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**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MILITARY COUP IN GUINEA:
LESSONS FOR AFRICAN STATES**

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores political issues in the context of Africa's generally poor economic performance. With the coup in Guinea following the death of Lansana Conte, it is very clear that a mere transition to democratic governance is no guarantee that military coups will not occur in Africa. Although a military coup is regrettable and unacceptable, equally regrettable is the fact that coup offered an oppressed people the only platform for change and liberation as the democratic door has been shut. Since independence, African states have still not taken off economically. This has been attributed to corruption, repressive and personal rule of African leaders. The consequences have been political instability, poverty, diseases and underdevelopment. As a result, one way to reflect upon the recent coup in Guinea is to critically analyse how political and economic situations express and contribute to such phenomenon. However, Guinea represents a microcosm of Africa. The paper concludes that the only way to prevent coup as a recurring decimal in Africa is for African leaders to strengthen democracy and economic policies within the context of good governance, accountability and transparency.

Key words: **Military coup, Underdevelopment, Political economy, Democracy, Good governance.**

INTRODUCTION

Coup and coup attempts have been a tradition in most African states since the attainment of formal independence. Only six African countries – Botswana, Djibouti, Cape Verde, Eritrea, Namibia, and South Africa – have never faced armed challenges (successful or unsuccessful) from their military, police, or other security personnel.¹ However, experience in Africa has shown that the military are no better than civilian when it comes to running governments. Rather than solve African contemporary and socio-economic problems, military coups d'état in Africa have tended to drive the continent deeper into underdevelopment. Essentially, the phenomenon of military coups has greatly resulted into authoritarian and dictatorial style of leadership. Most states in contemporary Africa, because they have long been saddled with authoritarian, corrupt and self-perpetuating oligarchies and one-person rulerships, have come under pressures from both domestic social forces and external donors interests to democratise their structures of governance, and replace existing systems of authoritarian rule with increasingly more accountable and grassroots-based

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