

Country: Lesotho

Years: 1966 – 1985

Head of government: Prime Minister Joseph Leabua Jonathan

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Jonathan's party as BNP. Manzano (2017: 100) identifies Leabua Jonathan as right. DPI identifies BNP as right. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing "Basotho National Party (BNP)... traditionally favored free enterprise and cooperation with South Africa while opposing apartheid. In the mid-1970s, however, it began co-opting policies originally advanced by the BCP, including the establishment of relations with Communist states and support for the ANC campaign against Pretoria." Perspective Monde (2020) identifies Jonathan as right. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Jonathan's party affiliation as BNP, and BNP as right, stating that it is "populist, nationalist, conservative." In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Basotho National Party (BNP) as 4.4 with an average divided-united party (0-10) score of 5.0. Rosenberg et al. (2004) write "The Basotho National Party (BNP) was founded in 1959 by Leabua Jonathan, Gabriel Manyeli, Patrick 'Mota, and others, who feared that the Basutoland African Congress (BAC) was hostile to whites, chiefs, and Catholics and that authoritarianism and communism were sources of its militancy... Jonathan and Manyeli decided that a conservative alternative to the BAC was needed." Meyers (2006) writes "Lesotho's conservatives saw the BCP programs as radical and formed their own party, the BNP, to protect their positions and beliefs as the country moved toward independence" and "The BNP was formed in 1958 under the leadership of Leabua Jonathan, a minor chief. Originally much more conservative than its BCP rival, it supported the traditional chiefs, opposed communism, and sought good relations with South Africa." Bardill and Cobbe (1985) write "it is difficult today to identify major ideological points of difference between Mokhehle's BCP and Jonathan's BNP... One of the clearest illustrations... of the narrow ideological gap between the two parties, is contained in Mokhehle's 1972 statement of the party's objectives: We are, to a certain extent, socialist, but we are definitely not in favour of a drastic shake-up of the present order of things. We would insist on an evolutionary socialism and because Lesotho is already largely socialist, this change wouldn't be so drastic as is feared. Although our social structure and even, to a certain extent, the policies of the present Government are socialistically inclined, we would want to move towards a true socialism which would not necessarily mean the abolition of private property and free enterprise" and "Despite the more socialist rhetorical tinge of the BCP in the past, if it came to power, it would probably not act

much differently from the BNP. Beneath the rhetoric the BCP was never very radical and recently has been strongly anti-Communist.” In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party’s ideology as “Center” (-0.142) in 1970, 1971, 1975, 1980, and 1985 with “A high level of visible disagreement” across all years.

Years: 1986 – 1990

Leader: Justin Metsing Lekhanya

Ideology: Right

Description: Perspective Monde (2020) and World Statesmen (2020) identify Justin Metsing Lekhanya instead of Moshoeshoe II on December 31, 1986-1989. And Lekhanya instead of Letsie III on December 31, 1990. HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Lekhanya’s party affiliation as none. DPI identifies BNP as right. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing “Basotho National Party (BNP)... traditionally favored free enterprise and cooperation with South Africa while opposing apartheid. In the mid-1970s, however, it began co-opting policies originally advanced by the BCP, including the establishment of relations with Communist states and support for the ANC campaign against Pretoria.” Rosenberg and Weisfelder (Historical Dictionary 2003: 336) hints at the mistreatment of the BNP, which is identified as rightist by World Statesmen (2019) and Perspective Monde (2019): “While the ousted Basotho National Party (BNP) leadership complained of mistreatment and together with other political parties vigorously opposed the order that suspended political activity, the Military Council seemed firmly in control.” Keesing’s Record of World Events, on the other hand, states that the BCP, identified as leftist by World Statesmen and Perspective Monde, also faced opposition by the Military Council: “In a clear sign that the Military Council intended to continue the ban imposed in March 1986 on all political activity pending agreement on a new constitution a supporter of the opposition Basotholand Congress Party (BCP) received a six-month prison sentence in March 1987 for wearing its colours in public. All other attempts to raise the issue of a new constitution and a return to party politics were likewise resisted”. Although Lekhanya ended up leading the rightist BNP, Rosenberg and Weisfelder (Historical Dictionary 2003) describe this leadership as a shift or transformation more than stemming from a lifelong sympathy for the party. For one, Lekhanya led the 1986 coup against Leabua Jonathan’s BNP government: “On 20 January 1986, Major General Lekhanya and other officers mounted a military coup to terminate the nonelected Basotho National Party (BNP) government of Leabua Jonathan” (227). Once Lekhanya was forced to resign from the government, the authors state that he “soon began a new political career by contesting the Mantšonyane constituency in the 1993 election as the candidate of the BNP, the party he had overthrown in 1986” (229). The authors then state, “In 1999 he completed his political transformation by

