figure in Ecuador from the 1930s to the 1970s and served as president five times. A noted orator, he was

also a distinguished lawyer and author, writing seven books on political discourse and statecraft. He seemed able to win any election, such was his popularity with the masses, but his terms in office were marked by sudden reversals in policy, contradictory economic programmes, temporary suspensions of civil liberties and military interventions. Despite his five presidencies, in which he governed both as constitutional president and dictator, he only managed to serve one full term and spent more time in exile than as president, governing for 12 years and 10 months in total.

Early Life

Velasco was born on 19 March 1893 into a wealthy family in Quito. He was educated at home until the age of 10 before attending the Seminario Menor de San Luis and Colegio San Gabriel. From 1911 he studied Law at the Universidad Central de Ecuador, where he founded and presided over a number of political associations for students and obtained a doctorate in 1922. Following his studies he became a columnist for newspaper *El Comercio de Quito* and a professor of Law. In 1933 Velasco was appointed as the Conservative party's election candidate and in Sept. 1934 he assumed the presidency, the first of five terms in office.

Career Peak

Velasco's economic proposals included the division of large landed estates, which failed to win the support of Congress. He responded by assuming dictatorial powers, imprisoning opposition leaders and censoring the press. In Aug. 1935 he was deposed by army leaders after 11 months in office and went into exile in Colombia.

In 1944 Velasco returned to Ecuador at the head of the Democratic Alliance, a multi-party coalition of Ecuadorian politicians dedicated to replacing current president Carlos Arroyo. On 28 May 1944 there was an uprising which saw the military and civilian supporters of the alliance pitted against Arroyo's police. The president resigned the following day and the military handed power to the Democratic Alliance who in turn named Velasco as president. The exiled leader returned triumphantly from Colombia and during a 3-day journey to Quito was greeted by enthusiasts who believed they were witnessing the birth of a popular revolution. As president, Velasco imprisoned and exiled Arroyo's supporters and baited the business community and the right wing. The Constituent Assembly, which was dominated by the Democratic Alliance, convened to write a new constitution. However, the leftist elements of this alliance were destined to be disappointed as the new president imposed a series of repressive policies. As hostilities grew, Velasco condemned the new constitution and dismissed the Assembly. He aggravated the nation's economic problems by failing to reduce the high level of inflation; living standards continued to fall. When in Aug. 1947 he was ousted by his minister of defence and again forced into exile, he enjoyed little support and was replaced by Carlos Mancheno.

In June 1952 Velasco triumphed in the elections, taking 43% of the vote, and in Sept. he commenced his third and only full 4-year term. Ecuador was enjoying a period of economic stability and although Velasco continued to spend as before—building bridges and schools and implementing salary increases for members of Congress—in contrast to his previous terms in office there were now sufficient funds to pay for his spending programmes. Camilo Ponce Enríquez won the 1956 elections and Velasco indicated that he would be retiring from political life. For the first time Velasco was not obliged to flee the country at the end of his presidency.

However, following widespread riots in 1960, Velasco felt a 'duty to the Ecuadorian people' to stand for the presidency for the fourth time and came to power with 49% of the votes, his widest margin of victory. Velasco's populism continued into his inaugural address when he renounced the Rio Protocol of 1942, a treaty which ended Peru's occupation of Ecuador by ceding some 200,000 square kilometres of land to Peru. He thus assumed the presidency with the support of the masses, but saddled himself with expensive commitments to the poor at a time when the budget deficit was approaching a critical level. He announced a programme of economic reform but soon became unpopular as a result of austerity measures, sparking a series of strikes and demonstrations in several major cities. Velasco ordered the arrest of his vice-president, a move which left him open to charges of violating the constitution and in Nov. 1961 he was forced by an army junta to resign.

In the June 1968 presidential elections the 75-year old Velasco was voted in for the fifth time, 34 years after his initial victory. However, Velasco won barely one third of the votes, foreshadowing the political difficulties that

plagued him during his final term. He was faced by a hostile Congress, overwhelming economic problems and increasing political chaos. After rioting by thousands of university students he disbanded Congress and the Supreme Court and, with the backing of the army, assumed dictatorial powers in June 1970. Velasco subsequently decreed a number of necessary, though extremely unpopular economic measures. In 1971 he lost his most important ally, Gen. Jorge Acosta Velasco, his nephew and minister of defence, who had continually reshuffled the high command in order to keep supporters of Velasco in key posts. In Feb. 1972, after Velasco insisted upon holding elections in which populist leader Assad Bucaram seemed certain to win, military leaders overthrew Velasco and replaced him with a junta headed by Gen. Guillermo Rodríguez Lara.

Later Life

Following his fifth administration, Velasco was exiled to Argentina. He retired from politics becoming a professor of Law at the University of Buenos Aires. In Feb. 1979 his wife was killed in a bus accident and Velasco accompanied her body to Quito where he remained until his death on 30 March 1979 at the age of 86.

Venetiaan, Rinaldo Ronald (Suriname)

Introduction

Rinaldo Ronald Venetiaan was president of Suriname from 2000 to 2010, having previously held the office between 1991 and 1996. Dedicated to free market principles, he implemented a series of measures to bring the struggling economy that he inherited under control. His first term in office was also characterized by a programme of austerity measures.

Early Life

Venetiaan was born on 18 June 1936 in Paramaribo. He later moved to the Netherlands, where he studied mathematics and physics at Leiden University. Returning to Suriname, he undertook a teaching career before being appointed minister of education in 1973 in the government of Henck Arron, holding office until a military coup in 1980. After civilian government was re-established, Venetiaan resumed his role in the education ministry in 1988. In 1991 the New Front for Democracy won parliamentary elections and elected Venetiaan to the presidency.

Career Peak

In 1992 Venetiaan signed a peace accord with the rebel Surinamese Liberation Army, which had been operational since the mid-1980s. A primary aim of his first term was to secure economic stability after the years of coups and counter-coups. Despite stabilizing the currency and achieving a budget surplus, his austerity measures were widely unpopular and he lost the 1996 election to Jules Wijdenbosch, an ally of former military dictator Desi Bouterse, who instigated increased public spending.

With Wijdenbosch increasingly under attack for economic mismanagement, elections were called for May 2000 and Venetiaan led the New Front to victory. He again took over a faltering economy burdened by bureaucracy, high inflation, a devalued currency, overwhelming international debt and a collapsing healthcare system. In response, he cut public spending, replaced the guilder (in Jan. 2004) with the Suriname dollar and restructured the economically significant banana industry. Foreign relations were meanwhile dominated by a longstanding disagreement with Guyana over maritime boundaries. The UN established a tribunal to mediate in 2004 and in Sept. 2007 it awarded two-thirds of the disputed area to Guyana.

At the parliamentary elections of May 2005 Venetiaan's New Front for Democracy coalition returned the largest number of MPs, with the National Democratic Party of Bouterse second. However, the New Front failed to obtain the two-thirds majority required to elect the president. In Aug. 2005 Venetiaan won a second term of office when he polled 560 votes against 315 for his opponent, Rabin Parmessar, in a vote by the United People's Conference, consisting of MPs and elected local and district representatives.

He did not stand for re-election in 2010 and was succeeded by Dési Bouterse on 12 Aug.

Verhofstadt, Guy (Belgium)

Introduction

Verhofstadt was prime minister of Belgium for a period spanning almost 9 years, including two full terms and an emergency, interim appointment after his defeat at the polls in 2007. The election of his Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD; Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten) party in June 1999 ended decades of dominance by the Christian Democrats. He is the president of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe group at the European Parliament and continues to be an important figure in pan-European politics.

Early Life

Verhofstadt was born on 11 April 1953 in Dendermonde, one of three children of a trade union lawyer. He attended secondary school in Ghent and went on to study law at the city's university. Having graduated in 1975, he became involved in local politics the following year. His first major step in national politics came 4 years later when he was elected chairman of the Young Liberals, introducing a new radical manifesto to attract younger voters. In 1982 he was appointed chairman of the Flemish Liberal Party (PVV) and in 1985 was elected to the Belgian parliament, subsequently holding senior ministerial portfolios in the coalition government. Forced into opposition in 1988, Verhofstadt planned a radical overhaul of the party, which in Nov. 1992 adopted the new name of the Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD). In the 1995 general election the VLD failed to oust the Christian Democrats from power and in the summer of that year Verhofstadt resigned as party chairman. He returned to the political arena in May the following year with a revised citizen's manifesto appealing to the middle ground. In 1997 he resumed the VLD leadership. The party made significant gains in the June 1999 parliamentary elections and Verhofstadt became the country's first Liberal prime minister for 60 years.

Career Peak

In the immediate aftermath of the 1999 election Verhofstadt was successful in resolving the dioxin crisis that had hit Belgian agriculture and resulted in the downfall of his predecessor. Then, presiding over a 'rainbow coalition' of Liberals, Socialists and Greens (representing Belgium's two main linguistic communities), he pledged in his first term to achieve a balanced budget, reduce taxation and promulgate an amnesty for asylum seekers. This latter policy led to conflict with an increasingly vocal far-right anti-immigration lobby. Verhofstadt meanwhile maintained his strong support for European integration.

In parliamentary elections on 18 May 2003 the VLD won the largest vote share with 15.4% and 25 seats in the 150-member Chamber of Representatives (two more seats than in 1999). Verhofstadt reconstituted his coalition government (but without environmentalist representation) and he was inaugurated for his second term as prime minister on 12 July 2003. The previous month he announced plans to reform war crimes legislation which, under existing terms, allowed for charges to be brought against foreign nationals accused of abuses committed outside Belgian jurisdiction. This issue had attracted US hostility, particularly in the light of Belgium's opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Heavy losses for Verhofstadt's VLD party in the local elections of Oct. 2006 proved a prelude to a poor performance in the parliamentary elections in June 2007. On the evening of election day Verhofstadt conceded defeat and announced his resignation as leader of the VLD, calling for a new generation of politicians to further the party's cause. However, the inability of the opposition coalition to form an effective government threatened to become a crisis as important policy matters went unresolved. As a stopgap measure the King asked Verhofstadt to form an interim government to address the most pressing issues. This arrangement was approved by parliament on 23 Dec. 2007, and the government was provided with a 3-month term. The programme of the government was largely restricted to the

achievement of two urgent goals: drawing up a budget for 2008 and achieving a consensus for the renewal of the Belgian state, the unity of which had been strained by the political crisis. On 25 Feb. 2008 the government approved a two stage framework for the reform of the state, focusing on the decentralization of policy-making powers in the first stage and in the second on more fundamental 'major state reform'. It was announced on 26 Feb. 2008 that the 2008 budget had been agreed. On 20 March 2008 the interim government was succeeded by a coalition led by the CD&V's Yves Leterme.

Later Life

Verhofstadt opted to take a 1-year sabbatical following his retirement from office. In July 2009 he was elected to the European parliament and also became president of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe group. Verhofstadt was re-elected as a European MP following the elections of May 2014, and ran unsuccessfully as ALDE's candidate for the European Commission presidency that same year. In Sept. 2016 he was chosen to lead the European parliament's negotiations with the UK over its exit from the EU.

Verwoerd, Hendrik Frensch (South Africa)

Introduction

Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd was an academic and politician who became one of the chief architects of the apartheid system. He served as prime minister from 1958–66.

Early Life

Verwoerd was born in Amsterdam on 8 Sept. 1901. He was still an infant when his family emigrated to South Africa. He went on to pursue an academic career as a professor of applied psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. In 1933 Verwoerd was appointed chair of psychology and social work. His entrance into the political arena came in 1937 when he took up the post of editor for the Nationalist newspaper *Die Transvaler*. When the Nationalists won the election of 1948 he abandoned journalism to become a senator in the South African parliament.

Career Peak

Verwoerd quickly achieved senior rank as minister of native affairs, and from 1950 onwards was the instigator of a programme of legislative segregation that was dubbed apartheid. In 1958 the Nationalists chose Verwoerd as leader. Once in power Verwoerd's dream of a segregated state became a reality, and Africans, Asians and Cape Coloureds were gradually driven into separate townships on the periphery of major cities.

In 1959 Verwoerd ensured that the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act became law. The act laid out plans for the compulsory resettlement of the black population into eight distinct homelands. Verwoerd's rigorous commitment to segregationist politics sparked demonstrations, including, in March 1960, one at Sharpeville during which the police fired on the crowd, killing 69 demonstrators. The African National Congress and Pan African Congress were subsequently banned and the police were granted powers to detain indefinitely without trial.

In April 1960 Verwoerd was the victim of a failed assassination attempt. He was convinced that his survival was a sign of God's approval of his policies. Confronted by growing international disgust in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre, he offered the white population the chance to decide in a referendum whether South Africa should leave the Commonwealth. By a slim majority the country became a republic on 31 May 1961. It was during Verwoerd's tenure in office that Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment.

On 6 Sept. 1966 Verwoerd was stabbed to death by a parliamentary employee of mixed race, whose motives were never clearly established.

Videla, Jorge Rafaél (Argentina)

Introduction

Jorge Videla ruled Argentina from March 1976 until March 1981, the former army general having led a coup against Isabel Perón to establish himself as de facto president. Considered the architect of a 'dirty' war to eliminate left-wing guerrillas and their supporters, he was later sentenced to life imprisonment.

Early Life

Jorge Rafaél Videla was born on 2 Aug. 1925 in the city of Mercedes in the San Luis province of Argentina. The son of a military officer, Videla entered the National Military College at the age of 16 and graduated in 1944 with the rank of second lieutenant. After attending the Escuela Superior de Guerra between 1952 and 1954, he served at the ministry of defence and thereafter directed the Military Academy until 1962. He became chief of the army's general staff in 1973 and, 2 years later, Isabel Perón appointed him commander-in-chief of the army.

Unhappy with Perón's leadership, particularly in the face of terrorist attacks from the Marxist ERP and the Montoneros, in March 1976 Videla and his supporters seized power in a bloodless coup. It was the sixth time the army had seized power since 1930. Two days later Videla assumed the presidency.

Career Peak

He headed a three-man military junta that included Gen. Orlando Ramón Agosti and Adm. Eduardo Emilio Massera. Once in power, Videla dissolved congress, appointed loyal officers to key government positions, banned trade unions and imposed military control. Terming his administration the 'National Reorganization Process'. Videla ruled by terror. Although he had pledged to stay in power for only 3 years, in May 1978 the leaders of the junta installed him for a second term.

Under his regime left-wing figures (or 'subversives' were subject to jail, torture and extra-judicial killing. Political arrests and executions extended to journalists and intellectuals, while it was also alleged that children of government opponents were kidnapped and illegally adopted by members of the military. Estimates of the number of people killed or 'disappeared' range from 9,000 to 30,000 and his campaign against the left elicited international condemnation.

Videla appointed José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz as minister of economy, charged with economic stabilization and the privatization of state-owned companies. A free market policy was adopted to curb inflation but, despite some early success, foreign debt increased fourfold.

Videla escaped three assassination attempts by Marxist groups. In 1981 he relinquished power to Gen. Roberto Viola, a former junta member.

Later Life

With the return of representative democratic government, Videla was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1985. After 5 years in prison he was pardoned as part of a decree by President Carlos Menem. In 1998 Videla was re-arrested on kidnapping charges relating to his time in power. He briefly returned to prison but was transferred to house arrest following concerns over his health. After the election of Néstor Kirchner in 2003 the government no longer recognized Videla as one time legal president. In April 2010 the Supreme Court overturned Menem's pardon. Videla was subsequently re-tried for murder, kidnapping and torture and was convicted of 31 killings. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in Dec. 2010. Videla died in prison in May 2013.

Vieira, João Bernardo (Guinea-Bissau)

Introduction

After leading a military coup in 1980 João Vieira held the presidency until 1999, when he was ousted by the army. After 6 years in exile he returned to

contest the 2005 presidential elections, modelling himself as a 'soldier of peace'. He narrowly won the second round in July and took office in Oct. Following clashes between the government and the army, Vieira was assassinated on 2 March 2009.

Early Life

João Bernardo (Nino) Vieira was born on 27 April 1939 in Bissau, then part of Portuguese Guinea. He joined the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) in 1960, was the party's political commissioner in the Catio region from 1961, and was a commander (rising to head of military operations in the War Council) in the war of independence from 1964. Following independence in Sept. 1974, he became commander in chief of the armed forces under President Luis Cabral. On 14 Nov. 1980 Vieira overthrew Cabral and appointed himself president, chair of the revolutionary council and, from 1981, secretary general of the PAIGC.

Career Peak

Vieira led the country for the next 18 years, latterly introducing a market economy and multi-party system. In 1994 he retired from the army and stood as the PAIGC candidate in the country's first free presidential elections, narrowly defeating Kumba Ialá of the Party for Social Renewal. Criticized for his increasingly autocratic leadership, Vieira alienated sections of the army, whose unsuccessful attempt to oust him in 1998 triggered a short civil war. In May 1999 he was finally forced into exile in Portugal. Following a further coup in Sept. 2003, the caretaker government of Carlos Gomes, Jr. tabled fresh presidential elections for 2005. Vieira returned from exile to stand as a candidate and won with 52% of the vote.

On 1 Nov. 2005 he sacked the government and appointed a long-term ally, Aristides Gomes, as prime minister. In April 2007 Aristides Gomes was succeeded by Martinho Ndafo Kabi, who served until Aug. 2008 when Vieira dissolved parliament and appointed Carlos Correia to head the government in the run-up to fresh elections in Nov., which were won by the PAIGC. During the campaign, Ialá accused Vieira of being the leading illicit drug trafficker in the country. A week after the poll, rebellious soldiers attacked Vieira's presidential residence but were repulsed by security forces.

Vieira's alleged involvement in the slaying of the army's chief of staff in a car bomb on 1 March 2009 led to his own assassination the next day. He was succeeded by Raimundo Pereira as acting president.

Vīķe-Freiberga, Vaira (Latvia)

Introduction

A university professor who lived for much of her life in Canada, Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga was politically unknown when elected Latvian president by the *Saeima* (parliament) in 1999. Throughout her presidential career she promoted Latvian membership to the European Union and NATO. Vīķe-Freiberga's term of office ended in 2007.

Early Life

Vīķe-Freiberga was born in Riga on 1 Dec. 1937. Towards the end of World War II, with the arrival of Russian troops, she and her family left Latvia and went as refugees to Lübeck, Germany. In 1949 the family moved to Morocco. Five years later they emigrated to Canada where they lived in a Latvian community in Toronto. There she studied psychology and linguistics before pursuing a career in academia. A professor of psychology at the University of Montreal, she was also involved in the study and promotion of the Latvian language and culture. After Latvia's independence, Vīķe-Freiberga returned to Latvia and between 1998–99 headed the Latvian Institute in Riga.

Career Peak

In 1999, although recently returned to Latvia, Vīķe-Freiberga stood as an independent candidate in the presidential elections. In the seventh round of voting, she took 53 votes to beat the foreign minister Valdis Birkavš and the finance minister Ingrida Ūdre. She replaced Guntis Ulmanis.

After being elected, Viķe-Freiberga worked to promote Latvia to the West and encourage the country's entry into the EU and NATO. After criticism from the EU, the OSCE and Russia, in Dec. 1999 she amended a proposed language law which would have made the Latvian language mandatory in public life and the workplace. The proposals were seen as discriminating against the Russian-speaking population, which constitutes about a third of Latvian inhabitants. In June 2003 she was re-elected president by parliament, receiving 88 votes out of 96. In 2004 Latvia joined both the EU and NATO. Despite protests from Latvian war veterans, Viķe-Freiberga attended Russia's war anniversary celebrations in Moscow in 2005 (the only Baltic state president to do so).

Viķe-Freiberga was unable to stand for re-election in May 2007 having served two full terms. She was succeeded by Valdis Zatlers.

