

Institute of Belt and Road Initiative

National Study Series: MALAWI

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Section 1 History

The Maravi Kingdom

The earliest recorded settlers in the Nyasa region are those of the Maravi Confederacy. Established about 1480 by Bantu- speaking tribes, and lasting into the 18th century, the confederacy dominated the region west from the great lake to the Luangwa River, south to the Zambezi and east to the coast. During the 18th century, this tribal kingdom of the Maravi people lost its unity under the influence of Arab merchants coming from the east. Local chieftains made their own profitable alliances in the fast- growing ivory and slave trade. And the Yao people, living south and east of Lake Nyasa, began to threaten the Maravi as intermediaries between the inside and the coastal markets.

British Involvement

Slavery was the question that focused Western interest on these parts of Africa from the middle of the 19th century on. Centered on what he had seen along the Zambezi, Livingstone, who started an anti- slavery campaign, reached Lake Nyasa in 1858. In 1876 Scottish missionaries founded Blantyre (named after the birthplace of Livingstone and

now one of Malawi's largest towns) as a base from which to combat slavery. A key element of Livingstone's agenda was to establish fair trade to replace the existing slave-derived income. So soon after the missionaries were pursued by an African Lakes Company, sponsored in Scotland. Both the missionaries and the company's employees found themselves in frequent conflict with the slave traders. Their difficulties prompt the appointment, in 1883, of a British consul to the area. He was accredited, grandiosely but vaguely, to 'the kings and chiefs of central Africa'. And there was already a British presence in the area surrounding Lake Nyasa in 1890, when Cecil Rhodes made his alliance with Lewanika further to the west. In comparison, German colonists in these areas were the settlers sent by Rhodes to present-day Zimbabwe and Zambia. That difference influenced British policy directly. In 1891 charters were issued to the Rhodesian Corporation to manage Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). In the same year, however, the British government assumed full responsibility for the governance of today's Malawi—recognized as the British Central African Protectorate from 1893 and Nyasaland from 1907.

Nyasaland hardly prospered over the next half-century. Most travel to neighboring countries in search of jobs, with job in short supply to the African population. The view established in governmental circles that the economy of Nyasaland would prosper only in some sort of closer union with its two colonial neighbors. Throughout the 1950s there was considerable debate about the political prospects of these nearby African colonies. The Rhodesian and Northern Rhodesian Europeans expected that they would sooner or later unite to create a new united government. From the point of view of the British Government, geography and economics have proposed that Nyasaland would also be concerned. But any such policy was resisted by the Africans, particularly in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland with their small European populations. To Africans here the danger of union was obvious. They would be overshadowed by the strong European culture of Rhodesia, postponing perhaps indefinitely the ideal of independence under black majority rule.

Confederation

In 1953 the British government introduced an uncomfortable agreement in the form of the Union of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, faced with competing demands and conscious of its responsibility for Nyasaland as well as the two Rhodesias. This was to be a nation of self-governance, with its own parliament and Prime Minister (first Lord Malvern, then Prince Welensky from 1956). The intention was to derive the greatest economic benefit from the larger unit while minimizing political tension between the three parts of the federation, each of which retained its existing local government. The federated colonies were at differing stages in their political development. All they had in common was an almost complete absence of any African voice in the political process. Over three decades Rhodesia had become a colony with self-governance but with no African suffrage. Northern Rhodesia had a Legislative Council reserved for African members with (1948) two seats. There were no Africans on the legislative council of Nyasaland at the

time of federation. Two years later, in 1955, five Representatives were elected. The intended economic benefits materialized during the early years of the federation, helped by a world rise in copper prices, but this was not enough to stifle increasing political unrest particularly as British colonies elsewhere in Africa won independence (beginning with Ghana in 1957).

African lawmakers in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland gained greater influence in their Legislative Councils in the early 1960's. The desire to break the union rose. In March 1963 the British government eventually admitted that the three territories were seeking independence by this time. On 31 December 1963 the union officially disbanded.