succeeding Retselisitsoe Sekhonyana as head of the BNP” (229). In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Basotho National Party (BNP) as 4.4. Rosenberg et al. (2004) write “The Basotho National Party (BNP) was founded in 1959 by Leabua Jonathan, Gabriel Manyeli, Patrick ‘Mota, and others, who feared that the Basutoland African Congress (BAC) was hostile to whites, chiefs, and Catholics and that authoritarianism and communism were sources of its militancy... Jonathan and Manyeli decided that a conservative alternative to the BAC was needed.” Meyers (2006) writes “Lesotho’s conservatives saw the BCP programs as radical and formed their own party, the BNP, to protect their positions and beliefs as the country moved toward independence” and “The BNP was formed in 1958 under the leadership of Leabua Jonathan, a minor chief. Originally much more conservative than its BCP rival, it supported the traditional chiefs, opposed communism, and sought good relations with South Africa.” Bardill and Cobbe (1985) write “it is difficult today to identify major ideological points of difference between Mokhehle’s BCP and Jonathan’s BNP... One of the clearest illustrations... of the narrow ideological gap between the two parties, is contained in Mokhehle’s 1972 statement of the party’s objectives: We are, to a certain extent, socialist, but we are definitely not in favour of a drastic shake-up of the present order of things. We would insist on an evolutionary socialism and because Lesotho is already largely socialist, this change wouldn’t be so drastic as is feared. Although our social structure and even, to a certain extent, the policies of the present Government are socialistically inclined, we would want to move towards a true socialism which would not necessarily mean the abolition of private property and free enterprise” and “Despite the more socialist rhetorical tinge of the BCP in the past, if it came to power, it would probably not act much differently from the BNP. Beneath the rhetoric the BCP was never very radical and recently has been strongly anti-Communist.”

Years: 1991 – 1992

Head of government: Prime Minister Elias Phisoane Ramaema

Ideology:

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government’s affiliation. Rosenberg and Weisfelder (Historical Dictionary 2003: 448) describe the reason behind Metsing Lekhanya’s replacement by Ramaema: “The precipitating issue was the demand from rank-and-file soldiers for substantially better pay. The quite junior perpetrators of the coup chose Ramaema to legitimize their actions because he appeared to be the most pliable member of the original military junta and seemed unlikely to thwart their actions”. The authors describe Ramaema as close to Lekhanya but still a bridge between the Military Council and the monarchy: “Lesotho government sources described him as Lekhanya’s ‘right-

hand man’ and a ‘mediator’ in conflicts between the Military Council and King Moshoeshoe II” (448). The authors describe Ramaema’s actions while in power, most importantly his commitment to guiding Lesotho back to civilian rule, repealing the previous ban on political activity, and distancing the government and the military: “General Ramaema’s greatest accomplishment was overseeing Lesotho’s constitutional transformation back to civilian rule. He swiftly revoked the hated Order No. 4, the Suspension of Political Activities Order, and dropped from the draft Constitution a clause that would have enshrined a military presence in the cabinet” (449). The authors also describe the economic environment that Ramaema inherited: “Ramaema had few resources to deal with Lesotho’s acute economic problems. Pay increases granted to appease the military and civil service left few options to accomplish national objectives in agriculture, education, and health care or to compensate for sharp decreases in employment of Basotho miners in South Africa” (449). The authors continue, describing Ramaema’s approach to Lesotho relations with South Africa, which valued and prioritized democracy and civilian rule: “Since separate nationhood was intrinsic to the reason of being of the Lesotho Defence Force, General Ramaema and his colleagues believed that reconstituted relationships could be negotiated only by the two sovereign states once majority rule had been achieved in South Africa. He sought to foster South African aid, investment, and trade and to facilitate the success of the joint Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which was Lesotho’s preeminent development endeavor and source of future revenue.” (449) World Statesmen (2020) identifies Ramaema’s party affiliation as none.

