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KINGDOM OF LESOTHO CONFLICT INSIGHT

ABOUT THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide analysis and recommendations to assist the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States and Development Partners in decision making and in the implementation of peace and security-related instruments.

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SITUATION ANALYSIS

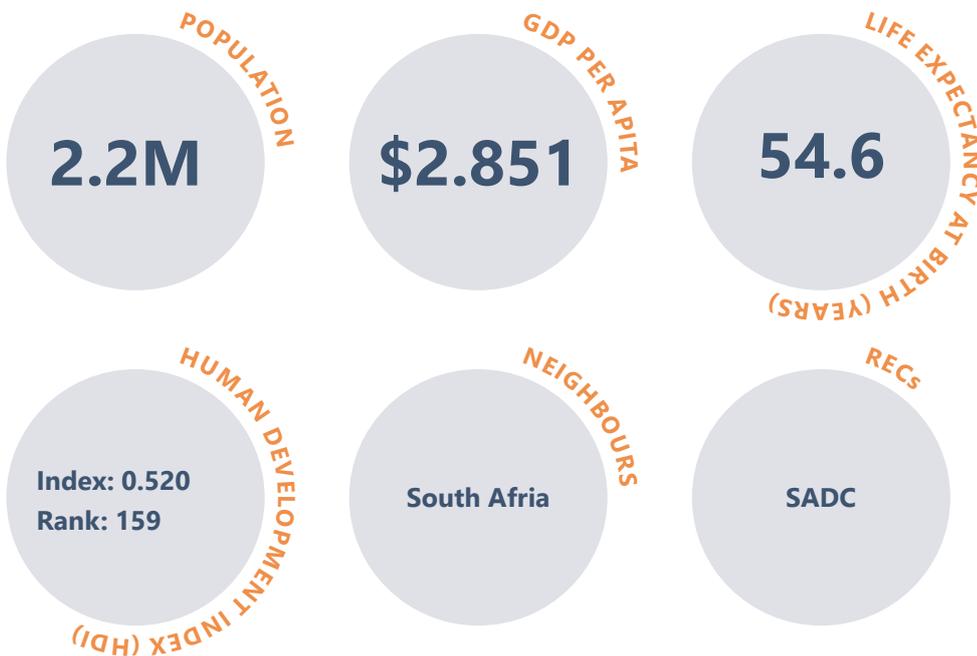


Figure 1: Country profile and demographics
 Source: UNDP Human development index 2018 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LSO>).

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a landlocked country surrounded entirely by South Africa. It has a population of about 2.2 million and a total land area of 30.4 square kilometres.ⁱ Since gaining independence from British rule in 1966, Lesotho has faced various challenges that have prevented the country from achieving political stability and sustained economic growth. The population of Lesotho remains largely rural-agrarian, despite recorded growth in its Gross National Income (GNI) per capita of about 21.6% between 1990 and 2017.ⁱⁱ Lesotho has high levels of inequality, poverty as well as a 33% unemployment rate among young people.ⁱⁱⁱ As a lower-middle-income and landlocked country, Lesotho is subject to domestic pressures, and is heavily exposed to any economic and political uncertainty experienced by South Africa.^{iv} Such a political risk is a key determinant of economic performance in the country.

The post-colonial history of Lesotho has revolved around contestations for power during and after elections, unresolved issues of political impunity, and periodic military intervention in the country's political

processes.^v There have been two successful military coup d'états resulting in a change of government as well as two attempted coups.^{vi} These crises have cost the country missed economic opportunities, loss of lives, a damaged international image, and intensified political tensions with harmful effects on the country's social fabric. One of the key drivers of conflict is the country's socio-economic fabric and the attraction to the state by political elites, who value it as a source of survival and wealth accumulation due to the country's relatively high level of poverty, unemployment, inequality, and lack of a robust private sector.^{vii} Hence, contestations over the control of the state have resulted in an unstable coalition government structure with a negative impact on the prospects for progressive democracy.

Fragmentation in political parties has often led to party splits and unstable governments, as seen in the rapid disintegration of two successive coalition governments, following the 2012 and 2015 elections. Furthermore, entrenched alliances between political elites and certain branches of the security forces, namely the army and the police, have escalated hostilities between political elites, thereby destabilizing the political system.

ⁱ The World Bank. (2018). Retrieved from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.TOTL.K2?locations=LS>. According to the UNDP Human Development Index 2018, GNI PER Capita (GNI) of Lesotho is \$3,255. Retrieved from: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LSO>.

ⁱⁱ The World Bank. (2017). Retrieved from: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/lesotho?view=chart>.

ⁱⁱⁱ UNICEF Annual Report 2017, Lesotho. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Lesotho_2017_COAR.pdf.

^{iv} Case Study – Lesotho Political Economy Analysis. (2017, 3 June). UNICEF. Retrieved from: [https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF_Lesotho_--_2017_--_Political_Economy_Analysis\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF_Lesotho_--_2017_--_Political_Economy_Analysis(1).pdf).

^v Motsamai D. (2015, April), Elections in a time of instability Challenges for Lesotho beyond the 2015 poll. Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report. Retrieved from: <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/SARReport-Issue3.pdf>.

^{vi} While Lesotho has had four coup d'états (in 1970, 1986, 1991 and 1994), but only two of these are regarded as military coups.

^{vii} Matlosa, K. (2017). Understanding political crisis of Lesotho's Post-2015 Elections, (P.132).

Since 2012, Lesotho has held three national elections within six years; prompted by votes of no confidence passed by the parliament against the sitting prime minister (PM) at the time. A coup d'état was attempted on 30 August 2014 against the then Prime Minister Thomas Thabane, forcing him to flee and seek refuge in South Africa.^{viii} Following this incident, Lesotho became a prominent agenda item at the summits and extraordinary summits of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). However, despite intensive efforts by SADC and the holding of two snap elections in 2015 and 2017, the full restoration of peace and normalcy in Lesotho has yet to be achieved. The assassinations of two army chiefs of staff and several senior police officers in 2015 and 2017, as well as numerous clashes between elements in the army and police loyal to political factions, is a cause of concern and frustration to the efforts invested so far in the peace process.

^{viii} *Appraising the efficacy of SADC in resolving the 2014 Lesotho conflict, Progress and Prospects.* (2015, 23 October). ACCORD. Retrieved from: <https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/appraising-the-efficacy-of-sadc-in-resolving-the-2014-lesotho-conflict/>.

CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT

Socio-economic factors

Lesotho is one of the poorest countries in the world with high levels of inequality and poverty, and of the highest rates of unemployment on the continent. About 57% of the country's total population lives below the poverty datum line.^{ix} The unemployment rate in Lesotho is estimated at 25% and is high among the youth.^x The country also has one of the highest HIV/AIDS rates in southern Africa. Lesotho relies heavily on revenue from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenue pool to fund public expenditures.^{xi} Despite having housed the garment industry for years, none of the firms operating are owned by its citizens. A significant number of educated people are working in South Africa, regardless of a high literacy rate of over 76%.^{xii} These socio-economic problems have impacted negatively on the prospects for democratic consolidation.

Fragmented multi-party system

Splinter parties in Lesotho are easy to form as permissive floor-crossing arrangements allow constituency-based members of parliament (MPs) to change their political allegiances without losing their seats.^{xiii} As a result, disgruntled MPs can punish their parties by depriving them of numbers, engineering new opposition coalitions (most of them short-lived), and forcing elections by frequently using the floor-crossing tool. For example, two successive coalition governments rapidly disintegrated following the 2012 and 2015 elections. Before the 2012 elections, then Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili and MPs from the majority Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) resigned from the party and founded the Democratic Congress (DC) party, ending a two-year-long factional battle and power struggle.

Similarly, in 2015, splits within the two dominant parties of the seven-party coalition government, the DC (the leading party in the coalition government), and the LCD (the party of the then prime minister and the second largest coalition partner), led to the collapse of the coalition government. The split within the DC resulted in the formation of the Alliance of Democrats (AD) party, led by the former deputy leader of the DC. The

internal power struggles in the LCD gave birth to the Movement for Economic Change (MEC). The AD is the second largest party in the current four-party coalition government.

The decision by political elites to break away from the mother party and form a new political organization is primarily due to a lack of internal cohesion and institutional effectiveness as agents of democracy.^{xiv} In some instances, party leaders, fearing ouster from power by their subordinates or possible successor, tend to either leave the mother party to form a new party or try to make it impossible for the challenger to survive. This was the case in 1997, 2006 and 2011 when the LCD (splinter party of the Basutoland Congress Party (BCP)), the All Basotho Convention (ABC) (splinter party of the LCD), and the DC (splinter party of the LCD) were respectively formed. While leaders left to form a new party in the LCD and DC cases, the challenger/potential successor left the party and formed a new splinter party in the ABC case.

Fragmentation within political parties can also be linked to greed by politicians and to the overconcentration of power in the office of the prime minister.^{xv} Although the constitution provides for the removal of the PM through a motion of no-confidence, it grants a significant amount of power to the PM, including the power to take action without the consent of the king. As a result, political elites engage in cutthroat contests to gain this power.

Furthermore, the MMP (Mixed Member Proportional) electoral system, which allocates Proportional Representation (PR) seats for a minimum electoral threshold, further incentivizes party factionalism. Under the MMP model, it is possible for a party that has not won a single constituency to gain a substantive number of PR seats; while a party that has won more constituencies automatically receives fewer PR seats. While the model ideally promotes representative democracy, history has proven that it produces greater fragmentation among political parties, which is strongly linked to unstable coalition governments.^{xvi}

^{ix} Central Intelligence Agency, *Lesotho 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/lt.html>.

^x *Ibid.*

^{xi} Case Study – *Lesotho Political Economy Analysis*. (2017, June). UNICEF. Retrieved from: [https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF_Lesotho_-_2017_-_Political_Economy_Analysis\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF_Lesotho_-_2017_-_Political_Economy_Analysis(1).pdf).

^{xii} UNDP Human development index 2018 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LSO>).

^{xiii} Non-constituency or party nominated MPs (40 out of 120 MPs) do lose their seats when they defect.

^{xiv} Matlosa, K. And Shale V. (2006). *Impact of Floor Crossing on Party Systems and Representative Democracy: The case of Lesotho*.

^{xv} Mahlakegn, M.K. (2017, February). *Lesotho Splinter Parties: Cause and Effect*. Southern Africa Peace and Security Reports. Retrieved from: <http://sacpps.blogspot.com/2017/02/lesotho-splinter-parties-cause-and.html>.

^{xvi} *Lesotho needs a new electoral system*. (2017, 21 July). . *Mail & Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-07-21-lesotho-needs-a-new-electoral-system>.

Issues of rule of law

While political elites typically compete for state power through coalition building, relations between the security agencies, especially the army and the police, are usually defined along partisan lines. As a result, political instability in Lesotho has been driven by the militarization of politics upon which a culture of violence, malfeasance, and impunity is anchored.^{xvii}

Entrenched alliances between political elites and certain branches of the security forces, namely the army and police, have escalated hostilities between political elites. Since 2012, political leaders have used the military to their political advantage, and the military elite has shown an increasing appetite for political participation. As a result, security forces have been drawn into high-level political disputes in Lesotho.

For example, in 2012, while Mosisili sought to shore up his increasingly fragile political position through the support of the army, Prime Minister Thabane sought to counter this by replacing Mosisili's appointment of Lieutenant-General Tlali Kamoli as Commander with Brigadier-General Maaparankoe Mahao. Kamoli refused to step down with the tacit support of the LCD (led by Mothetjoa Metsing) and the DC (led by Mosisili) and staged an attempted coup on 30 August 2014. Consequently, the Lesotho Defense Force (LDF) soldiers attacked police stations and surrounded the residences of Thabane, Mahao, and other senior government officials.^{xviii} Thabane and his fellow coalition leaders fled to South Africa, later returning under heavy security detail provided by the government of South Africa. Since then, political instability and militarized politics have continued to exist in the country. Two extreme outcomes of this were the assassinations of two former LDF Commanders in June 2015 and October 2017. These assassinations form one of the major contributing factors to the current crisis afflicting Lesotho today.

The constitutionally overlapping mandate granted to security institutions, namely the army and the police, is arguably one of the reasons for the frequent military interference in the maintenance of law and order in the country and the resultant instability. Lesotho's military architecture is mandated by section 5 of the LDF Act of 1996 to venture into National Law Enforcement, thus, creating overlapping mandates between the army and the police.^{xix} This overlap in functions has resulted in constant interference of security agencies in democratic rule, causing instability.

In general, Lesotho's socio-economic condition marked by poverty, unemployment and inequality has turned contestation over state power into a fierce warfare among the political elites. This has resulted in the rise of factionalism within political parties - with often violent patterns - and an attempt to accumulate power by involving security forces and in turn militarizing politics. These political infightings have undermined attempts to tackle socio-economic challenges.