Steps to independence

In Nyasaland, the years just before independence had seen the first stirrings of African nationalism. A coalition of politicians, including a psychiatrist, Hastings Banda, spoke out against the three colonies being suggested to join together. Nevertheless, as it did arise, Banda went overseas to practice medicine in Ghana in 1953. Yet his colleagues applied pressure on him to return. He did so in 1958, becoming president of the Nyasaland African Congress. In this position he led an increasingly strident campaign against the federation. In 1959 the resulting disturbances were followed by a state of emergency and Banda's arrest.

Released in 1960, Banda was interested in debates on constitutional change in Tanzania. We have reached a consensus. Nyasaland was in the Union but Africans should have a majority in the National Assembly of the Colony. Banda joined the government as minister in 1961 and became prime minister in February 1963, ten months before the breakup of the federation, when Nyasaland was given internal self- rule. Nyasaland became independent in July 1964, taking the name Malawi. Banda retained his post as prime minister.

Independence

Banda entered the government as a minister in 1961 and became prime minister in February 1963 when Nyasaland was given internal self- rule, ten months before the breakup of the union. Within months of independence, most members of his cabinet resigned- partly on this issue and partly in protest against Banda's autocratic style of government from the outset. There is little that will improve in either way over the years. Two of his ex- ministers waged a revolt against him in 1965. It collapsed, and Banda turned Malawi into a republic with himself as president the following year - a post which he assumed for life in 1971. He ruled the nation as a one- party dictatorship, with anyone showing signs of dissatisfaction with his policies being ferociously prosecuted. Leaders of the MCP (Malawi Congress Party) voted for parliament in annual elections, but under a constitutional amendment in 1981, the president nominated as many parliamentarians as he desired. The unusually poor voter turn- out in 1992 coincided with demand from foreign loan institutions to bring about multiparty democracy. The final outcome is new elections in 1994, despite heavy resistance from Banda and his MCP.

The key opposition presidential candidate, Bakili Muluzi, has been elected, following

recorded violence and harassment by the MCP. Its party, the Unified Democratic Front, also had the highest number of parliamentary seats. In 1995 Banda was arrested and was charged with the murder, ten years previously, of three former cabinet colleagues. He was acquitted and died in retirement, in 1997, at the age of ninety- five. President Muluzi made significant progress in improving Malawi's economy in the second half of the 1990s, especially with regard to reducing inflation. This has introduced much- needed global investment and aid increase.

Section 2 **Geography**

The Republic of Malawi is a landlocked country previously known as Nyasaland in south-eastern Africa. This is bordered by west Zambia, north and north- east Tanzania, and east, south and south- west Mozambique. Malawi spans over 118,484 km² (45,747 sq mi) and has an estimated population of 18,143,217 (as of July 2018). Lake Malawi covers around a tenth of the territory of Malawi. Its capital is Lilongwe, now the largest city in Malawi; the second largest is Blantyre, the third largest is Mzuzu, and the fourth largest is Zomba, its former capital. The name Malawi comes from the Maravi, an old name of the Nyanja people that inhabit the area. The nation is dubbed "Africa's Warm Heart," because of the people's friendliness. Malawi is connected by rail to the ports of Nacala and Beira in Mozambique. It ranges between 9 ° and 18 ° S latitudes and 32 ° and 36 ° E longitudes. The Great Rift Valley passes from north to south across the country. Lake Malawi lies within the rift valley, constituting more than three quarters of the eastern boundary of Malawi. From the southern end of the lake the Shire River flows down the rift valley to join the Zambezi River in Mozambique farther south. In the east and west of the Rift Valley lay plateaux and mountains. The Nyika Plateau sits in the north of the country to the west of Lake Malawi. The Shire Highlands are situated in south Malawi, east of the rift valley and the Shire River and south of Lake Malawi. The mountain tops of Zomba and Mulanje climb from the highlands to 7,000 and 10,000 feet (2,134 and 3,048 metres) respectively.