Years: 1993 – 1997

Head of government: Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Mokhehle’s party as BCP. DPI identifies BCP as left. Political Handbook of the World (2015) elaborates, writing “Formerly a socialist party, the BCP in its 1993 election manifesto declared its commitment to a mixed economy. Controversy rocked the BCP in 1996 as the rift between the party’s conservative elders and the younger, so-called modernizers widened. At a party congress in March delegates elected a new 12-member National Executive Commission (NEC). In addition, “conservative” Deputy Prime Minister Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, a potential Mokhehle successor, secured the party vice presidency”. Political Handbook of the World (2015) also writes “Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The LCD was launched by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, the (then) BCP interim president, on June 7, 1997... In early 1998 Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, theretofore deputy party leader, was elected to succeed Mokhehle as party leader... Party infighting was reported in 2000...

Some observers suggested the friction underscored a split between the youthful, possibly more progressive, supporters of Mosisili and a conservative faction led by Shakhana MOKHEHLE, brother of the LCD founder.” Manzano (2017) corroborates that Mokhele is Left. Perspective Monde (2020) identifies Mokhehle as Left. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Mokhehle’s affiliation as BCP until 1997, LCD afterwards, and corroborates that BCP is leftist, stating it was “socialist”. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Basotho National Party (BNP) as 4.4. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. Bardill and Cobbe (1985) write “it is difficult today to identify major ideological points of difference between Mokhehle’s BCP and Jonathan’s BNP... One of the clearest illustrations... of the narrow ideological gap between the two parties, is contained in Mokhehle’s 1972 statement of the party’s objectives: We are, to a certain extent, socialist, but we are definitely not in favour of a drastic shake-up of the present order of things. We would insist on an evolutionary socialism and because Lesotho is already largely socialist, this change wouldn’t be so drastic as is feared. Although our social structure and even, to a certain extent, the policies of the present Government are socialistically inclined, we would want to move towards a true socialism which would not necessarily mean the abolition of private property and free enterprise” and “Despite the more socialist rhetorical tinge of the BCP in the past, if it came to power, it would probably not act much differently from the BNP. Beneath the rhetoric the BCP was never very radical and recently has been strongly anti-Communist.” In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party’s ideology as “Center-left” (-1.58) in 1993.

Years: 1998 – 2011

Head of government: Prime Minister Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Mosisili’s party as LCD. DPI identifies LCD as left. Political Handbook of the World (2015) writes “Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The LCD was launched by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, the (then) BCP interim president, on June 7, 1997... In early 1998 Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, theretofore deputy party leader, was elected to succeed Mokhehle as party leader... Party infighting was reported in 2000... Some observers suggested the friction underscored a split between the youthful, possibly more progressive, supporters of Mosisili and a conservative faction led by Shakhana MOKHEHLE, brother of the LCD founder.” Manzano (2017) corroborates that Mosisili is Left. Perspective Monde (2020) identifies Mosisili as Left. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Mosisili’s affiliation as LCD, and corroborates that LCD is leftist, stating it was “social-democratic”. In the Global

Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party's ideology as "Center-left" (-0.992) in 1998, 2002, and 2007.

