**The advantages and disadvantages of a Presidential system of Government**

**ADVANTAGES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**

***Definition of a presidential system of government***

A presidential system of government is a system of government in which the President is directly elected by the people to govern for fix number of years, usually four years. The number of years may vary from country to country. The president, so elected, acts as both head of state and head of government. The United States of America is a good example of a Presidential System of Government.

***It is democratic***

The presidential system of government is usually regarded as democratic in the sense that, under the system, the president is directly elected by the electorates and is therefore directly responsible to the people.

***Effective Control by President***

In a Presidential system, since the Ministers are appointed by the President, the President is able to effectively control them. As his direct appointees, they are answerable to him for every action they take in the performance of their duties.

***Room for quick decision-making***

The Presidential system promotes quick decision-making and execution of government policies. This is so because, the president is single executive and there does not need to do too many lengthy consultations before a decision is arrived at.

***Stability of government***

One of the features of a presidential system of government is that there is a fixed term of office. After each is ended, the voters must elect another person or renew the mandate of the current president. As a result of this feature, anybody interested in the presidency, patiently waits for his or her turn to have a shot at it. The presidential system, therefore, ensures the stability of the government.

***Cheaper to operate***

In a presidential system of government, there is only one executive that must be catered for and once that is done, that is all. This is unlike the parliamentary system where there are two people making the executive so the state must find resources to cater for the two of them. This makes the presidential system less expensive.

***Easy to locate responsibility***

In the presidential system, it is easy to determine where responsibility lies. One man can be held responsible for any acts of commission and omissions. In fact, in Africa for example, the president is blamed for anything that goes wrong even it is clearly not his fault.

**DISADVANTAGES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM**

***Can degenerate into dictatorship***

The Presidential system has the tendency to degenerate into a dictatorship. The result is that the rights of the citizens may be trampled upon, the views of political opponents, suppressed and their individual liberties are taken away from them.

***The thin line between partisan and national issues***

In a presidential system, sometimes, it is difficult to differentiate between issues that are purely national and those that are purely partisan issues. This is because the same person represents the face of the party in power and at the same time the leader of the state.

***Cannot change government midstream***

In a Presidential system, the executive stays in power for a fixed term. The disadvantage is that if by the middle of his term of office his policies no longer favour the people, he cannot be removed unless he serves his full term.

***Strain relationship between executive and legislature***

In a presidential system, if majority of members of the legislature belong to a party different from that of the president, they can oppose policy proposals from the executive. Also when the executive proposes nominees for vetting and approval by Parliament, the nominees may be rejected by Parliament. On the other hand, the president can also refuse to give his assent to bills from parliament for it to become law. This could lead to a stalemate.

***Fixation on how to remain in power***

Since there is a fixed term of office for the president and periodic elections to renew mandate, the executive may lose focus too much on winning the next election and therefore lose his focus on his core function. Also, the party of the president will be more concerned about staying in power than on the problems of the people.