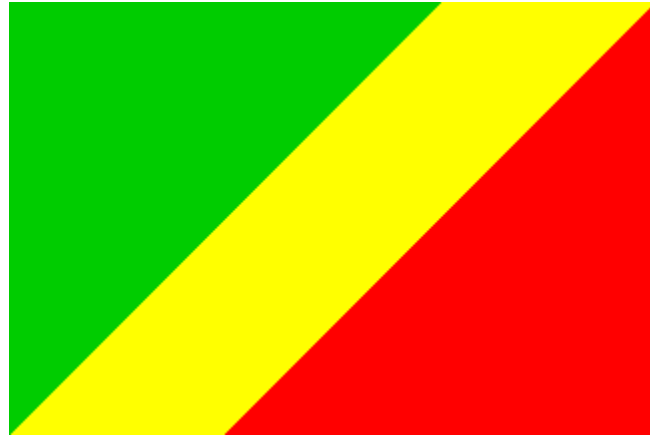


Improving the Political Culture of Congo



Comment améliorer la culture politique au Congo



What is political culture?

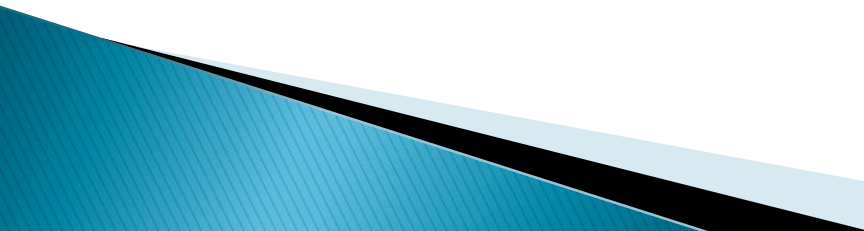
Qu'est que c'est la culture politique?

- ▶ Political values and morals of the population
- ▶ Values include levels of tolerance, trust, and belief in rights of others
- ▶ E.g., democratic culture means accepting losses gracefully
(Examples: USA elections in 2000; Ghana elections in 2008: 49.8% to 50.2%!)
- ▶ Mosaic of cultures: cultures of classes and *ethnies*
- ▶ Perhaps the culture of the elite and the mass is not the same

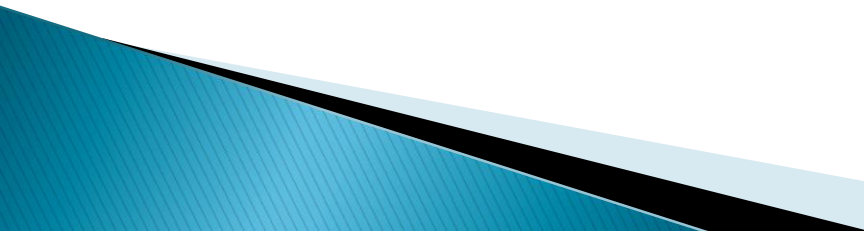
Why does political culture matter?

- ▶ Political culture is the key to civility (Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia)
- ▶ Political culture is key to democracy (Benin, Ghana, and India)
- ▶ Political culture matters more than institutions

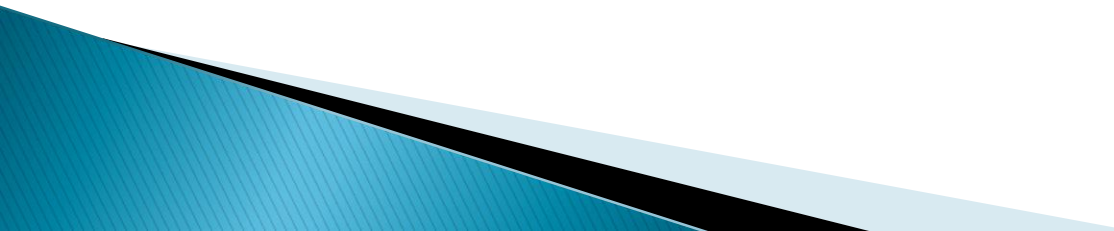
(If the United States had a parliamentary system, it would still function)



Can political culture change?

