

# An Analysis of Africa's Unconstitutional Government Transitions



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By

Jibrin Ubale Yahaya

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I dedicate this book to my mother Hajiya Khadija Inuwa, father Alh. Ubale Jibrin, and wives Maimuna Balarabe and Fatima Sagir Imam for their understanding and patience during the writing process.



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## FOREWORD

Over fifty years ago, military takeovers became more common in Africa, which exacerbated the problem of unconstitutional political transitions. The evolution of African law has been greatly impacted by the African Union (AU), which was founded in 2001. This is especially true of the way it has addressed the illegal changes in government that have occurred in numerous African nations. The African Union (AU) has created a thorough legal framework that defines an unconstitutional change of government, specifies the proper course of action, and assigns authority to Union organs for legislation, the executive branch, and implementation in order to ease these kinds of transitions. The AU framework for such responses includes targeted sanctions as the most comprehensive measures on regional strengthening democracy and good governance. This book evaluates the actions taken by the African Union, focusing on sanctions in particular as the most intrusive and divisive legal measure. Positive legal developments have taken place despite the regime's poor design and implementation—it lacked an efficient union court and defined unconstitutional changes too narrowly, for example—which is encouraging for an Africa that will eventually uphold international law. Despite shortcomings in its current system of penalizing those who violate democratic values, the African Union (AU) is an important player in advancing democracy throughout Africa. The definition of unconstitutional changes of government is too narrow, and sanctions are often unnecessary. Instead, more effective diplomatic alternatives should be taken into consideration in order to resolve the differences in an amicable way. There are no operational AUs. one aspect of organizational structure is a union court or supervisory system. Nonetheless, the union's innovation-promoting initiatives, such as prohibiting coup leaders from taking part in Union events, show how far it has come in this regard. Dr. Jibrin Ubale Yahaya's book offers insightful analysis on how to evaluate the effectiveness of good governance in preventing unwelcome political transitions in Africa. I suggested using this book to become acquainted with its intellectual deposit for security experts, policymakers, academics, and students from a variety of social science disciplines in order to stay up to date with this development.

**Prof. Nuhu Liman Abdullahi.**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences,**  
**Nasarawa State University, Keffi.**

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# INTRODUCTION

This book examines the recent trend of unconstitutional changes in African governments, particularly in Mauritania, Guinea, Madagascar, and Niger. These changes pose a significant challenge to the African democratic project, as they contradict sub-regional and pan-African norms that prohibit such changes. The book explores the causes of these changes, how political actors and institutions react, and the differences in regional organizations' responses to these crises. It also examines various unconstitutional methods of government change, such as military takeovers, presidential extensions, political system manipulation, election manipulation, and refusal to accept defeat. The book also examines the limitations of institutional mechanisms like the African Union's Constitutive Act, the Lomé Declaration, and the ECOWAS Democracy and Good Governance Protocols in preventing unconstitutional changes. The book also explores the evolution of military intervention in Africa since the end of the Cold War, focusing on successful cases like Sierra Leone and the Comoros as well as unsuccessful cases like Darfur, Rwanda, and Somalia. The book offers insights into the advantages and disadvantages of such interventions and suggests ways for Africa to resolve its own conflicts and reap financial benefits.

**Jibrin Ubale Yahaya, Ph.D.**



## ABBREVIATIONS

AFS	African Standby Force
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CA	Constitutive Act of the African Union
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Developmental Authority
MAES	AU Electoral and Security Assistance Mission to the Comoros
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NARC	North African Regional Capability
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
REC	Regional Economic Community
RoPA	Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
PSC	African Union Peace and Security Council
UCG	Unconstitutional change of government
UN	United Nations
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission



# CHAPTER ONE

## AFRICA AND THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS

### 1.1 Introduction

Africa finds itself at a democratization crossroads once more. Due to a confluence of internal and external factors, the democratic wave that swept the continent just over 20 years ago unleashed enormous hopes that are now starting to fade. An enormous increase in the number of "democratic refugees" in many African nations is one outcome of this trend. Here, the term "refugee" refers to a group of marginalized and/or excluded citizens who are causing internal events that pose a serious threat to public order, rather than the narrow, conventional definition. In certain African countries, the process of democratization appears to have resulted in a growing sense of alienation and dispossession among the populace, rather than promoting popular empowerment, participation, competition, and legitimacy.

