



# New Nations in Africa

## MAIN IDEA

**REVOLUTION** After World War II, African leaders threw off colonial rule and created independent countries.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Today, many of those independent countries are engaged in building political and economic stability.

## TERMS & NAMES

- Negritude movement
- Kwame Nkrumah
- Jomo Kenyatta
- Ahmed Ben Bella
- Mobutu Sese Seko

**SETTING THE STAGE** Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Africa resembled little more than a European outpost. As you recall, the nations of Europe had marched in during the late 1800s and colonized much of the continent. Like the diverse groups living in Asia, however, the many different peoples of Africa were unwilling to return to colonial domination after World War II. And so, in the decades following the great global conflict, they, too, won their independence from foreign rule and went to work building new nations.

## TAKING NOTES

**Clarifying** Use a chart to list an idea, an event, or a leader important to that country's history.

Ghana	
Kenya	
Zaire	
Algeria	
Angola	

## Achieving Independence

The African push for independence actually began in the decades before World War II. French-speaking Africans and West Indians began to express their growing sense of black consciousness and pride in traditional Africa. They formed the **Negritude movement**, a movement to celebrate African culture, heritage, and values.

When World War II erupted, African soldiers fought alongside Europeans to “defend freedom.” This experience made them unwilling to accept colonial domination when they returned home. The war had changed the thinking of Europeans too. Many began to question the cost, as well as the morality, of maintaining colonies abroad. These and other factors helped African colonies gain their freedom throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The ways in which African nations achieved independence, however, differed across the continent. In Chapter 27, you learned that European nations employed two basic styles of government in colonial Africa—direct and indirect. Under indirect rule, local officials did much of the governing and colonists enjoyed limited self-rule. As a result, these colonies generally experienced an easier transition to independence. For colonies under direct rule, in which foreigners governed at all levels and no self-rule existed, independence came with more difficulty. Some colonies even had to fight wars of liberation, as European settlers refused to surrender power to African nationalist groups.

No matter how they gained their freedom, however, most new African nations found the road to a strong and stable nation to be difficult. They had to deal with everything from creating a new government to establishing a postcolonial economy. Many new countries were also plagued by great ethnic strife. In colonizing Africa, the Europeans had created artificial borders that had little to

do with the areas where ethnic groups actually lived. While national borders separated people with similar cultures, they also enclosed traditional enemies who began fighting each other soon after the Europeans left. For many African nations, all of this led to instability, violence, and an overall struggle to deal with their newly gained independence.

## Ghana Leads the Way

The British colony of the Gold Coast became the first African colony south of the Sahara to achieve independence. Following World War II, the British in the Gold Coast began making preparations. For example, they allowed more Africans to be nominated to the Legislative Council. However, the Africans wanted full freedom. The leader of their largely nonviolent movement was **Kwame Nkrumah** (KWAH•mee uhn•KROO•muh). Starting in 1947, he worked to liberate the Gold Coast from the British. Nkrumah organized strikes and boycotts and was often imprisoned by the British government. Ultimately, his efforts were successful.

On receiving its independence in 1957, the Gold Coast took the name Ghana. This name honored a famous West African kingdom of the past. Nkrumah became Ghana's first prime minister and later its president-for-life. Nkrumah pushed through new roads, new schools, and expanded health facilities. These costly projects soon crippled the country. His programs for industrialization, health and welfare, and expanded educational facilities showed good intentions. However, the expense of the programs undermined the economy and strengthened his opposition.

In addition, Nkrumah was often criticized for spending too much time on Pan-African efforts and neglecting economic problems in his own country. He dreamed of a "United States of Africa." In 1966, while Nkrumah was in China, the army and police in Ghana seized power. Since then, the country has shifted back and forth between civilian and military rule and has struggled for economic stability. In 2000, Ghana held its first open elections.

### Vocabulary

*Pan-African* refers to a vision of strengthening all of Africa, not just a single country.

## Fighting for Freedom

In contrast to Ghana, nations such as Kenya and Algeria had to take up arms against their European rulers in order to ultimately win their freedom.

**Kenya Claims Independence** The British ruled Kenya, and many British settlers resisted Kenyan independence—especially those who had taken over prize farmland in the northern highlands of the country. They were forced to accept African self-government as a result of two developments. One was the strong leadership of Kenyan nationalist **Jomo Kenyatta**. The second was the rise of a group known as the Mau Mau (MOW mow). This was a secret society made up mostly of native Kenyan farmers forced out of the highlands by the British. **A**

Using guerrilla war tactics, the Mau Mau sought to push the white farmers into leaving the highlands. Kenyatta claimed to have no connection to the Mau Mau. However, he refused to condemn the organization. As a result, the

### History Makers



#### Jomo Kenyatta 1891–1978

A man willing to spend years in jail for his beliefs, Kenyatta viewed independence as the only option for Africans.

*The African can only advance to a "higher level" if he is free to express himself, to organize economically, politically and socially, and to take part in the government of his own country.*

On the official day that freedom finally came to Kenya, December 12, 1963, Kenyatta recalls watching with overwhelming delight as the British flag came down and the new flag of Kenya rose up. He called it "the greatest day in Kenya's history and the happiest day in my life."

#### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

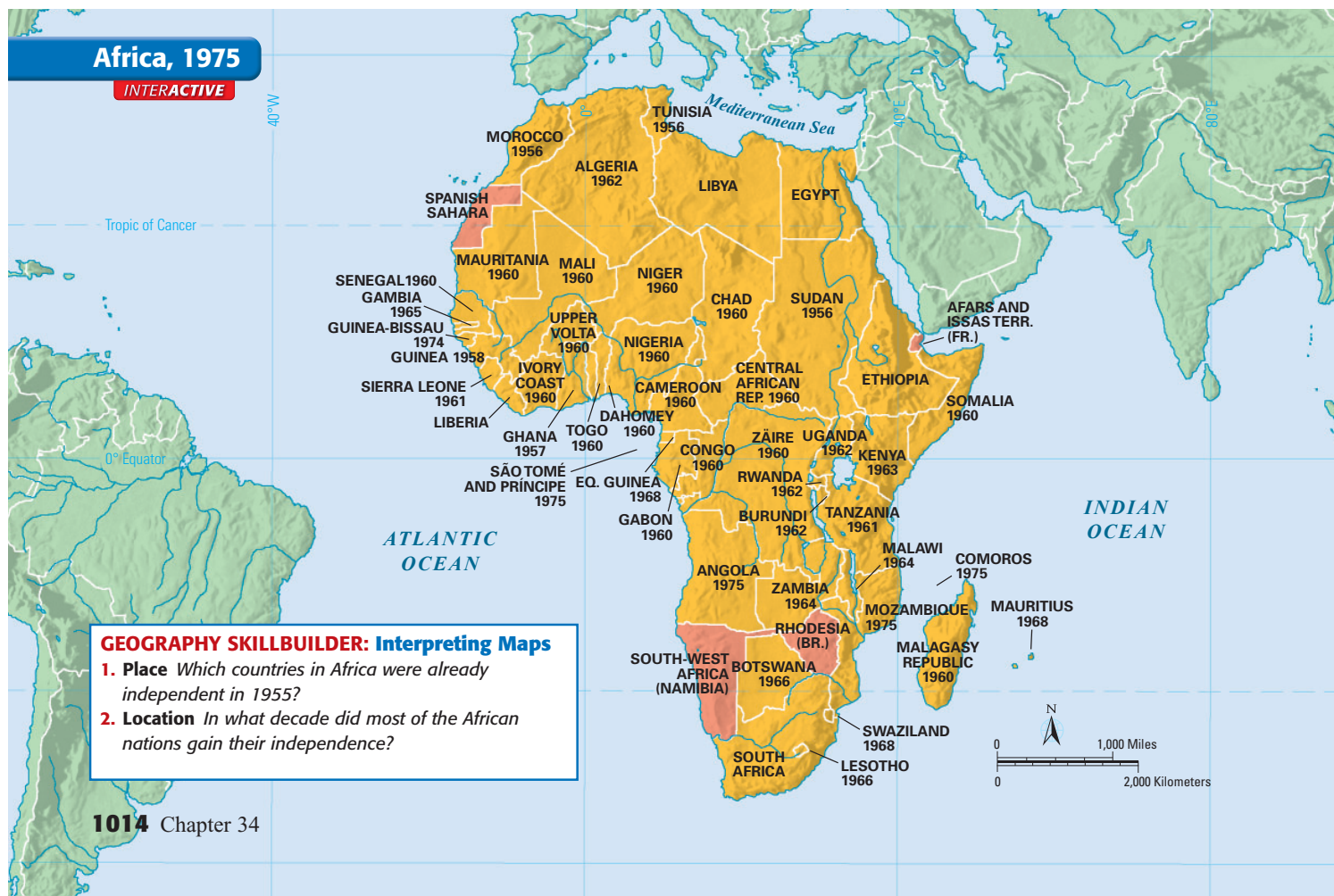
**RESEARCH LINKS** For more on Jomo Kenyatta, go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)

### MAIN IDEA

#### Contrasting

**A** How did the granting of independence to the British colonies of Ghana and Kenya differ?



**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps**

- 1. Place** Which countries in Africa were already independent in 1955?
- 2. Location** In what decade did most of the African nations gain their independence?

British imprisoned him for nearly a decade. By the time the British granted Kenya independence in 1963, more than 10,000 Africans and 100 settlers had been killed.

Kenyatta became president of the new nation. He worked hard to unite the country's various ethnic and language groups. Kenyatta died in 1978. His successor, Daniel arap Moi, was less successful in governing the country. Moi faced increasing opposition to his one-party rule. Adding to the nation's woes were corruption in Moi's government and ethnic conflicts that killed hundreds and left thousands homeless. Moi stepped down in 2002, and a new party gained power through free elections.

**Algeria Struggles with Independence** France's principal overseas colony, Algeria, had a population of one million French colonists and nine million Arabs and Berber Muslims. After World War II, the French colonists refused to share political power with the native Algerians. In 1954, the Algerian National Liberation Front, or FLN, announced its intention to fight for independence. The French sent about half a million troops into Algeria to fight the FLN. Both sides committed atrocities. The FLN prevailed, and Algeria gained its independence in July 1962.