Voronin, Vladimir (Moldova)

Introduction

Vladimir Voronin was chosen by parliament as Moldova's president following the victory of the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) in the Feb. 2001 parliamentary elections. The former Soviet Communist Party bureaucrat sought initially to forge closer ties with Russia, but when relations cooled from 2003 over the issue of Transnistria he looked increasingly to integration with the European Union.

Early Life

Vladimir Nicolae Voronin was born on 25 May 1941 in the village of Corjova, Chişinău county. He attended the technical co-operatist secondary school in Chişinău and graduated from the USSR's extramural institute of food industry in 1971, having worked as the director of the bread factory in Dubosari from 1966–71. For the next decade, he worked in the regional committee of the PCRM, heading the town councils of Dubosari and Ungheni. Promotion to the central committee of the party came in 1983. In 1985, the year in which Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the USSR, Voronin was elected as a member of the supreme council of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR). Gorbachev's reform programme reversed the suppression of national characteristics within the USSR and by the late 1980s the Romanian language was in common and official use in Moldova. In 1990, when Voronin served as the minister of internal affairs of the MSSR, Moldova achieved *de facto* independence. Full independence followed the dramatic collapse of the USSR in Aug. 1991.

In late 1991 an ex-communist reformer, Mircea Snegur, won an election for the presidency. Four months later Moldova achieved formal recognition as an independent state at the United Nations. But independence brought a guerrilla war to the Transnistria region in the north and east of the country, populated by many ethnic Russians and Ukrainians who feared a Moldovan merger with Romania. A ceasefire in 1992 brought limited autonomy to the region, and Russian 'peacekeeping' troops were stationed there.

Voronin rose through the ranks of the PCRM, becoming first secretary to the central committee in 1994, the year of Moldova's first parliamentary election. Snegur's Agrarian Democratic Party (ADP) won a majority but was subsequently wracked by infighting. In Dec. 1995 residents of Transnistria overwhelmingly voted for independence from Moldova, although the referendum was considered illegal by the central government. Voronin contested a presidential run-off election against Snegur in Dec. 1996 but the eventual victor was Petru Lucinschi, a former communist running as an independent.

In May 1997 Moldova and Transnistria signed an agreement to keep Moldova a single state. During the March 1998 legislative elections the PCRM received the biggest share of the vote but was unable to form a government, leading to a series of short-lived, non-affiliated governments. In 2000 parliament failed to elect a successor to President Lucinschi, leading to early general elections in Feb. 2001. The PCRM won over 50% of the vote and parliament elected Voronin as president on 4 April.

Career Peak

Voronin used his inaugural address to criticize his predecessors, saying they had reduced Moldova to humanitarian catastrophe and dire poverty. He promised major reform in three areas: modernization of the country's ancient administrative structures, liberalization of the economy and the creation of a 'civil society' by strengthening institutions and organizations operating outside state control. Voronin was initially broadly pro-Russian (Russian language lessons having been reintroduced as compulsory in Moldovan schools), but his government later made a fundamental policy change and adopted a pro-European Union position. At the March 2005 parliamentary elections the PCRM was returned to power but with a reduced majority and Voronin was re-elected as president the following month.

In an attempt to resolve the thorny Transnistria issue, a federal system was proposed in 2002 under which Transnistria and the Turkic enclave of Gagauz Yeri would enjoy constitutional autonomy. However, in the face of violent popular protest, the Moldovan government backed down in Nov. 2003. Then, in a referendum in the breakaway province in Sept. 2006, voters overwhelmingly backed independence and ultimately union with Russia. However, the poll was not recognized by the Moldovan government or the international community. Meanwhile, despite Voronin's repeated calls for their departure, Russian military forces remained in Transnistria. Relations with Russia were further soured by Russian demands in 2006 for large rises in prices of natural gas supplies to Moldova and the suspension of imports of Moldovan wine, reportedly on health grounds. Moldova continued to face economic problems in the agriculture sector because of harvest failure and drought and from the widening trade deficit with Russia.

In March 2008, following Prime Minister Vasile Tarlev's resignation, Voronin nominated Zinaida Greceanii, also from the PCRM, as the country's first female premier.

Voronin was not eligible to stand for a third term in office but retained the presidency on an acting basis following disputed elections in April 2009. The results prompted outbreaks of civil unrest across the country with claims that the elections were fraudulent. The PCRM won the majority of the vote but did not gain enough seats to elect a president of their choosing. In May Voronin was elected speaker of parliament but was forced to dissolve parliament over the presidential issue and schedule more elections for July. The PCRM again received the most votes of any single party but were beaten into second place after the opposition formed a coalition in Aug. Although a new parliamentary speaker was elected to replace Voronin, the coalition lacked enough seats to appoint their own presidential candidate. However, conceding defeat, Voronin stood down on 11 Sept. and the new speaker of parliament, Mihail Ghimpu, took over in an acting capacity.

Vranitzky, Franz (Austria)

Introduction

Franz Vranitzky was chancellor of Austria and leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) from 1986–97. He oversaw Austria's accession to the European Union from 1995, and helped to restore the country's international image after the presidency of Kurt Waldheim. His earlier banking career led the media to label him 'the pin-striped socialist'.

Early Life

Vranitzky was born on 4 Oct. 1937 in Vienna and educated in the capital, graduating from the University of Commerce in 1960. Following a brief period in industry, he joined the Austrian National Bank in 1961. From 1970–76 he served as a policy adviser to the federal minister of finance, and from 1976–81 as deputy chairman of the board of directors of Creditanstalt-Bankverein. He then became the head of the Österreichische Länderbank (then the second largest Austrian bank) until his appointment in 1984 as federal minister of finance.

Career Peak

Having become federal chancellor on 16 June 1986, Vranitzky presided over a series of SPÖ coalitions with the conservative People's Party (ÖVP) during his decade in office. He was credited in his first 4 years with an upswing in the

national economy, and then campaigned successfully for Austria's accession to the EU. This was approved by a two-thirds majority in a national referendum in June 1994 and formalized on 1 Jan. 1995. However, economic conditions subsequently worsened as the government wrestled with a large budget deficit. Despite better than expected federal election results for the SPÖ in Dec. 1995, the party slumped in the first direct elections to the European Parliament in Oct. 1996. Vranitzky resigned as chancellor in Jan. 1997 and was succeeded by Viktor Klima, who also took over the SPÖ chairmanship the following April.

Vujanović, Filip (Montenegro)

Introduction

Filip Vujanović became Montenegro's president following independence in June 2006. He had served as president of Montenegro within the confederation of Serbia and Montenegro for the previous 3 years. Economic and structural reforms have included a programme of privatization, while closer links have been pursued with the European Union including an official application for EU membership. During his presidency, Montenegro also joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Vujanović left office in May 2018.

Early Life

Born on 1 Sept. 1954 in Belgrade, then the capital of Yugoslavia, Vujanović was educated in Nikšić and studied law at the University of Belgrade. After graduating in 1978 he worked as a court official in Belgrade before moving south to Podgorica in 1981.

Following a period at the Podgorica district court, Vujanović worked as an attorney from 1981–93. After the break-up of the Yugoslav Federation, Serbia and Montenegro formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992. In March 1993 the Montenegrin Prime Minister Đukanović appointed Vujanović as minister for justice. He served for 2 years as a close ally of Đukanović, adopting a pro-independence and pro-European stance, and in May 1995 he took over as minister of the interior. When the ruling Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro (DPS CG) split into two factions in 1996, Vujanović backed Đukanović against his rival Momir Bulatović, a former ally of Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević.

In 1997 Đukanović was elected president of Montenegro and in Feb. 1998 Vujanović took up the premiership. While supporting Montenegro's independence campaign, he maintained good relations with Serbia. He offered his resignation in April 2002 during a constitutional crisis over ratification of a looser federation between Serbia and Montenegro.

Following legislative elections in Oct. 2002 Vujanović was appointed parliamentary speaker and stood as the DPS CG candidate for Montenegro's presidency. He won both rounds in Dec. 2002 and Feb. 2003 convincingly, but the result was declared invalid as less than 50% of the electorate voted. Parliament subsequently abolished the minimum turnout rule and Vujanović became president in March 2003 with 63% of the vote.

Career Peak

Vujanović identified Montenegro's integration into Western political and military structures through accession to the EU and entry into NATO's Partnership for Peace programme as priorities. He oversaw the privatization of key parts of the economy, including the banking sector and Kombinat Aluminijuma Podgorica (the country's largest industrial company), introduced social and judicial reforms and made a start in combating organized crime. He also opened cross-border talks on joint commercial ventures with Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia.

On 3 June 2006, following a referendum, Montenegro declared independence and on 28 June 2006 became a member of the United Nations. The country has since joined the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and in Dec. 2008 submitted a formal application to join the EU (achieving candidate status in Dec. 2010). Its decision in Jan. 2010 to establish diplomatic relations with Kosovo, which had unilaterally declared itself independent from Serbia in 2008, has aggravated tensions with the Serbian government.

Vujanović was re-elected for a further 5-year term in April 2008. In Dec. 2010 he nominated Igor Lukšić as prime minister following the resignation of Đukanović, but following parliamentary elections in Oct. 2012 Đukanović resumed the premiership at the head of a centre-left coalition. Vujanović narrowly secured a third term at the presidential election held in April 2013, defeating Miodrag Lekić of the Democratic Front.

Although the DPS CG again won the most seats in parliamentary elections in Oct. 2016, Đukanović shortly afterwards announced his resignation as prime minister. Vujanović named Duško Marković, previously a deputy premier, as prime minister-designate and his new government was approved by parliament at the end of Nov. that year.

In June 2017 Montenegro became the 29th full member of the NATO alliance.

Vujanović served as president for 16 years and was the longest-serving president of Montenegro since the country's independence. He was succeeded in May 2018 by Milo Đukanović.

Wa Mutharika, Bingu (Malawi)

Introduction

Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika became president of Malawi following elections in May 2004, having been nominated by former president (and his former political foe), Bakili Muluzi, who retired after two consecutive terms in office. He was re-elected in May 2009. Mutharika died of a heart attack whilst in office in April 2012.

Early Life

Bingu wa Mutharika was born in Thyolo, Malawi on 24 Feb. 1934. The son of a Catholic primary school teacher, he gained a master's degree in economics from the University of Delhi, India, before studying for a PhD in development economics at Pacific Western University in Los Angeles, USA. He then went to work for the Malawian civil service and later for the Zambian government.

In 1978 Mutharika joined the UN, motivated by his opposition to the regime of Hastings Banda, Malawi's self-declared 'President for Life'. He was given the post of director for trade and development finance for Africa. In 1991 he became secretary-general of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

Mutharika was a founding member of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the party led by Muluzi that went on to win Malawi's first multi-party elections in 1994. The two became adversaries when Mutharika opposed Muluzi's economic policies. Mutharika left the UDF to form the United Party (UP) in 1997. However, after unsuccessfully contesting the presidency in 1999, he disbanded the UP and returned to the UDF, where he was made minister of economic planning and development in 2002.

Career Peak

In Feb. 2005, following a series of clashes with Muluzi and an alleged assassination attempt in Jan. by UDF members, Mutharika again resigned from the party, subsequently forming the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). In June 2005 he survived an impeachment motion backed by the UDF. In April 2006 Vice President Chilumpha was charged with treason and in July Muluzi was arrested on corruption charges. In May 2008 several opposition figures were arrested after Mutharika accused Muluzi of plotting to overthrow him. Mutharika retained power following elections in May 2009 in which he received 66% of the vote in the presidential poll and his DPP secured 114 of the 193 seats in the National Assembly. However, external electoral observers were critical of the government's use of state-controlled radio and television to obtain unfair advantage, and in May 2011 the British High Commissioner was expelled from Malawi after he criticized Mutharika as increasingly dictatorial in a leaked diplomatic cable.

Mutharika's principal economic challenges in office have remained the reduction of poverty and regeneration by encouraging foreign investment. He has also pursued a high-profile anti-corruption campaign. In May 2010 he granted a presidential pardon to two homosexual men whose earlier conviction for gross indecency had provoked international condemnation.

Internationally, in Jan. 2008 he ended diplomatic ties with Taiwan and switched Malawi's allegiance to communist China.

On 5 April 2012 Mutharika suffered a heart attack and died in hospital 2 days later, aged 78. In line with the constitution, vice president Joyce Banda was sworn in as his successor.

Wade, Abdoulaye (Senegal)

Introduction

A barrister, writer and newspaper editor, Abdoulaye Wade spent nearly 40 years in opposition before becoming president at his fifth attempt in 2000. His election marked the end of Senegal's socialist era. He was re-elected in Feb. 2007 but his controversial bid for a third term proved unsuccessful, losing to former prime minister Macky Sall in a run-off in March 2012.

Early Life

Wade was born on 29 May 1926, in Kébémér. He was educated in Senegal and at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, where he studied law and economics. After practising as a barrister in France for some years, he returned to Senegal to take up an academic post at the University of Dakar.

In 1974 he created the liberal Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS; Senegalese Democratic Party), one of the three parties allowed under the 1976 constitution. He unsuccessfully stood as a presidential candidate in the 1978 elections against Léopold Sédar Senghor. In the same year he entered the National Assembly.

He lost the 1988 presidential race against Abdou Diouf. The latter accused Wade of inflaming riots with his claims of election fraud and Wade was arrested. He spent several months in prison while Diouf declared a state of emergency. However, following his release Wade was appointed a minister in Diouf's government in 1991. He resigned the following year and in 1993 once more stood unsuccessfully for the presidency. He joined Diouf's government again in March 1995, resigning 3 years later.

By 2000 public dissatisfaction with Diouf's leadership was running high, yet he emerged with most votes after the first round of a presidential poll against Wade and six other candidates. Diouf and Wade went into a run-off, and Wade, benefiting from the absence of the other candidates (particularly Moustapha Niasse), won 58.5% of the vote. He was sworn in as the new president on 1 April 2000 and formed a coalition government with Niasse as prime minister.

Career Peak

Wade's election promises included boosting the economy and confronting growing poverty, while raising literacy and health levels. However, attempts to implement necessary reforms were hampered by Senegal's crippling levels of international debt. In addition, Wade's popular standing was diminished by the resignation of Niasse in 2001, on whom he had relied for electoral victory. Nevertheless, his coalition won almost 75% of National Assembly seats in the 2001 elections. In Nov. 2002 Wade dismissed Prime Minister Madior Boye (who on her appointment was Africa's only female leader) and her entire cabinet, replacing her with Idrissa Seck. He in turn was replaced in April 2004 by Macky Sall of the PDS (and subsequently detained from July 2005 until Feb. 2006 on charges of fraud and sedition). In April 2005, 14 PDS deputies in the National Assembly defected, protesting an increasing lack of democracy and transparency.

Negotiations between the government and the Casamance movement culminated in a ceasefire in 2004 and the signing of a peace agreement in 2005.

Wade was closely involved in the launch of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an African-led strategy (endorsed by the then Organization of African Unity in July 2001) for economic recovery, good governance and sustainable growth.

He was elected to a further term in the presidential election of Feb. 2007 and his ruling coalition increased its majority in legislative elections the following June, with Cheikh Hadjibou Soumaré replacing Macky Sall as prime minister. However, the parliamentary poll was boycotted by the main

opposition parties. In local elections in March 2009 opposition parties made substantial gains, prompting the resignation of Soumaré as prime minister and his replacement by Souleymane Ndéné Ndiaye in April. In April 2010 Senegal marked 50 years of independence from France.

Wade's acceptance of his party's nomination to seek a third term in the Feb. 2012 presidential elections provoked violent opposition protests as the constitution does not allow for a president to serve more than two terms. However, a court ruling found in favour of Wade running for re-election on the grounds that the constitution was promulgated in 2001, a year after his first term began. Wade failed to win a majority in the first round of the elections and subsequently lost to the opposition candidate Macky Sall in a run-off in March 2012. Sall succeeded Wade on 2 April 2012.

Waheed Hassan, Mohammed (Maldives)

Introduction

Mohammed Waheed Hassan took office as president in Feb. 2012 after incumbent Mohamed Nasheed's resignation following public protests over the arrest of a senior judge. Waheed, formerly Nasheed's deputy, was defeated in the second round of the Nov. 2013 presidential election although he had won the most votes in the re-run first round.

Early Life

Mohammed Waheed Hassan was born on 3 Jan. 1953 in the capital, Malé. He graduated in English Language and gained a diploma in teaching from the American University of Beirut in 1976, before returning to Malé to teach. In 1978 he became the first anchor on Maldivian television with TVM (Television Maldives).

Waheed won a scholarship to Stanford University, California, where he completed a master's degree in education planning in 1979. He joined the Maldivian ministry of education and in 1980 was appointed by President Gayoom as an adviser to a special session of the Majlis (parliament) tasked with reviewing the constitution.

In 1982 Waheed returned to Stanford to study political science. In 1987 he was awarded his PhD in international development education. In 1988 he was appointed director of educational services at the ministry of education and in 1989 won the seat of Malé in the general election. Having resigned over the poor human rights record of Gayoom's government, he left the Maldives in 1991 to work as a freelance consultant with the UN on educational development programmes.

In 2008 he set up the Gaumeethiithaad party, which formed the 'MDP Itthiithaad' with the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) to contest the 2008 elections. The coalition emerged victorious and on 11 Nov. 2008 Nasheed—a co-founder of the MDP in 2003—and Waheed were sworn into office as president and vice-president respectively. On 7 Feb. 2012 Nasheed resigned amid growing public unrest following his arrest of the chief justice, Abdullah Mohamed. Waheed was sworn in as president later that day, leading an administration consisting largely of technocrats and Gayoom appointees.

Career Peak

Waheed's first task was to rebut Nasheed's claim that his successor helped organize his removal from office. Waheed denied the charge but Nasheed's supporters have continued to protest and demand early elections. Waheed appealed to the international community for support and in Aug. 2012 a Commonwealth-backed commission dismissed Nasheed's assertion that he had been ousted in a coup and confirmed the constitutional legitimacy of the transfer of power. In Oct. Nasheed was arrested for defying a summons to stand trial for the arrest of the chief justice, which had triggered the crisis in Feb.

In the presidential elections held in Nov. 2013 (after an annulled election 2 months earlier) Waheed was defeated in the run-off by Abdulla Yameen of the Progressive Party of Maldives. Yameen succeeded Waheed as president on 17 Nov. 2013.

Waldheim, Kurt (Austria)

Introduction

Kurt Waldheim was secretary general of the United Nations between 1972 and 1981 and president of Austria, 1986–92. Renowned as a diplomat, he gained notoriety during the 1986 presidential election when allegations were made about his involvement in Nazi war atrocities. He was cleared by an international commission and won the presidency, but the allegations blighted his tenure and he did not run again in 1992.

Early Life

Waldheim was born in Sankt Andrä-Wörden in Lower Austria on 21 Dec. 1918, the son of a Catholic Czech civil servant. In 1937–38 he was in the Austrian army before undertaking studies at the Vienna Consular Academy. He then began studying for a degree in jurisprudence at the University of Vienna but his studies were interrupted when he was drafted into the German army. Fighting on the Russian front in 1941, he was wounded and it was the subsequent period of his life that was at the centre of later allegations against him.

He eventually finished his legal studies at the University of Vienna. In 1945, with Austria regarded as an unwilling partner to Germany's actions, Waldheim entered the Diplomatic Service. For 2 years he served with the Austrian delegation to the Austrian State Treaty negotiations. He was first secretary of the Austrian delegation in Paris between 1948 and 1951 and followed this with a period as chief of the department of personnel at the ministry of foreign affairs in Vienna until 1955. In 1955–56 he was Austria's permanent observer to the UN, then minister plenipotentiary to Canada (based in Ottawa) for 2 years and ambassador to Canada for a further two.

From 1960–64 he worked again at the ministry of foreign affairs, as chief of the political department (West) until 1962 and then as director-general for political affairs. He was Austria's ambassador to the UN, 1964–68, when he worked on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. Between Jan. 1968 and April 1970 he was minister of foreign affairs in the government of Josef Klaus, but left the post following the collapse of Klaus' administration. In April of the following year he stood for the national presidency on behalf of the conservative People's Party but was defeated.

