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Definition: **South Africa** from *The Macquarie Dictionary*

1.

a republic in the southern-most part of Africa, bordered by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland; the Dutch Cape Colony (formed 1652) became a British colony in 1806; after British victory in the Boer War this was merged with the Transvaal and other British dependencies such as Natal to form the Union of South Africa, a British dominion (1910); independent since 1934 and a republic since 1961; apartheid system from 1948 (when National Party came to power) to 1994 when first multi-race elections under new democratic constitution were held.

1^o23^o226 km² Afrikaans, English and African languages including Xhosa, Zulu and Sesotho rand Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative) and Bloemfontein (judicial)

Formerly Union of South Africa



Image from: [SOUTH AFRICA in Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement](#)

Summary Article: **South Africa**

from *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Country on the southern tip of Africa, bounded north by Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe and northeast by Mozambique and Swaziland.

Government South Africa is a multi-party democracy, with a presidential political executive. Under its 1996 constitution, there is a two-chamber parliament, comprising a lower house, the National Assembly, and an upper house, the National Council of Provinces. The National Assembly has 400 members, elected for five years by proportional representation, with 200 from a national list and 200 from provincial party lists. The National Council of Provinces has 90 members, with 10 members from each provincial assembly. Elections are by universal adult suffrage. Bills must be passed by both houses of parliament and are considered by a joint mediation committee if rejected by one chamber. The president, who is head of state and government, is elected by the National Assembly and appoints a first deputy president, to act as premier, from the majority party within the assembly, and a second deputy president from the second-largest party. Any party with 20% of the national vote is entitled to nominate a deputy president, to be appointed by the president. The appointments are subject to confirmation by the National Assembly. There is also an 11-member Constitutional Court, whose judges are appointed for a non-renewable term of 12 years (or until they reach the age of 70), and a National House of Traditional Leaders, which advises the government on customary law.

The earlier 1984 constitution was based on racial discrimination in the context of apartheid, with black Africans completely unrepresented at national level.

History For the history of South Africa before 1902, see [South Africa: history to 1902](#).

Towards the Union of South Africa The Second South African, or Boer, War 1899–1902 (see [South African Wars](#)) was ended by the Peace of Vereeniging of 1902. The defeat of the Boers (now known

as Afrikaners) was to lead to the creation of the Union of South Africa, but it also stimulated Afrikaner nationalism. Britain annexed the South African Republic (the Transvaal) and the Orange Free State, but both were given responsible government in 1906 and 1907. Their constitutions did not mention a non-racial qualified franchise, which, though weakly implemented in practice, had been a feature of the earlier constitutions of the Cape and Natal.

The National Convention of 1908–10 was dominated by the British colonial administrator Lord Alfred Milner, and the former Boer commanders Jan Smuts and Louis Botha. The Convention, which was composed of white representatives of the four colonies, drafted a constitution for the Union of South Africa, and the draft constitution deliberately deferred the question of the non-racial franchise, except for the Cape, which was allowed to retain its existing constitution in this respect.

The British parliament endorsed the proposals of the National Convention, embodied in the South Africa Act 1909, and on 31 May 1910 the Union of South Africa achieved independence within the British Empire under the premiership of Louis Botha; see British Empire, **colonizing Africa and dominions and independence**.

The continuance of Afrikaner nationalism Smuts and Botha believed that the healing of the breach between Afrikaner and Briton was essential to South Africa's future, and did not favour Afrikaner nationalism. However, there were many who did. In a famous speech at De Wildt, near Pretoria, in 1912 the former Boer general James Hertzog announced that in a conflict of interests between Britain and South Africa he would place the interests of South Africa first.

The apparent anti-British tone of the speech caused Botha to resign and re-form his government without Hertzog, who in 1914 founded the National Party in opposition to the governing South African Party (SAP). Also in opposition were the South African Labour Party (founded in 1910 by Col F.H.P. Cresswell) and the British-oriented Unionist Party.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 sparked a small-scale Boer rebellion, which was speedily crushed by Smuts. South African forces occupied German South West Africa (now Namibia), and also served elsewhere with the Allies. Some 6,700 South Africans died in the war.

