



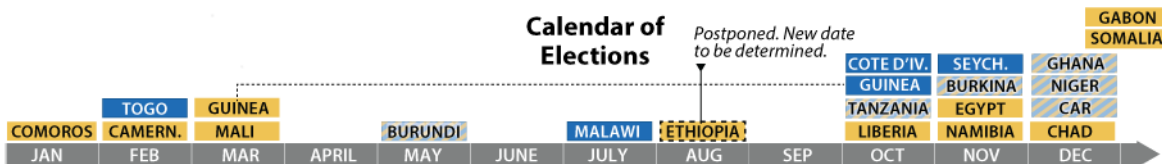
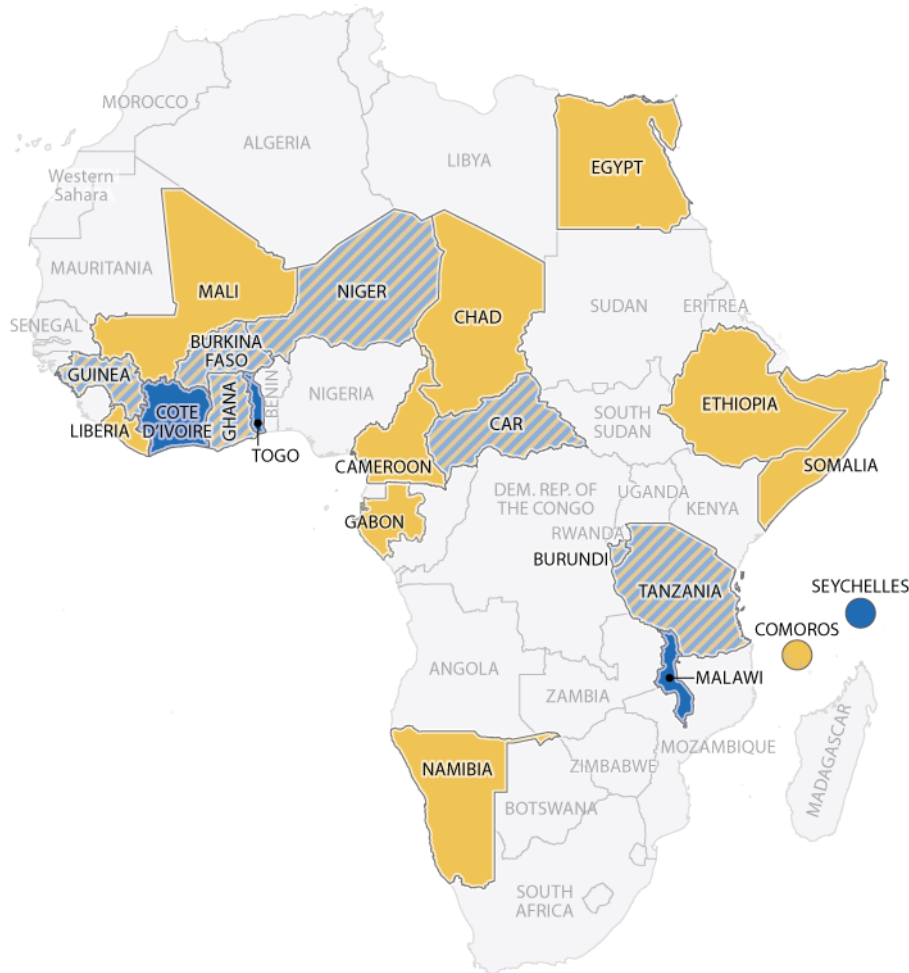
Updated April 27, 2020

African Elections in 2020

At the start of the year, 21 African countries were slated to hold presidential and/or parliamentary polls in 2020. Scheduled election dates are listed below. Some may be subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic or other factors.

Elections Scheduled for 2020

Presidential Parliamentary Both



Source: Created by CRS. Election data was derived from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, the National Democratic Institute and other news sources. Map boundaries from U.S. Department of State (2017).

Note: Elections from January to March have taken place as scheduled. Future listed election dates are provisional and current as of Monday April 27, 2020. Some have not been confirmed, one has been postponed (Ethiopia), and several may be subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic or other factors. Timeline is arranged by scheduled date or, where applicable, the month by which the election is due. Parliamentary elections in Gabon are expected in late 2020 and in Somalia in late 2020 or early 2021.

Country Election Snapshots

Burkina Faso (*Presidential & Parliamentary, Nov. 22*)

President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré is expected to seek reelection amid a growing Islamist insurgency and ethnic violence. Rising violence has undercut the initial optimism of the country's 2014-2015 democratic transition from authoritarian rule.