^{xvii} Matlosa, K. (2017) *Understanding political crisis of Lesotho's Post-2015 Elections*, (P.132).

^{xviii} *Prime Minister Thabane was believed to be backed by the police, while Deputy Prime Minister Metsing and Mosisili were supported by the army.*

^{xix} *Call to Review Overlapping Army, Police Functions.* (2018, 25 March). Center for Investigative journalism. Retrieved from: <https://lescij.org/2018/03/25/call-to-review-overlapping-army-police-functions/>.

ACTORS

KEY

- Links/ Close Relationship
- ~ Discord/ Conflict
- = Alliance
- - - Informal/ Intermittent
- | Broken/ Disconnected Link

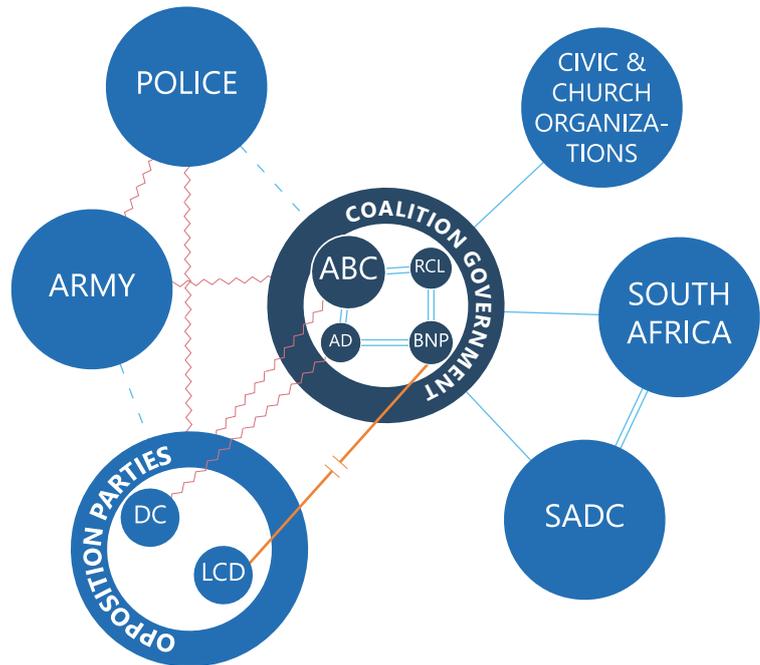


Figure 2: Actors Mapping

3.1 Political parties

All Basotho Convention (ABC) led coalition

The ABC is a leading coalition government consisting of four parties - the ABC, the Alliance of Democrats (AD), the Basutoland National Party (BNP), and the Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL). The coalition was formed in 2017 following the June 2017 elections. Due to the inability of the elections to deliver a single party with an outright majority, the ABC, under Thomas Thabane, declared its intention to form a governing coalition with the AD (nine seats), BNP (five seats), and RCL (one seat).

The ABC is a splinter party of the LCD formed in 2006. Disagreements within the LCD resulted in one of the party's prominent ministers leaving to form the ABC together with 18 other MPs. The ABC's support base was mainly in the urban areas, including the capital city of Maseru. The party won 17 out of the 80 constituencies in its first election contest in 2007. Its support consolidated in 2012 elections when it won 26 constituency seats and obtained four compensatory PR seats. In the 2015 elections, the ABC won 46 of the 120 national assembly seats and came second to DC, which won 47 seats. As a result, it failed to form a coalition government. In 2017, the ABC won 48 parliamentary seats and formed a

governing coalition with the AD, BNP and RCL, however, despite commitments made by Prime Minister Thabane to prioritize the restoration of law and order and economic recovery, barely a year after assuming power, the ABC is riddled with serious infighting, which has affected its capacity to deliver services to the electorate.^{xx} ABC leader and current Prime Minister Thabane is still believed to have the support of the police, while the army backs his opponents, namely Mosisili of DC and Metsing of LCD.

The AD party is a splinter party of the DC formed in December 2016. The party took part in its first elections in 2017 and won 9 seats. Currently, escalating tensions within the AD, caused by a power struggle, are threatening to tear apart the party in particular and the coalition government in general.

The BNP party was founded in 1959 as a BCP party splinter.^{xxi} While it is the long-standing nationalist party in Lesotho, it has been rocked by internal squabbles and has so far produced four political parties.^{xxii} The party does not currently have significant support, only winning five seats in the 2017 elections.

^{xx} Lesotho: ABC in a crisis. (2018, 18 August). Lesotho Times. Retrieved from: <http://lestimes.com/abc-in-a-crisis/>.

^{xxi} History of elections in Lesotho. (2017, 26 May). Lesotho Times. Retrieved from: <http://lestimes.com/history-of-elections-in-lesotho/>.

^{xxii} BNP splinter parties are: The National Independence party, National progressive Party, Basotho Democratic National party, and Democratic party of Lesotho.

The RCL party was formed in December 2014 as a breakaway from the LCD.^{xxiii} While the party won two of the proportional seats in the 2015 general elections, it retained only one seat in the early elections in 2017.

Lesotho's ABC-led coalition is a marriage of convenience, particularly between the AD and the ABC. Although the AD and ABC are both erstwhile BCP members, their leaders were political opponents in 2016, who later joined forces against a common enemy - the then DC-led coalition - and formed a government.^{xxiv} The inability of the 2017 elections to deliver the majority to a single party led to calls for a government of national unity by former Deputy Prime Minister Metsing of the LCD. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister Thabane's ABC, which won 48 parliamentary seats, declared its intention to form a governing coalition with the AD, BNP and RCL.

Democratic Congress (DC)

The Democratic Congress (DC) is the biggest party in opposition. The DC is a splinter party of the LCD formed in 2011 when the then Prime Minister Mosisili, who was in power for 15 years as LCD leader, resigned from the party in Parliament with 46 MPs. When parliamentary elections were held later that year in May, the DC won more seats than any party but failed to get an outright majority. It was poised to form the government but failed to do so due to the coalescing of the opposition parties led by the ABC.

The DC managed to regain power through a coalition with the LCD and five other smaller parties, following its new alliance signed in June 2014 with the LDC. However, the party experienced factionalism in 2016, which led to yet another split and crumbling of the coalition government. A new political party, the AD, was formed by the then deputy leader of the DC, and some members of the DC's national executive committee, following their attempts at ousting their leader from the party.