Industrial unrest From 1913 to 1922 there were several major strikes in the South African gold and coal mines – in the earlier period mainly to gain recognition of white trade unions from the mine owners. In 1922, however, the white miners struck over the use of blacks in jobs previously done by whites. For a brief period a revolutionary council controlled the Rand, until Smuts brought in troops to quell it. Three ringleaders were hanged and others temporarily imprisoned or deported.

As a consequence in the 1924 election Smuts's SAP was defeated by a Nationalist–Labour Pact government and Hertzog became prime minister – a position he was to hold until 1939.

Hertzog's first government Hertzog's first government introduced a number of measures aimed at preserving white dominance, and others that sought to reconcile Anglo-Boer antagonisms.

The Industrial Conciliation Act 1924 and the Wages Act 1925 were both aimed at protecting the white unions and workers from black encroachment, and the government also tried to introduce measures to remove blacks from the Cape electoral roll. The English and Afrikaans languages were given equal status in education and government, and a compromise solution was found to the 'flag issue', whereby the orange, white, and blue of the 17th-century Dutch Republic had a centrepiece of the Union Jack and

the flags of the former Boer republics. In the economic sphere, state capital was injected into industry, and semi-public industrial bodies such as the Iron and Steel Industrial Corporation (ISCOR) were formed.

Hertzog continues in power At the 1929 general election, though the Labour Party was split, the Pact held. Hertzog's National Party, however, won enough seats to form a government on its own, but in refusing, in the midst of world recession, to go off the gold standard, Hertzog nearly brought the country to economic ruin. Pressurized by the veteran politician Tielman Roos, who emerged from retirement to demand abandonment of the gold standard and the formation of a national government, Hertzog's government conceded, and there was an almost immediate improvement in the country's economic position.

In 1933 Hertzog's National Party and Smuts's SAP fused, eventually to form the United South African National Party (United Party). Dr D F Malan of the Cape National Party broke away in 1934 but reunited with Hertzog and some of his followers in 1939 to form the Reunited National Party (Herenigde Nasionale Party), the forerunner of the later National Party in South Africa.

In 1934 the House of Assembly passed two bills that confirmed the understanding under the 1931 Statute of Westminster that South Africa was independent of legislative control by the British Parliament, and that the British crown acted solely on the advice of South African ministers in matters concerning South Africa.

In 1936 by 169 votes to 11 the South African parliament adopted the Bantu Representation Act, removing black Africans in Cape Province from the voters' roll. It also passed the Native Land and Trust Act 1936, allocating less than 14% of South Africa's land as black African 'reserves'.

The beginnings of black nationalism The African National Congress (ANC) had been formed in 1912 by Dr Pixley Seme and the Rev John Dube as a multiracial nationalist organization. Its aims were to extend voting rights to the entire population, and to end racial discrimination. In the 1920s Clement Kadalie's Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU) – with a peak membership of 100,000 – temporarily superseded the ANC, but it collapsed in 1929 partly through internal feuding but also through government intervention. In the 1930s an All African Convention campaigned without success against the Hertzog Bill to deprive Cape Africans of the franchise. In the 1940s the Congress Youth League sought to influence the ANC towards more 'Africanist' policies.

South Africa divided in World War II At the outset of World War II Hertzog declared that South Africa would remain neutral. He was challenged by Smuts and on 4 September 1939 was defeated in parliament by 80 votes to 67. Hertzog resigned and Smuts became premier. The South African army fought alongside the British, and played an important part in the Ethiopian and North African campaigns. Many were taken prisoners by German and Italian forces when Tobruk fell in June 1942, but South African armoured units participated in the British Eighth Army advance under Gen Alexander.