Lake Malawi



Map of Malawi with its bordering countries

Physical Geography

The Great Rift Valley traverses the country from north to south. In this deep trough lies Lake Malawi (also called Lake Nyasa), the third- largest lake in Africa, comprising about 25% of Malawi's area. Lake Malawi is sometimes called the Calendar Lake as it is about 365 miles (587 km) long and 52 miles (84 km) wide. The surface of Lake Malawi is located at 1,500 feet (457 m) above sea level, with a maximum depth of 2,300 feet (701 m), which means the lake bottom is over 700 feet (213 m) below sea level at some points. The Shire River flows from the south end of the lake and joins the Zambezi River 400 kilometers (249 mi) south in Mozambique. The land forms high plateaus west of the Great Rift Valley, with plateaus typically rising from 3,000 to 4,000 feet (914 to 1,219 m) above sea level. The Nyika Uplands rise up as high as 8,000 feet (2,438 m) in the north. The area in northern and central Malawi west of the lake has been classified as part of the Central Zambezian Miombo Woodlands Eco region by the World Wildlife Fund. South of the lake lie the Shire Highlands, with an elevation of 600– 1,600 meters (1,969– 5,249 ft.), rising to elevations of 2,130 and 3,002 meters (6,988 and 9,849 ft.) at the Zomba Plateau and Mulanje Massif respectively. The Kirk Range lies west of the Shire, and forms the border with Mozambique. In its middle stretch between Chigaru and Chikwawa, the Shire River drops almost 400 m through 80 km of gorges, rapids, and cataracts. In the extreme south, the Shire enters the Zambezi lowlands, and the elevation is only 60– 90 meters (197– 295 ft.) above sea level.

National Parks

Lake Malawi National Park

It is a national park situated in Malawi, South East Africa, at the southern end of Lake Malawi. It is Malawi's only national park created with the purpose of protecting fish and

aquatic habitats. Given this, Lake Malawi National Park has a decent amount of land in it, including a headland, the foreshore and several small rocky islands in Lake Malawi. Lake Malawi National Park was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984, being of "significant significance for the conservation of biodiversity owing, in particular, to the abundance of its fish." This abundance of fish is noteworthy because Mbuna, known locally as cichlid fish, is an excellent example of evolution at work. Other attributes of the park include the outstanding natural beauty of the area with its craggy landscape contrasting with the clear waters of the lake. The park includes most of the Nankumbu Peninsula, a mountainous headland that projects northwards into the lake terminating in Cape Maclear, the surrounding areas of water (aquatic zone of the property extends for just 100 metres from the lake shore and covers just 0.02% of the lake's total area), Mwenya Hills, Nkhudzi Hills, Nkhudzi Spit, and 13 islands: Otter, Domwe, Thumbi West, Mumbo, Zimbabwe, Thumbi East, Mpanda, Boadzulu, Chinyankhwazi Rock, Chinyamwezi Rock, Nankoma, Maleri, Nakantenga[2]. The peninsula rises steeply from the foreshore to the Nkhunguni Peak 1,143 m (3,750 ft) in the west and the Dzimwe Peak 963 m (3,160 ft) in the east. The slopes are clad in dense forests.[3] There are few inhabitants on the mountainous part of the peninsula, but there are several fishing villages on the more level parts of the foreshore, the largest being Chembe, close to Cape Maclear. These villages are inside the park but are not part of it.

Children playing at the shores of Lake Malawi

Kasungu National Park

It is a Malawi national park situated west of Kasungu, about 175 km north of Lilongwe and stretching along the Zambian border. Kasungu National Park, developed in 1970, is the second largest in Malawi at an average of 2,316 km² and situated at an altitude of about 1,000 m above sea level. It lies about 165 km north of Lilongwe in the central region.

Many years in March, during the rainy season, the park is closed. The park is mild from September through to May and colder from June to August. A wide number of birds migrate to the park during the summer months, and bird watching is popular between June and September. The forest consists mostly of woodland with grassy outlets of the river Miombo, known locally as Dambos. A variety of rivers flows through the area, including the Dwanga and the Lingadzi and their tributary, the Lifupa, which provides an important hippo survey spot in the Lifupa Lodge area. Kasungu is known for its herd of elephants although affected by wildfires. Many park-born species include Sable Antelopes, roan antelopes, kudus, impala and hartebeest, and African Buffaloes and Zebra plains. Predators include; hyenas and Cape wild dogs in Kasungu National Park. In the late 1970s, the South African cheetah was considered to be extinct.