Following the no-confidence vote against the then Prime Minister Mosisili, a snap election was held in June 2017 where the DC came second winning 30 parliamentary seats, next to the ABC. As a result, the ABC-led coalition government was formed. Nonetheless, DC is the largest opposition in parliament and poses the most significant

political threat to the coalition government. DC leader Mosisili is also believed to have the support of the army.

Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)

The LCD is the second largest opposition in parliament. The party poses a significant political threat to the Lesotho coalition government, as it occupies the second largest parliamentary seats among the opposition (11 seats) next to the DC. It was formed in 1997 as a splinter of the then ruling party BCP. Due to strong pressure from a dominant group within the BCP's executive committee to relinquish power, the then Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle formed the LCD and immediately claimed that he was still the Prime Minister because he had the largest number of MPs (41) who crossed the floor with him.^{xxv} Consequently, the LCD took power. Following his death in 1999, divisions within the ruling LCD continued. This resulted in the formation of two splinter parties, the Lesotho People's Congress (LPC) and ABC, in 2001 and 2006 respectively.

Besides party hopping by individuals within the LCD, the party also hopped from a coalition government led by the ABC in 2012 to the one led by the DC in 2015. As part of the coalition government formed after the 2012 elections, LCD engaged in a fierce power struggle with the leading ABC. It joined forces with its sworn-in enemy, the DC, and engineered the fall of the ABC-led coalition government. The LCD's decision to partner with the DC cost it dearly as some of its MPs split to form a new party, the Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), which currently is a party in the ABC-led coalition government.^{xxvi}

3.2 Security forces

The Lesotho security forces consist of the Lesotho Defense Force (LDF), the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS), the National Security Service (NSS), and the Lesotho Correctional Services (LCS). While the LMPS, under the Ministry of Home Affairs and Public Safety (MHA), is responsible for internal security, the LDF maintains all external security and assists the police when requested by the LMPS Commissioner. More so, section 5 of the LDF Act of 1996 mandates the army to also venture into national law enforcement.^{xxviii} The NSS is an intelligence service that provides information on possible

xxiii *Reformed Congress of Lesotho*. Wikivividly. Retrieved from: https://wikivividly.com/wiki/Reformed_Congress_of_Lesotho.

xxiv *The leaders of the AD and ABC were political opponents when the founder of AD, Monyane Moleleki, was deputy leader of DC. AD was formed in December 2016.*

xxv *Op-Ed: The bureaucratization of politicians in Lesotho. (2017, 1 March). Daily Maverick. Retrieved from: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-03-01-op-ed-the-bureaucratization-of-politicians-in-lesotho/>.*

xxvi *Shale, V. (2017). Political Parties and Political Instability in Lesotho. page 36.*

xxvii *Political parties & instability in Lesotho. (2017, November). The Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.thepost.co.ls/insight/political-parties-and-instability-in-lesotho/>.*

xxviii *Call to Review Overlapping Army, Police Functions, (2018, 25 March). Center for Investigative Journalism. Retrieved from:*

threats in support to internal and external security. The prime minister has direct authority over the LDF and NSS. The LCS is under the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights, Correctional Services, Law, and Constitutional Affairs.^{xxix}

Since independence in 1966, the army's interest in politics and how the state is managed has become the most influential political actor, often acting similarly to a political party. Consequently, there have been two military coup d'états (in 1986 and 1991) resulting changes of government as well as two attempted coups (in 1998 and 2014).^{xxx} Outside formal political structures, security forces have also been drawn into high-level political disputes in Lesotho. During the 2014 political crisis, for example, the security sector was split along party lines. This led to the misuse of the security forces by opposing factions.^{xxxi} In addition, the murder of two army chiefs of staff and several senior police officers in 2015 and 2017, and numerous clashes between elements in the army and police loyal to political factions demonstrates how security forces remain a major and influential political actor in the country's politics.

The architecture of the army that is designed to venture into ordinary law enforcement has created overlapping mandates with the police. This overlap in function is arguably one of the major reasons for military interference and resultant instability.

3.3 Civic and Church organizations

Civic and church organizations in Lesotho have played a role in trying to neutralize the political tensions in Lesotho, particularly, in the period between 2007 and 2014. While their efforts to bring conflicting parties together in 2014 were not successful, they are currently involved in a national dialogue process to build bridges and facilitate negotiations between conflicting parties.^{xxxii}

xxix Refworld, U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report, *Lesotho-International Labour Organization*. Retrieved from: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/160128.pdf>.

xxx Lesotho has had four coup d'états (in 1970, 1986, 1991 and 1994), but only two of these are regarded as military coups; the 1986 overthrow of government by General M.J. Lekhanya and the overthrow of Lekhanya through a mutiny orchestrated by Colonel Phisoane Ramaema in 1991. In 1970, the ruling Basotho National Party (BNP) cancelled the general election as it became clear that the opposition Basotho Congress Party (BCP) had won. A coup was effected when the Government declared the state of emergency, arresting key opposition figures, confining the king to his quarters and suspending all political activities forthwith. In 1994, King Letsie III dissolved a democratically-elected BCP government. The literature on Lesotho refers to this as the 'palace coup.'

xxxi Update on the political situation in Lesotho. (2018, December). SALO Liaison, Dialogue and Research. Retrieved from: <http://www.salo.org.za/update-on-the-political-situation-in-lesotho-by-letlhogonolo-mpho-letshele/>.

xxxii Communiqué of the Lesotho Multi-Stakeholder National Dialogue held from 26 to 28 November 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.sadc.int/files/5515/4384/2128/Multi-Stakeholders_National_Dialogue_Communique_pdf.pdf.

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

The current conflict being experienced in Lesotho can be traced to the 2012 National Assembly elections when then Prime Minister Mosisili's DC party failed to attain the required majority. This resulted in the formation of the first coalition government in Lesotho's history made up of three political parties that had a narrow majority in parliament – Thabane's ABC, Deputy Prime Minister Metsing's LCD, and Maseribane's BNP. The new government, however, faced several challenges ranging from managing a coalition, which was a new variable in government-formation for the three parties, to struggling for control of state power, particularly the military. This resulted in the breakdown of relations between the coalition parties and the eventual collapse of the government.