Burundi (*Presidential & Parliamentary, May 20*)

President Pierre Nkurunziza—whose contested reelection to a third term in 2015 set off a violent national crisis—has publicly committed to step down in favor of ruling party nominee Evariste Ndayishimiye. Security forces and ruling party militias continue to repress opposition supporters, the media, and civil society. Whether Nkurunziza's successor might open political space or renew ties with Western donors remains in doubt.

Cameroon (*Parliamentary, Feb. 9*)

Cameroon's main opposition party boycotted legislative and municipal elections held in February amid a separatist insurgency in the country's west, Islamist violence in the north, a crackdown on civil space, and substantial pre-election violence against candidates and supporters. Low turnout and allegations of fraud marred the polls. The National Assembly is generally viewed as a rubber stamp for long-time President Paul Biya.

Central African Republic (*Presidential & Parliamentary, Dec. 27*)

President Faustin Archange Touadera is expected to run for a second term amid strains in the government's 2019 peace agreement with rebel groups and growing Russian influence. Most of the country remains outside of central government control.

Côte d'Ivoire (*Presidential, Oct. 31*)

President Alassane Ouattara has pledged to step down at the end of his second term, allaying concerns that he would attempt to circumvent constitutional term limits. At the same time, his government has moved to restrict political freedoms and sideline key opposition figures. Francophone West Africa's top economic performer, Côte d'Ivoire has never had a peaceful transfer of power between democratically elected heads of state.

Ethiopia (*Parliamentary, postponed from Aug. 29 due to COVID-19*)

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who welcomed the return of exiled opposition groups after he took office in 2018, will seek a popular mandate for his sweeping reform agenda in elections that have been postponed, possibly to early 2021, due to COVID-19. Political forces are realigning amid the breakup of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) coalition. Most of its member parties merged into a new party led by Abiy in late 2019. Key opposition parties accepted the poll delay, but called for consultations on an interim governing arrangement when parliament's term ends in October.

Ghana (*Presidential & Parliamentary, due by December*)

President Nana Akufo-Addo is slated to seek reelection against former President John Mahama, while their respective political parties vie for parliamentary control. Elections have become institutionalized in Ghana since a transition to multiparty rule in the early 1990s, under a de-facto two-party system.

Guinea (*Parliamentary, March 22; Presidential, October*)

Second-term President Alpha Condé successfully pushed for a constitutional referendum on March 22, after multiple delays and despite regional criticism over the voter registry and unresolved political tensions. Legislative elections were held simultaneously after two years of delays. Condé's support for a new constitution

is widely viewed as a step toward running for a third term. Opposition parties led anti-referendum protests and boycotted the vote. State security forces have allegedly opened fire on anti-third-term protests and arrested prominent activists.

Niger (*Presidential & Parliamentary, Dec. 27*)

President Mahamadou Issoufou, elected in 2011 after a military coup, is expected to step down after two terms. This could lead to the first-ever democratic transition between two elected presidents in Niger, a key U.S. and European security partner in West Africa's increasingly conflict-ridden Sahel region.

Malawi (*Presidential, due by July 2*)

Malawi's Constitutional Court annulled the May 2019 presidential election in February 2020—in which incumbent President Peter Mutharika narrowly won reelection—citing extensive irregularities and electoral commission incompetence. The court ordered a new election by July under a 50%-plus-one electoral system (to be established by the legislature); it found the current plurality-based system to be unconstitutional. It also ordered a reversion to the pre-election status quo, allowing President Mutharika to retain his post.

Mali (*Parliamentary, March-April*)

Legislative elections were held on March 29 after two years of delays due to Islamist insurgent threats and protracted disputes regarding implementation of a 2015 peace accord with northern separatists. The kidnapping of a top opposition leader, reportedly by a local Al Qaeda-aligned network, further marred the elections. Many districts held run-offs on April 19; turnout was reportedly low.

Seychelles (*Presidential, due by November*)

President Danny Faure may face an uphill reelection battle. His predecessor resigned in 2016 after the opposition Seychelles Democratic Alliance won a parliamentary majority. Executive-legislative political gridlock has since prevailed.

Tanzania (*Presidential & Parliamentary, Oct. 4*)

Under President John Magufuli, who is expected to seek reelection, the government has imposed increasingly severe restrictions on the opposition and civil liberties generally, including during local elections in 2019. Zanzibar, a semiautonomous region with a history of political interference in elections and violently contested results, also is to hold simultaneous presidential and legislative polls, likely in October.

Togo (*Presidential, Feb. 22*)

President Faure Gnassingbé, in office since succeeding his father in 2005, won reelection to a fourth term, as permitted under a 2019 constitutional amendment. Protracted large protests calling for Gnassingbé's resignation shook the country in 2017-2018.

Parliamentary elections are also expected in **Chad** (December), **Egypt** (November), **Gabon** (late 2020), **Liberia** (October), **Namibia** (November), and **Somalia** (late 2020 or early 2021). **Comoros** President Azali Assoumani's party won a parliamentary majority in January polls the opposition boycotted.

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