The aforementioned exemplifies the mixed fortunes of democracy and a sense of apprehension about its reversal. It seems that this has compromised all known principles of good governance, such as accountability and control, belying the sanguine expectations that accompanied the celebration of a new dawn of democracy in Africa two decades prior (Omotola 2008a; Bratton and van de Walle 1997). Human insecurity is becoming more common as citizens are becoming secondary stakeholders in the democratization processes and are instead being treated as clients or consumers (Omotola 2008b; Aremu and Omotola 2007). A growing number of individuals are being excluded from or marginalized within their society's political and policy-making processes. The fact that the (politically excluded) individuals, in contrast to traditional refugees, appear to have no access to asylum in order to give them the ability to undergo "democratic repatriation and reintegration."

This could be due to the fact that powerful political actors who rig the system to benefit themselves have severely distorted the fundamental

democratic institutions, such as political parties, electoral oversight organizations, and the legislature, which could help with a process of political inclusion or reintegration. The apparent inability of the international community to effectively intervene to stop such a pervasiveness—especially when no fundamental interests are involved—complicates the situation even more. The outcome has been a political catastrophe with the constant risk of undoing the progress made toward democracy in previous decades.

A growing number of unconstitutional changes of government in Africa indicate that democracy is in danger of regressing. The resurgence of military coups in recent times, similar to those that occurred in 2008 in Mauritania and Guinea; Guinea-Bissau and Signs of the African democratization crisis include Madagascar in 2009; Niger Republic in May 2009 and February 2010; and the inability of incumbents to cede power to winning opposition candidates or parties, as demonstrated most recently in Côte d'Ivoire by President Laurent Gbagbo's refusal to accept defeat in the December 2010 election. The prospects for the consolidation of democracy on the continent are seriously threatened by the resurgence of military coups in Africa (Gyimah-Boadi, 2005). Posner and Young (2007:126) emphasized these possibilities when they asserted that "the formal rules of the game are beginning to matter in ways that are indicative of the institutionalization of political power in Africa." They didn't in the past. They based their conclusion primarily on the unwillingness of certain current power holders to change the constitution to grant them a third term of office, despite obvious advantages like public pressure. They also came to this conclusion because presidents who have given in and tried to take advantage of such chances have a high failure rate.

When compared to recognizable democratic indicators created and employed by Freedom House and Polity IV, Posner and Young's findings become even more compelling. Data from the Polity IV series show that between 1990 and 2008, a large number of African nations successfully transitioned from autocracies to anocracy—"sort of a hybrid regime on a scale somewhere between "autocracy" and "democracy" (Engel, 2010:4). African nations were assigned an average Polity IV authority trend score of -5.38 in 1990; however, by 2008, that score had increased to +1.34.1. By utilizing criteria like "free," "partly free," and "not free," Freedom House also observed a slight improvement in the status of African nations: in 1990, there were a pitiful four free, eighteen partly free, and thirty not free nations; today, 9,000, 24 and by 2009, 20 had become fully, partially, or not free. Two Only eight and one African countries, respectively, had better scores

and better status in 2009 compared to 2005, according to Engel's (2010:5) distillation of these datasets. On the other hand, during the same period, 23 countries and five countries recorded lower scores. The two closely related factors that Engel (2010:5) attributes to the decline in the quality of democracy in Africa are "(1) coups d'état and other forms of what African Union has labelled unconstitutional changes of government and (2) election-related violence" (emphasis in the original).

How does this development make sense? What other ways, besides military interventions, do unconstitutional changes in government appear in Africa? What is the response of democratic institutions and actors, such as parliaments, opposition parties, political parties, and the ruling class, to this challenge? What effects might unconstitutional government changes have on Africa's democratic and political stability? The research tackles these and associated queries, explaining the increasing occurrence of unconstitutional governmental transitions and their indications for the strengthening of democracy in Africa.