Thabane and Metsing's coalition, which has frequently been referred to as an uneasy coalition, was strongly affected by divisions within the government, which were highly intent on forcing the then Prime Minister Mosisili out of power. Serious political disagreements within the coalition government emerged to the public in June 2014 when Deputy Prime Minister Metsing, leader of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), announced an agreement with the Democratic Congress (DC) – the largest party in parliament and official opposition – to pass a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Thabane, leader of the ABC.^{xxxiii} Sensing that his political fate was hanging in the balance, Thabane invoked Section 83 of the Constitution of Lesotho and dissolved parliament, preventing his political foes from unseating him through a no-confidence vote. Thabane also declared an anti-corruption campaign, ensnaring Metsing in what would have likely been an embarrassing and drawn-out court case, slated to begin the same month.^{xxxiv} Efforts to bring conflicting sides to dialogue as early as March 2014 by civic and church organizations were unsuccessful.

The escalation of hostilities was also the result of entrenched alliances between members of Lesotho's governing coalition and individual branches of the security forces, namely the army and police. The post-2012 developments vividly demonstrate the growing control of the military by politicians, as well as an increasing appetite for political involvement by the military elites. As a result, security forces are often drawn into high-level political disputes. During the 2014 political crisis, while the police backed Thabane,

Metsing had the support of the army. Tensions in the country reached a boiling point when the prime minister decided to replace the head of the army, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli, with his ally Lieutenant General Maaparankoe Mahao, in late August 2014. Those outside Thabane's camp saw the decision as an underhanded and self-serving move.^{xxxv} Kamoli refused to step down with the tacit support of the LCD and the DC, which had appointed him in 2012. On 30 August, he led a number of military troops in seizing police stations, police headquarters in the capital, television and radio facilities, as well as surrounding the residence of Prime Minister Thabane, Lieutenant General Mahao, and many other senior government officials including the police commissioner. Soldiers also reportedly disarmed the country's police force, which was generally viewed as being supportive of Thabane.^{xxxvi} Prime Minister Thabane fled to South Africa, citing fears of a Kamoli-led coup attempt, which the army denied.

Following the attempted coup and the return of Prime Minister Thabane after an intervention by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the next round of parliamentary elections, which had been scheduled for 2017, was rescheduled to February 2015 in a bid to end the instability. However, no party won an outright majority. Mosisili's DC won a small majority, and Thabane's ABC came just one seat behind. With this majority, the DC still needed to coalesce with other parties in order to form a government and so joined forces with the LCD and five other smaller parties. Consequently, Mosisili was inaugurated as Prime Minister on 17 March 2015.

Nevertheless, the early elections and subsequent new government did not completely ease the political tensions in the country. Initially, there were no immediate signs of discontent or threats of violent outcomes as the elections ran smoothly, fairly and peacefully. Upon his reinstatement as Prime Minister in 2015, Mosisili could not rely on the unwieldy coalition of seven parties, so he turned to the army. He dismissed the police commissioner and demoted Mahao to his original position as Brigadier (an unprecedented action, as top-ranking military personnel are ordinarily retired with their ranks and not demoted).^{xxxvii} Later, Mahao's appointment was terminated, and Kamoli reinstated as Head of the Armed Forces. Kamoli began to round up soldiers, and

^{xxxiii} Think Africa Press Commentary Piece on Lesotho "Coup" 2014". (2014, September). Retrieved from: <https://thinkafricapress.com/>.

^{xxxiv} Lesotho: It's Not Too Late for Lesotho to Get Back On Track. (2014, 8 September). All Africa. Retrieved from: <https://allafrica.com/stories/201409082403.html>, 8 September 2014.

^{xxxv} Think Africa Press Commentary Piece on Lesotho "Coup" 2014". (2014, September). Retrieved from: <https://thinkafricapress.com/>.

^{xxxvi} Lesotho Cultural Life, Encyclopaedia Britannica. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lesotho>.

^{xxxvii} Matlosa, K. (2017). *Understanding political crisis of Lesotho's Post-2015 Elections*. (P.146).

he is alleged to have plotted a mutiny. Thabane and other opposition leaders fled to South Africa once again, worried that their lives were in danger with Kamoli as Lieutenant General.^{xxxviii} This led to an upheaval with claims that the government had been refusing Thabane security to which it dismissed as an attempt to spread lies and cause disruption. Furthermore, the reinstatement of Kamoli as Lieutenant General received backlash from both local and international actors.

The tipping point of politicization of the Lesotho military was reached when Mahao was assassinated on 25 June 2015. SADC leaders appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate his death, the alleged mutiny, and related matters. However, the Commission of Inquiry reported that they found no evidence that Mahao had planned a mutiny.^{xxxix} Subsequently, SADC recommended criminal investigations into the killing, the dismissal of Kamoli, and the reforms of the constitution, public sector and security sector.^{xl} Following a period of resistance, in November 2016, the government conceded to SADC's recommendations and announced Kamoli's retirement effective from 1 December.

Political infighting continued in Lesotho in 2017. Following Kamoli's dismissal, in February 2017, Thabane and other opposition party leaders returned from their long exile in South Africa. In March, they prepared a no-confidence vote that toppled Prime Minister Mosisili and broke up his seven-party coalition government, leading to another snap election in 2017. Similar to 2015, the 2017 elections were necessitated by the collapse of the ruling coalition due to a successful no-confidence motion. Symbolic of the frequency of party fragmentation and resultant political instability, 1,365 candidates from 27 political parties vied for 120 parliamentary seats.^{xli} The elections on 3 June 2017 resulted in the return of Thabane and the ABC, who won 48 seats but failed to gain an outright majority; while Prime Minister Mosisili secured only 30 seats. The electoral commission declared the election as "largely peaceful", despite an unexpected deployment of the army at polling stations that sparked criticism and confusion.^{xlii} Opposition parties voiced concern over irregularities in the elections as well as misconduct during the campaign period, and on 16 June, called for an international inquiry into alleged electoral fraud.^{xliii} Despite the allegations, on 19 June, Thabane was sworn in as Prime Minister and formed a coalition government with the AD, BNP and RCL.

Nevertheless, the dissolution of the parliament after the no-confidence vote put on hold the multi-stakeholder reform process the country had started in 2016 at the recommendation of SADC. As a result, the government failed to institute the Constitutional, Public and Security Sector Reforms in 2017. In October, opposition party DC filed a motion of no-confidence against the newly formed government of Prime Minister Thabane and demanded the re-opening of parliament. Parliament had adjourned sine die (for an indefinite period) on 7 August 2017. Within the same month, former head of armed forces Kamoli was arrested and charged with the murder of a senior police officer during the attempted coup in August 2014.