At home Afrikaners were deeply divided, and by 1941 it was clear that a majority of Afrikaners were against the war effort and in favour of a republic. Hertzog retired from politics in 1940 and a few of his supporters under Hertzog's former finance minister Nicolaas Havenga, disillusioned with the Reunited National Party, formed the Afrikaner Party. The Ossewa-Brandwag ('Sentinels of the Ox Wagon'), which had been formed as a cultural organization following the Voortrekker centenary celebration of Dingaan's defeat at Blood River in 1838, developed into a strongly pro-Nazi political force, and many Afrikaners were interned.

At the general election of 1943, however, Smuts won an overwhelming victory with 105 seats to the 43 gained by Malan's National Party.

South Africa had benefited economically during the war years, but between 1945 and 1948 the Smuts government was condemned at the United Nations for South Africa's racial policies (particularly towards its Indian population). It was also attacked at home for appearing, under the liberal guidance of Jan H Hofmeyr, who was finance and education minister 1939–48, to seek to blur racial divisions between black and white.

In 1947 Malan and Havenga entered into an electoral pact. At the general election of 1948 the National and Afrikaner parties gained 79 seats and Smuts' United Party 74. To many Afrikaners the Nationalist victory atoned for a 'century of wrong'.

The introduction of apartheid Up to 1948 the predominant racial struggle in South Africa had been between the English-speakers and the Afrikaners. Since Union in 1910 legislation under successive governments had increasingly restricted the civil rights and movement of Indians and blacks, but it was the Malan government that developed an all-encompassing theory of apartheid ('apartness') or 'separate development'. The latter term was later replaced by 'multinational development', but the basic policy remained.

In the early post-war period ANC leaders – encouraged by UN anti-racial policies and the gaining of independence by former British and other colonies – combined with the coloureds and Indians to demonstrate peacefully against such apartheid measures as the Pass Laws and the Group Areas Act of 1949, which gave legal status to traditional residential segregation. In 1952 the Defiance Campaign, a non-violent mass movement aimed by blacks at drawing attention to the worst of their grievances, collapsed in a few months, and its leaders, including the Zulu chief Albert Luthuli, were banned or imprisoned and new legislation introduced to make it almost impossible for such a demonstration to occur again. However, the campaign had brought into the open South Africa's key racial issues.

The government's decision to abolish the political rights of the Cape coloureds was hotly contested by the Torch Commando, an anti-fascist and anti-racist organisation of ex-servicemen, but in 1953 the Nationalist Party was returned with an enhanced majority despite an electoral pact between the United and Labour parties, a pact that had operated at general elections since 1943.

In 1954 J G Strijdom succeeded Malan as prime minister, and Dr Hendrik Verwoerd succeeded Strijdom in 1958. The Nationalist government pressed ahead with further apartheid legislation, including the Separate Representation of Voters Act 1956, which removed coloureds from the electoral roll. Following the Tomlinson Commission Report of 1955, legislation was introduced to implement the 'homeland' (or Bantustan) policy, by which certain – mostly arid – areas were set aside for development towards self-government by particular ethnic black groups (see Black National State). Additional legislation banned mixed marriages, limited the number of Africans allowed in urban areas, and denied Africans the right to strike. The effect was to make anything other than official contact between black and white in South Africa almost impossible.

Parliamentary opposition In 1958 the Labour Party lost all parliamentary representation and ceased to exist. Another opposition party had emerged in 1953, when a small group broke with the United Party to form the Liberal Party. It was multiracial and eventually included unqualified universal suffrage among its aims. It never won a parliamentary seat and eventually disbanded in 1968 when the

government brought in legislation forbidding mixed political organizations. The only other multiracial political party in South Africa, the Communist Party, was disbanded under the Suppression of Communism Act 1950.

In 1959 another group broke with the United Party to form the Progressive Party. Although for many years Helen Suzman was its only MP, in 1974 seven members were returned to parliament. In 1975 the Progressive Party joined with another splinter group from the United Party to form the South African Progressive Reform Party, with Colin Eglin as leader. The new party had 12 seats in parliament in 1977 (out of a total of 171) and aimed to replace the United Party as the official opposition. The basic policy of the party was power-sharing between black and white.