This book argues that unconstitutional changes of government pose a fundamental threat to democratic stability and consolidation in Africa, based on empirical data collected across the continent. It is crucial to recognize that this argument could be reversed in order to point out that unconstitutional changes in African governments are a result of the continent's inability to solidify democracy. Even though this argument makes sense, it shouldn't be overemphasized. This is due to the fact that regular, competitive, legitimate elections serve as the first and most fundamental component of liberal democracy, guaranteeing the constitutional ascent to power (Diamond, 2008). Generally speaking, this is the beginning of the transitional processes that lead to the consolidation of democracy. Despite the criticism that liberal democracy in Africa essentially impedes the rise of people's or popular democracy, consequently turning into a catalyst for the disempowerment of the populace (for instance, Saul 1997a, 1997b; Ake 1996; Omotola 2009b, 2008d). Nevertheless, the liberal brand of democracy maintains broad acceptance as the standard for human political organization. Thus, in the framework of liberal global governance, the consolidation of democracy in Africa to the point where it is less vulnerable to threats of reversal takes on greater significance.

This book also makes the case that military takeovers will continue to be a plausible catalyst for the continent's democratic regression as long as insufficient efforts are taken to address the factors that predispose people to them, particularly poor governance in all of its manifestations. Perhaps more

important to understand is that the deeper sources of threat to democracy are more likely to be found in the contradictions that arise from the process of democratization itself, such as concerns about ownership, social inequality, justice, and representation, as well as how it affects the people's political, economic, and sociocultural rights. Democracies that are not well institutionalized hinder the ability to set up electoral procedures and guarantee political actors follow them, which further undermines democratization efforts. Certain incumbents' propensity to manipulate another important factor undermining democracy on the continent is the political system, which is imposed or pushed for constitutional amendments to ensure father-to-son succession, third term projects, and tenure prolongation. While it is notable that some regulatory standards and principles prohibiting unconstitutional changes in government are becoming more and more ingrained in Africa's democratic and governance architecture, these frameworks have shown to be clearly insufficient for a variety of reasons, as will be highlighted in our discussion.

There are twelve chapters in the book. The first places the issue of Africa's democratic instability in theoretical and historical contexts. In the second, institutional safeguards against unconstitutional changes of government in Africa are critically examined, highlighting the inherent limitations of both the Lomé Declaration and Article 30 of the AU's Constitutive Act. The third examines the ways in which unconstitutional changes of government have manifested themselves in Africa, including military takeovers, constitutional reviews for the purpose of extending tenure, and the refusal of the ruling class to cede power following an election loss and the implementation of post-election dispute resolution tactics, such as power-sharing. The reactions of African governments and bodies at the regional and sub-regional levels to these developments are examined critically in the fifth section. The last chapter provides a summary of the study's key points and offers recommendations for strengthening democracy in Africa.

## **1.2 African Democratic Instability: Conceptual and Historical Considerations**

African democratic instability is a complex issue characterized by political unrest, coups, electoral violence, weak institutions, and persistent authoritarianism. It is influenced by historical, social, and economic factors, as well as the legacies of colonialism and post-independence state formation.

Fragile democracies, such as weak rule of law, limited checks and balances, and political corruption, often undermine democratic processes. Hybrid regimes, which combine democratic and autocratic governance, manipulate outcomes through voter suppression, media control, and opposition repression. Civil society plays a crucial role in promoting democracy and advocating for human rights, but often faces restrictions and challenges from authoritarian regimes.

International influence, including foreign governments, NGOs, and international organizations, has both supported and destabilized democratic values. Economic and social drivers like high levels of poverty, inequality, and unemployment contribute to democratic instability.

Historical factors include colonial legacies, post-independence struggles, decolonization, and Cold War influence. African democracies were often undermined by external powers that supported authoritarian regimes to protect their geopolitical interests, further eroded democratic institutions and fostered instability.

Recent democratic transitions in Africa since the 1990s have been uneven, with some countries achieving stability while others continue to struggle with electoral violence, corruption, and weak governance. Addressing these challenges requires strengthening democratic institutions, fostering inclusive political participation, and promoting sustainable development.

Democratic instability in Africa has been a persistent challenge since the wave of independence in the mid-20th century. Despite numerous attempts at establishing democratic governance, many African countries continue to face political instability, characterized by coups, electoral violence, authoritarian regimes, and fragile institutions. Understanding the causes and consequences of this instability requires a conceptual and historical analysis of the factors that have shaped Africa's political landscape.