Years: 2012 – 2014

Head of government: Prime Minister Thomas Motsoahae Thabane

Ideology: Left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. *Political Handbook of the World* (2018: 840) identifies Thabane's party as ABC: "Subsequently, the LCD and the All Basotho Convention (ABC), formed in 2006 by former minister Thomas Thabane and 17 other LCD members who lacked confidence in the government, made arrangements with the National Independent Party (NIP) and the Lesotho Workers' Party (LWP) by which the predominant party would contest only the single-member constituencies." World Statesmen (2019) states the ABC split from LCD in 2006; LCD is identified as social democratic by World Statesmen and leftist by DPI. *Political Handbook of the World* (2015) writes "Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The LCD was launched by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, the (then) BCP interim president, on June 7, 1997... In early 1998 Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, theretofore deputy party leader, was elected to succeed Mokhehle as party leader... Party infighting was reported in 2000... Some observers suggested the friction underscored a split between the youthful, possibly more progressive, supporters of Mosisili and a conservative faction led by Shakhana MOKHEHLE, brother of the LCD founder." The *Political Handbook* (2015) states that Thabane was "once considered a likely successor to Prime Minister Mosisili". Keesing's Record of World Events states that Thabane founded ABC after leaving LCD, for non-ideological reasons: "The ABC had been formed in October 2006 by Motsoahae Thomas Thabane, a member of the LCD who had earlier resigned as minister of communications, science, and technology. *The Independent* of Feb. 22 reported that Thabane had resigned from the cabinet to form his own party because 'he could no longer stomach government corruption'". The *Political Handbook* (2015) states that Thabane and the other LCD dissidents who split from the party with him, vowed "to fight poverty and bring about economic change". Institute for Security Studies (2012) suggests that Thabane's ABC is ideologically similar to the LCD: "The All Basotho Convention (ABC), led by the newly inaugurated Prime Minister Thabane...had sealed a coalition deal with the LCD under Mothejoa Metsing...An advantage for the ABC-led coalition is that in addition to commonalities in policy ideology and well-known policies, its partners have extensive parliamentary experience." World Statesmen (2020) identifies Thabane's affiliation as ABC, describing it as "liberal democratic, split from LCD", and describes LCD as leftist, stating it was "social-democratic". In the Global Party

Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of All Basotho Convention (ABC) as 4.0. In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party's ideology as "Center-left" (-0.528) in 2012.

Years: 2015 – 2016

Head of government: Prime Minister Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili

Ideology: left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Mosisili's party as LCD. DPI identifies LCD as left. Political Handbook of the World (2015) writes "Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The LCD was launched by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, the (then) BCP interim president, on June 7, 1997... In early 1998 Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, theretofore deputy party leader, was elected to succeed Mokhehle as party leader... Party infighting was reported in 2000... Some observers suggested the friction underscored a split between the youthful, possibly more progressive, supporters of Mosisili and a conservative faction led by Shakhana MOKHEHLE, brother of the LCD founder." Manzano (2017) corroborates that Mosisili is Left. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Mosisili's affiliation as LCD, and corroborates that LCD is leftist, stating it was "social-democratic". In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. Perspective monde (2019) identifies Mosisili's ideology as leftist, writing "Pakalitha Mosisili... centre gauche [center left]". In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party's ideology as "Center-left" (-0.992) in 2015.

Year: 2017-2019

Head of government: Prime Minister Thomas Motsoahae Thabane

Ideology: Left

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. *Political Handbook of the World* (2018: 840) identifies Thabane's party as ABC: "Subsequently, the LCD and the All Basotho Convention (ABC), formed in 2006 by former minister Thomas Thabane and 17 other LCD members who lacked confidence in the government, made arrangements with the National Independent Party (NIP) and the Lesotho Workers' Party (LWP) by which the predominant party would contest only the single-member constituencies." World Statesmen (2019) states the ABC split from LCD in 2006; LCD is identified as social democratic by World Statesmen and leftist by DPI. Political Handbook of the World (2015) writes "Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD). The LCD was launched by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, the (then) BCP interim president, on June 7, 1997... In

early 1998 Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili, theretofore deputy party leader, was elected to succeed Mokhehle as party leader... Party infighting was reported in 2000... Some observers suggested the friction underscored a split between the youthful, possibly more progressive, supporters of Mosisili and a conservative faction led by Shakhana MOKHEHLE, brother of the LCD founder.” The Political Handbook (2015) states that Thabane was “once considered a likely successor to Prime Minister Mosisili”. Keesing’s Record of World Events states that Thabane founded ABC after leaving LCD, for non-ideological reasons: “The ABC had been formed in October 2006 by Motsoahae Thomas Thabane, a member of the LCD who had earlier resigned as minister of communications, science, and technology. *The Independent* of Feb. 22 reported that Thabane had resigned from the cabinet to form his own party because ‘he could no longer stomach government corruption’”. The Political Handbook (2015) states that Thabane and the other LCD dissidents who split from the party with him, vowed “to fight poverty and bring about economic change”. Institute for Security Studies (2012) suggests that Thabane’s ABC is ideologically similar to the LCD: “The All Basotho Convention (ABC), led by the newly inaugurated Prime Minister Thabane...had sealed a coalition deal with the LCD under Mothejoa Metsing...An advantage for the ABC-led coalition is that in addition to commonalities in policy ideology and well-known policies, its partners have extensive parliamentary experience.” World Statesmen (2020) identifies Thabane’s affiliation as ABC, and corroborates that ABC is leftist, stating it was “liberal democratic, split from LCD”, and describes LCD as leftist, stating it was “social-democratic”. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. In V-Party (2020), 3 experts identify head of government party’s ideology as “Center-left” (-0.505) in 2017.