The beginnings of radical black opposition In the mid-1950s the Congress Alliance, a body representative of all races, including whites, had sought to reorganize the resistance movement, and in 1955 a Freedom Charter was adopted at Kliptown. Later, differences led to a breakaway movement, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), being formed in 1959 with Robert Sobukwe as president.

The PAC launched a peaceful demonstration against the Pass Laws (restricting the movements of nonwhites within the country) at Sharpeville and Lange on 21 March 1960. White police, panicking, fired on the unarmed crowds and killed 69 protesters. The repercussions were world wide, and the flight of capital and withdrawal of investment temporarily rocked the South African economy. The government introduced stronger measures to deal with opponents, including the banning of the ANC and the PAC.

Many black leaders went into exile, and many of their followers joined guerrilla forces outside South Africa believing that armed struggle was the only way to achieve black-majority rule in South Africa. In 1964 the ANC leader Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment for alleged sabotage. He became a central symbol of black opposition to the apartheid regime, remaining in prison until 1990.

South Africa becomes a republic A referendum on 5 October 1960 showed 52% of eligible voters in favour of a republic and 48% against – a numerical majority of 74,580 out of a total vote of 1,626,336. In 1961 Verwoerd attended the Commonwealth Conference to put South Africa's case for remaining a member of the Commonwealth as a republic. The attack on its racial policies made him withdraw his application. The attack was particularly severe because of African unrest, the massacres at Sharpeville and Lange, and the subsequent repressive legislation. On 31 May 1961 South Africa became a republic outside the Commonwealth and was to become increasingly isolated.

Vorster's premiership At every election the Nationalists maintained their majority. In 1966 Verwoerd was assassinated by a parliamentary messenger and B J Vorster became NP prime minister. While maintaining the apartheid policies of his predecessors he deliberately sought to improve the Republic's relations with black Africa and, under strict control, to promote the homelands. Partly due to the buoyant economy in the 1970s, a shortage of white industrial workers forced change in relations with black workers, particularly in their efforts to form trade unions. The Durban strikes by African workers in 1972–73 in particular resulted in limited amended legislation in favour of black workers. In 1975, in cooperation with President Kaunda of Zambia, Vorster sought to find a peaceful solution to achieving black-majority rule in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), but these talks broke down and guerrilla war continued.

At the United Nations South Africa's racial policies continued to be condemned, as was its refusal to relinquish control of South West Africa (Namibia), which it had originally administered as a mandate from the League of Nations after taking it from Germany in World War I. Black African states particularly

resented South Africa's military intervention from 1975 in Angola in support of UNITA in its civil war with the Soviet- and Cuban-backed MPLA. South African raids were also made to attack bases in southern Angola of SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement. South African military interventions in Angola continued through much of the 1980s (see Angola).

Internally, the government introduced new security laws to give it powers to ban any individual or organization that 'endangers the security of the state'. In addition, early in 1976 the government introduced legislation empowering South African armed forces to cross the country's borders to counteract any threat to security south of the Equator.

Renewed opposition to the regime In the 1970s several homeland leaders such as Chief Buthelezi of KwaZulu and Chief Phatudi of Lebowa emerged as national African leaders urging a common programme of reform. Nominal independence was achieved by a number of the black homelands, or bantustans, starting with Transkei in 1976. However, these Black National States were not recognized internationally, and were regarded as puppet regimes by more militant black nationalists.

New African-orientated organizations such as the South African Students' Organization (SASO) and the Black Peoples' Convention (BPC) had sprung up, backed by Black Community Programmes, an offshoot of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa. All had their activities circumscribed by the banning of able leaders or limitation of funds.