### **i. State Fragility and Weak Institutions**

**Colonial Legacy:** Many African countries inherited weak state institutions from their colonial rulers, which were often designed to extract resources rather than to promote good governance. This legacy of weak institutions has made it difficult for many African states to manage conflicts, enforce the rule of law, and deliver public services, leading to democratic instability.

**Neo-Patrimonialism:** Political systems in many African countries are characterized by neo-patrimonialism, where leaders maintain power through patron-client relationships, often at the expense of democratic norms and institutions. This system undermines accountability, weakens state capacity, and fosters corruption, all of which contribute to political instability.

The colonial legacy and neo-patrimonism have significantly impacted African democratization. The weak institutions inherited from colonial rulers, designed to extract resources, have been ill-suited for managing internal conflicts, enforcing the rule of law, and delivering public services. This lack of strong, democratic institutions has made it difficult for many African states to establish effective governance and maintain stability. The legacy of weak institutions has led to ongoing challenges in building and sustaining democratic frameworks, contributing to persistent instability and undermined democratic processes.

Neo-patrimonism, on the other hand, is a system where political leaders maintain power through patron-client relationships, distributing resources and favors to loyal supporters in exchange for political support. This system often undermines accountability and transparency, as political loyalty is prioritized over the rule of law and public service. This system erodes democratic norms by prioritizing personal gain and loyalty over democratic principles, weakening the effectiveness of democratic institutions and processes.

The interplay between colonial legacies and neo-patrimonism has significantly impacted the democratization process in Africa. Addressing these challenges requires focused efforts on institutional reform, enhancing accountability, and reducing corruption to foster more resilient and effective governance structures.

## **ii. Ethnic and Regional Divisions**

**Ethnic Politics:** Ethnicity plays a significant role in African politics, with political parties and leaders often mobilizing support along ethnic lines. This can lead to exclusionary politics, where certain ethnic groups dominate political power, while others are marginalized. Such divisions can fuel conflict, as marginalized groups may resort to violence to challenge their exclusion from political and economic power.



**Regionalism:** In some African countries, regional divisions exacerbate political instability. For instance, in Nigeria, the competition between the northern, southern, and western regions has contributed to political tensions, often leading to conflict and instability.

Regionalism in Africa can lead to political tensions, instability, and economic disparities. Different regions vie for control, resulting in political gridlock, conflict, and reduced government effectiveness. Economic disparities are also exacerbated, as certain regions receive more resources and investment than others, fueling regional grievances and conflicts. Ethnic politics and regionalism significantly impact the democratization process in Africa, with ethnic mobilization often resulting in exclusionary practices, undermining inclusive governance, and contributing to conflict and instability. Addressing these issues requires promoting inclusive political systems, equitable resource distribution, and national unity to build a more stable and democratic environment.

### **iii. Authoritarianism and Democratic Reversals**

Despite the wave of democratization that swept across Africa in the 1990s, many countries have experienced democratic reversals, where leaders manipulate the political system to extend their rule. This has led to pseudo-democracies where elections are held, but political competition is stifled, and opposition parties are repressed.

Despite the wave of democratization that swept across Africa in the 1990s, many countries have experienced significant democratic reversals. These reversals are characterized by the erosion of democratic norms and the entrenchment of authoritarian leaders who manipulate the political system to extend their rule. While elections may be held regularly, the political competition is often undermined, opposition parties are repressed, and the core principles of democracy, such as free and fair elections, political pluralism, and civil liberties, are disregarded.

#### **a. Manipulation of Democratic Processes**

One of the key features of authoritarian rule in many African states is the manipulation of democratic processes. Leaders often resort to constitutional amendments, electoral fraud, and the abuse of state resources to extend their rule and weaken democratic checks and balances.

The removal of presidential term limits in African countries like Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi has been a significant issue, with significant consequences for governance, democracy, and political stability. In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni removed the two-term limit from the constitution in 2005, allowing him to run for re-election. In 2017, another amendment lifted the age limit for presidential candidates, allowing Museveni to extend his rule indefinitely. This practice weakened Uganda's democratic processes and concentrated power in the hands of the executive. Despite maintaining political stability, these changes have led to increasing civil discontent, opposition crackdowns, and accusations of authoritarianism.