Year: 2020

Head of government: Moeketsi Majoro

Ideology: left

Description: Varieties of Democracy identifies party affiliation as “All Basotho Convention”. World Statesmen (2020) identifies Majoro’s party as “ABC” and identifies ABC as leftist, stating it was “liberal democratic, split from LCD”, and describes LCD as leftist, stating it was “social-democratic”. In the Global Party Survey 2019, 9 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) as 4.2. DPI identifies ABC’s ideology as leftist.

References:

- Bardill, John E., and James H. Cobbe. *Lesotho: Dilemmas of Dependence in Southern Africa*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985.
- Keesing's Record of World Events (Formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1931-2015) Volume 53 (2007), Issue No. 2 (February), Page 47738
- Keesing's Record of World Events (Formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1931-2015) Volume 32 (1986), Issue No. 12 (December), Page 34786
- Keesing's Record of World Events (Formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1931-2015) Volume 34 (1988), Issue No. 4 (April), Page 35814
- Keesing's Record of World Events (Formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1931-2015) Volume 36 (1990), Issue No. 2 (February), Page 37238
- Lansford, Tom. "Lesotho." In *Political Handbook of the World 2015*, edited by Tom Lansford, 838-844. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 2015.
- Manzano, Dulce. 2017. *Bringing Down the Educational Wall: Political Regimes, Ideology, and the Expansion of Education*. Cambridge.
- Mullenbach, Mark. 2019. Dynamic Analysis of Dispute (DADM) Project. <https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/sub-saharan-africa-region/lesotho-1966-present/>
- Meyers, B. David. "Kingdom of Lesotho." In *World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties*, 4th ed., edited by Neil Schlager and Jayne Weisblatt, 788-92. New York City, NY: Facts on File, 2006.
- Norris, Pippa. 2020. Global Party Survey dataset. <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/GlobalPartySurvey>
- Perspective monde. 2019. *Lesotho. Dirigeants Politiques*. <http://perspective.usherbrooke.ca/bilan/servlet/BMGvt?codePays=LSO&ani=1975&moi=1&anf=2019&mof=8>
- Political Handbook of the World Online Edition. 2018. *Various entries*. <https://library.cqpress.com/phw>.
- Rosenberg, S., & Weisfelder, R. F. (2013). *Historical dictionary of Lesotho*. Lanham: Scarecrow.
- Rosenberg, Scott, Richard Frederick Weisfelder, Michelle Frisbie-Fulton, and Gordon MacKay Haliburton. *Historical Dictionary of Lesotho*. New ed. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2004.
- Rulers.org. 2019. Lesotho. www.rulers.org/rull.html#lesotho
- World Statesmen. 2019. Lesotho. www.worldstatesmen.org/Lesotho.htm
- "A New Day in Africa." *Chicago Tribune*. January 5, 1992. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1992-01-05-9201020191-story.html>.
- Polk, Peggy. "Bad Weather Forced Pope John Paul II's Plane to..." *United Press International*. September 14, 1988.

<https://www.upi.com/Archives/1988/09/14/Bad-weather-forced-Pope-John-Paul-II's-plane-to/8461590212800/>.

“Lesotho's Former Dictator Says Parliament 'Illegitimate'.” *Mail & Guardian*.

November 11, 2008. <https://mg.co.za/article/2008-11-11-lesothos-former-dictator-says-parliament-illegitimate>.

“Lesotho After May 2012 General Elections: Making the Coalition Work.”

Institute for Security Studies. ISS Africa, June 12, 2012. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/lesotho-after-may-2012-general-elections-making-the-coalition-work>.