Militant opposition to the regime erupted in June 1976 with rioting in Soweto township near Johannesburg, which led to the deaths of 176 people, a number of whom were students demonstrating against the compulsory use of the Afrikaans language as the medium of instruction. Further unrest continued periodically in Soweto and other townships. In 1977 international condemnation of police brutality followed the death in detention of the black community leader Steve Biko, who had founded SASO in 1968.

By the 1980s thousands of the apartheid regime's opponents had been imprisoned without trial and more than 3 million people had been forcibly resettled in black townships.

White opposition parties sought to unite against the NP and in March 1977 Sir De Villiers Graaff, the UP leader, and Theo Gerdener, the leader of the Democratic Party, agreed to form a new party called the New Republic Party. Earlier in the year, six members on the right wing of the UP had formed the new South Africa Party. However, in a general election in November 1977 the National Party (NP) won a landslide victory.

Constitutional reform In 1978 Vorster resigned and was succeeded as prime minister by his NP colleague P W Botha. Botha embarked on constitutional reform to involve 'coloureds' and Asians, but not blacks, in the governmental process. This led to a clash within the NP, and in March 1982 Dr Adries Treurnicht, leader of the hardline (*verkrampste*) wing, and 15 other extremists were expelled. They later formed a new party, the Conservative Party of South Africa (CPSA). Although there were considerable doubts about Botha's proposals for a new constitution in the coloured and Indian communities as well as among the whites, they were approved by 66% of the voters in an all-white referendum in November 1983 and came into effect in September 1984. This constitution created a three-part parliament, comprising a House of Assembly for whites, a House of Representatives for coloureds and a House of Delegates for the Indian community. It also replaced the role of prime minister with that of president. But there remained no assembly for the African majority and from 2004 there were

increasingly large-scale protests by blacks in South Africa's cities.

In 1986 a number of apartheid laws were amended or repealed, including the ban on sexual relations or marriage between people of different races, the ban on mixed racial membership of political parties, and the ban on Africans forming legal trade unions. But the underlying inequalities in the system remained and the dissatisfaction of the black community grew. In the 1986 cabinet of 21, including Botha, there were 19 whites, 1 coloured, and 1 Indian. The NP continued to increase its majority at each election, with the white opposition parties failing to unseat it.

State of emergency In May 1986 South Africa attacked what it claimed to be guerrilla strongholds in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The exiled ANC leader Oliver Tambo was receiving increasing moral support in meetings with politicians throughout the world, and Winnie Mandela, during her husband's continuing imprisonment, was 'banned' repeatedly for condemning the system publicly. Non-violent resistance was advocated by Bishop Tutu, the Inkatha movement, and others.

President Botha imposed a state of emergency in June 1986, a few days before the tenth anniversary of the first Soweto uprising, which was marked by a strike by millions of the black community. Serious rioting broke out in the townships and was met with police violence, causing hundreds of deaths. Between 1980 and 1990 some 1,070 people were judicially executed.

Sanctions imposed Abroad, calls for the economic and cultural boycott of South Africa, in particular economic sanctions against South Africa, grew during 1985 and 1986. At the Heads of Commonwealth conference in 1985 the Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) of Commonwealth politicians was conceived to investigate the likelihood of change in South Africa without sanctions. In July 1986 the EPG reported that there were no signs of genuine liberalization. Reluctantly, Britain's prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, agreed to limited measures. Some Commonwealth countries, notably Australia and Canada, took additional independent action. The US Congress eventually forced President Reagan to move in the same direction. Between 1988 and 1990 economic sanctions cost the South African treasury more than \$4 billion in lost revenue. The decisions by individual multinational companies to close down their South African operations may, in the long term, have had the greatest effect.

Promise of reform under de Klerk At the end of 1988 South Africa signed a peace agreement with Angola and Cuba, which included the acceptance of Namibia's independence, and in 1989, under United Nations supervision, free elections took place there. In February 1989 state president Botha suffered a stroke that forced him to give up the NP leadership and later the presidency. He was succeeded in both roles by F W de Klerk, who promised major constitutional reforms. Meanwhile the nonracist Democratic Party (DP) was launched, advocating universal adult suffrage, and, together with the Conservative Party, made significant gains in the September 1989 whites-only assembly elections. The ruling NP lost one-quarter of its seats. Its new total was only nine seats more than was required for a majority, its worst electoral showing since coming to power in 1948.