In Rwanda, President Paul Kagame successfully pushed through a 2015 referendum that allowed him to potentially remain in power until 2034. This amendment lifted the two-term limit, granting him a seven-year term followed by eligibility for two additional five-year terms. This move is credited with transforming Rwanda into a model of development and stability following the 1994 genocide. However, extending his presidency raised concerns about democratic backsliding, the erosion of political pluralism, and the long-term sustainability of a political system centered around one leader.

In Burundi, President Pierre Nkurunziza sought a controversial third term in 2015, arguing that his first term didn't count toward the constitutional two-term limit because he was initially appointed by parliament. This move triggered violent protests, a failed coup, and widespread unrest. A 2018 referendum extended the presidential term limits, allowing future presidents to serve longer, though Nkurunziza himself chose not to seek re-election in 2020.

The removal of presidential term limits in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and other African countries presents a complex challenge. While some leaders justify it as necessary for stability and development, it raises serious concerns about the long-term health of democracy, political pluralism, and governance in these countries.

Electoral manipulation is a crucial tool used by authoritarian leaders to maintain power, often making elections mere formalities rather than genuine expressions of democratic will. Common methods include vote rigging, gerrymandering, and controlling election commissions. These methods can dilute the voting power of opposition strongholds or concentrate government supporters in a way that ensures electoral victories.

Authoritarian regimes also influence election commissions by co-opting election bodies and controlling logistics, such as voter registration and ballot distribution. They limit opposition through disqualification of candidates, intimidation and violence, and media control by restricting free media and using disinformation campaigns.

One-party dominance in elections often results in a lack of genuine competition, as opposition parties are too weak or suppressed to challenge the ruling party. Formalities over substance in some authoritarian contexts ensure that elections are held primarily for international legitimacy, without any real intent to reflect the people's will. Election outcomes are often predetermined, with few surprises or genuine opportunities for change.

International observers may have limited impact on authoritarian regimes, as they may face restrictions or be limited in their capacity to detect fraud. Diplomatic fallout from sanctions or condemnations may have limited impact on authoritarian leaders, especially if they control the state apparatus or have economic or security ties to powerful allies.

Electoral manipulation undermines the principles of democracy, allowing leaders to retain power while maintaining a façade of legitimacy. This practice erodes public trust in elections and weakens governance by reducing accountability and responsiveness to the electorate.

## **b. Repression of Opposition Parties**

Under authoritarian rule, opposition parties and political dissent are frequently suppressed through legal, financial, and violent means. This repression stifles political pluralism, a core element of functional democracies.

Legal restrictions are a common tool used by authoritarian or semi-authoritarian governments to weaken opposition parties and limit their ability to challenge the ruling regime. These restrictions can be achieved through selective application of laws, corruption or criminal charges, eligibility restrictions, bans on political parties, tight regulations on party formation, harsh oversight, media restrictions, limits on freedom of assembly, control over campaign financing, voter suppression tactics, judicial and legislative manipulation, and international responses.

1. **Disqualification of Opposition Candidates:** Governments often use legal mechanisms to disqualify opposition candidates by applying

laws selectively, barring individuals from running for office based on alleged legal or ethical violations. This includes barring individuals from running for office based on alleged legal or ethical violations, even if these charges are baseless or politically motivated.

2. **Corruption or Criminal Charges:** Opposition figures are frequently accused of corruption or other criminal activities to prevent them from participating in elections. Eligibility restrictions may include age limits, citizenship requirements, or residency rules to target specific candidates and keep them out of the race.
3. **Restrictions on Political Parties:** Governments may ban opposition parties or dissolve them under the guise of national security concerns or claims of links to terrorism or extremism. Tight regulations on party formation, such as high financial deposits, unrealistic membership thresholds, or bureaucratic hurdles, make it difficult for new or smaller parties to establish themselves or compete effectively.
4. **Media Restrictions:** Governments use laws to restrict opposition access to media platforms by either outright censoring critical media outlets or forcing them to align with government narratives. Independent media can face closures, fines, or the revocation of broadcasting licenses.
5. **Limiting Freedom of Assembly:** Legal restrictions on protests, demonstrations, or public gatherings are often used to curtail opposition movements. Criminalization of dissent and restrictions on political events make it difficult for opposition parties to organize effective campaigns and reach voters effectively.
6. **Voter Suppression Tactics:** Legal obstacles to voting, selective enforcement of election laws, and judicial and legislative manipulation can lead to the erosion of trust in democracy, concentration of power, and delegitimization of elections. International responses to legal restrictions include condemnation and pressure from international bodies and human rights organizations, monitoring and advocacy by international election observers and NGOs, but their ability to influence the situation on the ground is often limited by government resistance to outside interference.