- ▶ Can political culture change?
(Consider Germany and Japan after World War II; Benin after 1990)
 - ▶ Yes, but it is usually a process, not a moment in time
 - ▶ Does culture change from the bottom up, or top down? (Both)
 - ▶ Economics matter, but it is not everything
 - ▶ Leadership, the power of example, also matters
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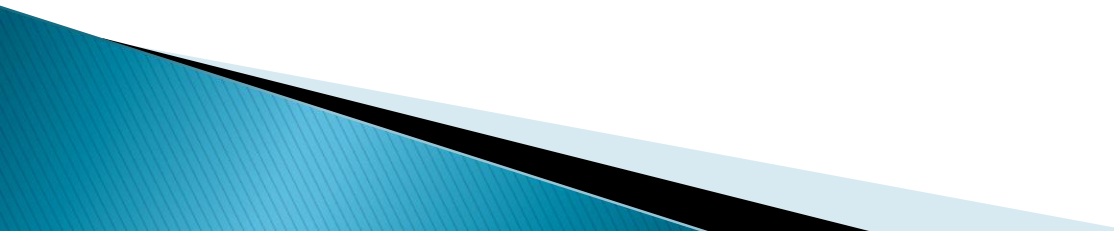
How could Political Culture be changed in Congo–Brazzaville?

1. Reinforce the rule of law (l'état de droit)
 2. Empower women at multiple levels
 3. Allow an *independent* bourgeoisie to emerge
 4. Encourage a trans-ethnic civil society
 5. Promote literacy and a free press
- 



Un état de droit: prerequisite for progress in
Congo


Reinforcing the rule of law

- ▶ Presidential example is a key, as is behavior of the political class
 - ▶ Washington, Nyerere, and Senghor
 - ▶ Prosecution of some security personnel would set a good example
 - ▶ (U.S. has done this with American personnel in Iraq; fight culture of impunity)
 - ▶ Permit democracy at the local levels
 - ▶ Tolerate independent judiciary
- 



Empower women at multiple levels

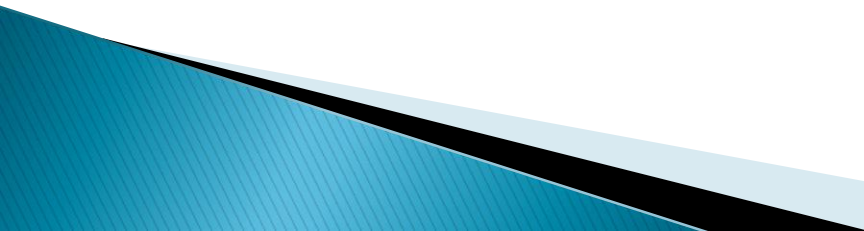
Women's participation improves the political culture

- ▶ Women care about education, health, children
 - ▶ Presidential appointments symbolically important (non-traditional posts)
 - ▶ Quotas for women in parliament valuable (Examples of Uganda and Rwanda are impressive)
 - ▶ Prosecute cases of violence against women—and use appropriate punishments
 - ▶ Make a commitment to equal education for girls and women, including quotas
- 



Civil Society Groups are the training groups grounds for democratic participation

Nurture *independent*, trans-ethnic civil society organizations

- ▶ CS organizations do not have to be created
 - ▶ Encouragement of trans-ethnic organization is a key
(professional, human rights, women, etc.)
 - ▶ Require democracy at the local level and in CS organization
 - ▶ Even in Church organizations and hierarchical organizations
 - ▶ Resist the corporatist temptation
- 



Both a bourgeoisie and industrial working class would improve Congo's Political Culture

Allow the emergence of an *independent* bourgeoisie

- ▶ A middle class is not necessarily a bourgeoisie
- ▶ Independence of this class is crucial
- ▶ Such a class will demand good governance (and it will be critical of government)
- ▶ Oil money would provide the loans
- ▶ What would they manufacture?
(Cement, soap, tobacco, canned fruit and juices)



Literacy, a free press, and information:
antidotes to disorder

Free Press and Literacy

- ▶ Congo used to have an exemplary record on literacy
 - ▶ Policies to require universal primary education are valuable
 - ▶ A free press is not likely to be very responsible.... But that is okay.
 - ▶ A lively press gives the Congolese government an opportunity to demonstrate its self-confidence
- 