

Transfer of Power to a New Administration in Ghana's Democratic System: The Way Forward

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This paper examines the transfer of power to a new administration in Ghana's democratic system. Since becoming independent in 1957, Ghana's attempts at democracy failed due to incessant coups d'état. Ghana succeeded in changing government through the ballot box for the first in 2001 when the New Patriotic Party (NPP) emerged a winner in the 2000 general elections and took the political baton from the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The wheels of power turned when the NDC won the 2008 elections and took over the political baton from the NPP in January 2009. Ghana thus passed Huntington's *two-turnover test* for democratic consolidation. This notwithstanding, the experiences of these two transitions smack of coups d'état, leaving in their wake "acrimony, tension and ill-feeling" and polarising the country in the negative sense. The President of Ghana acknowledges that Ghana as nation is polarized. It is therefore imperative that a solution to this problem is found to avert possible threats to the generally beneficial gains of democracy. The objective of this paper is to provide an in-depth analysis on transfer of power in Ghana's democratization process in its two time democratic successions. It is to identify the challenges of the transition, to understand the sources of the challenges and their implications for Ghana's democracy. The outcome should lead to transitional polices and good practices to facilitate smooth transitions in the future to strengthen the teething democracy as well as feed into the ongoing discourse on constitutional reforms where necessary for good governance. Lessons learned from the Ghanaian experiences will help address the threats to the generally beneficial democratization gains in some African countries. In terms of methodology the paper wi,"sans-serif"; mso-ascii-font-family:Calibri; mso-ascii-theme-font:minor-latin; mso-fareast-font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-fareast-theme-font:minor-fareast; mso-hansi-font-family:Calibri; mso-hansi-theme-font:minor-latin; mso-bidi-font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-bidi-theme-font:minor-bidi;}

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