With political elites and military officials continuously at loggerheads with each other, and with the infighting within the ruling ABC and AD, the Lesotho government has been unable to peacefully operate the government, leading to the current sustained political instability. While the Lesotho national dialogue process aimed at facilitating the implementation of the multi-stakeholder reforms and that includes political parties and different stakeholders was started with the support of SADC in 2018, the continued infighting between the government and opposition parties also threatens the process. The reform process had stalled due to the bickering between the government and opposition over the latter's demands for a Government of National Unity (GNU) and an independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The opposition, including LCD's leader Metsing, also demanded an end to the prosecution of opposition politicians accused of various crimes, murder-accused former army commander Lieutenant general Tlali Kamoli and other army officers accused of human rights violations.^{xliiii} Furthermore, the assassination of Commander Lt-Gen Khoantle

xxxviii SABC, *Former Lesotho Prime Minister flees to SA*. (2015, 22 May). SABC. Retrieved from: <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/72de348048774142967bd62edf086e8alFormerundefinedLesothoundefinedPrimeundefinedMinisterundefinedfleesundefinedtoundefinedSA-20152205>.

xxxix SADC Commission of Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao, *Final Report*, 5 November 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.gov.ls/gov_webportal/important%20documents/sadc%20commission%20of%20inquiry%20to%20the%20kingdom%20of%20lesotho/phumaphi%20report_201602081514.pdf.

xl SADC Double Troika Summit Communiqué, 18 January 2016. Retrieved from: <https://allafrica.com/stories/201601191432.html>

xli *Lesotho needs a new electoral system*. (2018, 7 October). *Mai le's Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://img.co.za/article/2017-07-21-lesotho-needs-a-new-electoral-system>

xlii *Observers dub Lesotho polls 'largely peaceful'*. (2017, 5 June). eNCA. Retrieved from: <https://www.enca.com/africa/observers-dub-lesotho-polls-largely-peaceful>.

xliii *Lesotho's Thomas Thabane wins election*. (2017, 7 June). eNCA. Retrieved from: <https://www.enca.com/africa/lesothos-main-opposition-leader-thomas-thabane-wins-election>.

xliii *Opposition leaders including LCD's leader Metsing returned to Lesotho in November 2018 after remaining in exile in South Africa for over a year. Former prime minister Metsing stayed in exile citing an alleged plot to assassinate him, but the government has refuted his claims, insisting that he fled to escape prosecution for corruption*.

xlv *Mohloboli, M.* (2018, 1 December). *Metsing insists on GNU, truth commission*. *Lesotho Times*. Retrieved from: <http://lestimes.com/metsing-insists-on-gnu-truth-commission/>

Motšomotšo, Tlali Kamoli's substitute, in October 2017, has also contributed to the current crisis in Lesotho.

According to Amnesty international, allegations of torture and other ill-treatment have continued, the right to freedom of expression remains severely restricted, and there are reports of unlawful killings.^{xlvi} Moreover, the repeated droughts and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the workforce resulted in chronic food shortages, and widespread poverty and unemployment plagued the country.^{xlvii} These socio-economic problems have impacted negatively on the prospects of democratic consolidation.

^{xlvi} Amnesty International Report, Lesotho 2017/2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/lesotho/report-lesotho/>.

^{xlvii} Lesotho Cultural Life, Encyclopaedia Britannica. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lesotho>.

PAST AND CURRENT RESPONSES

Several developments preceding the August 2014 attempted coup provided the backdrop of the SADC intervention in Lesotho. In May 2014, when the coalition government that took power in 2012 began to show severe cracks with uncertainty regarding changes in the LDF, SADC recommended that inter-party peace talks be initiated to resolve coalition tensions.^{xlviii} However, despite several inter-party consultations, mainly led by SADC, the talks were not successful in resolving tensions within the fragile governing coalition.

SADC assisted Lesotho to return to constitutional normalcy following the attempted coup and the resultant instability. For example, on 1 September 2014, shortly after the attempted coup and subsequent exile of Prime Minister Thabane in South Africa, the SADC Troika on Defense, Politics and Security convened an emergency meeting in Pretoria, South Africa with party leaders of the coalition and agreed on a roadmap for the suspension of parliament to be lifted, and for the partners to iron out their differences.^{xlix} In its meeting on 15 September 2014, SADC also mandated the then South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa as the Lesotho SADC facilitator to further guide the implementation of the roadmap. Specifically, the facilitator was given the mandate of assisting the country to return to constitutional normalcy, political stability and restoration of peace and security.^l In line with SADC's recommendations, Thabane and other top officials were returned, parliament was reconvened and parliamentary elections, which had been scheduled for 2017, were brought forward by two years, and were held on 28 February 2015. While SADC's interventions in Lesotho stabilized the immediate and medium-term political and security situation, its mediation effort was criticized for its ambiguous position when it came to addressing insecurity and clearly defining the SADC position on the coup attempt. In addition, the mediation was also critiqued for lacking a conflict prevention focus and not integrating root causes more robustly into its process.^{li}

SADC was also involved in investigating the death of former army chief Mahao. It appointed a Commission of Inquiry, led by Botswana judge Mpaphi Phumaphi,

to investigate his death, the alleged mutiny and related matters. On 18 January 2016, the Double Troika of SADC endorsed the Commission report and handed it over to Prime Minister Mosisili. The report recommended the government to: review the respective roles of the Lesotho Defense Force and Lesotho Mounted Police Service to remove any overlap between the two forces' mandates; reforms to parliamentary rules as they affect coalition governments, motions of no confidence, the prorogation of parliament and the issue of floor crossing; judicial, civil service and media reforms; and processes that could be followed for ensuring an inclusive process for the formulation and adoption of the reforms. SADC's Commission of Inquiry into the circumstances of Mahao's killing (as well as the political disturbances in the country) recommended that Kamoli is removed from the post of army chief, that the government ensure the safe return of the exiled opposition leaders, and that the mutiny suspects be released.^{lii} It also approved the establishment of an oversight committee as an early warning mechanism in the event of signs of instability in Lesotho, and to intervene as appropriate, in consultation with the SADC facilitator.

SADC attempted to support the implementation of political, constitutional and security sector reforms in 2017 to address the underlying causes of instability. While the removal of Kamoli from his post was realized in 2016, due to pressure from the United States, opposition leaders in exile including Thomas Thabane (who claimed to have fled the country fearing assassination by Kamoli) returned in February 2017.^{liii} The multi-stakeholder reform process, however, was put on hold in 2017 due to the no-confidence vote and the subsequent snap elections.