Despite de Klerk's release of the veteran ANC activist, Walter Sisulu, and some of his colleagues in October 1989, the new president's promises of political reform were treated with scepticism by the opposition until he announced the lifting of the 30-year ban on the ANC, followed by the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990. In September 1990 President de Klerk declared membership of the NP open to all races. In December 1990 ANC president Oliver Tambo returned triumphantly and in January 1991 Nelson Mandela (who was subsequently elected ANC president) and Zulu Inkatha leader Chief Buthelezi both urged their followers to end attacks on one other, but revelations of government

financial support and police funding for Inkatha political activities, for example to counter the ANC and foment division among blacks, threatened ANC cooperation.

Abandonment of apartheid announced In February 1991 President de Klerk announced the intended repeal of all remaining apartheid laws. In March 1991 he announced legislation to abolish all racial controls on land ownership, enabling all South Africans to purchase land anywhere. In June 1991 all the remaining racially discriminating laws were repealed. As a result the USA lifted its trade and investment sanctions against South Africa in July and the country was readmitted into international sport by the International Olympic Committee. In September 1991 President de Klerk announced a draft constitution, giving black people the franchise but providing strong safeguards for the white minority. It was immediately criticized by the ANC because it served to perpetuate the white hegemony. However, the ANC agreed to negotiate and it joined with the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) to form a united front against the government. In December 1991, however, the PAC withdrew, claiming that the planning of the negotiations was undemocratic. A whites-only referendum on the granting of constitutional equality to all races was held in March 1992 and approved by 69% of those voting. This gave de Klerk a clear mandate to proceed with plans for the new constitution, which would end white-minority rule.

An obstacle to constitutional reform occurred when in June 1992 more than 40 people were killed in the black township of Boipatong by Inkatha, aided and abetted by police. The ANC called a halt to the constitutional talks until the government took steps to curb township violence.

Proposed government of national unity In February 1993 de Klerk and Mandela agreed to the formation of a government of national unity after free non-racial elections in 1994. Inkatha leader Chief Buthelezi complained of not having been consulted and warned that he would oppose such an arrangement.

Radical ANC leader Chris Hani was assassinated by a white extremist in April 1993. In the same month President de Klerk apologized for apartheid for the first time in public and announced April 1994 as the date for the first non-racial elections. An escalation in township violence followed, initiated by groups opposed to the proposed constitutional changes and to the ANC's dominant role in negotiating them. In September 1993 it was agreed that a multiracial Transitional Executive Council would be established (to comprise one member from each of South Africa's political parties) in the run-up to the elections. In October 1993 a new Freedom Alliance was formed by Inkatha leader Chief Buthelezi, white right-wing groups, and the leaders of the black homelands of Ciskei and Bophuthatswana, all opposed to the creation of a single democratic state and seeking greater autonomy for their respective areas. In the same month, Mandela and de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Interim non-racial constitution In November 1993 the government and the ANC agreed on an interim constitution, providing for multiracial elections to a 400-member National Assembly in April 1994 and incorporating a fundamental bill of rights. Under the new constitution, South Africa would be divided into nine provinces (the existing homelands were to be dissolved and progressively integrated), and, in addition to English and Afrikaans, Xhosa and eight other languages would be made official. The constitution was approved overwhelmingly by South Africa's Transitional Executive Council in December 1993, but the vote was boycotted by the right-wing Freedom Alliance.

Pre-election violence South Africa was invited to rejoin the Commonwealth in January 1994. Chief Buthelezi continued his campaign to derail the democratization process, calling on Inkatha supporters to boycott the forthcoming elections. In March Bophuthatswana was annexed following a popular uprising

against its leader, Lucas Mangope, and an attempted takeover of the capital, Mmbatho, by white right-wing extremists. The Freedom Alliance rapidly disintegrated. First Ciskei registered, then the leader of the far-right Volksfront, General Constand Viljoen, left his party to form and register a new right-wing Freedom Front.