In 1972 he was appointed UN secretary-general, a post he held for over 9 years. His tenure saw humanitarian projects in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Nicaragua. He actively pursued Middle East peace, making visits to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. He oversaw peacekeeping operations in Cyprus, visiting the country three times, and in Guinea, Yemen and Angola. His re-election in 1976 was opposed by a number of Third World nations but he secured re-appointment. He was defeated in 1981 by a Chinese veto. The following year he took up a professorship at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

In 1986 he once again stood as the People's Party's candidate for the Austrian presidency. During the election campaign the opposition made claims about Waldheim's war record. His history after his wounding in 1941 up until the end of the war had been hazy and his opponents produced documentation that suggested he had known of and been involved in Nazi war atrocities. As a counter-intelligence officer for General Alexander Löhr until the latter stages of the war, it was alleged that Waldheim had taken part in vicious reprisals against dissidents in Yugoslavia and had then participated in the mass deportation to concentration camps of Jews from Thessaloniki in Greece. This contrasted with Waldheim's version that he had returned to his studies in Austria following his discharge from the Eastern Front. An international commission judged in his favour but was critical of his lack of candour about this period of his life.

Career Peak

Waldheim subsequently became Austria's first non-Socialist president since the war. However, Austria found it difficult to assert influence in the international arena with Waldheim as its head of government. He served out his 6-year term but did not stand for re-election in 1992. He died aged 88 on 14 June 2007.

Wałęsa, Lech (Poland)

Introduction

Lech Wałęsa led the Solidarity movement in Poland which precipitated the collapse of the country's communist regime. He served as president from 1990 until 1995. A Gdańsk electrician, he fought for workers rights during the 1970s and early 1980s. Solidarity, a nationwide workers' alliance, came into being in 1980 and, despite government attempts to suppress it, its membership grew to 10 m. Wałęsa's role in the downfall of Polish communism is regarded as key to the subsequent collapse of communism in the rest of the Eastern Bloc.

Early Life

Wałęsa was born on 29 Sept. 1943 in Popowo, Poland into a poor farming background. His father was held in a concentration camp during World War II and died shortly after his liberation in 1945. Wałęsa attended vocational school and became a farm machinery mechanic until entering the military in 1961. He left the army in 1967 and moved to Gdańsk, where he became an electrician in the Lenin Shipyard.

Wałęsa had his first taste of political life during the 1970 Gdańsk riots when workers protested at rises in food prices. Gdańsk witnessed more anti-government strikes in 1976. As one of the leaders Wałęsa was arrested and sacked from his job. More protests broke out in 1980 with workers barricading themselves in the Lenin Shipyard. Wałęsa climbed the yard's fences to join his former colleagues who designated him their leader.

Taking their cue from the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR), founded during the 1976 strikes, the 17,000 Gdańsk strikers presented the government with a Charter of Workers' Rights in Aug. 1980. The government granted the right to strike and loosened restrictions on the freedom of expression. A meeting in Gdańsk of regional trade union leaders led to the founding of Solidarity (*Solidarność*) on 22 Sept. By early 1981, under the leadership of Wałęsa, Solidarity boasted a membership of over 10 m.

As Solidarity's strength grew there were calls for free elections and trade union rights. Facing extreme pressure from Moscow, President Jaruzelski imposed martial law in Dec. 1981. Solidarity lost its legal status and its leadership, including Wałęsa, was arrested and imprisoned. Solidarity was severely weakened as a political force over the following year. However, it was revitalized in 1983 when Wałęsa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, to the anger of the Polish government.

Career Peak

Wałęsa led Solidarity as an underground movement for much of the 1980s. However, in 1988 President Jaruzelski's attempts to impose economic reforms precipitated an increase in labour unrest. The government agreed to negotiations with Wałęsa and the Solidarity leadership as well as the influential Catholic Church, in what became known as the Round Table talks. Solidarity was once more guaranteed legal status and the government agreed to free elections, with the proviso that the opposition contest only a minority of seats.

In the elections of June 1989 Solidarity won a convincing victory, taking virtually all the seats to which it was entitled. The communists attempted to form a coalition with Solidarity but Wałęsa refused and Jaruzelski had little option but to appoint Wałęsa's associate, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, as Prime Minister. Wałęsa stood against Mazowiecki in the presidential elections of 1990 and won by a landslide.

Wałęsa set about reforming the Polish economy and oversaw the transition to a free market economy, a job made more difficult by a succession of weak and short-lived parliaments. Despite severe struggles during most of Wałęsa's period in office, the Polish economy prospered. However, Wałęsa's popular appeal diminished as his tenure progressed. His skills as Solidarity's leader revolved around his ability to speak for the common people, but in government his tone was often regarded as aggressive and his style of leadership autocratic. His critics also accused him of jingoism and he lost further popularity when, as a devout Catholic, he tightened up laws on abortion. At the presidential elections of 1995 Wałęsa narrowly lost to

Aleksander Kwaśniewski, leader of the Democratic Left Alliance, a grouping of reconstituted communists.

Later Life

Following his presidential defeat, Wałęsa was reluctant to withdraw from the political scene. In Aug. 2000 he faced a Polish court charged with cooperating with the secret police during the communist era. He was acquitted on all charges, paving the way for him to stand at the elections of Oct. 2000. Kwaśniewski was re-elected by a majority with Wałęsa coming in a distant sixth with 1% of the vote. Wałęsa subsequently announced his retirement from political life.

In May 2004 Gdańsk International Airport was officially renamed Gdańsk Lech Wałęsa Airport. Wałęsa left the Solidarity movement in Aug. 2006 owing to his disapproval of the party's leadership under the Kaczyński brothers. He launched a libel suit against Lech Kaczyński after the latter repeated allegations that Wałęsa had worked as a communist spy.

Wangchuk, Jigme Singye (Bhutan)

Introduction

Jigme Singye Wangchuk became king of Bhutan in 1972, ruling as an absolute monarch until his abdication in Dec. 2006. He partially opened up the country to foreign influence, but strove at the same time to preserve traditional Bhutanese ways of life. In 1998 he devolved some of his powers to the National Assembly and a ministerial cabinet. A draft constitution, published in March 2005, proposed to make the country a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy, though practical power was to remain with the throne. Jigme Singye's reign was accompanied by international unease about the treatment of the nation's ethnic Nepalese minority.

Early Life

Jigme Singye was born on 11 Nov. 1955, the son of King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. He was educated in the UK and India before attending the Ugyen Wangchuck Academy in Paro. Jigme Dorji died in July 1972 and Jigme Singye succeeded him, although his formal coronation did not take place until 2 June 1974.

Career Peak

Taking the title of Druk Gyalpo (Dragon King), Jigme Singye continued the cautious modernization of Bhutan begun by his father. This included the admission of foreign tourists for the first time in 1974, although tourist numbers remain restricted. This gradual opening-up was accompanied by a determination to maintain Bhutanese customs, as epitomized by the legal requirement that citizens wear traditional dress. In 1979, the year in which Jigme Singye married four sisters as queens, the government declared that refugees must take Bhutanese citizenship or face repatriation. The move marked the beginning of a steady decline in relations between the government and ethnic minorities.

In 1986 new legislation laid down terms for citizenship on the basis of length of residency. A national census in 1988 declared thousands of people, mostly ethnic Nepalese who had been resident for up to 20 years, to be illegal immigrants. The following year Nepali ceased to be a standard language of tuition in schools. Ethnic tensions spilled into violence in the south of the country in the early 1990s, and thousands of ethnic Nepalese crossed the border into eastern Nepal where they remain in refugee camps, their fate still unresolved. Bhutan demanded the repatriation of anyone proven to be a Bhutanese national but denied that to be the case for most of those in the camps. Refugee leaders, however, claimed that Jigme Singye's regime forcibly removed the majority of the displaced people.

In 1998 the King ceded some of his power, theoretically allowing the National Assembly to dethrone him with a two-thirds majority. The following year he permitted television and Internet access for the first time.

In early 2005 proposals were published for the adoption of a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy by 2008. In Sept. 2006 plans were announced for a two-phase election. There was to be no restriction on

those allowed to vote and any number of candidates were to be permitted in the first round of voting, although only the two leading parties would contest the second round. It was expected that the King would abdicate in favour of his son, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, at the time of the elections but on 14 Dec. 2006 Jigme Singye transferred power to his son with immediate effect.

Jigme Singye oversaw Bhutan's entry into numerous international organizations including the IMF, the FAO, the WHO, UNESCO, UNIDO and ECOSOC.

Wen Jiabao (China)

Introduction

Wen Jiabao was confirmed as China's Premier of the State Council (prime minister) in March 2003. Although relatively low-profile, he has established a reputation for reliability and durability. A leading figure in the liberalization of China's economic and environmental policies in the 1990s, he has promoted the development of the traditionally poorer and less urban west of the country.

Early Life

Wen Jiabao was born in Tianjin in the east of China in Sept. 1942. In 1965 he obtained a degree from the Beijing Institute of Geology and joined the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In 1968 he received his master's degree and began working with the geomechanics survey team at the Gansu provincial geological bureau (until 1982).

Wen then moved to Beijing to work at the ministry of geology and mineral resources. After heading the policy and research section he was appointed vice-minister. In 1985 he was made deputy director of the general office of the CCP central committee, working closely with the party chairman, Hu Yaobang. Wen emerged unscathed after Hu's 1987 purge and took over as director of the general office as well as becoming an alternate member of the Politburo of the CCP central committee and secretary of the central committee's work committee of departments.

In 1989 Wen was in attendance when General Secretary Zhao Ziyang visited Tiananmen Square during the student protests. Zhao was subsequently purged, but again Wen's position remained secure. In 1992 he took on additional roles within the CCP central committee. Having led the team responsible for drafting the national 5-year plan in 1995, Wen won full membership of the Politburo of the central committee 2 years later.

Throughout the 1990s Wen was a prominent figure in the formation of the party's economic policy. He was involved in banking reform and the restructuring of the finance ministry. By the late 1990s he was increasingly involved in environmental and rural affairs. In March 2003 Wen was confirmed as Zhu Rongji's successor to the premiership with 99.3% support from the National People's Congress.

Career Peak

Although perceived as less charismatic than Zhu, Wen has won respect within the Chinese political establishment for his longevity and experience. His management style has traditionally been based on seeking consensus.

When he was in Gansu, Wen became one of the few leading Chinese politicians to work for an extended period in the economically less prosperous west of the country. He stated that his aim is to narrow the prosperity gap between the east and west of China. In addition, many observers hoped that he could confront the problems of China's economically weak agricultural sector. Under Jiang, Wen did much to promote the land rights of the rural peasant population. In addition, he has pushed for a reduction in the tax burden on rural communities and promoted freedom for farmers to sell their holdings.

Despite his contribution to banking reform in the 1990s, Wen was not expected to champion radical reforms to counter the crippling problem of bad debts. In 2002 he called for a 'gradual approach' to further deregulation and in 2003 he stated that China would not be pressured by the international community into a revaluation of the yuan (*renminbi*). Nevertheless, in July

2005 China did revalue the currency, abandoning its 11-year peg to the US dollar and linking it to a basket of currencies. In March 2010 Wen again resisted international pressure on China for further revaluation, branding it a form of 'trade protectionism'.

Wen's programme for assisting the rural poor took shape at the opening of the National People's Congress in March 2004. Stressing the importance of social development in poorer regions, he highlighted the damaging disparity in wealth between the rich, industrial coastal provinces and the poorer rural provinces of the interior. He promised investment in agriculture, emphasizing the need to increase overall grain production capability. His programme also included the recognition of private property, requiring an amendment to the constitution, designed to prevent the unlawful requisition of property by officials.

However, the government's slow reaction to SARS, originating in Guangdong in 2002 and 2003, was criticized by the international community as nearly 350 people died from the virus, despite quarantines and travel bans. Then the government was criticized for its attitude towards HIV/AIDS, prompting the health minister in 2004 to announce plans to combat the epidemic. Furthermore, in Sept. 2008 a scandal over tainted milk supplies, which caused around 50,000 children to fall ill, prompted a public apology by Wen.

In April 2007 Wen visited Japan and became the first Chinese premier to make a formal address to the Japanese legislature, in which he urged friendship and reconciliation after their countries' difficult shared history. Relations deteriorated, however, in Sept. and Oct. 2010 as Chinese fishermen were arrested off Japanese-controlled, but disputed, islands in the East China Sea.

Wen was re-elected for a further term in March 2008. In Nov. he disclosed that the effects of the global financial crisis on China were worse than had been expected, prompting the government to announce a US\$586 bn. spending stimulus to boost the economy. Nevertheless, by the second quarter of 2010 official figures suggested that China had overtaken Japan as the world's second largest economy. Earlier, in March 2009, China's central bank called for a new global reserve currency run by the International Monetary Fund to replace the US dollar and Wen, while voicing his confidence in the Chinese economy, expressed concern over China's significant holdings of US government bonds.

In June 2011 Wen travelled to Hungary, the UK and Germany to sign trade and investment agreements, and said that China would lend investment support to countries in the eurozone struggling with sovereign debt.

Wen, like President Hu Jintao, stepped down in March 2013 and was succeeded by Li Keqiang.

Werner, Pierre (Luxembourg)

Introduction

Pierre Werner was prime minister for more than 20 years, serving from 1959–74 and again from 1979–84. The first politician to propose the introduction of a European single currency, he is known as 'the father of the euro'.

Early Life

Pierre Werner was born on 29 Dec. 1913 at Saint-André, near the Northern French town of Lille. He studied law in Luxembourg and at the University of Paris, and was awarded a diploma in economics and finance from the *École Libre des Sciences Politiques*. He achieved his PhD in law in 1938, beginning his career as a lawyer but working for the *Banque Generale du Luxembourg* during the Nazi occupation.

After the Second World War, Werner joined the ministry of finance as a civil servant. In 1945 he was appointed commissioner for banking control, with responsibility for banking regulation, the credit market and international financial collaboration. A member of the centre-right Christian Social People's Party (CSV), he was appointed minister of finance and minister of defence in 1953 and became the leader of the CSV in 1954. He succeeded Pierre Friedon as prime minister in March 1959 after leading the party to electoral victory.

Career Peak

Werner was a leading advocate for a common currency, believing that the economic problems of the 1920s and 1930s were the root cause of the Second World War and arguing that economic union was a way to prevent further conflict. Although the Treaty of Rome in 1957 had made reference to a single currency, it was Werner in a speech at Strasbourg in 1960 who called for the early adoption of a common currency, the 'Euror'.

In 1970 Werner was appointed chairman of the European Economic Community (EEC) and was tasked with reducing currency exchange rate volatility. The Werner Report, published later that year, proposed a three-stage process towards economic and monetary union and a single currency, to be completed by 1980. However, political disagreements, the collapse of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system and the global oil crisis frustrated plans for a shared currency.

Werner was re-elected as premier in 1964, taking on the additional portfolios of foreign affairs and the treasury, and won a third term in 1969. However, in 1974 the CSV was defeated at the polls for the first time since its birth 30 years earlier and Werner was succeeded as premier by Gaston Thorn, who headed a Liberal–Socialist coalition. Werner led his party to electoral victory once again in June 1979, securing his fourth term as prime minister. The CSV was the biggest party at the 1984 elections but Werner chose the moment to retire from politics and was succeeded to the premiership by Jacques Santer.

Later Life

Werner subsequently pursued his business interests, serving as chairman of the *Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Télédiffusion (CLT)* and of *Société Européenne des Satellites*, Europe's first private satellite operator.

As well as his pivotal role in the creation of the euro, Werner was also credited with helping transform Luxembourg into one of Western Europe's richest nations. As the steel industry declined in the late 1960s and 1970s, he was instrumental in developing the country as a leading international financial centre. He died on 24 June 2002, 6 months after the euro was launched. In 2003 the Pierre Werner Institute was created in Luxembourg to stimulate intellectual exchanges and promote research between European countries.

Whitlam, Gough (Australia)

Introduction

Gough Whitlam was Australia's Labor Prime Minister from 1972–75. He introduced major reforms in the welfare system, immigration and foreign policy but his tenure was blighted by scandals within his cabinet and in 1975 the Opposition failed to approve his finance bill. Faced with this impasse, he refused to call a general election. He was controversially sacked by Australia's Governor-General, an act unprecedented in Australian history.

Early Life

Edward Gough Whitlam was born on 11 July 1916 in Melbourne. His mother was Martha Maddocks and his father was Frederick Ernest Whitlam, a solicitor who was active in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Whitlam graduated from the University of Sydney with a BA in 1938. He then served in the Royal Australian Air Force during the Second World War before completing a law degree from Sydney in 1946. In 1942 he married Margaret Dovey, with whom he had four children. Whitlam joined the Labor Party in 1945 and started practising as a barrister in New South Wales in 1947. He was defeated in state elections in 1950 but entered parliament as the representative for Werriwa 2 years later. In 1960 he became deputy leader of the party, a position he held until 1967. In that year he replaced Arthur Calwell as leader. Whitlam led Labor to defeat at elections for the House of Representatives in 1969 and for the Senate a year later. In 1972 he was victorious at House of Representative elections, becoming prime minister and ending Labor's 23 years in opposition.

Career Peak

Whitlam immediately embarked on a batch of radical reforms. Forming a two-man government for 2 weeks with his deputy, Lance Barnard, he withdrew Australia from Vietnam and ended conscription. With a cabinet elected by the parliamentary party, Whitlam abolished university fees, set up a Schools Commission, improved welfare provisions for single parents and the homeless, abolished the death penalty and lowered the voting age to 18. In addition, he increased funding for culture and public transport, made improvements to the universal health insurance scheme, promoted equal pay for women and men, relaxed restrictions on immigration from Asia and Africa and extended Aboriginal rights—thus eradicating the ‘White Australia’ policy. His foreign policy was similarly dynamic. He withdrew Australia’s troops from Vietnam. Papua New Guinea was granted self government, then independence in Sept. 1975. The government hardened its line against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Meanwhile, Whitlam pursued closer relations with China, sought to lessen Australia’s reliance on the USA and loosened ties with Britain. However, his attitude towards Indonesia and Portuguese Timor has been heavily criticized, especially since the release of confidential foreign affairs department papers in 2000. Having deemed Timor-Leste ‘too small’ for self-determination, it is alleged that Whitlam encouraged Indonesia’s *Operasi Comodo* (an undercover destabilization operation). President Suharto ordered an invasion after the former colony declared its independence in Nov. 1975.

Whitlam’s government was beset by rising unemployment and inflation and the effects of the world oil crises. In 1974 he called elections for both houses and won a majority in the House of Representatives but not the Senate. A high profile loans scandal broke in 1975 when it was revealed that Rex Connor and Dr. Jim Cairns, senior members of the government, had unconstitutionally attempted to secure \$A2 bn. in foreign loans to assist the government’s work. A further scandal concerning Cairns and his secretary soon followed. Lacking the support of the Senate, Whitlam was unable to gain parliamentary approval for his finance bill. The stalemate in Oct. 1975 resulted in a complex constitutional problem that was still unresolved when Whitlam met Governor-General Sir John Kerr, the titular head of state, who had been nominated for the position by Whitlam. Kerr encouraged Whitlam to break the deadlock by calling a general election but Whitlam refused. Kerr dismissed him from his post and appointed Liberal Malcolm Fraser as his interim successor. That an unelected head of state should be able to remove a democratically elected prime minister caused a constitutional crisis.

Later Life

Whitlam remained Labor leader but the party lost the election in Dec. 1975 and again in 1977. He resigned from politics in July 1978. He has held various academic positions and maintained a presence on the international political scene. In 1983 he was appointed by Bob Hawke as Australia’s Ambassador to UNESCO and between 1986–91 sat on the Australia–China Council. He has published several books including a memoir of his time in government.