Elephants at Lifupa dam in kasungu National park

Lengwe National Park

It is a Malawi national park near the town of Chikwawa and some 40 miles southwest of Blantyre. For Malawi the topography of Lengwe is unique and consists of open deciduous forests and dense thickets. This is the birthplace of the reclusive antelope Nyala. Lengwe's atmosphere is hot and warm, and rain is the only source of constant precipitation. Several man-made water holes were designed to accommodate and

preserve the animal population. The government runs the tourist lodge Nyala. Animals that inhabit this park are the spotted hyena, leopard, warthog, kudu, impala, Samango monkey, reedbuck, Cape buffalo and suni, Interesting birds, particularly shrikes, rollers, bee-eaters and the Yellow-spotted nicator. Lengwe was developed as a Game Reserve in 1928 to protect the large mammals found in the Lower Shire Valley, especially the antelope of Nyala and its habitat. This security is significant, since the Lower Shire Valley is the farthest north where nyala can naturally be found. At that time, the protected area measured 520 square kilometers. Later, it was reduced to 120 square kilometers in order to provide land for agriculture. This 120 km² is what is now referred to as "Old Lengwe." This did not include the year-round supply of water to the animals that the Shire had provided, 1964 and 1970, four artificial waterholes were built throughout the area and in 1970, Lengwe was given the status of a national park.



Lengwe National park

Liwondwe National Park

Liwonde National Park is a national park in southern Malawi near the Mozambique border, also known as the Liwonde Wildlife Reserve. The park was established in 1973 and has been managed since August 2015 by African Parks, a non-profit conservation organization. African Parks also installed an electric fence around the park's perimeter to help mitigate tension between humans and wildlife. The nearby Mangochi Forest Reserve also came under protection of African Parks in early 2018, nearly doubling the size of the protected area. Liwonde National Park, and the contiguous Mangochi Forest Reserve, are managed by African Parks in collaboration with local communities represented by the

Upper Shire Association for the Conservation of Liwonde National Park (USACOL) and 31 Village Natural Resources Committees surrounding Liwonde. Liwonde has a 129 kilometre (80 mi) perimeter, which was unfenced until the nonprofit organization African Parks confirmed plans to construct a fully fenced border in 2015, which has since been completed.



Elephant herd crossing a road in Liwonde National park

Nyika National Park

Nyika National Park is the largest national park in Malawi, with a surface area of 3200 km² (1250 m²). The park occupies almost the whole Nyika Plateau in northern Malawi, roughly 480 km north of Lilongwe and 60 km north of Rumphi by road. Entry is through a single gravel road that branches north of the road from Rumphi to the border post of Katumbi and works its way up the southwestern scarp of the plateau, continues over the top where it forms the boundary with Zambia, then descends the northwestern scarp in a sequence of curves and proceeds north to the border post of Chisenga. Entry is through a single gravel road that branches north of the road from Rumphi to the border post of Katumbi and works its way up the southwestern scarp of the plateau, continues over the top where it forms the boundary with Zambia, then descends the northwestern scarp in a sequence of curves and proceeds north to the border post of Chisenga. A spur on the top of the plateau goes east to Chelinda, the park's headquarters in the centre. Though

the border of the park falls within 35 km from Livingstonia, there is no eastern entry. The name Nyika means "where the water comes from" as the plateau's elevation makes it wetter than surrounding areas. Other suggested meanings are "wilderness" and "short grassland". The top is frequently in cloud, both in the rainy season and in the cold dry season when dense fogs, called Chiperoni, may persist well into the morning and sometimes all day. The persistent moisture brings over 200 types of orchid into flower. The grasslands of Nyika are rich in wildflowers all through the year but especially from January to April during the rains. Most people experience the Nyika by staying on or driving over the plateau itself but this represents only around one third of the National Park. The escarpments and northern hill areas descend to lower altitude and feature a much drier landscape seasonally. This is dominated by *Brachystegia* woodland and *Protea* scrub at the interzone between the grassland and the woodlands. To travel into these zones you will need to be fully equipped for camping and take a local guide with you. It is very easy to get lost and leaving the marked roads is not recommended without local support.



