

An Analysis of the Recurrence of Military Coups in Africa. A Probe into the Experiences of Central African Republic in the 21st Century

Jonah Marawako , Pedzisai Sixpence , and Davidzo Hope Mapuvire

Abstract

This article contends that, Central African Republic (CAR) is a tinderbox of political instability due to the perennial problem of coups in the country. With this in mind, the research was motivated by the desire to answer the following questions: What characterises the coups in CAR? Why is Central Africa a theatre of coups? Who are the key players in the country and what can be done to bring back the legacy of statehood that CAR has lost? In an attempt to answer these questions, this study made use of published and unpublished material, key informant interviews and interviews by various regional and international news channels. While the study focused on the occurrences of coups in CAR, it made references to related experiences in Africa and the rest of the world. Additionally, the study kept in mind the time frame during which the state incurred a higher concentration of this political calamities, the study was not strict on this delimitation considering that the country as well as other African states have witnessed coups before, during and may continue to, after the period under study. The content analysis on this study obtained that the unconstitutional change of governments in CAR are profoundly a result of the continued existence of rebel groups in the country; the prevalence of the culture of political intolerance; the challenges of a massive population of Internally Displaced Population (IDPs); the government setup; the colonial legacy left across all Francophone countries in Africa; the geopolitical complexities in the region and the development of the threat of Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Africa and the rest of the world. To that end, the research recommends that there be enhanced efforts to strengthen the military in CAR; intensified effort towards thwarting local and regional militants; enhanced efforts to demilitarise and demobilise various armed groups in the country; build strong government institutions; promote democratic practices starting with the holding of free, fair and credible elections as well as fight religious intolerance among other recommendations.