Whitlam died on 21 Oct. 2014 at an aged-care facility aged 98. At the time of his death, he ranked as Australia’s longest-living former prime minister ever.

Wickremanayake, Ratnasiri (Sri Lanka)

Introduction

Ratnasiri Wickremanayake, from the leftist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), was unexpectedly returned to the largely ceremonial office of prime minister in Nov. 2005 by the new executive president, Mahinda Rajapaksa. Known as a hardliner, he advocated that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who had waged a separatist ethnic insurgency from 1972, should be militarily defeated, an objective that was finally achieved in May 2009. He was succeeded in April 2010 by D. M. Jayaratne.

Early Life

Ratnasiri Wickremanayake was born in southern Ceylon on 5 May 1933. He was educated at Ananda College, Colombo and studied law in London during the 1950s before entering politics. Following his return to Sri Lanka, he was

elected at the July 1960 legislative elections to represent the Kalutara district, Horana for the People’s United Front alliance. Sirimavo Bandaranaike led the SLFP to victory at that time and became the world’s first female prime minister.

Wickremanayake joined the SLFP in 1962 and became deputy minister for justice following the parliamentary elections of May 1970. The government increased state involvement in the economy, but anger at the slow pace of reforms triggered an armed rebellion by the Marxist People’s Liberation Front (JVP) in April 1971. The uprising was crushed but spiralling inflation (partly caused by rapidly rising oil prices), high unemployment and a growing trade deficit followed, and the SLFP suffered a humiliating defeat to the United National Party (UNP) in the elections of July 1977.

Wickremanayake was promoted to general secretary of the SLFP in 1977, although Bandaranaike remained party leader. The SLFP was returned to power in Aug. 1994 as the principal party of the People’s Alliance (PA) and Wickremanayake was appointed minister of public administration, home affairs and plantation industries. He also served as leader of the house in the cabinet of the new president, Chandrika Kumaratunga, the daughter of Bandaranaike. The government attempted to broker peace with the LTTE but the war intensified after April 1995.

Wickremanayake became prime minister in Aug. 2000 after the resignation of Bandaranaike and headed a minority SLFP government supported by the JVP until Oct. 2001, when it became apparent that the government was about to lose a no-confidence motion. While prime minister, Wickremanayake spurned suggestions of compromise with the LTTE. He was then leader of the opposition until he made way for Mahinda Rajapaksa in April 2002. Following the victory of the United People’s Freedom Alliance (UPFA—which included the SLFP and the JVP) in elections that followed Kumaratunga’s sacking of the UNP government in Feb. 2004, Wickremanayake was appointed minister of Buddhist affairs, public security, and law and order, and deputy minister for defence. He held these posts until the new president (and former prime minister), Rajapaksa, appointed him prime minister in 2005.

Career Peak

Wickremanayake’s appointment reinforced President Rajapaksa’s hardline stance on any future peace negotiations with the LTTE. There followed an intensification of violence between the Tamils and government forces despite token adherence to the 2002 ceasefire. By the end of 2006 the government had reintroduced sweeping anti-terrorism measures and in Jan. 2008 it formally annulled the ceasefire. Government military action against the LTTE escalated in 2008 and registered increasing territorial gains, leading Wickremanayake to state in Feb. 2009 that the government had entered ‘the final phase of eradicating terrorism’. Following the defeat of the LTTE in May, he pledged to root out any remnants of rebel militancy. Following parliamentary elections in April 2010 in which the United People’s Freedom Alliance again secured a strong majority, President Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed D. M. Jayaratne prime minister. Wickremanayake left office on 21 April. He died aged 83 on 27 Dec. 2016.

Wilson, Harold (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Introduction

James Harold Wilson was British Labour prime minister from 1964–70 and 1974–76. A wily political manipulator, he managed to govern with wafer thin majorities. His terms of office were plagued by economic problems and serious divisions within the ranks of the Labour Party. His most significant achievement was ensuring the Labour Party remained unified while under his leadership.

Early Life

He was born on 11 March 1916 in Huddersfield, Yorkshire in the north of England. His father was an industrial chemist and his mother a schoolteacher.

Wilson was educated at Wirral Grammar School (he would become the first British prime minister educated at state school) before gaining a First in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from Jesus College, Oxford. While at Oxford he was a member of the Liberal Club (but not the Labour Club) and, unusually for a prime minister in the making, he played no role in the Oxford Union. By 1938 he had become a Fellow of University College, Oxford and went on to work with Sir William Beveridge on the report that would lay the foundations for the welfare reforms of Clement Attlee's premiership.

Wilson joined the civil service during World War II and became director of economics and statistics for the ministry of fuel and power, his *New Deal for Coal* report paving the way for the post-war nationalization of mining. In 1940 he had married Mary Baldwin, with whom he had two children. He was awarded an OBE in 1945, briefly returning to academe before entering the House of Commons as the member for Ormskirk, an area of Merseyside. Electoral changes meant his constituency evolved into Huyton, the area he served until his retirement from the Commons. In 1947, at 31 years of age, he was appointed president of the board of trade, the youngest cabinet minister since the eighteenth century. However, disappointed at proposed welfare cuts and increased defence spending, he resigned in 1951.

During 1955–59 he was opposition spokesman on economic affairs and in 1960 he unsuccessfully challenged Hugh Gaitskill for the party leadership. He failed too in his bid for the deputy leadership. A year later he was shadow spokesman for foreign affairs and in 1963 he again challenged for the leadership, following the sudden death of Gaitskill. His opponents were deputy leader George Brown and future prime minister James Callaghan. Callaghan was knocked out in the first ballot and Wilson won the second by a narrow margin. He led Labour to victory in the general election of 1964, though with a majority of just five.

Career Peak

Hopes were high that Wilson's tenure would see a dramatic change in the social and economic landscape. He had told the 1963 Labour Conference that 'we are redefining... our socialism in terms of the scientific revolution... the Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this revolution will be no place for restrictive practices or outdated methods on either side of industry'. Wilson returned to the polls in 1966 and won an increased majority but the 'revolution' was already faltering. The *National Plan*, devised by the new Department of Economic Affairs, did not have the expected impact and in 1966 the economy was further hit by a seamen's strike, against which Wilson stood firm leading to charges of betrayal by the Labour left. He then took the unpopular step of enforcing a general wage freeze to be followed by wage controls, and on 18 Nov. 1967 he reluctantly gave permission for the devaluation of sterling.

1969 saw his government backtrack on proposed Lords' reform, and similarly Barbara Castle's *In Place of Strife* trade union reforms were not followed through. The economy struggled, unemployment rose and strike action increased, resulting in a Conservative victory at the general election of 18 June 1970. At the next election in Feb. 1974 the Conservatives won the largest number of seats of any party but failed to secure an absolute majority. When the Liberals rejected a Liberal-Conservative coalition, Wilson stepped in to hold power until a second election in Oct. of the same year saw him establish a majority of three.

Though Wilson's governments were not as reformist as supporters had hoped, there were a number of significant pieces of legislation passed during his terms in office. The Open University and comprehensive schools were established, the voting age was reduced to 18, the death penalty abolished and laws governing divorce, homosexuality and abortion reformed. In terms of foreign policy, he believed Britain still had a crucial role on the world stage. In his first term, without committing British forces, he supported US action in Vietnam, a stance unpopular with many on the Labour left, and his support for the Nigerian government during the Nigerian civil war was to further dilute his popularity among some Labour members. In 1965 he was faced with Ian Smith's illegal declaration of independence in the British colony of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Wilson imposed economic sanctions, rather than military force, but they were ineffective and a negotiated settlement was not achieved until the 1980s. In addition, sectarian violence in Northern Ireland had been on the increase throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Direct British rule had been imposed by Heath's government in 1972 between Wilson's two tenures, but neither the Conservatives nor Labour made any discernible progress in pursuit of peace. The question of Britain's role within the European Economic Community also proved a considerable problem for Wilson, dangerously splitting his own party. However, in a bid to prove public support for Britain's

membership, and thus stave off its critics at least in the short term, Wilson authorized Britain's first ever referendum in June 1975 in which membership received majority support.

Domestically, Wilson's second period of government was blighted by economic strife, industrial action and growing rifts between the various wings of the Labour party. To general shock he resigned in March 1976 and was replaced by James Callaghan. There was some controversy surrounding his last honours list, known as the 'lavender list' which rewarded close friends and allies, including the manufacturer of his famous raincoats who would later be convicted of fraud.

Later Life

Wilson was created a Knight of the Garter in 1976 and, following his departure from the Commons in 1983, he was made a life peer, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx. He wrote his memoirs and several other volumes in retirement, but his health failed badly in later years and he died in London on 24 May 1985.

Wilson is often seen as a politician's politician, a man best remembered for his adept political manoeuvring, although a number of his reforms remain influential today. The first man since the nineteenth century prime minister William Gladstone to win four general elections, he would later comment that 'I wish I could have been prime minister in happier and easier times'. His oft-repeated sentiment that 'a week is a long time in politics' however, gives an indication of the short-term expediency that was to govern so much of his time in office.

Wulff, Christian (Germany)

Introduction

Christian Wulff was sworn in as the youngest ever president of Germany on 2 July 2010. He was elected by the Federal Assembly after his predecessor, Horst Köhler, resigned after comments about the overseas deployment of the German military that were considered to have overstepped the role of the federal president. The deputy leader of Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) at the time of his appointment, Wulff became the first Catholic to serve as president in over 40 years. Wulff resigned in Feb. 2012 after allegations of corruption relating to his time as prime minister of Lower Saxony.

Early Life

Wulff was born on 19 June 1959 in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony. Raised a Roman Catholic by his mother after his father left the family, he studied law and economics at the University of Osnabrück. He joined the CDU in 1975 and was chairman of the School Students Union of Germany from 1978–1980. Having worked for several years as part of the Junge Union (the joint youth wing of the conservative CDU and Christian Social Union of Bavaria), he was elected to the CDU's executive board in Lower Saxony in 1984.

Wulff continued to live in Osnabrück and was elected to the city council in 1986, remaining a member for 15 years. He qualified as a solicitor in 1990 but discontinued his professional practice in 1994 on being elected to the Landtag of Lower Saxony, representing the constituency of Osnabrück-West. He retained the seat until his appointment to the presidency. Over the years Wulff cemented his position as a senior member of the CDU, serving as one of four deputy chairmen of the party in 1998 and as minister-president of Lower Saxony from 4 Mar 2003 until he became federal president.

Career Peak

In the wake of the controversy surrounding the resignation of Köhler, Wulff was considered a safe pair of hands. A conciliatory figure who, it was hoped, could overcome differences in the fragile coalition, he pledged to 'build bridges' in a society divided by immigration, the reintegration of East and West, and unemployment. Nevertheless, in Aug. 2011 he made a controversial intervention on financial developments in the European Union when he questioned the legality of the European Central Bank's bond-buying in support of Germany's heavily-indebted southern euro zone partners. On 17 Feb. 2012 Wulff resigned as president owing to allegations of misconduct during his tenure as leader of Lower Saxony.

Yadav, Ram Baran (Nepal)

Introduction

Ram Baran Yadav became president in July 2008 after winning a comfortable majority in the first presidential elections since the country became a federal democratic republic. Yadav's role was largely ceremonial, including the performance of traditional Hindu duties previously carried out by the abolished monarchy.

Early Life

Ram Baran Yadav was born on 4 Feb. 1948 to an ethnic Madhesi family in the village of Sapahi, in the Dhanusha District. He studied medicine at the School of Tropical Medicine (Kolkata) and the Calcutta Medical College. He obtained his postgraduate degree from the Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, India. Upon returning to Nepal, Yadav ran his own medical practice in Janakpur.

While in India, Yadav had become involved in the Nepali pro-democracy movement and in 1980 he joined the Nepali Congress (NC) party. He participated in the 1990 Jana Andolan (People's Movement) but was arrested and jailed for 3 months until the implementation of a democratic constitution. Yadav was elected to parliament as an NC candidate in 1991 and served as minister of health for 3 years in the administration of Girija Prasad Koirala.

At the 1999 general election Yadav was re-elected and continued as health minister, establishing a healthcare system in rural Nepal. He then became general secretary of the NC. He won the seat of Dhanusa-5 at elections for the constituent assembly in April 2008.

Yadav contested the presidential election of July 2008 on an NC ticket but fell four votes short of the 298 needed to win a simple majority. In a second round of voting he won 308 of 590 votes cast. Yadav's victory came as an upset to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN-M) who were seeking to form the government after their win in the April 2008 Constituent Assembly election. Yadav was sworn into office on 23 July 2008.

Career Peak

Yadav prioritized the drafting of a new democratic constitution in a bid to end Nepal's long track record of political violence, and has been keen to maintain friendly ties with both India and China. However, he faced opposition from the CPN-M whose leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda), led a coalition government from Aug. 2008 until May 2009 when he resigned in protest at Yadav's blocking of his controversial attempt to dismiss the country's army head. Madhav Kumar Nepal of the Communist Party (Unified Marxist-Leninist) was sworn in as the prime minister of a new coalition, excluding the CPN-M, later in the month. The CPN-M demanded a return to power, claiming that Yadav had acted unconstitutionally, and kept up prolonged political pressure on Madhav Kumar Nepal until he resigned as prime minister in June 2010.

The previous month the coalition government and Maoist opposition had agreed to extend a deadline for drafting a new constitution until May 2011. Repeated efforts to elect a new premier were unsuccessful until Feb. 2011 when, following the withdrawal of Pushpa Kamal Dahal and then Ram Chandra Poudel of the NC as candidates, Jhala Nath Khanal of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) was approved by parliament and sworn in by Yadav. In a further premiership change in Aug. 2011 Khanal resigned after the government and opposition had failed to meet the May deadline for agreeing a new constitution and was replaced by Baburam Bhattarai of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Bhattarai similarly missed a constitutional deadline of May 2012 and also failed to hold elections promised for Nov., prolonging the political stalemate and generating increasing friction with Yadav, who called the Maoist government's legitimacy into question.

In March 2013 Yadav swore in Khil Raj Regmi, the chief justice, as prime minister of an interim government pending elections that took place in Nov. for a constituent assembly to complete the drafting of a new constitution. Following these elections, Yadav in turn swore in Sushil Koirala of the NC as prime minister in Feb. 2014.

Yadav's term as president ended in Oct. 2015 following Bidhya Devi Bhandari's election to the post. Yadav was ineligible to stand due to a constitutional limit on successive terms.

Yaméogo, Maurice (Burkina Faso)

Introduction

Maurice Yaméogo was the first elected president of newly independent Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Elected to the colonial executive council in 1958, he administered the country's transition from semi-autonomy to independence, despite being pessimistic as to Burkina Faso's ability to survive without French backing. An autocratic leader, he was overthrown in a 1966 military coup led by Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana.

Early Life

Yaméogo was born in 1921 in Koudougou, Upper Volta. He studied at Pabret and qualified as a teacher. He soon became involved in politics. Shortly after its creation, Yaméogo became involved with the Parti de Regroupement Africain (African Union Party). In the French colonial administration he served successively as minister for agriculture, the interior, information and justice. In 1957 a law was passed allowing an executive council to be appointed and the following year, the French African colonies voted for autonomy. Burkina Faso voted overwhelmingly for semi-autonomy. Conversely, Yaméogo was against the idea of independence believing the country's extreme poverty and its lack of trade or reserves rendered it too weak to survive economically at that time without colonial support.

Career Peak

In 1958 Yaméogo was elected president of Upper Volta's government council. The following year the country joined a union of former French colonies together with Niger, the Côte d'Ivoire, Dahomey (Benin) and Togo. A trade accord with the Côte d'Ivoire underlined Burkina Faso's subordinate economic position. Nonetheless, in 1960 Burkina Faso achieved full independence and Yaméogo was democratically elected the country's first independent president, representing the Union Démocratique Voltique (UDV). This party was the Burkina arm of the radical Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (African Democratic Union) founded by the Ivorian, and later president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny.

An autocratic leader, Yaméogo imposed a one-party government, outlawing all opposition to his UDV. Continuing economic difficulties provoked dissatisfaction within the country. He was re-elected in 1965, but his second term was short lived. In 1966 his attempts to cut civil servants' wages led to widespread strikes. In this unstable atmosphere, Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana took the opportunity to depose Yaméogo in a military coup. Lamizana led the country for the next 14 years.

Later Life

Yaméogo died on 15 Sept. 1993.

Yanukovych, Viktor (Ukraine)

Introduction

Having served as prime minister under President Kuchma from 2002–05, Viktor Yanukovych was briefly declared president after the bitterly contested 2004 election. When the result was annulled he lost the re-run and resigned as prime minister. In March 2006 his Party of Regions won the largest number of seats in parliament and in Aug. 2006 he became prime minister in a coalition government. His power base is in eastern Ukraine, where he has strong links with industrialists, and he favours close ties between Ukraine and Russia.

On 18 Dec. 2007 Yanukovich was formally dismissed by parliament. In 2010 he fought a bitterly contested presidential election against Yuliya Tymoshenko, narrowly defeating her in the second round of voting. Tymoshenko contested the results, claiming electoral misconduct, but Yanukovich was sworn in as president on 25 Feb.

Early Life

Viktor Yanukovich was born on 9 July 1950 in Yenakiyev, Donetsk Oblast, in Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine. His mother, an ethnic Ukrainian nurse, died when he was two, and his father, an ethnic Belarusian train driver, died when he was in his teens, leaving him in the care of his grandmother. He served a prison sentence in 1967 for robbery and another in 1970 for bodily injury, although he claims to have been later cleared of both crimes. In 1972 he began working in the Donetsk coal industry and completed his education, graduating in mechanical engineering from Donetsk Polytechnic Institute, in 1980. He joined the Communist Party and rose rapidly as a manager in Donetsk regional transport.

He entered politics in Aug. 1996 as deputy head of Donetsk Oblast administration and was appointed head in May 1997. From May 1999–May 2001 he was head of the Donetsk Oblast regional council and became closely associated with a group of business and political figures known as the 'Clan of Donetsk', led by the coal and steel oligarch Rinat Akhmetov. His lobbying for them brought him strong political and financial support but also fuelled rumours of links to organized crime. In Nov. 2002 he was appointed prime minister by President Leonid Kuchma.

Yanukovich oversaw the continuing liberalization of the economy, cutting higher rates of income tax and encouraging land privatization. He often favoured the interests of Ukrainian industrialists over international investors, helping to power the domestic economy but leading to allegations of corruption. He maintained strong links with Russia and spoke against Ukraine joining the European Union and NATO. In 2003 his government signed an agreement to take Ukraine into a free trade zone and customs alliance with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, although negotiations subsequently stalled. Kuchma chose not to fight the 2004 presidential election and Yanukovich stood as his successor, openly supported by Russia's President Putin.

Yanukovich lost the first round to Viktor Yushchenko of the pro-west, liberal Our Ukraine party but won the second round on 21 Nov. 2004. The result was challenged and Yushchenko's supporters staged huge street protests dubbed the 'Orange Revolution'. The Supreme Court annulled the result and a re-run of the second round saw Yushchenko triumph. Following a parliamentary vote of no confidence in his government, Yanukovich resigned as prime minister in Jan. 2005.

Yanukovich spent 2005 building on his grassroots support in eastern Ukraine. He profited from disillusionment with Yushchenko's government, which was divided and indecisive. Yanukovich's Party of Regions emerged as the largest party at the March 2006 parliamentary elections with 186 seats out of 450, ahead of the Tymoshenko Bloc and Our Ukraine. However, with no overall parliamentary majority, months of wrangling over a new government ensued before Yushchenko was forced to nominate Yanukovich as prime minister in Aug. 2006. Yanukovich agreed a coalition deal with Yushchenko's party, but the working relationship was uneasy from the outset. In Dec. 2007, following further elections in Sept., he was replaced by Tymoshenko as prime minister of a new coalition between her supporters and Yushchenko's Our Ukraine.