By employing these legal tactics, governments can create a controlled political environment where opposition parties struggle to gain ground, often leading to long-term political stagnation or authoritarianism.

Harassment and violence are common tactics used by authoritarian regimes or governments to suppress opposition movements and maintain control. These methods are often employed to intimidate political opponents, silence dissent, and stifle political competition.

1. **Harassment of Opposition Leaders and Activists:** Opposition leaders and activists often face extensive surveillance by state security agencies, which gathers intelligence that can be used against them. Legal harassment is common, with opposition figures subjected to arbitrary arrests, detentions, and legal charges. Property seizure and asset freezes are also common tactics used to financially cripple their activities.
2. **Intimidation and Threats:** Opposition leaders, journalists, and activists are often threatened with violence or death if they continue to challenge the regime. Targeting of families is another tactic used to pressure individuals into silence or compliance. Governments often use state-controlled media to launch smear campaigns against opposition figures, spreading false or misleading information to tarnish their reputations and erode public support.
3. **Violence Against Protesters:** Security forces are often deployed to violently suppress opposition protests, using tactics such as tear gas, rubber bullets, water cannons, and live ammunition to disperse crowds. Mass arrests are common during demonstrations, with many detained without trial or facing harsh legal penalties. Extrajudicial killings may also occur, especially in the lead-up to or during elections.
4. **Violence Against Opposition Leaders:** In some cases, prominent opposition figures are assassinated to eliminate political threats. Kidnappings and forced disappearances are also used to send a message about the risks of opposing the regime. Torture and abuse are often used to extract confessions, intimidate them into submission, or punish them for their political activities.
5. **Use of Paramilitaries and Vigilante Groups:** Some regimes employ paramilitary or vigilante groups that operate outside the law but with tacit government approval. These groups often attack opposition rallies, intimidate voters, or target specific opposition figures with violence. Street violence is also used to disrupt political organizing.
6. **Targeting of Opposition Strongholds:** In areas where opposition support is strong, security forces or government-aligned groups may target homes, businesses, and community centers, sending a message

that opposition activities will have severe consequences. Blockades and curfews are often imposed to disrupt political organizing.

7. **Violence During Elections:** Pre-election violence, election day violence, and post-election crackdowns are all ways in which harassment and violence can impact democratic participation. Fear of reprisals deters many people from actively participating in opposition movements, while erosion of political pluralism deteriorates as opposition parties become less effective, marginalized, or co-opted by the ruling regime. Self-censorship also weakens public debate and stifles the free flow of information, making it harder for opposition movements to challenge the government.

International reactions to harassment and violence against opposition leaders and supporters include condemnation and sanctions, calls for accountability, and humanitarian assistance. However, these efforts do not always address the root causes of the violence. The use of harassment and violence against opposition leaders and supporters not only undermines democratic processes but also often leads to long-term political instability.

### **c. Control of Media and Civil Society**

Authoritarian regimes typically exert tight control over the media and civil society organizations, which are crucial for holding governments accountable and promoting transparency.

Media censorship is a significant issue in authoritarian regimes or fragile democracies, where the media landscape is dominated by state-controlled outlets that serve the interests of the ruling government. This concentration of power limits access to unbiased information and stifles critical reporting, resulting in a highly controlled narrative. State-controlled media outlets often act as mouthpieces for the government, disseminating propaganda that praises the ruling regime and downplays or ignores any dissent or opposition. Opposition parties, civil society groups, or independent voices are often given little or no coverage in state media, portraying them as threats to national stability.

Independent media outlets may face legal action and fines, journalist imprisonment, cyber censorship, harassment and violence against journalists, and physical violence. These tactics create a climate of fear that discourages investigative reporting and create a culture of impunity that emboldens further violence against the press.