

## TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

Here's a rundown of the various forms of government, with definitions provided by "The World Factbook."

\***Absolute monarchy** - a form of government where the monarch rules unhindered, i.e., without any laws, constitution or legally organized opposition.

**Anarchy** - a condition of lawlessness or political disorder brought about by the absence of governmental authority.

**Authoritarian** - a form of government in which state authority is imposed onto many aspects of citizens' lives.

\***Commonwealth** - a nation, state or other political entity founded on law and united by a compact of the people for the common good.

\***Communist** - a system of government in which the state plans and controls the economy and a single -- often authoritarian -- party holds power; state controls are imposed with the elimination of private ownership of property or capital while claiming to make progress toward a higher social order in which all goods are equally shared by the people (i.e., a classless society).

**Confederacy (Confederation)** - a union by compact or treaty between states, provinces or territories that creates a central government with limited powers; the constituent entities retain supreme authority over all matters except those delegated to the central government.

\***Constitutional** - a government by or operating under an authoritative document (constitution) that sets forth the system of fundamental laws and principles that determines the nature, functions and limits of that government.

**Constitutional democracy** - a form of government in which the sovereign power of the people is spelled out in a governing constitution.

**Constitutional monarchy** - a system of government in which a monarch is guided by a constitution whereby his/her rights, duties, and responsibilities are spelled out in written law or by custom.

**\*Democracy** - a form of government in which the supreme power is retained by the people, but which is usually exercised indirectly through a system of representation and delegated authority periodically renewed.

**Democratic republic** - a state in which the supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote for officers and representatives responsible to them.

**\*Dictatorship** - a form of government in which a ruler or small clique wield absolute power (not restricted by a constitution or laws).

**Ecclesiastical** - a government administered by a church.

**\*Emirate** - similar to a monarchy or sultanate, a government in which the supreme power is in the hands of an emir (the ruler of a Muslim state); the emir may be an absolute overlord or a sovereign with constitutionally limited authority.

**\*Federal** (Federation) - a form of government in which sovereign power is formally divided -- usually by means of a constitution -- between a central authority and a number of constituent regions (states, colonies or provinces) so that each region retains some management of its internal affairs; differs from a confederacy in that the central government exerts influence directly upon both individuals as well as upon the regional units.

**Federal republic** - a state in which the powers of the central government are restricted and in which the component parts (states, colonies, or provinces) retain a degree of self-government; ultimate

sovereign power rests with the voters who chose their governmental representatives.

**Islamic republic** - a particular form of government adopted by some Muslim states; although such a state is, in theory, a theocracy, it remains a republic, but its laws are required to be compatible with the laws of Islam.

**Maoism** - the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism developed in China by Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), which states that a continuous revolution is necessary if the leaders of a communist state are to keep in touch with the people.

**Marxism** - the political, economic and social principles espoused by 19th century economist Karl Marx; he viewed the struggle of workers as a progression of historical forces that would proceed from a class struggle of the proletariat (workers) exploited by capitalists (business owners), to a socialist "dictatorship of the proletariat," to, finally, a classless society -- Communism.

**Marxism-Leninism** - an expanded form of communism developed by Vladimir Lenin from doctrines of Karl Marx; Lenin saw imperialism as the final stage of capitalism and shifted the focus of workers' struggle from developed to underdeveloped countries.

**Monarchy** - a government in which the supreme power is lodged in the hands of a monarch who reigns over a state or territory, usually for life and by hereditary right; the monarch may be either a sole absolute ruler or a sovereign - such as a king, queen or prince - with constitutionally limited authority.

**\*Oligarchy** - a government in which control is exercised by a small group of individuals whose authority generally is based on wealth or power.

**\*Parliamentary democracy** - a political system in which the legislature (parliament) selects the government - a prime minister, premier or chancellor along with the cabinet ministers - according to party strength as expressed in elections; by this system, the government acquires a dual responsibility: to the people as well as to the parliament.

**Parliamentary government** (Cabinet-Parliamentary government) - a government in which members of an executive branch (the cabinet and its leader - a prime minister, premier or chancellor) are nominated to their positions by a legislature or parliament, and are directly responsible to it; this type of government can be dissolved at will by the parliament (legislature) by means of a no-confidence vote or the leader of the cabinet may dissolve the parliament if it can no longer function.

**Parliamentary monarchy** - a state headed by a monarch who is not actively involved in policy formation or implementation (i.e., the exercise of sovereign powers by a monarch in a ceremonial capacity); true governmental leadership is carried out by a cabinet and its head - a prime minister, premier or chancellor - who are drawn from a legislature (parliament).

**Presidential** - a system of government where the executive branch exists separately from a legislature (to which it is generally not accountable).

**\*Republic** - a representative democracy in which the people's elected deputies (representatives), not the people themselves, vote on legislation.

**Socialism** - a government in which the means of planning, producing and distributing goods is controlled by a central government that theoretically seeks a more just and equitable distribution of property and labor; in actuality, most socialist governments have ended up being no more than dictatorships over workers by a ruling elite.

**Sultanate** - similar to a monarchy, a government in which the supreme power is in the hands of a sultan (the head of a Muslim state); the sultan

may be an absolute ruler or a sovereign with constitutionally limited authority.

**Theocracy** - a form of government in which a Deity is recognized as the supreme civil ruler, the Deity's laws are interpreted by ecclesiastical authorities (bishops, mullahs, etc.); a government subject to religious authority.

**Totalitarian** - a government that seeks to subordinate the individual to the state by controlling not only all political and economic matters, but also the attitudes, values and beliefs of its population.