Career Peak

Yanukovich regained the presidency in Feb. 2010 after comprehensively defeating Yushchenko in the first round of elections and then prime minister Tymoshenko in the second, winning by a 3.5% margin. Tymoshenko accused him of vote-rigging and mounted a legal challenge against the results. However, she subsequently dropped her action stating that she would not receive a fair hearing. She and her party nevertheless refused to recognize Yanukovich's election and boycotted the inauguration ceremony. In March Yanukovich appointed a longstanding ally, Mykola Azarov, to succeed Tymoshenko as prime minister.

In Oct. 2010 Yanukovich forced through constitutional changes overturning limits on presidential power that had been introduced in 2004. At the end of the year Tymoshenko and former interior minister Yuriy Lutsenko were charged with abuse of state funds while in office. Both rejected the accusation as a politically motivated manoeuvre by the Yanukovich

government, but in Oct. 2011 Tymoshenko was found guilty and jailed for 7 years. Her conviction prompted international condemnation, particularly from the European Union whose high representative for foreign policy warned of 'profound implications' for EU–Ukraine relations, including for Ukraine's hope of concluding a trade and association agreement.

In Oct. 2012 the Party of Regions retained power after a decisive win in parliamentary elections, although international monitors criticized the conduct of the poll. In Dec. Yanukovich appointed a reconstituted but largely unchanged government under Prime Minister Azarov.

Under Yanukovich's presidency, Ukraine gradually improved its relations with neighbouring Russia, ending years of hostility between the two countries. In April 2010 he signed an agreement with Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, which extended the lease of the Russian Black Sea naval base in Crimea for 25 years in exchange for accords on cheaper gas supplies. A month later, parliament voted to abandon Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations, conforming to Russia's opposition to any Ukrainian involvement with the organization.

However, on 22 Feb. 2014 following popular opposition in Ukraine to closer ties with Russia (culminating in the 'Euromaidan' demonstrations of 2013–14), Yanukovich was impeached by parliament and removed from the presidency. He was subsequently disowned by his party, the Party of Regions, and fled the capital amid escalating violence between Euromaidan protesters and state authorities.

On 25 Feb. 2014 the provisional Ukrainian parliament voted in favour of sending Yanukovich to The Hague to face trial for the violence that resulted in the deaths of at least 82 protesters during the final days of his presidency. He fled to Russia, where he has since maintained that he remains Ukraine's sole legitimate leader.

Yar'adua, Umaru Musa (Nigeria)

Introduction

Umaru Yar'adua was sworn into office on 29 May 2007 after a landslide victory in disputed presidential elections. Selected candidate for the governing People's Democratic Party (PDP), he succeeded outgoing president, Olusegun Obasanjo. Yar'adua's electoral success marked the first time in Nigeria that an elected civilian head was replaced by another civil leader.

Early Life

Umaru Musa Yar'adua was born on 9 July 1951 in Katsina to a politically active family. His father served as a minister in the First Republic and his older brother, Shehu Musa Yar'adua, was vice president in Olusegun Obasanjo's military government. Yar'adua graduated from Ahmadu Bello University with a degree in chemistry in 1975. After graduation he undertook a mandatory year in the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), teaching at the Holy Child College in Lagos. He then moved to the Katsina College of Arts, Science and Technology, remaining there until 1979. In 1980 Yar'adua earned an MSc in analytical chemistry from Ahmadu Bello University and continued teaching at Katsina Polytechnic until 1983, when he moved to the private sector.

In the early 1980s Yar'adua entered party politics, becoming an active member of the People's Redemption Party (PRP). He later became a founding member of the People's Front, which was subsumed into the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in 1988. In the same year he became a member of the SDP's constituent assembly, a member of its national caucus and, subsequently, the SDP state secretary for Katsina State. Away from politics Yar'adua was thriving in the private sector, holding directorships of several companies including Hamada Holdings and Habib Nigeria Bank Ltd.

In 1998, at the start of Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar's transition rule, Yar'adua established the K34 political association, which would become part of the PDP. He was returned as governor of Katsina State in 1999, winning re-election in 2003. During his 8-year tenure he proved himself a prudent and transparent leader while Katsina State underwent unprecedented growth, especially in the health and education sectors. On 17 Dec. 2006 he was selected by the PDP as its presidential candidate for the April 2007

elections after parliament denied Olusegun Obasanjo the opportunity to run for a third term. He was announced winner of the election, although the results were challenged before a special election tribunal that upheld them in Feb. 2008.

Career Peak

Yar'Adua pledged that the rule of law, the constitutional separation of powers, non-interference and economic growth would be the guiding principles of his presidency. However, his first cabinet was criticized for containing too many ministers linked to the Obasanjo era and, despite making reconciliatory noises to the opposition, Yar'Adua appointed only two opposition members as assistant ministers.

He pledged to ease the volatile situation in the oil-producing Niger Delta and entered into talks with rebel militias. However, attacks on oil installations by militants continued through 2008 and into 2009, reducing output sharply. In Nov. 2008 the government was also confronted by violent sectarian clashes between Christian and Muslims in Plateau state in central Nigeria that killed an estimated 400 people. Further violence by Boko Haram, an Islamic fundamentalist sect, in the north-east of the country in July 2009 provoked clashes with the security forces leading to several hundred more deaths.

Speculation about Yar'Adua's state of health created a mood of political uncertainty, heightened in Nov. 2009 when he left the country to receive medical treatment abroad. His absence prompted the senate to transfer presidential power to vice president Goodluck Jonathan in Feb. as an interim measure. Although Yar'Adua returned at the end of the month he was thought to be too ill to take up his duties and Jonathan remained acting president. Yar'Adua died on 5 May 2010.

Yasuhiro, Nakasone (Japan)

Introduction

A member of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Yasuhiro Nakasone was prime minister of Japan from 1982–87. During his premiership he encouraged Japan's participation in international affairs and promoted closer links with the United States, forging a special relationship with the then US president Ronald Reagan. He was forced to resign from the LDP in 1989 following a share purchase scandal, but rejoined in 1991.

Early Life

Nakasone was born into a wealthy family on 27 May 1917 in Takasaki. In 1941 he graduated from Tokyo Imperial University and then served in the navy during the Second World War. In 1947 he was elected to the lower house of parliament, retaining his seat in successive elections. He was appointed director-general of the Science and Technology Agency and chairman of the Atomic Agency Commission in 1959–60 and held ministerial posts from 1967, including for transport (1967–68), defence (1970–71) and international trade and industry (1972–74). He also served as LDP secretary-general in 1974–76 and chairman of the party's executive council in 1971–72 and 1977–80.

Career Peak

In Oct. 1982 Suzuki Zenko resigned as LDP president and as prime minister of Japan. Having built up a strong factional backing within the LDP, Nakasone stood successfully for election to the party presidency. By virtue of the LDP's parliamentary dominance, he was also elected prime minister by the legislature in Nov. 1982. In Dec. 1983 the LDP lost its absolute majority in an electoral backlash following the conviction for corruption of Kakuei Tanaka, an influential faction leader and former prime minister. However, Nakasone remained as prime minister of a coalition administration with a small conservative party. In Oct. 1984 he was reaffirmed as LDP president for a further 2 years. Capitalizing on his personal popularity, he led the party to a convincing victory in parliamentary elections in July 1986. Later that year his tenure as LDP president was extended for a further 12 months. Under Nakasone's premiership, which ended in Nov. 1987, Japan's economy began to rival that of the United States and the country became the world's

largest creditor nation. He also raised Japan's political profile significantly in the international community and controversially increased its defence spending. Nakasone retained considerable influence within the factional rivalries of the LDP until he was forced to resign from the party for 2 years in May 1989 in response to a financial scandal.

Yatsenyuk, Arseniy (Ukraine)

Introduction

Arseniy Yatsenyuk became acting prime minister in Feb. 2014 following the impeachment of the former president, Viktor Yanukovich. Yatsenyuk was approved for the post in a parliamentary poll, winning 371 votes from the 450-member assembly, and was reappointed in Nov. He resigned in April 2016.

Early Life

Arseniy Petrovych Yatsenyuk was born on 22 May 1974 in Chernivtsi to a family of Jewish ancestry, although opponents have accused him of downplaying this aspect of his heritage to win favour with ethnic Ukrainian voters in the west of the country. In 1996 he graduated in law from the Chernivtsi National University, where his parents were academics, before joining Raiffeisen Bank Aval. In 2001 he earned a degree in accounting from the Chernivtsi Trade and Economics Institute.

In Sept. 2001 Yatsenyuk joined the Crimean ministry of economy, working against a backdrop of distrust towards Kyiv from the region's largely ethnic Russian population. He joined the National Bank of Ukraine in 2003 as vice-president and later became its acting head. During the 2004 Orange Revolution he advocated limiting cash withdrawals, a move subsequently recognized as key to saving the country's banking system.

He was named minister of economy in Sept. 2005 and oversaw talks on Ukraine's prospective membership of the World Trade Organization and the European Union (EU). In Sept. 2006 he became first deputy head of the secretariat of the president and served as the president's representative to the cabinet. In March 2007 he was voted by parliament to be foreign minister in Viktor Yushchenko's government, and in elections in Sept. 2007 he won a parliamentary seat. In Dec. that year he was named chairman of the house but was dismissed from the post in Nov. 2008.

At the 2010 presidential election Yatsenyuk stood as the candidate for his own Front for Change party, but won less than 7% support in the first round. After Yuliya Tymoshenko was imprisoned on embezzlement charges in 2011, he took the helm of her Fatherland party, with Front for Change formally merging into it in June 2013. At the height of the protests against Yanukovich's government in Jan. 2014, Yatsenyuk was offered but rejected the premiership. However, following Yanukovich's departure for Russia, Yatsenyuk was elected acting prime minister on 27 Feb. 2014.

Career Peak

Yatsenyuk quickly secured recognition for his government from the EU, United Nations and USA. His most pressing security challenge has been to contend with the continuing conflict between the Kyiv government and pro-Russian separatists in the east of the country and Russia's military threat following its annexation of Crimea in March 2014. He has also needed to address endemic corruption and a deep economic recession. He has stated his belief that the country's future lies in the EU (with which an association accord was signed in June 2014 and a free trade deal came into force in Jan. 2016) while trying to improve relations with Russia.

Following parliamentary elections in Oct. 2014, in which his pro-Western People's Front attracted the largest share of the overall vote with about 22%, Yatsenyuk was reappointed prime minister on 27 Nov. 2014, securing 341 of 450 parliamentary votes.

Yatsenyuk's government survived a parliamentary vote of no confidence in Feb. 2016 following allegations of corruption and criticism over the slow pace of reforms. President Petro Poroshenko had called for Yatsenyuk's resignation prior to the vote, claiming that the prime minister had lost the support of the governing coalition. Yatsenyuk eventually resigned on 14 April 2016.

Yekhanurov, Yuriy (Ukraine)

Introduction

Yuriy Yekhanurov, an experienced technocrat, economist and long-time ally of President Yushchenko, was appointed as Ukraine's prime minister in Sept. 2005. Ahead of the March 2006 parliamentary elections, he was charged with stabilizing government and the economy after the first post-'orange Revolution' administration had become mired in infighting and allegations of corruption. He left office in Aug. 2006.

Early Life

Yuriy Ivanovich Yekhanurov was born on 23 Aug. 1948 in Belkachi, Yakutia, in Soviet Russia. He was at school in Bichursk, Buryatia (Siberia) until 1963. When his family moved to Kyiv in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, he attended the Technical School for Construction. Having begun work as an apprentice in a concrete manufacturing plant in 1967, Yekhanurov rose to become the complex's executive director in 1978, a position he held for 7 years. During this period he undertook advanced studies in economics at the Kyiv Institute of Economics, graduating in 1983 with a 'candidate degree' (equivalent to a PhD). In Aug. 1988 he was nominated deputy director of Glavkivstroy (the municipal department for construction).

Following the break-up of the USSR and Ukraine's declaration of independence in Aug. 1991, Yekhanurov was involved in economic policy as an advocate of sweeping liberalization and privatization. In 1992 he joined the department for economic reform in Kyiv's municipal administration and a year later entered the government as deputy minister of the economy. Between 1994 and early 1997 he oversaw the initial stage of privatization in Ukraine as head of the State Property Fund. Subsequently he served as minister of the economy in the government of Pavlo Lazarenko, before being nominated as head of the state committee for business development. He became a member of the Popular Democratic Party in 1998 (providing political support to President Leonid Kuchma) and was elected as the parliamentary member for Zhytomyr district. In Dec. 1999 he was appointed first vice-prime minister of Ukraine in the new government of Viktor Yushchenko, the former head of the National Bank of Ukraine.

After the government was ousted by President Leonid Kuchma in May 2001, Yekhanurov became first deputy head of the presidential administration, working on issues of administrative reform. He joined Yushchenko's 'Our Ukraine' centre-right opposition and represented the bloc in parliament in 2002. He then served as chairman of the committee for industrial policy and entrepreneurship and took up a professorship at the Taras Shevchenko National University. On 3 April 2005, following the 'Orange Revolution', the newly-elected President Yushchenko appointed Yekhanurov as governor of the city of Dnipropetrovsk.

Career Peak

On 8 Sept. 2005 Yekhanurov was appointed acting prime minister by Yushchenko. The president's action came in the wake of his decision to sack his entire cabinet, including Prime Minister Tymoshenko, because of infighting and allegations of corruption. Parliamentary approval for Yekhanurov's appointment required two rounds of voting and on 22 Sept. 2005 he secured the support of 289 out of 339 deputies. Yekhanurov set out his plans to improve the country's business climate by lifting state controls and to achieve Ukraine's membership of the World Trade Organization. In Jan. 2006, following an agreement with Russia ending a dispute over Russian gas prices, Ukraine's parliament dismissed Yekhanurov's government. However, President Yushchenko questioned the legal basis of the action ahead of the March 2006 parliamentary elections. Yekhanurov continued to perform his duties but in an acting capacity.

The elections of March 2006 were won by Viktor Yanukovich's party, with the parties of Yuliya Tymoshenko and President Yushchenko in second and third places respectively. However, with Yanukovich unable to form a majority government, it appeared that power would go to a coalition made up of the parties of Tymoshenko and Yushchenko plus the Socialists. When this deal collapsed, Yanukovich's Party of Regions sought an alliance with the Socialists and Communists. In July the president decided to accept Yanukovich's proposed coalition rather than call fresh elections. Yekhanurov left office on 4 Aug. 2006.

Yeltsin, Boris Nikolayevich (Russia)

Introduction

Boris Yeltsin was elected president of Russia (then within the USSR) by the Russian parliament in 1990. The following year he was elected president in popular elections, Russia's first leader to so secure office. He was at the forefront of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991. Despite ailing health, economic difficulties and the war in Chechnya, he won re-election in 1996. His second term was marked by erratic policy making and frequent changes of government personnel. He unexpectedly resigned in late 1999 and handed power to Vladimir Putin.

Early Life

Yeltsin was born in the village of Butka in the region of Sverdlovsk on 1 Feb. 1931. In 1955 he graduated from the Ural Kirov Technical College with a degree in engineering. Two years later he married Naina Girina, with whom he had two children. He joined the Communist Party in 1961 and became head of the construction department under the Sverdlovsk regional party committee. In 1975 he became secretary of the Sverdlovsk CPSU regional committee in charge of industrial regional developments, and the following year was named first secretary of the Sverdlovsk CPSU regional committee, a position he held until 1985. During that time he also served on the USSR supreme council (1978–89) and as Moscow's mayor from 1985–87. In 1981 he was elected a member of the CPSU central committee, a position he occupied until 1990.

In Dec. 1985 Boris Yeltsin was named first secretary of the Moscow Communist Party by Mikhail Gorbachev, with a specific brief to rid the party of corruption. He was promoted to the Politburo the following year. However, he was ousted on 11 Nov. 1987 after delivering a speech criticising the party leadership. His next post was a step down to first deputy-chairman of the USSR state construction committee, where he stayed from Nov. 1987 to early 1989.

In March 1989 Yeltsin made a political comeback, winning 90% of the vote to join the Congress of People's Deputies. In a major political rebuff to Gorbachev, Yeltsin was elected Chairman of the Russian Supreme Council by the legislature on 29 May 1990. He left the Communist Party in July, and became Russia's first popularly elected president on 12 June 1991.

Gorbachev came under increasing pressure from conservatives, fearful of the reform movement that had swept Eastern Europe since 1989. In Aug. they attempted a coup. Yeltsin, based in Moscow, was at the forefront of resistance to them and was widely credited with their defeat. Gorbachev remained in power but was increasingly reliant upon Yeltsin. On 8 Dec. 1991 Yeltsin signed a treaty dissolving the Soviet Union and forming the Commonwealth of Independent States along with ten other former Soviet republics. Gorbachev's declining power was highlighted when he found out about the agreement after George Bush, the American president. Gorbachev resigned on 25 Dec. from his positions in the defunct USSR and Yeltsin held the reigns of the CIS government.

Career Peak

Yeltsin quickly set about reforming the economy, encouraging a free market. He ended state interference in the funding and pricing of many food and consumer goods, but his policies met opposition in parliament. In 1993 the Duma introduced reforms to reduce presidential powers, but a national referendum in April supported Yeltsin.

On 21 Sept. 1993 Yeltsin disbanded parliament and ordered new elections. When vice president Alexander Rutskoi declared himself the new leader and was sworn in by parliament, Yeltsin successfully besieged the building. Dec. 1993 saw widespread voter support for Yeltsin's proposed constitution, but the elections also gave nationalists a strong voice in parliament. In Dec. 1994 Yeltsin sent Russian troops into the breakaway region of Chechnya. The war proved long, bloody and inconclusive.

Presidential elections were held on 4 July 1996. Yeltsin's economic reforms had seemingly borne little fruit by this time and the issue of Chechnya was thorny. In addition, he suffered a heart attack while on the campaign trail in the month before the elections and it was widely expected that he would

struggle at the polls. However, he defeated his Communist challenger, Gennady Zyuganov, after two rounds. He underwent a heart bypass operation in Nov., having been virtually absent from the political scene in the preceding months.

In 1997 Yeltsin established a precarious peace with the rebel Chechnyan forces. On 23 March 1998 Yeltsin dismissed his entire government, blaming the failure of economic reforms. In June Russia's stock market fell sharply, fuelling investors' fears of a collapse of the rouble and pressurising the government to devalue the rouble. In mid-1999, the peace with Chechnya broke after rebels invaded Dagestan and were blamed for several bomb attacks within Russia. Yeltsin staved off attempts by parliament to impeach him, while concerns over his health and prodigious drinking grew. Yeltsin resigned on 31 Dec. 1999 and Vladimir Putin, the seventh prime minister of Yeltsin's tenure, succeeded him as president.

Later Life

Yeltsin retired to the country where he wrote his memoirs. President Putin controversially granted him immunity from any future prosecution. On 23 April 2007 Yeltsin died at the age of 76.

Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang (Indonesia)

Introduction

Retired general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, known widely by his acronym SBY, succeeded Megawati Sukarnoputri as president of Indonesia on 20 Oct. 2004. In the country's first direct presidential election he polled 61% of an estimated 125 m. votes and he became the first incumbent to be re-elected in July 2009. He left office on the completion of his second presidential term in Oct. 2014.

Early Life

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was born on 9 Sept. 1949 in the small town of Pacitan, in the east of the Indonesian island of Java. His family were observant Muslims and he attended a traditional *pesantren* (Muslim boarding school). He graduated from Indonesia's military academy in 1973 and joined the army, which was then, with Gen. Suharto as president, the country's dominant authority. He served as a senior officer in Indonesia's 1975 invasion of Timor-Leste, then a Portuguese colony. Gen. Suharto's 'New Order' political system was characterized by a strongly anti-communist foreign policy and relatively good relations with the USA. Yudhoyono travelled to the USA in 1976 and 1982, attending military training programmes at Fort Benning, Georgia. He later took a master's degree in business management from Webster University in Missouri and has since described the USA as his 'second home'. Between 1984 and 1987 Yudhoyono returned to Timor-Leste and commanded Battalion 744 in the city of Dili. By the mid-1990s he had risen through the ranks to become chief-of-staff in the Jakarta command. Questions have been asked about his knowledge of a raid by security forces on the Jakarta offices of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) on 27 July 1996 (then chaired by Megawati Sukarnoputri), which left five dead and 23 missing.