Buthelezi remained intransigent, and politically motivated killings increased. A temporary state of emergency was imposed in KwaZulu/Natal, where violence had escalated following the shooting of Inkatha demonstrators in Johannesburg. Within days of the start of the elections, Buthelezi agreed to call a halt to Inkatha's campaign of violence in return for the status of the Zulu king being enshrined in the new constitution. The violence abated to some extent, but the ultra-right (the only group still refusing to participate) carried out pre-election bombings in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

First multiracial elections In the first non-racial elections in April 1994, the ANC captured 62% of the popular vote and won seven out of South Africa's nine new provinces.

The NP came second with 20% (winning Western Cape), and Inkatha (IFP) third with 10%. Despite reports of ballot-rigging in KwaZulu/Natal (where the IFP received most support), the Independent Electoral Commission declared the elections free of fraud.

In May 1994 the parliament elected Nelson Mandela as president of South Africa, with his ANC colleague Thabo Mbeki as first deputy president (premier), and the former president and NP leader F W de Klerk as second deputy president. The post of home affairs minister went to Zulu leader Chief Buthelezi. The new government included six ministers from the NP and three from the IFP.

South Africa under Mandela In June 1994 South Africa rejoined the Commonwealth, and in August it was announced that a 40-member select committee would be set up to oversee the drafting of a new, permanent constitution. A bill was passed restoring land to dispossessed blacks in November 1994.

Crime and violence escalated during 1995, particularly in KwaZulu/Natal province, and although the ANC won local elections in November, turnout was at barely 30%. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was appointed to begin, in 1997, investigations into abuses of human rights in the apartheid era, with an amnesty promised to those who confessed their crimes.

De Klerk withdrew the NP from the government of national unity in May 1996 after the adoption of a new constitution, which made no provision for power-sharing after 1999. The NP went into opposition and de Klerk stepped down as leader of the weakened and divided party in August 1997 to be replaced by Marthinus van Schalkwyk.

In March 1996 the ANC's Trevor Manuel became South Africa's first non-white finance minister and in April 1998 Lt-Gen. Siphwe Nyanda, a former ANC guerrilla leader, became the first non-white head of the South African National Defence Force. In September 1998, in its first military intervention since the end of apartheid, South Africa sent troops into Lesotho to support a government beleaguered by an army mutiny.

Mandela hands over power to Mbeki In December 1997 President Mandela handed over the leadership of the ANC to Thabo Mbeki. He remained as president until the June 1999 general election. This was won by the ANC, with 66% of the vote, and Mbeki was sworn in as president. He appointed the ANC's Jacob Zuma as deputy president after Buthelezi declined the post.

President Mbeki faced a range of problems, including rising crime rates, a weak economy (the rand fell

37% in value in 2001) with high unemployment and income inequalities, corruption, and a serious AIDS epidemic. The UN estimated in 2000 that a fifth of the country's population were HIV positive and South Africa's Medical Research Council reported in October 2001 that 40% of all adult deaths were AIDS related. But Mbeki was slow to acknowledge the seriousness of the crisis and was criticized for stating publicly that immune deficiency was caused by poverty and not by the HIV virus, and for opposing treatment with AZT, an immune boosting drug. Later, in December 2006, the government changed tack and announced a plan to fight the AIDS crisis.

In October 2001 the ANC's chief whip Tony Yengeni, was arrested in connection with a corruption and perjury scandal related to a \$6 billion arms deal. But the ANC strengthened its position in March 2003 when, following the defection of two deputies, it gained control of the Western Cape province. This was followed by the April 2004 parliamentary elections when it won 70% of the vote and 279 of the 400 National Assembly seats, finishing well ahead of the opposition Democratic Alliance (50 seats) and Inkatha (28). The new parliament elected Mbeki as president for a further five-year term.