Afromontane Grassland at Nyika Plateau, Malawi

Mountains

Mulanje Mountain

Mount Mulanje is an isolated granite massif, covering over a thousand square kilometers. From a distance, it's hard to believe Mulanje is not a range of Mountains, it seems long rather than high. Yet it is so tall that it creates its own climate, and is known to be unkind, even lethal to those who dare take the mountain for granted. The summit, the highest in south-central Africa at 3000m, is called Sapitwa, which is said to mean "Don't go there!" The warning challenges the determined climber. Sapitwa does require experience, though often testing endurance rather than technique. For the less dedicated, Mulanje offers equally great rewards. Spectacular views across tea plantations to Mozambique, sheer drops down gullies laced with waterfalls; glades shaded by forest trees where purple crested loeries and sun squirrels scuttle along the branches; montane grasslands dotted with ground orchids and gladioli and alive with butterflies; forests of fragrant Mulanje cedar trees. Mulanje Cedar, *Widringtonia whytei*. Threatened by logging in the past, the cedars may not survive the next half century. In the late 1890's the offices of the Commissioner of British Central Africa as colonial Malawi was then called, were roofed with beams and shingles of Mulanje cedar. Visitors can still buy beautifully carved trinket boxes and chests of this pale, beautifully scented wood.



Mulanje Mountain

Zomba Mountain

Only stand on top of the Zomba plateau and look at the glorious Mulanje across the Phalombe plains, and you'll agree shortly. The bowl of the peak of the mountain is a woodland park. Patches of tropical trees, cold streams and lush grasslands are among the crops, and from the viewpoints, Malawi is spread out like a relief map. Hike, hunt or sail but take your phone and binoculars. Zomba Mountain Zomba is about an hour from Blantyre. The Mtengatenga Postal Museum is a must for philatelists, and art lovers should look out for road-side stalls selling handmade clay pots and whimsical "mud heads". As you enter Zomba, there is the King's African Rifles War Memorial (left), to the men who gave their lives in the two World Wars.

The craftsmen who specialize in carving chief's chairs are about half an hour north of Zomba at Chingale. Each made single wooden basic nature of the chair is embellished with low relief carvings. Those are special in Malawi.



Zomba Mountain

Dedza Mountain

About 2200 Dedza Mountain peaks above the Great Rift Valley. A magnificent view of Lake Malawi can be seen from the top. Dedza is a treat for bird- watchers. Pockets of native montane forest hidden in gullies between rolling grasslands have a remarkably rich ecosystem.



Dedza Mountain

Section 3 **Politics and Government**

Malawi's politics take place within the framework of a presidential representative democratic republic, whereby Malawi's president is both head of state and head of government, as well as a multiparty system. The Government exercises executive power. Both the Government and the National Assembly have the power to legislate. Malawi's Cabinet is selected by Malawi's President. Judiciary is separate from the executive and legislative branches. Since 1994 the Malawi government has become a multi- party democracy. Malawi was ranked a "hybrid dictatorship" by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2019. Under the Constitution of 1995, every 5 years the president, who is both head of state and head of government, is elected by universal automatic suffrage. Malawi has a vice president, serving along with the president. The president has the right to name a second vice president from another group. It also includes a presidentially appointed cabinet. The members of the cabinet of Malawi can be drawn from either within or outside of the legislature. Bakili Muluzi was president from 21 May 1994 to May 2004, having won reelection in 2000 with 51.4% of the vote to leading challenger Gwandaguluwe Chakuamba's 44.3% for the MCP- AFORD party. In the 2004 election

Bingu wa Mutharika defeated Chakuamba by a ten- point margin. Appointed members of a Malawi Cabinet and government departments in Malawi help the President of Malawi and the new division of the Government. Since May 2014 Professor Arthur Peter Muntharika is the new leader of the Democratic Progressive Party.

The National Assembly comprises 193 members, elected in single- seat constituencies for a five- year term. The constitution has originally provided for a second chamber, 80- seat Senate, but no action has been taken to create the Senate to date and the provisions requiring it to be created had been removed in 2001. The Senate was intended to provide representation for traditional leaders and the different geographical districts, as well as various special interest groups, such as women, youth, and the disabled.