In 1996 Yudhoyono served as chief military observer with the United Nations force in Bosnia. Two years later, with Indonesia in turmoil following the ousting of President Suharto in March 1998, he left the army and was appointed the minister for mining and energy in the administration of Abdurrahman Wahid. When the Muslim cleric was succeeded as president in 2001 by Mrs Megawati, daughter of former president Sukarno, Yudhoyono joined her cabinet as chief security minister. He was praised for the way he handled the aftermath of the Oct. 2002 Bali bombing that killed 202 people. He subsequently helped draft Indonesia's first counter-terrorist law and attempted to broker a peace agreement with separatist rebels in the historically troubled province of Aceh in Sumatra in 2003, which collapsed in May of that year. In March 2004 Yudhoyono resigned from Megawati's increasingly unpopular cabinet to establish the Democratic Party (PD). In the first round of elections in April (for choosing the members of parliament and three tiers

of local officials) the PD had a strong showing. On 5 July, when Yudhoyono, along with his running mate Jusuf Kalla—a business tycoon with ties to many of the country's Islamic clerics—fought in the country's first direct presidential elections, no candidate won more than 50% of the vote. This forced a run-off election between Yudhoyono and Megawati on 20 Sept. which Yudhoyono won with 60.9% of the vote. He was officially sworn in as president on 20 Oct. 2004.

Career Peak

Yudhoyono vowed to fight terrorism, eradicate corruption, restore Indonesian institutions and the rule of law, and rebuild the economy. The president set himself the goal of creating jobs for 50 m. unemployed Indonesians. He also pledged to repair the often fractious relationship with Australia. In the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami of 26 Dec. 2004, which is estimated to have killed some 166,000 people on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, Yudhoyono was quick to accept aid and expertise from the international community. Handling relief and reconstruction was an opportunity for him to be a more decisive and approachable leader than his predecessor. It was also an opportunity for him to improve relations between Jakarta and Aceh—the region worst-affected by the tsunami—and in Aug. 2005 his government signed a peace agreement with separatist leaders granting greater political autonomy to the province. Elections for a provincial governor and district officials in Aceh took place in Dec. 2006.

Yudhoyono's government was confronted by renewed terrorism, as suicide bombers again targeted the tourist resort of Bali in Oct. 2005 killing 19 people, and by further natural disasters. In Nov. 2008 three Islamic terrorists convicted for their part in the Bali bombing in 2002 were executed by firing squad. However, extremist activity continued, notably the launching of suicide bomb attacks in July 2009 on two luxury hotels in Jakarta which killed nine people and injured at least 50 more. In the first half of 2010 a number of suspected Islamist militants were arrested in a series of anti-terrorist raids by security forces. Meanwhile, an earthquake in May 2006 and another tsunami in July killed around 6,500 people on Java, floods in Jakarta in Feb. 2007 left an estimated 340,000 people homeless, another earthquake in Sumatra the following month killed more than 50 and, in Sept. 2009, an earthquake off the coast of Sumatra left more than 1,000 dead. Further extensive casualties followed another earthquake off the western coast of Sumatra and the volcanic eruption of Mount Merapi in Oct. 2010.

By 2008 Yudhoyono's political popularity was being undermined by continuing unemployment, rising prices and a cut in fuel subsidies, despite increased spending on anti-poverty programmes and significant progress in his anti-corruption drive. Nevertheless, in parliamentary elections in April 2009 his Democratic Party emerged as the largest party and in July he was returned to office with 60.8% of the vote in the presidential poll.

Following a final report in July 2008 by a joint investigative commission that blamed Indonesia for human rights violations in the run-up to Timor-Leste's independence in 2002, Yudhoyono expressed the Indonesian government's deep regret but did not apologize.

Towards the end of his term in office, Yudhoyono was criticized for a failure to counter corruption or combat increasing incidents of religious intolerance and sectarian violence by hardline Islamic groups. Indonesia's brittle relations with Australia were strained by revelations in Nov. 2013 that Australian intelligence services had tapped the telephones of Yudhoyono and his close confidantes, prompting the recall of Indonesia's ambassador.

Since the constitution prohibits presidents from serving more than two terms, Yudhoyono was ineligible to stand for a third term in the presidential elections scheduled of 2014. On 20 Oct. 2014 he was succeeded by Joko Widodo of the Indonesian Democratic Party–Struggle.

Yushchenko, Viktor (Ukraine)

Introduction

After a drawn-out and bitter contest for the presidency of Ukraine, the pro-EU and reformist former banker, Viktor Yushchenko, emerged as the winner in Jan. 2005. Following allegations of vote-rigging in the Nov. 2004 election, tens of thousands of Yushchenko's orange-clad supporters protested and forced a rerun. However, his presidency was undermined by political

rivalries, dissension within the government and parliamentary opposition. Having performed badly in the first round of presidential elections in early 2010, he was succeeded by Victor Yanukovich on 25 Feb. 2010.

Early Life

Viktor Andriyovich Yushchenko was born on 23 Feb. 1954 in Khoruzhivka, Sumy Oblast. He attended the Finance and Economics Institute in Ternopil and graduated in 1975. Returning to Sumy in 1976 after service in the Soviet army, Yushchenko worked as an economist and department chief at the Ulyanivka branch of the USSR's central bank. In 1984 he obtained a post-graduate degree in finance and credit. Shortly afterwards he moved to Kyiv, taking up appointments as Deputy Director for Agricultural Credit at the Ukrainian office of the USSR's central bank, then Department Director at the Kyiv office of the USSR's Agro-Industrial bank and, in 1991, Deputy Chairman of the Agro-Industrial bank's Board of Directors.

He was a key figure in the establishment of the National Bank of Ukraine, becoming its governor in 1993. He oversaw the introduction of Ukraine's new currency, the hryvnia, in 1996 and was credited with policies that diminished the impact of the Russian rouble crash on Ukraine's economy in 1997. Yushchenko then survived a corruption scandal that engulfed the central bank before being appointed prime minister in Dec. 1999 by President Leonid Kuchma. His free-market approach, his decision to pay off Ukraine's debts to Russia and his promotion of foreign and domestic investment brought some improvement to the economy. However, his government came into conflict with oligarchs from eastern Ukraine, who controlled the oil and gas sectors and were linked to Kuchma (and Moscow), and was ousted in 2001 by a no-confidence vote.

Yushchenko began talks with liberal and nationalist opposition forces and, in Jan. 2002, created 'Our Ukraine'—a coalition of centre-right groups. In the parliamentary elections in March 2002 Our Ukraine reduced the Communist Party's dominance in parliament, but failed to secure the majority needed to form a new government. Instead, pro-Kuchma forces, led by the For United Ukraine party, received enough support to hold the balance of power.

When Kuchma's term ended in 2004, Yushchenko ran against the prime minister, Viktor Yanukovich (backed by the powerful clans in eastern Ukraine and Moscow), for the presidency. During an acrimonious campaign, Yushchenko became ill with a condition that left his face disfigured, prompting accusations of poisoning by the intelligence agencies. After neither candidate reached the 50% margin required for victory in the first round, a run-off vote showed a victory for Yanukovich, which contrasted sharply with exit polls. International observers reported electoral irregularities and there were huge public protests in Kyiv and elsewhere, which led to the invalidation of the results by the Supreme Court and the re-running of the election in Dec. Yushchenko was declared the winner, although this time Yanukovich claimed to have been the victim of electoral fraud. Despite resigning as prime minister, Yanukovich continued to protest about the conduct of the election until the electoral commission reaffirmed Yushchenko as the official winner with 54.1% of the vote and the Supreme Court rejected Yanukovich's final appeal in Jan. 2005.

Career Peak

Addressing a crowd estimated at more than 100,000 in Kyiv, Yushchenko described his inauguration as president on 23 Jan. as a victory of freedom over tyranny. He promised to create new jobs, fight corruption, enforce taxes and make business transparent, adding: 'My goal is Ukraine in a united Europe'.

On 4 Feb. 2005 the Ukrainian parliament approved Yushchenko's nomination of Yuliya Tymoshenko as the new prime minister. She was one of his key supporters, but a controversial figure—Russian authorities having accused her of bribery when she ran a Ukrainian gas trading company in the mid-1990s. However, the optimism that followed the 'Orange Revolution' soon faded and, following public disagreements within the government and further corruption allegations, Yushchenko sacked his entire cabinet on 8 Sept. 2005, including Tymoshenko who subsequently became a political rival. He appointed Yuriy Yekhanurov, an economist and technocrat, as the new prime minister.

In Jan. 2006, after the signing of an agreement with Russia ending a damaging dispute over prices for Russian gas supplies, the Ukrainian parliament passed a vote of no confidence in the Yekhanurov government, although Yushchenko questioned the legal validity of the move ahead of the March 2006 parliamentary elections.

The elections returned the Party of Regions of Ukraine, supporting the pro-Russian former prime minister Yanukovich, as the largest party but without an overall majority. Tymoshenko's Election Bloc meanwhile pushed Yushchenko's Our Ukraine into third place. After several months of political stalemate, Yushchenko was forced to nominate Yanukovich as prime minister in an attempt to resolve the impasse. However, Yushchenko's relations with a largely hostile legislature continued to deteriorate, and in Jan. 2007 the parliament voted controversially to curtail the president's constitutional powers. Political tensions were exacerbated further in April by a disputed presidential decree dissolving parliament before Yushchenko and Yanukovich reached a compromise agreement in May to hold fresh elections at the end of Sept. The elections left no grouping with an outright majority but after weeks of negotiations Yushchenko again nominated Tymoshenko as prime minister of a pro-Western coalition government comprising their respective supporters. Tymoshenko's appointment was narrowly approved by parliament in Dec. 2007.

Damaging rivalry between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko nevertheless continued through 2008. In May the prime minister's party prevented the president from making his annual address to parliament in protest at his interference in government economic policies. Then in Sept., amid increasing concerns over Russia's hostility towards Ukraine's aspirations to join NATO and Russian military intervention in Georgia, the coalition government collapsed. Yushchenko dissolved parliament and called an election (although this was postponed owing to the financial crisis). Meanwhile, Ukraine's economy suffered a downturn in the wake of the global financial crisis, necessitating the arrangement of a US\$16.5 bn. loan support package from the International Monetary Fund in Oct. In Dec. Tymoshenko managed to form another coalition government with backing from some of the president's supporters, but it was viewed by some commentators as weak and unstable.

In a further dispute over gas prices and unpaid bills, Russia shut off gas exports to Ukraine (also disrupting onward pipeline flows to much of Europe) for 3 weeks in Jan. 2009 before a resolution was reached.

Presidential elections on 17 Jan. 2010 saw Yushchenko win a mere 5.5% of the vote thus excluding him from the second round run-off in which his old opponent Viktor Yanukovich narrowly defeated Yuliya Tymoshenko. Yushchenko was succeeded by Yanukovich on 25 Feb. 2010.

Zafy, Albert (Madagascar)

Introduction

A medical professor and politician, Albert Zafy created the Union Nationale pour le Développement et la Démocratie (The National Union for Development and Democracy; UNDD) and was president from 1993–96. He was one of the leading figures in non-violent mass protests against Didier Ratsiraka's autocratic Conseil Suprême de la Révolution (CSR) government, which helped topple his predecessor in 1992. His own term ended when impeachment charges were brought against him.

Early Life

Zafy was born on 1 May 1927 into a Catholic family in Betsiaka, Antseranana province. After completing his secondary education in the Malagasy capital, he obtained his medical qualifications in Montpellier. In 1964 he returned to Madagascar to work in the Antananarivo public hospital. After a further 4 years in France, he became the head of surgery in the Malagasy capital. He also taught at the University of Madagascar (now the University of Antananarivo).

He was health minister between 1972–75, first under Philibert Tsiranana and then under the subsequent military rule, but left the government when Ratsiraka came to power in 1975. Returning to his non-political career, he helped set up La Clinique des Frères Francisquains (Clinic of Franciscan Brothers) at Ambanja, becoming its director in 1987. With fellow professionals he founded the KMZ, a committee for the defence of human rights. In 1990 he returned to the political scene, creating the UNDD which formed part of an opposition coalition, the Forces Vives (Live Forces; FV) of which Zafy

was made president. The alliance put pressure on Ratsiraka to resign, creating a provisional government in July 1991 with Zafy at its head. In 1991, Ratsiraka finally conceded defeat and stepped down. Zafy headed a transitional government, the 31-member Haute Autorité de l'Etat (High State Authority), replacing the CSR. In 1992 he survived assassination attempts and the following year contested free elections against Ratsiraka whom he defeated with 67% of votes, most other candidates having transferred their support to him to defeat Ratsiraka.

Career Peak

Zafy changed the constitution to allow the president to appoint the prime minister instead of the national assembly. The bill was passed following a referendum. In 1996 economic hardship led to a series of strikes and protests. In Sept. the national assembly impeached Zafy for abusing his constitutional powers. He stepped down in Oct. although he stood for the elections in Dec. 1996. He was defeated by Ratsiraka.

Later Life

Zafy has remained politically active as an opposition leader since leaving office. He played an active role in discussions to end the 2009 political crisis caused by the coup d'état led by Andry Rajoelina, and was a staunch critic of the transitional government in place until 2014. He suffered a stroke on 11 Oct. 2017 and was hospitalized in La Réunion. He died 2 days later aged 90.

Zapatero, José Luis Rodríguez (Spain)

Introduction

José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE; Partido Socialista Obrero Español), became prime minister in March 2004 when his party unexpectedly defeated the Popular Party (PP) in the aftermath of the terrorist attack that month on Madrid. After taking office, he announced the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq and called for greater international co-operation against terrorism. However, his judgment was called into question over his policy towards Basque separatism. Zapatero secured a second term after the PSOE won the March 2008 elections and he was re-elected in April.

Early Life

Rodríguez Zapatero (known as Zapatero) was born on 4 Aug. 1960 in Valladolid. He studied law at the Universidad de León before embarking on a career in politics. From a traditionally left-wing family, Zapatero was strongly inspired by his grandfather, a republican captain executed by nationalists in 1936 at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. In 1977, before the first post-Franco democratic elections, Zapatero attended a socialist political rally in Gijón. He was inspired by former PSOE leader Felipe González Márquez and in 1978 he joined the PSOE as a youth member. Four years later he became the PSOE youth leader in his home region of León. In 1986 he was elected to parliament representing León, becoming the youngest member of the *Cortes* at that time. His party standing was further enhanced in 1988 when he became the regional leader of the León PSOE.

In 1996 the PSOE's 14-year domination ended with the election of José María Aznar. The following year González resigned as PSOE leader amid corruption charges and the revelation of his government's brutal treatment of captured Basque terrorists, for which two of his former ministers were imprisoned. During the following 3 years the party floundered under the leadership of Joaquín Almunia, who resigned in March 2000 following a humiliating election defeat. Zapatero then became one of four candidates for the party leadership, along with the better-known members José Bono, Matilde Fernández and Rosa Díez. At the 35th PSOE party conference, Zapatero won a surprise victory with 41.8%, narrowly defeating Bono's 40.8%.

On election Zapatero set out his plans for the rejuvenation of the flagging PSOE. He changed the party's executive committee, installing

many young politicians in a bid to revitalize the party's image. Zapatero's ambition was to create an effective opposition to Aznar and present himself as a strong candidate for prime minister. His *Nueva Via* (New Way) represented a shift from the traditions of socialism to more centrist politics, with echoes of Tony Blair's New Labour ideology in British politics. This move reduced the ideological distance between the ruling and opposition leaders, Aznar having abandoned traditional right-wing politics for a more moderate, centrist stance.

On 11 March 2004 Madrid's rail network was hit by terrorist bombings that killed 191 people. Aznar's government blamed ETA in the immediate aftermath, but evidence soon pointed to a link with North Africa. At the general election three days later, the PP suffered a backlash of voter hostility and were unexpectedly defeated by the PSOE. Zapatero was sworn in as prime minister on 17 April 2004.

Career Peak

Although lacking an absolute majority, Zapatero declined to form a coalition, saying that he would govern through consensus with other groups. Reiterating his opposition to the war in Iraq and criticizing the failure of US-led forces to install a workable post-war structure, he announced that Spanish troops would be withdrawn from Iraq by the end of May 2004. At the same time, he increased Spain's military commitment to the UN-led force in Afghanistan and called for more international co-operation to counter terrorism. His domestic agenda included an expected increase in welfare spending and promised reform of the tax system. Observers believed he would be more sympathetic than his predecessor to regions with large nationalist movements.

In Feb. 2005 a car bomb exploded in Madrid, injuring about 40 people. Although ETA was thought to be responsible, the Zapatero government offered peace talks the following May if the organization would disarm. Also in Feb. the Spanish electorate endorsed the European Union's proposed new constitution treaty in a referendum. In June 2005 parliament defied the Roman Catholic Church by legalizing gay marriage and granting homosexual couples adoption and inheritance rights.

In March 2006 ETA declared a permanent ceasefire, marking a supposed end to four decades of separatist violence. However, Zapatero's willingness to negotiate with the organization was criticized severely when ETA broke the truce with a bomb attack on Madrid airport in Dec. that year which killed two people. In a subsequent parliamentary debate he apologized to the nation for having 'made a mistake' about ETA. Zapatero meanwhile gave his government's support to a new charter giving greater autonomy to Catalonia which was approved by 74% of voters in a referendum in the region in June 2006. Andalusia voted in favour of similar reforms in Feb. 2007.

After the ETA attack at Madrid airport Zapatero adopted a harder line against the group, suspending all peace moves. In response, ETA withdrew its ceasefire in June 2007. In Oct. several people were convicted and imprisoned for the Madrid train bombings in 2004.

In Nov. 2007 the Spanish parliament passed a bill formally denouncing the Franco dictatorship and ordering the removal of all related statues and symbols from streets and buildings.

The PSOE won the elections of March 2008, taking 169 of the 350 seats. Zapatero was subsequently re-elected prime minister by parliament in April 2008. His new cabinet for the first time included more women than men.

In response to sharply rising unemployment in the wake of the global financial crisis, Zapatero unveiled an €11 bn. plan in Nov. 2008 to boost the economy through investment in public works and infrastructure. Spain nevertheless went into recession in Jan. 2009 and unemployment continued to rise through the year. In June the PSOE came second to the opposition Popular Party in the elections to the European Parliament.

Meanwhile, in July 2009, a Spanish government minister visited British Gibraltar for the first time in 300 years but insisted that Spain would not relinquish its claim to the territory. In Jan. 2010 Spain took over the rotating six-month presidency of the European Union.

The impact of the economic downturn cast a long shadow over the political landscape in 2010. Government austerity measures to reduce Spain's budget deficit, unpopular labour reform and rising unemployment (reaching 20%) prompted widespread unrest and strikes by workers as Zapatero's approval ratings among voters plummeted. Meanwhile, ETA's announcement in Jan. 2011 that a further ceasefire announced four months earlier was 'permanent' was dismissed by the government.

On 2 April 2011 Zapatero announced he would not stand for re-election in the 2011 parliamentary election. Following the defeat his party suffered in the Nov. elections, Zapatero left office on 21 Dec. 2011.

Zardari, Asif Ali (Pakistan)

Introduction

Asif Ali Zardari became Pakistan's president in Sept. 2008 following the resignation of Pervez Musharraf. He has been co-chairman of the Pakistan's People's Party (PPP), the largest grouping in the National Assembly, since the assassination of his wife, Benazir Bhutto, in Dec. 2007. A controversial figure, he has struggled to maintain a stable coalition government.