In response to the continued tension and the "hampered" implementation of SADC recommendations by the government of Lesotho, the SADC Double Troika Summit met in August 2017 and approved the extension of the tenure of the Oversight Committee that was deployed in November 2016.^{liv} Communiqués released by the AUC chairperson also repeatedly urged the government of Lesotho to implement the recommendations of the SADC Commission of Inquiry.

xlviii Motsamai D. (2015, April), *Elections in a time of instability Challenges for Lesotho beyond the 2015 poll*. Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report. Retrieved from: <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/SAReport-Issue3.pdf>.

xlix Louw-Vaudran, L. (2014, 2 September), *What next for Lesotho?*, Institute for Security Studies. Retrieved from: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/what-next-for-lesotho>.

l Maseru Facilitation Declaration - Communiqué by SADC Facilitator Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, 2 October 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/speeches/communiqué-sadc-facilitator-deputy-president-cyril-ramaphosa%3A-maseru-facilitation>.

li Motsamai D. (2015, April), *Elections in a time of instability Challenges for Lesotho beyond the 2015 poll*. Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report. Retrieved from: <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/SAReport-Issue3.pdf>.

lii SADC Commission of Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao, Final Report, 5 November 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.gov.ls/gov_webportal/important%20documents/sadc%20commission%20of%20inquiry%20to%20the%20kingdom%20of%20lesotho/phumaphi%20report_201602081514.pdf.

liii Fabricius, P. (2017, 16 February), *Is Lesotho about to plunge into chaos again?*. Institute for Security Studies. Retrieved from: <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-lesotho-about-to-plunge-into-chaos-again>.

liv Communiqué of the 37th SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, 20 August 2017. Retrieved from: https://www.sadc.int/files/4715/0347/1755/37th_SADC_Summit_English_Communique.pdf.

On November 2018, the SADC Preventive Mission in Lesotho (SAPMIL) force was deployed comprising 268 personnel to stabilize the political and security situation following the assassination of army chief and commander Lieutenant-General Khoantle Motšomotšo, and some senior officers of the LDF in September 2017. With the support of the African Union Commission in mobilizing the required financial resources, the SAPMIL force, which was initially deployed for six months but later extended to a year, ended its mission and withdrew its troops in November 2018. While the Oversight Committee and the SADC Preventive Mission in Lesotho (SAPMIL) are deployed to act as an “Early Warning Mechanism” and as a “Preventive Mission” respectively, the actions taken were more reactive and not necessarily preventive of the escalation of political instability that had already occurred.^{lvii}

In 2018, SADC led a national dialogue process aimed at facilitating the implementation of the multi-sector reforms. Nevertheless, the severe problems plaguing the ruling ABC and the governing coalition are worrying. Furthermore, the divergent views among the government and opposition parties regarding the change of the SADC facilitator from South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to the former South African deputy chief justice Dikgang Moseneke in the national dialogue process were resolved. However, the continued political infighting between the government and opposition parties threatens the national dialogue process and the implementation of the multi-sector reform in general.

In response to human rights violation concerns, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) has expressed concern and called on the government to capacitate the relevant institutions to enable them to investigate allegations of human rights violations.^{lviii}

^{lv} *Communiqué of the 37th SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, 20 August 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.sadc.int/news-events/news/communique-double-troika-summit-sadc-heads-state-and-government/>.*

^{lvi} *Communiqué of the Double Troika Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government, 17 September 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.sadc.int/news-events/news/communique-double-troika-summit-sadc-heads-state-and-government/>.*

^{lviii} *AU raises red flag over Lesotho’s human rights. (2018, 26 October). Lesotho Times. Retrieved from: <http://lestimes.com/au-raises-red-flag-over-lesothos-human-rights/>.*

SCENARIOS

Best case scenarios

The best case scenario would be the survival of the current coalition government until the end of its term without any fragmentation and infighting. Hence, the coalition government needs to address the root causes of the country's chronically turbulent politics by fully implementing the SADC recommended Constitutional, Public Sector and Security Sector Reforms.^{lviii} These reforms would involve reviewing the floor-crossing provisions, which allow constituency-based MPs to change their political allegiances without losing their seats. This tactic has been used to oust governments, dissolve parliaments and trigger new elections to decrease the rise of factionalism. Another reform area is section 5 of the LDF Act of 1996 that mandates the military to venture into National Law Enforcement. Through public sector reforms, the country will enable itself to provide better public services. Furthermore, through security sector reforms, the military will become more professional and de-politicized, and there would be checks and balances against abuses by the executive. This, in turn, would resolve issues of political impunity.

Worst case scenario

The worst case scenario for the country would be an escalation of violence as political elites continue to be at loggerheads with each other in trying to secure more power. There would also be the collapse of the Constitutional, Public Sector and Security Sector reform agenda. Under this scenario, politics in Lesotho will become overtly militarized, as security forces will be drawn into high-level political disputes and indiscipline within the army will deepen. Conditions of poverty, unemployment and inequality will worsen. In a country with little prospects for employment opportunities, political elites will desperately scramble for positions that would result in a constitutional crisis manifested through a standoff between the different political actors.

Most likely scenario

The most likely scenario is the continuation of cyclical conflict marked by explicit and covert violence; one in which the country experiences a spate of insecurity and fragile peace with a deleterious effect on the country's social fabric. Given the infighting and a possible split within the governing party, particularly within the ruling ABC and AD, it is probable that the current coalition government will not continue to be stable. Subsequently, a new election will be held to reconstitute the government, and longstanding security challenges will continue. Continued infighting between the government and opposition parties could also hamper the multi-sector reform process, and strong political interest from the military could also limit the implementation of the security sector reforms.

^{lviii} Three elections were held over the past six years.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

To the AU and SADC

In line with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the AU should actively push for the implementation of the SADC-recommended Constitutional, Public Sector and Security Sector Reforms by pressuring the government and opposition parties to take part in the national dialogue.^{lix}

SADC should continue its already fortified commitment to bringing about sustainable change in Lesotho through the implementation of its recommendations. SADC should also push for professionalism and de-politicization of the Lesotho security forces to bring sustainable conflict resolution as a preventive strategy.

SADC should push for the inclusion of all key players in the Lesotho conflict namely, the government, opposition parties, security forces, civil society and other stakeholders in the national dialogue process. These actors should collaboratively develop a comprehensive and sustainable framework of multi-sector reforms that would drive socio-economic development in the country and ensure political stability.

To the national government and political actors

The government should amend the constitution in a way that limits the current over-concentrated power in the office of the prime minister in order to decrease the fierce contestations for power among political elites. The government should also refine the constitutional flaw that gives overlapping mandates to security institutions, particularly of the Lesotho Defense Force and Lesotho Mounted Police.