Judicial Branch

The constitution stipulates an autonomous judiciary. Malawi's legal system, based on the English model, consists of lower courts of the magisterium, a superior court, and a supreme court of appeal. Until 1969, Malawi maintained a legal system based on the colonial model, upholding the rules of English law as amended by Malawi law. The hierarchy of courts began with the courts of Magistrates in the towns, ascending to a High Court and finally a Supreme Court of Appeal. Furthermore, there are several levels of local courts with different powers to hear disputes such as divorces and other matters of marriage, heritage and access to land on the basis of traditional customary law. Such trials, using an expedited method, have heard minor criminal cases stated in the Malawi Penal Code. They were inferior to the Supreme Court, and subject to laws that ensured a fair court, including the right to legal counsel and the ability to appeal to the High Court. Upon independence in 1964, Banda, then Prime Minister, and Justice Minister Orton Chirwa began to condemn English- speaking values such as the Presumption of Innocence, the need to prove guilt beyond fair doubt, and the obligation to substantiate proof. In 1969, the acquittal of five defendants in the first Chilobwe murders trial caused outrage although, as another individual was later found guilty of all these murders in a second trial, this anger was misplaced. Parliamentary reaction was hostile and several speakers, including ministers, openly suggested that European judges and the European- style legal system had made it possible for clearly culpable defendants to escape the punishment they deserved. In particular, Aleke Banda, the Finance Minister, attacked the use of defense attorneys and the legal safeguards imposed by the English- Law Evidence Rules. Banda (who became president in 1966) said that if the judge had any conscience, he would have to resign and directly relate conventional law to making punishment inevitable, arguing that there was no proof of innocence. Since 1970, American Courts system has been revamped. Three Regional Traditional Courts and a National Traditional Court of Appeal have been formed over the current network of lower- level traditional courts and have authority over nearly all criminal cases, including murder and treason, involving Africans of Malawian origin, using "customary" laws of proof and procedure. All cases were placed to a Regional Traditional Court of Appeal rather than the High Court of Malawi, as had been the case prior to 1970. There was the High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal, concerned primarily with civil law cases outside customary law. Though these courts maintained their statutory authority, Traditional Courts heard the

vast majority of felony trials in trial. The Traditional Courts were to act in compliance with African law and practice, even though they implemented an oppressive, hierarchical and punitive form of customary law in line with Banda's views. Most of the judges were non-legal chiefs, appointed by and vulnerable to Banda's removal, and without any judicial freedom. Defendants were not permitted to argue their cases with counsel, have no compulsory right either to call witnesses or to appeal (these were at the discretion of the courts and the Justice Minister). They were not given a summary of the charges against them before the trial, so could not prepare a defense.

The Traditional Courts developed a reputation during the 1970s and 1980s as being used to punish Banda's political rivals and as being corrupt. The political abuse of the Conventional Courts is expressed in Albert Muwalo's high profile trials in 1976, Secretary-General of the Malawi Congress Party and Focus Gwede, Chief of the Special Police Department, charged with attempting to assassinate President Banda, and the 1983 conviction of Orton Chirwa, Minister of Justice before the 1964 Cabinet Crisis, with his wife Vera Chirwa. In both cases, unsubstantiated evidence was admitted to secure convictions and all four were sentenced to death on flimsy evidence, although only Muwalo was ultimately executed

The operation of the three regional traditional courts and of the National Traditional Court of Appeal was suspended indefinitely during the transition to democracy in October 1993, which in practice amounted to their abolition. When the new Constitution came into effect on May 18, 1994, it recognised customary law as an integral part of the judicial system and transformed much of the lower-level provincial traditional courts into the courts of the Magistrates. It also called for a new network of traditional courts but no law was passed before 2011 to create such courts. Two rates of customary law courts were provided for in the 2011 legislation: several local courts were formed in each of the 27 districts of Malawi, mostly in rural areas, and one Regional Appellate Local Court in each regional (to hear appellate from the local courts). There may be more challenges to the Supreme Court, to which all forms of Municipal Courts are subordinate. Each Municipal Court and District Appeals Appellate Court are presided by a chairperson who does not need to be a lawyer who has a fair qualification level, English literacy and sufficient knowledge of the customary law and language of the region covered by the court. Complaints have been made that the Local Courts, now popularly called Traditional Courts, are charging excessive court fees to settle disputes.