Early Life

Born on 26 July 1955 in Nawabshah, Zardari was brought up and educated in Karachi. He established a career in business and property and in 1983 unsuccessfully contested local elections in Nawabshah. In 1987 Zardari married Benazir Bhutto, then leader-in-exile of the PPP in London. The following year Bhutto became prime minister when the PPP won the general election.

During Bhutto's first term of office Zardari prospered amid rumours of corruption. In 1990 Bhutto was ousted by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and Zardari was arrested and jailed on corruption and blackmail charges although never brought to trial. He claimed the action was politically motivated. While in prison Zardari was elected to the National Assembly and in 1993, when Bhutto won a second term as prime minister, the charges against him were dropped. He then served as minister for the environment from 1993–96 and as minister for investment from 1995–96.

In 1996 Bhutto was again removed from office and Zardari was arrested on charges of murder and corruption. He was detained for 8 years, during which time he and Bhutto appealed against a Swiss court conviction for money laundering. With Bhutto in exile in Dubai, Zardari continued to deny all charges and claimed political persecution. In 2004 he was freed and the charges against him in Pakistan were dropped. From 2004–07 he lived primarily in the USA, where he received medical treatment for several conditions.

In Nov. 2007 President Musharraf introduced a measure to cancel criminal charges against National Assembly members, clearing the way for Zardari and Bhutto to return to Pakistan. Following Bhutto's assassination during a PPP rally on 27 Dec. 2007, Zardari assumed joint chairmanship of the party with his 19-year-old son, Bilawal. In Feb. 2008 the PPP won the general election in coalition with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif (PML-N). Zardari and Sharif sought to establish a coalition government and made preparations to impeach Musharraf, who was refusing to relinquish power. Musharraf finally resigned on 18 Aug. 2008 and four days later the PPP nominated Zardari as their presidential candidate. However, on 25 Aug. Sharif took his party out of the coalition, protesting at the concentration of executive power in Zardari's hands and claiming that he had reneged on a promise to reinstate 60 Supreme Court judges. Zardari was elected president on 6 Sept. 2008.

Career Peak

Zardari's tenure has been marked by political tensions, both domestic and with neighbouring states. In March 2009 he defused mounting friction with the Pakistani judiciary and the PML-N by announcing the reinstatement of former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry—sacked by Musharraf in 2007 and since championed by Sharif—in response to widespread popular protests. Zardari also pledged to reduce some of the powers invested in the presidency (under constitutional changes which were later approved by parliament in April 2010), and in Nov. 2009 relinquished control of the country's nuclear weapons to the prime minister in an apparent effort to deflect growing opposition. This gesture, however, was overshadowed the following month as the Supreme Court quashed an earlier legal amnesty protecting Zardari and several political allies from corruption charges. Zardari's opponents renewed calls for his resignation. Prime Minister Gilani's failure to pursue further investigations into Zardari prompted the Court to charge the premier with contempt in Feb. 2012. In June it disqualified Gilani from holding office and he was succeeded by Raja Pervez Ashraf.

Zardari's attempts to improve relations with India have been hampered by allegations of Pakistani involvement in the major terrorist attack in

Mumbai in 2008 and further attacks in Mumbai and Delhi in July and Sept. 2011. Furthermore, longstanding tensions over the disputed territory of Kashmir led to border clashes in Jan. 2013. Zardari has also faced an increasing domestic security threat from Islamic extremists, especially in the volatile northwest region of the country. In response to a series of attacks, government forces launched major military offensives against Taliban militants from April 2009 in the Swat valley and from Oct. 2009 in the tribal area of South Waziristan. However, suicide bombings by militants continued unabated in many of Pakistan's major cities, further undermining Zardari's authority.

In July–Aug. 2010 Zardari was criticized for his government's response to a humanitarian crisis following flooding that devastated large areas of the country. More than 1,600 people were killed and 20 m. displaced by the deluge.

Relations with the USA became increasingly strained in 2010 and 2011. Cross-border US air strikes in anti-Taliban operations led Pakistan to temporarily suspend NATO's supply routes into Afghanistan in Sept. 2010 and again in Nov. 2011. Meanwhile, Osama bin Laden, founder of the al-Qaeda militant network, was killed by US special forces in Abbottabad in Pakistan in May 2011. The Pakistani security establishment's apparent ignorance about Bin Laden's presence in the city, and the US government's failure to notify the Pakistani authorities about its military intentions, caused further friction between the two uneasy allies.

Concurrently, there were increasing tensions between the Zardari government and Pakistan's powerful military leadership. In Dec. 2011 Zardari underwent hospital treatment in Dubai, triggering rumours of his resignation under coercion from the army, and in Jan. 2012 a scandal over a leaked memo alleging that senior government officials had sought US aid against a possible military coup further soured the political atmosphere.

In March 2013 parliament dissolved itself ahead of elections scheduled for 11 May. In so doing, it became the first parliament in Pakistan's history to complete a full 5-year term. Zardari stepped down as president in Sept. 2013, handing his duties over to a democratically elected successor, Mamnoon Hussain. Although no longer protected by presidential immunity against charges of money laundering and bribery, Zardari has vowed to stay on in Pakistan to oversee reforms to the PPP.

Zatlers, Valdis (Latvia)

Introduction

Valdis Zatlers was elected president by Latvia's parliament, the *Saeima*, in May 2007. He began his 4-year term in July, taking over from Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga. The president's role is principally ceremonial with limited legislative powers.

Early Life

Zatlers was born on 22 March 1955 in Riga. He attended secondary school before going on to the Riga Institute of Medicine in 1973 to train as a surgeon. He graduated in 1979 in orthopaedic and trauma surgery and began working at Riga Hospital No. 2. From 1985–94 he was head of the hospital's traumatology unit. His initial foray into politics saw him join the Popular Front of Latvia in 1988, shortly before the first significant protests against Soviet rule. In 1990–91 Zatlers completed 6 months of medical training at the universities of Yale and Syracuse in the USA, returning to Latvia as it won its independence.

From 1994–98 he was director of the State Orthopaedic and Traumatology Hospital, during which time he worked with patients suffering the effects of the 1996 Chernobyl disaster. He left the hospital in 2007, having been accused of malpractice over the purchasing of medical supplies and of accepting undeclared payments from patients, but was cleared of wrongdoing in both cases. Though a signatory of the People's Party's 1998 founding manifesto, Zatlers was not affiliated to any party before his election to the presidency on 31 May 2007, when he defeated Aivars Endziņš.

Career Peak

Zatlers' election by the ruling coalition was viewed as a compromise deal by the major parties. As president he sought to strengthen Latvia's bilateral economic relations through state visits and by raising the country's profile in the United Nations.

After anti-government demonstrations in Oct. and Nov. 2007 forced the resignation of Prime Minister Aigars Kalvītis, Zatlers appointed the interior minister, Ivars Godmanis, as premier. In Dec. 2007 the Schengen Treaty, abolishing border controls between certain EU member states, came into force in Latvia. With the country under increasing economic pressure, Godmanis' administration collapsed in Feb. 2009. Zatlers nominated Valdis Dombrovskis as premier of a new government that was approved the following month.

Although widely expected to win the vote, Zatlers was defeated by Andris Bērziņš in the presidential election held on 2 June 2011. The following month Zatlers formed the centre-right Zatlers' Reform Party.

Zedillo Ponce de León, Ernesto (Mexico)

Introduction

Representing the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party; PRI), Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León was president of Mexico from 1 Dec. 1994 to 30 Nov. 2000. Zedillo's steady recovery of the Mexican economy and negotiations of the Zapatista problem, both inherited from his predecessor, will be less well remembered than changes he made to the system that promoted a more democratic government and eventually made it possible to end the 71-year dominance of the PRI in Mexican politics.

Early Life

Zedillo was born in Mexico City on 27 Dec. 1951. The son of an electrician, he spent his childhood in the northern town of Mexicali. An economist, he studied at the Instituto Politécnico Nacional in Mexico, then at Bradford, England and finally at Yale University where in 1981 he earned his PhD in a study of the issue of public indebtedness in Mexico and its links to future growth of petroleum exports. Zedillo worked in the central bank of Mexico from 1978–88, engaging in economic research and analysis. During this time he gained wide recognition as one of the main proponents of economic modernization policies, establishing the Exchange Risk Coverage Trust Fund (FICORCA), the agency that made it possible to restructure the debt of many Mexican companies in the early 1980s. Zedillo joined the dominant PRI in 1971. His first political roles as Undersecretary and then Secretary of Planning and Budget Control from 1987–92, continued his successful economic career by reducing the rate of inflation from 160% to approximately 8%. He was Secretary of Education from 1992–94, during which time he was campaign manager for Luis Donaldo Colosio. However, on 23 March 1993 Colosio was assassinated in Tijuana and Zedillo was named as his replacement.

Career Peak

Contrary to the Mexicans' love of personality, Zedillo was considered uncharismatic. The incoming president himself claimed to be surprised at his election in Aug. 1994 when he came to power with only 48.8% of votes, the lowest majority of any PRI candidate since their rise to power in 1929. Even so, Zedillo set out on a programme that would move away from the traditional PRI way of governing as he sought to promote a more democratic parliament, even appointing a member of an opposition party to his cabinet. By spending more on health and education, Zedillo's aims were to promote a more egalitarian society by combating poverty. He also vowed to eradicate corruption. He did this by ordering a public investigation into the assassination of the PRI secretary general, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, eventually arresting the brother of his predecessor Carlos Salinas, Raul. Despite good intentions, Zedillo's goals were undermined by an economic crisis that occurred immediately after his arrival as president, a crisis brought on by his predecessor Salinas. By the end of 1994 the peso had been devalued by

over 40%. This recession had the knock-on effect of increasing crime, especially drug related offences, and causing a large number of Mexicans, driven out by unemployment, to emigrate illegally to the USA. Although Zedillo managed to bring the economy back to the level at which it had been when he took over, by the end of his term there were still approximately 40 m. people in Mexico living in poverty.

Equal in complexity and as challenging a problem as the recession was the conflict with the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of Liberation; EZLN). The conflict began with an uprising in Chiapas on 1 Jan. 1994 and continued throughout Zedillo's presidency. Zedillo originally managed to handle the problem successfully by putting down the uprising without bloodshed, even capturing the rebels' headquarters in 1995. The following year Zedillo's government signed the San Andreas Accord on Rights and Indigenous Cultures, an act taken as a sign that the government was sensitive to the problems faced by the indigenous population. An investigation into the Chiapas state where the rebels were based revealed that 90% of inhabitants were living in poverty, with 75% in extreme poverty. Even so, the problem of the paramilitaries, who had a tacit link to the government, soured any attempts to resolve the crisis. Reports of brutality culminated in the massacre of 45 displaced Tzotil Indians in a village church in Chiapas in 1997. Claims that the government backtracked on the San Andreas Accord and supported the anti-Zapatista paramilitary groups had derailed peace talks. Opposition parties, such as the Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party; PAN), took the opportunity to exploit anti-PRI sentiment and civil discontent brought on by the recession.

Despite these problems, Zedillo's most important move was to create a more democratic political system, which allowed an end to the continual domination of the PRI. Changes made to the electoral system meant the congressional elections of 1997 left the PRI without an overall majority. For the first time in its history, Mexico City elected a mayor who was not a PRI candidate, Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas. This paved the way for the 2000 elections, which saw the election of the PAN candidate Vicente Fox Quesada end the 71-year domination of the PRI party.

Later Life

Since leaving office Zedillo has had several jobs as an economic consultant. He is currently the director of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization at Yale University in the USA.

Zedkaia, Jurelang (Marshall Islands)

Introduction

Jurelang Zedkaia was elected president in Oct. 2009. Having represented the capital, Majuro, in parliament for 19 years, he vowed to unite the nation after 2 years of political tumult.

Early Life

Iroji Jurelang Zedkaia was born on 13 July 1950 on Majuro Atoll, the administrative centre of the Marshall Islands, then part of the US-controlled Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. He attended local schools and the Calvary Bible Institute (1967–69) before employment in the health service.

In the mid-1980s Zedkaia joined the Majuro Atoll's local authority, looking after the health, education and social affairs portfolios. First elected to represent Majuro in the *Nitijela* (the lower house of the legislature) in 1991, he held his seat in 1994 and was elected vice speaker for the *Nitijela* in 1997. He was returned as Majuro's representative for the Aelon Kein Ad (Our Islands) Party in the 2000 general election and again in Nov. 2007, when the United People's Party (UPP) eventually emerged as victors. After the results were challenged in the courts, the new president, Litokwa Tomeing, appointed Zedkaia as speaker in Jan. 2008.

The controversy surrounding the Nov. 2007 general election ushered in a power struggle between Tomeing and the defeated former president, Kessai Note. Against a backdrop of the global financial crisis, numerous party defections and new alliances, Tomeing weathered two motions of no

confidence. However, in a third vote held on 21 Oct. 2009 a majority voted to oust him, triggering a presidential election. Zedkaia narrowly defeated Note by 17 votes to 15 and he was sworn into office on 2 Nov. 2009.

Career Peak

In his inaugural address, Zedkaia called for the country to put aside political divisions. He prioritized improvements to health care, the education system and conditions for outer islanders, as well as forming closer relations with other countries. He attended the UN summit on climate change in Copenhagen, Denmark in Dec. 2009 and pledged to support the resulting accord while pushing for a legally-binding treaty to protect island nations vulnerable to rising seas. Following the general election in Nov. 2011, parliament elected Christopher Loek as the new president in Jan. 2012.

Later Life

Zedkaia passed away on 7 Oct. 2015 aged 65 from a suspected heart attack.

Zeidan, Ali (Libya)

Introduction

Ali Zeidan became prime minister in Oct. 2012. Having spent 30 years in exile opposing Muammar Gaddafi, Zeidan was a key figure in securing Western support for the rebellion that overthrew the former dictator in 2011.

Early Life

Ali Zeidan was born on 15 Dec. 1950 and grew up in the town of Waddan in central Libya. In the 1970s he served in the Libyan embassy in India before defecting from Libya in 1980 and joining the opposition National Front for the Salvation of Libya. Zeidan spent the next three decades in exile, working as a lawyer in Geneva and campaigning for human rights in his homeland.

During the 2011 Libyan uprising, Zeidan served as European envoy for the National Transitional Council (the rebel movement's chief political arm). He was widely credited with convincing Western leaders, including France's President Nicolas Sarkozy, to support the insurgency.

In Libya's first ever democratic elections in July 2012, Zeidan was elected as an independent for Al Jufrah. He stood for the premiership after a no-confidence vote was carried against the interim leader, Abdurrahim al-Keib. In a vote in the 200-seat General National Congress on 14 Oct. 2012, he secured the support of a liberal coalition led by the National Forces Alliance, gaining 93 votes against 85 for the only other candidate, local government minister Mohammed al-Hrari (who had been the choice of the Justice and Construction Party founded by the Muslim Brotherhood).

Career Peak

Parliament approved Zeidan's cabinet on 31 Oct. 2012. His primary task was to unite a country riven by political and regional affiliations. At his swearing-in, he pledged that 'this government will give its utmost best to the nation based on the rule of law, human rights, democracy, rights, and the belief in God, his Prophet and a state based on Islam'. He prioritized the recruitment and training of a professional army and police force to confront an environment awash with arms and militias in the wake of the revolution. In Oct. 2013 Zeidan was briefly kidnapped in Tripoli, apparently by militia gunmen. He was released unharmed and denounced the abduction as a failed coup attempt, which nonetheless raised international concerns over Libya's political stability.

Zeidan was ousted from the premiership in a parliamentary vote of no confidence on 11 March 2014, following a prolonged port blockade by militias in eastern parts of the country that had caused a dramatic downturn in the country's oil output. It had also emerged that a North Korean-flagged tanker had illegally loaded oil from a rebel controlled port in Libya, and subsequently escaped into international waters. Defence minister Abdullah al-Thany was named interim prime minister by congress the same day.

Zelaya, Manuel (Honduras)

Introduction

Manuel Zelaya was sworn in as president in Jan. 2006 after a bitterly contested election. A wealthy landowner and member of the Liberal Party (PLH), he had to confront high levels of unemployment, widespread poverty and a serious crime wave.

Early Life

José Manuel Zelaya Rosales was born on 20 Sept. 1952 in Catacamas in the Olancho department of Honduras and studied civil engineering at the National University of Honduras in the capital, Tegucigalpa. He inherited land in Olancho and worked there as a rancher during the 1970s, when Honduras was under military rule. In 1980 he began working as a co-ordinator for the PLH, which won the 1981 presidential election with its candidate, Roberto Suazo Cordova. Zelaya was elected a deputy in the national congress at the elections of Nov. 1985, a position he held until 1998. From 1987–94 he was on the board of the national council for private enterprise and was president of the industrial association of Medera.

Following the victory of Carlos Roberto Reina (PLH) in the presidential election of Nov. 1993, Zelaya was appointed minister for investment in charge of the social investment fund. From late 1997, under the PLH-led government of Carlos Roberto Flores, Zelaya introduced a programme to return power to local communities. Selected as the PLH candidate to contest the presidential election of 27 Nov. 2005, Zelaya campaigned on a platform of tackling crime by doubling police numbers and introducing re-education programmes for criminals. This contrasted with the approach of his National Party rival, Porfirio Lobo Sosa, who promised the death penalty for convicted gang members. Results were delayed for a week but Zelaya emerged victorious with 49.9% of the vote to Lobo Sosa's 46.2%. He was sworn in as president in Tegucigalpa on 27 Jan. 2006.

Career Peak

In addition to his vow to fight gang violence and drug trafficking, Zelaya pledged more job training, reforms to the education system and cuts in red tape. He also laid out plans for 'civil assemblies' to monitor government, and guaranteed food for the poor and the creation of 400,000 new jobs. The success of his programme rested largely on expanded trade under the US-Central America free trade agreement (which came into effect in April 2006) and on debt relief under the World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.

In Oct. 2007 the Nicaraguan and Honduran governments accepted an International Court of Justice ruling settling a long-running territorial dispute and Zelaya made the first official visit to Cuba by a Honduran leader for 46 years. In Aug. 2008 Honduras—traditionally an ally of the USA—joined the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, an alliance of leftist countries in Latin America headed by Venezuela's anti-US President Hugo Chávez. Zelaya cited a lack of international support to tackle poverty as the motive for the move.

In 2009 tensions mounted over the president's desire to amend the constitution in order to run for a second term in office. The changes were to be put to a referendum on 28 June but a Supreme Court ruling declared the ballot illegal. The military staged a coup before voting could commence, ousting Zelaya from power and placing him in exile initially in Costa Rica and later in the Dominican Republic. President of the National Congress, Roberto Micheletti, was sworn in as interim president declaring his intention to remain in office until scheduled presidential elections could be held in Nov.

Later Life

In May 2011 an appeal court judgment resulted in all corruption charges levelled against Zelaya being dropped, paving the way for his return from exile and Honduras' readmittance into the Organization of American States.

Zhivkov, Todor (Bulgaria)

Introduction

Todor Zhivkov was First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party from 1954–89 and was President from 1971–89. He was instrumental in deposing the monarchy in favour of a communist regime and became the Eastern Bloc's longest serving leader. Opposed to the reforms sweeping through the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe during the Gorbachev years, he was forced from power by members of his own party.

Early Life

Zhivkov was born on 7 Sept. 1911 in Bravets, Bulgaria but soon moved to Sofia. He joined the youth wing of the outlawed Communist Party when he was in his late teens and enrolled in the party proper in 1932, moving up its ranks until 1937. He led a partisan resistance movement during World War II and was active in the removal of the monarchy and the suppression of anti-communists in the war's aftermath.

