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## APARC and Its Mission

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Since the 1990s, a number of sub-Saharan African countries have been making significant strides in furthering democratic and free-market reform. These changes reflect the vision and dynamism of the present generation of African leaders in those countries.

The African Presidential Archives and Research Center at Boston University (APARC) is collecting documents that chronicle this phase in Africa's development, taking a multidisciplinary approach to teaching about Africa, and

establishing a forum for African leaders to engage other political, business, academic, and public-sector leaders regarding Africa's global relationships.

To learn more about the center or to receive additional copies of this report, please contact the Boston University African Presidential Archives and Research Center, 141 Bay State Road, Boston, Massachusetts 02215, 617-353-5452, [aparc@bu.edu](mailto:aparc@bu.edu).



### From the Director

The *African Leaders State of Africa Report* is a publication of the African Presidential Archives and Research Center at Boston University. The report is an effort to provide a forum for Africa's leaders to offer an assessment—in their own voices—of contemporary trends and developments in their respective countries. The 2004 report is the third in the series of reports, representing an ongoing contemporary chronicle of the progress of the countries featured in this publication.

The present period in the history of modern Africa could be characterized as a second epoch. The first was from the mid-1950s through the end of apartheid in South Africa. During this period the liberation of the continent was the focal point of political and practical concern. The major question for the leadership on the continent was: “How do Africans get their countries back?”

Although the liberation of the continent was not complete until the end of apartheid in South Africa, the transition from the first epoch to the second began well before apartheid ended. The second period substantively began with the end of the Cold War. This period is marked by an equally poignant question for African leaders: “Now that Africans have their countries back, how do they make them work?” What we have

chronicled in this report are the struggles with that question and the enormous comparative progress that has been made in the postcolonial, post-Cold War period in Africa.

The countries featured in this report have made significant strides in terms of democratic governance and the development of their economies along free-market lines.

In terms of governance, the countries featured have had to confront all of the challenges one would expect nascent democracies to face. Nigerian president Olusegan Obasanjo articulates those challenges as “strengthening political institutions, fighting corruption, building new leadership, sanitising the nature of political competition, and refocusing our political perspectives towards peace, tolerance, inclusion, harmony, and collective dedication to the common good.” This report catalogues the trials and travails that are part of the pain of birthing new democracies. But the dominant theme is one of leaders and countries clearly institutionalizing the principles and processes of democratic governance.

The process of democratic governance is rooting itself all across the continent. It is reflected in the stability of Tanzania, which is preparing for its fifth cycle of multiparty elections over the last twenty-plus years. It is reflected in Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano passing the torch of leadership in this year's multiparty elections after having led the country through civil war and constitutional changes to stability. It is reflected in Botswana, which just concluded its “ninth consecutive general election since 1965. Like all of those before it, the ballot was carried out in a peaceful, free, and fair manner.” Benin has recently celebrated its forty-fourth anniversary, which, according to President Mathieu Kérékou, “occurs in a context characterized by the protection of liberties within our political stability and the correct and regular functioning of the state's institutions, national unity, and social peace.”

Relative to the economy, the report chronicles unprecedented economic performance, which has been accomplished on the dregs of economic infrastructure left in most African countries at

the end of the colonial period. Botswana “achieved independence as one of the world’s poorest states, surrounded on all sides by racist and oppressive minority regimes.” From 1986 to 2003, the poverty rate dropped from 59 percent to 30 percent, “while at the same time a veritable telecommunications revolution has taken place.” The overall “teledensity” rate in Botswana has increased from 8 percent to more than 40 percent over the last four years. Since the end of apartheid in South Africa, President Thabo Mbeki notes, his country “is experiencing the longest period of consistent positive growth since the GDP [gross domestic product] was properly recorded in the 1940s.” In his final state of the state assessment, Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa stated, “Tanzania has entered the new millennium with hope and optimism . . . after a long period of stagnation and slow growth”; the mining sector grew at 17 percent in 2003, the manufacturing sector grew by 8.6 percent, and

the construction sector continues to grow at 11 percent per annum.

The cover design of the 2004 report is a collage of national flags and national currencies. As has been the case in previous years, the cover design is a representation of the dominant themes of the report. The flags and currencies are meant to be a graphic depiction of the political stability and economic viability that are the hallmarks of the countries featured in this year’s *State of Africa Report*.



Ambassador Charles R. Stith, Director  
African Presidential Archives and  
Research Center  
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