Malawi officially (2013) has a Supreme Court of Appeal as its highest court, having authority only over cases from lower courts. Its leaders include Chief Justice and nine other Judges of the Supreme Court. The Malawi High Court has full initial jurisdiction for hearing and determining any civil or criminal cases. Many cases in the High Court are heard before a single judge, without a trial, although three judges must hear cases in constitutional matters: there is a Chief Judge and 19 other judges in the High Court. The High Court has a General Division that can also hear lower court appeals and a Special Division concerned with industrial or business cases. Another special court is the Court of Industrial Relations which has authority over job matters. Cases before it are heard

informally by a council composed of a chairperson and one delegate each of the employers and staff, and with certain limits on legal representation. The Magistrate Courts and the District or Conventional Courts are also secondary courts. These have defined criminal and civil jurisdiction depending on their level, but expressly excluding cases of treason, murder or manslaughter

Local Government and political Parties

Local governance takes place in 28 districts within three regions governed by state and district commissions appointed by the central government. Local elections were held on 21 November 2000, the first of the multi-party era. In this election, the UDF party secured 70 per cent of seats. The districts are Balaka, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Dedza, Dowa, Chitipa, Karonga, Kasungu, Likoma, Lilongwe, Machinga, Mangochi, Mchinji, Mulanje, Mwanza, Mzimba, Neno, Nkhata Bay, Nkhosvota, Nsanje, Ntcheu, Ntchisi, Phalombe, Rumphi, Salima, Thyolo, Zomba.

Malawi is a multiparty state structure (see Malawi's list of political parties). In 1964, Malawi started as a one-party state, with the MCP being the only party until 1993. Under Chakufwa Chihana's leadership formed a coalition called the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), calling for an end to Kamuzu Banda's dictatorship. Despite of this internal and international pressure, Banda decided to hold a national referendum in 1993 in which the country voted to become a multi-party democracy. The first known opposition political party was AFORD, and later other opposition parties were created. In 1994, the first multi-party elections took place in which the UDF gained votes becoming the first government in a multi-party structure in Bakili Muluzi. Malawi is now a multi-party country with 40 registered parties with only a few popular.

THE COAT OF ARMS OF MALAWI



Section 4 Religion and Culture

Around 80 percent of Malawi's populations are Christians, with the majority Muslim. A few Malawians still follow conservative values. The primary languages of Malawi are English and Chichewa. English is understood by almost all the people in the country.

Once you arrive in Malawi, you'll be accepted into Africa's warm heart with a handshake that's the standard greeting- it can take the shape of a variety of styles and your hand can be held when you're talking to another. Malawians are welcoming people, they are their normal way of being and their sincere smiles are warming their hearts. Malawian families have a great sense of community, all duties and chores are shared. The main food is white maize consumed with potatoes, with fish with beef rarely. Live side by side families look after each other, offering a helping hand whenever needed. A cultural visit involving a 'home- stay' in a village can be arranged just about anywhere and offers a wonderful way to experience Malawi's traditional everyday life. Malawians are known for their artistic skill and creativity when it comes to handcrafts. You can find a wide variety of items that display traditional skills handed down through the generations and also new techniques. There are a number of tribes in Malawi such as the Maravi, Nyanja and Tumbuka, each adding a specific aspect to traditional masks, dance movements, music (drums and rattles), clothing and also language. The main ethnic group is the Chewa. Music is strongly rooted in Malawian culture with inflection from the Yao tribe of Tanzania in the north and the Zulu in South Africa amongst others.

Some of the local dances which are practiced in the country are manganje, gulewankulu, chimtali. The chewa being the largest ethnic group in the country their dancing of gulewankulu and song is the most common in the country.



Chewa traditional dance (Gulewankulu)