With the Communists installed in power, Zhivkov advanced rapidly in the party hierarchy, joining the Politburo in 1951. In March 1954 he replaced Vulko Chervenkov, who fell out of favour in Moscow after the death of Stalin, to become First Secretary of the Communist Party. He cultivated close ties with Nikita Khrushchev and consolidated his support at home, becoming Prime Minister in 1962. 9 years later he was made Chairman of the Council of State, a post equivalent to President.

Career Peak

Though he had criticized Chervenkov for the Stalinesque cult of personality, Zhivkov created an even stronger cult around himself. He proceeded with agricultural collectivization and did much to improve the country's industrial base. However, to achieve these results he executed his power ruthlessly. In the 1950s and 1960s he imprisoned thousands of his rivals and often resorted to the feared State Security forces, who set up the murder of the noted dissident Georgi Markov in London in 1978.

Zhivkov bound his country to the USSR more tightly than any of his East European neighbours. He improved ties with the Balkan states but relations with Yugoslavia were strained, particularly over the issue of Macedonian nationality. Relations with Bulgaria's significant Turkish minority declined during the 1980s when Zhivkov, concerned with the falling birth rate and increases in foreign debts, attempted to assimilate them. In practice, this policy involved the suppression of Turkish heritage and culture, leading to around 300,000 Turks leaving the country.

This added to the country's economic troubles and by 1989, having positioned himself against the liberalizing reforms of Gorbachev, opposition to his rule was growing. On 10 Nov. 1989 he was forced to resign and was replaced by Petur Mladenov.

Later Life

In the following month Zhivkov was expelled by the party. In 1992 he was convicted on charges of corruption and sentenced to house arrest, although the verdict was overturned in 1996. Two years later he was accepted into the Socialist Party, which had been established after the dissolution of the Communists, but his health was poor and he died on 5 Aug. 1998 in Sofia.

Zhou Enlai (China)

Introduction

Zhou Enlai was Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China between 1949 and 1976, and had been one of the leading players in the Chinese Communist Party since its foundation.

Zhou was born in Gansu province in 1898—the exact date is unknown. His family's relative wealth enabled Zhou to receive a good education in Tianjin before he was sent to Japan as a student in 1917. Returning to Beijing 2 years later he became involved in radical student politics and was arrested in 1920. Released the same year, his family's money allowed him to travel to France to study.

Early Life

As a student in France, Zhou embraced Communism and became the organizer of the Chinese Communist Party in Europe, after the party's foundation in 1921. Returning to China in 1924, Zhou was active in Sun Yat-sen's revolution of 1925 and the seizure of Shanghai by workers in 1927. By the time the Nationalists turned on the Communists in 1927, Zhou was in charge of the military division of the Communist Party and a member of the Politburo. During the Nationalists' military campaign against the Communists, he worked underground for the party in Shanghai until 1931.

When Communist activity in the cities became increasingly difficult Zhou retreated to the west where the Chinese Soviet Republic had been established. On the Long March (1934–35) he became Mao's close ally. After the all-out Japanese invasion of China, Zhou was the Communists' negotiator with the Nationalists as they attempted to form a common front against the Japanese. He remained in Chongqing through most of the war as the Communists' representative to the Nationalists. Later, Zhou led the Communist delegation in post-war negotiations, which proved fruitless and civil war between the two sides recommenced in 1946.

Career Peak

When the People's Republic of China was established on 1 Oct. 1949, Zhou became the new Communist state's first prime minister and (until 1958) the foreign minister. He travelled widely, promoted the alliance with the Soviet Union (which collapsed in the mid-1960s) and was influential in setting up the historic meeting between US President Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong in 1971. Perhaps his greatest contribution to modern China was as foreign minister and through his involvement in international affairs long after he relinquished the foreign affairs portfolio. He was an effective representative of his country as well as a survivor in the internal wars in the Chinese Communist Party. Zhou's negotiating skills, and personal charm, were important during the squabbles within the Central Committee and Politburo during the Cultural Revolution. Zhou was a moderating influence and, after the excesses of the Red Guards had discredited the Cultural Revolution, Zhou worked to bring moderates, including Deng Xiaoping, back into the leadership. He died in harness on 8 Jan. 1976, shortly before Mao.

Zhu Rongji (China)

Introduction

A keen economic reformer, Zhu Rongji held office as prime minister of the People's Republic of China from March 1998 until March 2003. Zhu made his name running the municipal government of Shanghai, China's largest city, and had had only a short ministerial career in national government when he was chosen as premier.

Early Life

Zhu Rongji was born on 1 Oct. 1928 in Henan province. He was educated at Tsinghua University in Beijing where he received a degree in electrical engineering in 1951. Two years before graduation he had joined the Chinese Communist Party, a necessary step for a successful career. The young graduate gained an appointment in the State Planning Commission. However, his career did not progress smoothly. A pragmatist, Zhu did not approve of the more radical economic decisions taken by Mao Zedong. His discrete opposition earned him demotion and internal exile, but also brought him to the notice of the future reformist leader, Deng Xiaoping.

When Deng became effective ruler of China, Zhu's career took off. In 1998 he became deputy leader of the party in Shanghai and then, in the same year, mayor. Able to put his liberal economic ideas into practice, Zhu opened

up the great port-city to foreign investors. Business in Shanghai flourished and standards of living improved. In 1993 Deng Xiaoping rewarded Shanghai's reforming mayor with one of the country's deputy prime ministerial posts. Zhu immersed himself in economic matters and got himself appointed head of the national bank (the People's Bank of China). He took measures to help boost the economy and cut inflation.

Career Peak

Zhu implemented wide-ranging reforms, not only economic. A major concern was the reform of the country's antiquated banking system. He also did not shy away from tackling the bad debts that many large state-run corporations had run up. Zhu introduced many elements of a market economy, for example allowing local authorities to charge economic rents for public housing, and his economic reforms have, in part, made possible China's membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO). He attempted to reform the military, reducing the number in arms by more than 900,000. But one of his biggest challenges was reshaping government: the administration had grown unwieldy with too many departments and deputy ministers. Zhu was partially successful in creating a leaner, more efficient system.

At the Communist Party congress of Nov. 2002 he was among several high-profile figures to announce their retirement from senior office, effective in March 2003.

Zia ul-Haq, Muhammad (Pakistan)

Introduction

Muhammad Zia ul-Haq was president of Pakistan between 1978–88 and the third head of state to enforce martial law.

Early Life

Zia ul-Haq was born in Jalundhar on 12 Aug. 1924. He was educated at the Government High School, Simla, then at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, before gaining a commission in the British army in 1943. With the end of the Second World War he remained in the armed forces and, with the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, became a member of the Pakistani army.

Having taken a training course in the US (1963–64) Zia acted as assistant quarter master of the 101 infantry division during the 1965 war with India. After the war he went on to teach at a military camp in Jordan until his appointment as Core Commander of Multan in 1975.

A year later, Zia superseded five senior colleagues to become Chief of Army Staff. His appointment, by President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was seen as a calculated move to appoint a supporter of Bhutto's leadership. The choice proved ill-fated and on 5 July 1977 the political opposition which had been mounted against Bhutto culminated in a bloodless coup, led by Zia. With Bhutto imprisoned, Zia placed the country under martial law and took control as Chief Martial Law Administrator.

Career Peak

Zia-ul-Haq reneged on his promise to return the country to civilian rule within 90 days and instead, in Oct. 1977, announced his intention to bring corrupt past leaders to account. The Disqualification Tribunal subsequently excluded many former cabinet members from active politics for 7 years. Amongst those accused by the tribunal was former president, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto was executed in 1979 for his alleged involvement in the murder of a political opponent.

Zia took office as president on 16 Sept. 1978, establishing an advisory body, the Majlis-i-Shura. The Shura, which carried no real political weight, comprised 284 professionals, journalists, clerics and intellectuals, all hand-picked by Zia.

Zia pursued a policy geared towards the Islamization of all social institutions. In 1979 he ordered the introduction of shariat courts to exercise Islamic law and took steps towards the Islamization of the economy.

In response to increasing pressure to hand over to a democratically elected government, Zia agreed to elections in March 1985. But a national referendum signalled 98% approval for Zia's process of Islamization. Zia took this as a vote of confidence and extended his tenure by a further 5 years. The

elections, which were boycotted by opposition parties, saw Muhammad Khan Junejo appointed as prime minister. Zia lifted the state of emergency but amended the constitution to increase his presidential powers.

A growing divide between Zia and his premier came to a head in May 1988 when Zia dissolved the national assembly and removed Junejo from his post.

Elections were again promised within 90 days, but with opposition from the Muslim League and threatened by the popularity of Benazir Bhutto, Zia once more looked set to postpone them. Before this could happen, however, on 17 Aug. 1988 Zia was killed in an air crash which also claimed the lives of many of Pakistan's top-ranking military. Sabotage was claimed though no-one was ever brought to trial. Zia's remains were buried at Faisal Mosque, Islamabad.

Zia, Khaleda (Bangladesh)

Introduction

Bangladesh's first female prime minister (1991–96) and widow of Ziaur Rahman, the country's president between 1977–81, Khaleda Zia returned to office in Oct. 2001 at the head of the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal (Bangladesh Nationalist Party; BJD). Her re-election took place amidst social and political unrest over the treatment of Bangladesh's Hindu, Buddhist and Christian minorities, with both her and her main political rival, former premier and leader of the Awami League, Sheikh Hasina Wahed, accused of fomenting communal violence. Her term of office ended in Oct. 2006.

Early Life

Khaleda Zia was born on 15 Aug. 1945 in the Dinajpur district of what was then East Bengal to a businessman father, Iskander Majumder.

In 1960 she married Ziaur Rahman. A hero of the 1971 secessionist war against Pakistan, Rahman became president of Bangladesh in 1977, forming the centre-right BJD. Following his assassination in 1981 as part of a failed military coup, leadership went to Rahman's vice-president, Abdus Sattar, who ruled until a second coup, a year later, which put the country under the dictatorial sway of Gen. H. M. Ershad. Ershad proclaimed martial law on 24 March 1982, abolishing all political parties and suspending the constitution. Having remained in the shadows during her husband's presidency, after his death Zia joined the BJD. In 1983 she was made a vice-chairman, going on to be elected leader of the party the following year. In 1983 the BJD formed a seven-party alliance. By 1990 the growing popularity of Zia's alliance and the eight-party alliance formed by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the daughter of Bangladesh's first prime minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, forced the resignation of Gen. Ershad. During the 8 years of Ershad's rule, Zia had been imprisoned seven times. Although Zia's BJD failed to win an overall majority in parliament, it received sufficient support from several smaller parties to gain power. On 20 March 1991 Zia was sworn in as prime minister.

Career Peak

Zia's first months in office were beset with catastrophe as Bangladesh experienced one of its worst cyclones in recent years, causing 131,000 deaths and damage at US\$2 bn. Although Zia appealed for international assistance, relief efforts were hindered by flooding and storms. Her leadership subsequently came under fire for her failure to deal effectively with the crisis.

In Aug. 1991 she was successful in reinstating a parliamentary system of government and in Sept. she became head of government after new elections. She tried to revitalize the agricultural industry and undertook reforms in education including the introduction of compulsory free primary education and measures to increase female enrolment.

In 1992 the destruction of the Babri Masjid Mosque in neighbouring India and the ensuing violence provoked fundamentalist sentiment and attacks against Hindus which Zia failed to quash. At this time, Zia's government intelligence unit shared links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), an agency which has since been denounced for its involvement with militant Islamic fundamentalism and terrorist activities.

Although Zia won the election held on 15 Feb. 1996 giving her a second consecutive term in power, the election was boycotted by all major opposition

parties. Handing over power to a caretaker administration, Zia was then forced into opposition by the Awami League, headed by Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

In 1999 she formed a four-party alliance with the Jatiya Party, the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Islami Oikya Jote, both linked to violence against Bangladesh's Hindu minority. In the 2001 election she accused the Awami League of failing to protect Hindus, though the Awami League, traditionally seen as tolerant towards minorities, put the blame for the violence on the BJD. In the 2001 election, held on 1 Oct., the BJD achieved a two-thirds majority and Zia was returned as prime minister. Balloting was chaotic and the next month saw a spate of violence against Hindus by supporters of the BJD alliance.

Among the dominant issues which Zia's government faced was the export of natural gas to India. A liberalization of trade in this area had long been pushed by the Indian government, the USA and the World Bank, yet Zia held back, citing doubts as to the extent of natural gas reserves and future domestic demands. Illegal emigration to India was another long-running source of contention. Talks between the two countries in April 2003 aimed to alleviate tensions over their joint border.

The poor state of the economy played second place to political rivalry and the issue of communal violence. A third of the country's clothing factories closed following the attacks on New York and Washington of 11 Sept. 2001 and the subsequent war in Afghanistan. Roughly 74% of the country's export revenue comes from this industry. Coupled with fallen foreign exchange reserves, the onus rested on Zia to revitalize the economy.

In Dec. 2002 Zia held break-through talks with Senior Gen. Than Shwe, leader of neighbouring Myanmar, on closer economic co-operation and improved road and shipping links. Ties between the two governments had been strained since the early 1990s, when up to 250,000 Muslim Rohingya refugees entered Bangladesh from Myanmar. The situation had been aggravated by Myanmar's plans for a controversial dam on the shared Naf River, until Than Shwe abandoned the project in 2001. The first authorized sea route between the two countries was opened in Feb. 2003. In March 2003 Zia made the first official visit to Myanmar by a Bangladeshi prime minister.

In May 2004 Zia's government approved a constitutional amendment providing for 45 seats to be reserved for female MPs. The opposition orchestrated a series of general strikes throughout 2004 aimed at destabilizing the government. Zia responded to international criticism over her government's treatment of opposition groups, the country's weak human rights record and the growth in influence of radical Islamic groups by warning that foreign countries and international aid organizations had no business interfering in the nation's domestic politics. Over several months in 2004 serious flooding killed several hundred and left several million homeless and in need of food. In Aug. 2005 a banned Islamic militant group claimed responsibility for a series of minor explosions throughout the country.

When Zia's term of office ended on 27 Oct. 2006, Dhaka descended into rioting amid uncertainty as to who would succeed her.

Later Life

In Sept. 2007 Zia was indicted for corruption while in office and jailed ahead of a trial. She was released on bail in Sept. 2008 ahead of elections aimed at restoring multi-party democracy.

Zia was arrested again in Feb. 2015 following further allegations of corruption. In Aug. 2015 the High Court stated that her trial must begin by Oct. 2015. In Feb. 2018 she was convicted of embezzling money meant for an orphanage and sentenced to 8 years in prison.

Zuma, Jacob (South Africa)

Introduction

Jacob Zuma became president of the ANC on 18 Dec. 2007 after defeating incumbent Thabo Mbeki in a leadership election. He was elected national president after the ANC won the general election of 22 April 2009 and was re-elected for a second term in May 2014.

Early Life

Zuma was born in what is now the KwaZulu-Natal Province on 12 April 1942. Influenced by his family's trade unionist background, he became involved in politics at the age of 17.

Zuma joined the ANC in 1959. With the party banned by the apartheid government the following year, by 1962 he was an active member of Umkhonto we Sizwe (the military wing of the ANC), which was subsequently classified as a terrorist organization. In 1963 Zuma was arrested and convicted of conspiring to overthrow the government. He was jailed for 10 years, serving part of the sentence on Robben Island alongside Nelson Mandela.

After his release Zuma helped re-establish the ANC as an underground movement in Natal. In 1975 he left South Africa, living in Swaziland and then Mozambique. He was then appointed to the ANC national executive committee in 1977 and served as its deputy chief representative in Mozambique until the signing of the Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique in 1984, when he became chief representative. Forced to leave Mozambique in 1987, Zuma was appointed head of underground structures and chief of the intelligence department, serving on the ANC's political and military council.

When the ban on the ANC was lifted in 1990 Zuma returned to South Africa and was elected ANC chairperson for the Southern Natal region. In 1991 he was elected the party's deputy secretary general, and at the 1994 general election he agreed to Thabo Mbeki running unopposed for the deputy presidency. Zuma was appointed to the executive committee of economic affairs and tourism for the ANC in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government. In 1997 he became the ANC's deputy president and 2 years later was chosen as South Africa's executive deputy president.

In 2005, following the conviction of Zuma's financial adviser Schabir Shaik on charges of corruption and fraud, Zuma was dismissed as deputy president by Mbeki. However, in Dec. 2007 he was elected ANC party president standing against Mbeki. His rhetoric found favour with many disadvantaged South Africans who felt marginalized by Mbeki's business-friendly policies. Zuma was thus clear favourite to become the next president of South Africa.

Career Peak

Mbeki resigned as president of South Africa on 21 Sept. 2008 after losing the support of the ANC over claims that he had interfered in the case against Zuma and in April 2009 the National Prosecuting Authority dismissed all charges. The ANC triumphed at the general election on 22 April 2009 and Zuma was elected president by parliament. He was sworn into office on 9 May 2009, succeeding Kgalema Motlanthe, who stepped aside after having replaced Mbeki.

Also in May 2009, the South African economy officially went into recession following a sharp downturn in the manufacturing and mining sectors. Unemployment accelerated and strikes and violent protests in July–Aug. were roundly condemned by Zuma. In a speech to the ANC in Jan. 2010 he warned that recovery from the economic crisis would be slow and that there would be a lag in job creation. A national strike by public sector workers over pay, which began in Aug. that year and paralysed hospitals, education and other services for 3 weeks before the action was suspended, undermined relations between the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

In Oct. 2010 Zuma announced major changes to the composition of his cabinet, appointing a host of new ministers and deputy ministers. However, allegations of high-level corruption continued to blight his administration and in Oct. 2011 he sacked two senior ministers and suspended the chief of police. Local elections earlier in May had maintained the ANC's political dominance, but the opposition Democratic Alliance increased its vote share to about 24%. In Nov. the ANC suspended Julius Malema, its militant youth wing leader and a prominent Zuma critic, for 5 years for bringing the party into disrepute.

In Jan. 2012 Zuma addressed a rally in Bloemfontein in celebration of the ANC's 100th anniversary. In Aug. 2012, 34 platinum miners in the town of Marikana were killed and around 80 more were wounded by police during an industrial dispute over wages. Public condemnation of the treatment of the miners prompted Zuma to establish a judicial commission of inquiry in Oct.

In Dec. 2012 Zuma was re-elected leader of the ANC at the party's 5-yearly conference and in July 2013 he carried out the fourth cabinet reshuffle of his term, dismissing three ministers. The rest of the year was dominated by the declining health and ultimate death in Dec. of Nelson Mandela, the revered anti-apartheid campaigner and South Africa's first

majority democratically elected president. Zuma's waning popularity was apparent at the subsequent memorial service for Mandela in Johannesburg, when he was barracked by many in the attending crowd, and also by the decision of the National Union of Metalworkers in the same month to withdraw its support for the ANC ahead of pending parliamentary elections. These took place in May 2014 and were comfortably won by the ANC, guaranteeing Zuma a second term in office.

In Feb. 2015 Zuma announced land reform proposals, long promised by the ANC, to redistribute farmland to black farmers and to ban foreign ownership. Later in the year, however, he attracted increasing criticism over further allegations of corruption, particularly in relation to South Africa's successful bid to host the 2010 football World Cup, and also for allowing Sudan's President Bashir to visit South Africa in defiance of his International

Criminal Court arrest warrant on charges of genocide and war crimes. Zuma's controversial appointments to the post of finance minister in Dec. 2015 also incurred negative reaction from the currency markets and from within his own party.

Mounting corruption allegations and a weak economic outlook fuelled speculation that Zuma might resign ahead of being constitutionally obliged to step down in 2019. He nevertheless survived two parliamentary votes of no confidence in March and Nov. 2016, as well as an impeachment motion against him in parliament in April that year. However, Zuma resigned in Feb. 2018 after facing criticism from within his own party over new corruption allegations. Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, who took over as the ANC leader in Dec. 2017, was sworn in as his successor as president on 15 Feb. 2018.