The government should work on the professionalization and de-militarization of security agencies. Checks and balances should be put in place to deter political elites from investing in the military for political gain.

The government should focus on developing the productive sector, focusing mainly on agricultural and rural development to address the dire poverty and unemployment conditions. This will reduce the intensity of political contestation over the control of the state and the violence that goes with this contestation.

The Lesotho national government and political actors should be willing and committed to the implementation of SADC's recommendations. An inclusive national dialogue on how to reform Lesotho's economy, politics, society, and security forces should be executed between political elites, civil society, and state institutions, among others. More importantly, political elites should focus on practical tactics that will lead the country to better governance and prevent temptations for securing political power.

The government should consider reviewing Lesotho's MMP electoral model. This will decrease the fragmentation among political parties and, in turn, will enable the country to have stable coalition governments with maximum parliamentary majorities.

The government should reform parliamentary rules and ban "floor-crossing" or at least introduce a by-election in case an MP crosses the floor.

^{lix} Article 13 of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance states that member state parties should take measures to ensure and maintain political and social dialogue, as well as public trust and transparency between political leaders (and the people) to consolidate peace.

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KINGDOM OF LESOTHO CONFLICT TIMELINE: 1966-2018

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- 1966 October:** The Kingdom of Lesotho gains independence, with Moshoeshe II as king and Chief Leabua Jonathan of Basutoland National Party (BNP) as prime minister.
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- 1970 January:** Opposition party Basutoland Congress Party (BCP) wins the majority vote but BNP refuses to give up power.
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- 1986 January:** The military junta overthrows the BNP.
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- 1990 February:** King Moshoeshe II goes into exile.
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- 1990 November:** King Moshoeshe II's son Prince Mohato sworn in as Letsie III.
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- 1986-1993:** Period of military dictatorship in Lesotho.
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- 1993 April:** BCP comes to power winning a majority vote in elections.
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- 1994 August:** King Letsie III, backed by the army, BNP and the Marematlou Freedom Party, dismisses the BCP government in what was referred to as palace coup.
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- 1995 January:** Moshoeshe II is restored to throne.
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- 1996 January:** Moshoeshe II dies in a car accident. Letsie III restored as king.
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- 1997:** The Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), splinter party of the BCP, is formed by Pakalitha Mosisili.
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- 1998 May:** LCD wins general elections, Pakalitha Mosisili becomes prime minister.
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- 2001:** A new electoral model, the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP), a composite of the First -Past The Post (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) systems, is devised.
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- 2002 May:** Pakalitha Mosisili of LCD is elected Prime Minister of Lesotho for a second five-year term.
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- 2004 February:** Prime Minister Mosisili declares a state of emergency after a three-year struggle against drought.
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- 2006 September:** LCD splinter party, the All Basotho Convention (ABC), is formed by Thomas Thabane and other LCD ministers.
-
- 2007 February:** Ruling LCD wins elections and Prime Minister Mosisili becomes elected Prime Minister of Lesotho for a third term.
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- 2007:** Lesotho experiences its most severe drought in 30 years.
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- 2007-2009:** SADC mediates the post-election impasse that was characterized by assassinations and alleged attempts on the lives of several party and government officials.
-

2011 March: The government and opposition parties reach an agreement on reinvigorating the MMP.

2012: The Democratic Congress (DC), splinter party of the LCD, is formed by the incumbent Prime Minister Mosisili and other majority LCD MPs.

2012 May: The ABC-led three-party coalition government with the LCD and BNP is formed. Thomas Thabane becomes prime minister following elections.

2014 August: Prime Minister Thomas Thabane sacks the head of the army, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli, and replaces him with his ally Brigadier Maaparankoe Mahao.

2014 August: Kamoli refuses to step down and instead leads a number of military troops in seizing police stations, television and radio facilities, as well as surrounding the residences of the Prime Minister, Lieutenant General Mahao, and many other senior government officials.

2014 August: Prime Minister Thabane flees to South Africa, citing fears of a Kamoli-led coup attempt, which the army denies.

2014 September: Prime Minister Thomas Thabane returns from exile under a SADC security detail.

2014 August: The LCD signs a new alliance with the DC.

2014 December: The Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL) party is formed as a splinter party of the LCD.

2015 February: Pakalitha Mosisili of DC becomes prime minister and heads the seven-party coalition formed after early elections.

2015 March: Kamoli is handed back to Lesotho government by SADC.

2015 April: Kamoli takes over as Army Commander. He starts to round up soldiers allegedly involved in a mutiny plot.

2015 May: Thomas Thabane and other opposition leaders flee once again, worried that their lives are in danger with Kamoli as Lieutenant General.

2015 June: ex-Army Commander General Mahao is shot dead in his home village with suspicion that the military played a role.

2015 July: SADC Double Troika Summit establishes a commission of inquiry into General Mahao's death.

2016 January: SADC's Commission of Inquiry submits its report to the government of Lesotho. The report recommends criminal investigations into the killing of Mahao, dismissal of Tlali Kamoli and Constitutional, Public Sector and Security Sector reforms.

2016 December: Tlali Kamoli retires.

2016 December: The Alliance of Democrats (AD), splinter party of the DC, is formed by the then DC deputy leader Monyane Moleleki’.

2017 February: Thomas Thabane, leader of the ABC, and other opposition parties in exile return.

2017 March: Parliament passes a vote of no confidence against the government of Prime Minister Mosisili.

2017 March: King Letsie III dissolves Lesotho’s parliament and calls elections in line with the advice of Prime Minister Mosisili.

2017 June: Prime Minister Mosisili loses early elections, Thomas Thabane returns to power.

2017 September: Lesotho Defense Force (LDF) Commander, Lt-Gen Khoantle Motšomotšo, is shot dead.

2017 October: Former head of armed forces Kamoli is arrested and charged with murder of a police official during the attempted coup in August 2014.

2017 November: SADC deploys its Preventive Mission in Lesotho (SAPMIL).

2018 January: SADC briefs the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council (PSC) on SAPMIL and requests the AU and its partners to help meet a US\$1.6m shortfall in funding for the first six months.

2018 August: The AU PSC takes its field mission to Lesotho.

2018 August: Led by SADC, the Lesotho National Leaders Forum convenes.

2018 November: SAPMIL concludes its mission in Lesotho.

2018 November: Opposition leaders, including LCD’s leader Metsing, return to Lesotho from more than a year of exile in South Africa.

2018 November: Lesotho holds its national dialogue on the multi-sector reforms.



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