Growing opposition to Mbeki Under Mbeki South Africa's economy grew steadily, with real GDP increasing by 4% a year between 1999 and 2006, but with inflation also rising. While seeking to reduce inequalities, he followed a business-friendly economic programme and sought to privatize a number of state industries. This provoked opposition from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which mounted a two-day strike in October 2002 and four weeks of strikes in schools, hospitals, and the public transport system in June 2007.

Also during 2007, there were a series of major demonstrations against the rising levels of violent crime in South Africa's cities, and Mbeki faced international criticism for his failure to condemn Robert Mugabe's authoritarian regime in Zimbabwe.

Mbeki faced a challenge from a populist rival in the ANC, Jacob Zuma, whom he had dismissed as vice-president in June 2005 because of his links to a corruption scandal involving his financial adviser. Zuma was popular with the country's disadvantaged and had the support of the ANC's militant youth league, trade unionists, and communists. In December 2007 he defeated Mbeki in party elections to become ANC president. In September 2008 Mbeki resigned as state president after the ANC's senior leaders asked him to step down. The vice-president Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and the defence minister and finance minister also resigned.

Motlanthe serves as 'caretaker president' before Zuma takes over in 2009 The ANC's deputy leader, Kgalema Motlanthe, was elected the country's new president by the national assembly. He appointed the National Assembly speaker, Baleka Mbete, as vice-president, and Trevor Manuel was persuaded to stay on as finance minister. But Motlanthe was viewed as a 'caretaker president'. He had the support of Zuma's dominant faction within the ANC, but Zuma, who had been cleared by the high court of corruption charges in September 2008, was preparing to take over as president after the 2009 general election.

The April 2009 national assembly elections saw the ANC's vote share fall to 66%, so that it won 264 of the 400 seats. Some of its support was lost to the new Congress of the People party which had been formed by breakaway ANC members and which won 8% of the vote. And the opposition centrist Democratic Alliance won the province of Western Cape and increased its overall share of the vote to 17%. Nevertheless, Zuma was sworn in as president in May 2009 and Motlanthe became vice-president.

President Zuma faced difficult economic conditions, in the form of the global financial crisis from 2008 and returning recession in the developing world in 2011–14. South Africa's economy was growing by 3% a year, but the unemployment rate stood at 25% in 2013 and income inequality remained high.

Death of Mandela and ANC success in general election On 5 December 2013, the 'father of the nation' Nelson Mandela died aged 95 after a period of failing health. His death was marked by ten days of national mourning followed by a state funeral attended by world dignitaries.

Despite facing criticism from the former ANC youth leader, Julius Malema, after 34 workers on strike at a platinum mine in Marikana were shot dead by police in August 2012, President Zuma was re-elected ANC leader in December 2012 with an overwhelming majority. The ANC went on to win a clear majority of seats in the May 2014 general election, although its vote share slipped to 62% (against 22% for the Democratic Alliance) and it won 249 of the 400 seats. After the election, Zuma remained as president while Cyril Ramaphosa became deputy president. A former leader of South Africa's National Union of Mineworkers, Ramaphosa had strongly backed police action in the so-called 'Marikana massacre'.

Calls for Zuma's resignation In March 2016 South Africa's constitutional court ruled that President Zuma had violated the constitution by failing to repay public money used to upgrade his private residence in 2009. Although Zuma apologized and pledged to repay the money, opponents called for his resignation and attempted (but failed) to impeach him in the National Assembly.

In April 2017 calls for Zuma's resignation were renewed, this time coming from Communist Party and trade union allies. They followed Zuma's dismissal of the respected finance minister Pravin Gordhan after a fall in the value of the rand (South Africa's currency). Gordhan's dismissal led to the country's credit rating falling to junk status (the likelihood of default on foreign currency debt being deemed very high).

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Black Townships in South Africa

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Apartheid in 1960s and 1970s

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images

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