The leader of the FLN, **Ahmed Ben Bella**, became first president of the newly independent Algeria. He attempted to make Algeria a socialist state, but was overthrown in 1965 by his army commander. From 1965 until 1988, Algerians tried unsuccessfully to modernize and industrialize the nation. Unemployment and dissatisfaction with the government contributed to the rise of religious fundamentalists who wanted to make Algeria an Islamic state. The chief Islamic party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), won local and parliamentary elections in 1990 and 1991. However, the ruling government and army refused to accept the election results. As a result, a civil war broke out between Islamic militants and the government. The war continues, on and off, to this day.

## Civil War in Congo and Angola

Civil war also plagued the new nations of Congo and Angola. Congo's problems lay in its corrupt dictatorship and hostile ethnic groups. Meanwhile, Angola's difficulties stemmed from intense political differences.

**Freedom and Turmoil for Congo** Of all the European possessions in Africa, one of the most exploited was the Belgian Congo. Belgium had ruthlessly plundered the colony's rich resources of rubber and copper. In addition, Belgian officials ruled with a harsh hand and provided the population with no social services. They also had made no attempt to prepare the people for independence. Not surprisingly, Belgium's granting of independence in 1960 to the Congo (known as Zaire from 1971 to 1997) resulted in upheaval. **B**

After years of civil war, an army officer, Colonel Joseph Mobutu, later known as **Mobutu Sese Seko** (moh•BOO•too SAY•say SAY•koh), seized power in 1965. For 32 years, Mobutu ruled the country that he renamed Zaire. He maintained control through a combination of force, one-party rule, and gifts to supporters. Mobutu successfully withstood several armed rebellions. He was finally overthrown in 1997 by rebel leader Laurent Kabila after months of civil war. Shortly thereafter, the country was renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On becoming president, Kabila promised a transition to democracy and free elections by April 1999. Such elections never came. By 2000 the nation endured another round of civil war, as three separate rebel groups sought to overthrow Kabila's autocratic rule. In January 2001, a bodyguard assassinated Kabila.



▲ Mobutu Sese Seko

### MAIN IDEA

#### Recognizing Effects

**B** Why was the Congo vulnerable to turmoil after independence?



History *in* Depth**Genocide in Rwanda**

Of all the African nations that have struggled with ethnic violence, perhaps none has seen more blood spilled than Rwanda. The tiny nation in East Africa gained its independence in 1962. Over the next 30 years, its main ethnic groups, Hutus and Tutsis, often clashed.

In the spring of 1994, the Rwandan president, a Hutu, died in a suspicious plane crash. In the months that followed, Hutus slaughtered about 1 million Tutsis before Tutsi rebels put an end to the killings. The United Nations set up a tribunal to punish those responsible for the worst acts of genocide.

His son, Joseph Kabila, took power and began a quest for peace. In July of 2002, some of the rebel forces agreed to a cease-fire, offering hope that a larger peace might one day become a reality.

**War Tears at Angola** To the southwest of Congo lies Angola, a country that not only had to fight to gain its freedom but to hold itself together after independence. The Portuguese had long ruled Angola and had no desire to stop. When an independence movement broke out in the colony, Portugal sent in 50,000 troops. The cost of the conflict amounted to almost half of Portugal's national budget. The heavy cost of fighting, as well as growing opposition at home to the war, prompted the Portuguese to withdraw from Angola in 1975.

Almost immediately, the Communist-leaning MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) declared itself the new nation's rightful government. This led to a prolonged civil war, as various rebel groups fought the government and each other for power. Each group received help from outside sources. The MPLA was assisted by some 50,000 Cuban troops and by the Soviet Union. The major opposition to the MPLA was UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), to which South Africa and the United States lent support. For decades, the two sides agreed to and then abandoned various cease-fire agreements. In 2002, the warring sides agreed to a peace accord, and the long civil war came to an end.

As the colonies of Africa worked to become stable nations, the new nation of Israel was emerging in the Middle East. Its growth, as you will read in the next section, upset many in the surrounding Arab world and prompted one of the longest-running conflicts in modern history.

## SECTION

## 3

## ASSESSMENT

**TERMS & NAMES** 1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Negritude movement
- Kwame Nkrumah
- Jomo Kenyatta
- Ahmed Ben Bella
- Mobutu Sese Seko

**USING YOUR NOTES**

2. Which item had the greatest impact on its country? Why?

Ghana	
Kenya	
Zaire	
Algeria	
Angola	

**MAIN IDEAS**

3. Who were the Mau Mau of Kenya? What was their goal?
4. What sparked the present-day civil struggle in Algeria?
5. What prompted Portugal to eventually grant Angola its freedom?

**CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING**

6. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** How did the way in which European colonialists carved up Africa in the 1800s lead to civil strife in many new African nations?
7. **ANALYZING MOTIVES** Why do you think the United States and the Soviet Union participated in Angola's civil war?
8. **ANALYZING ISSUES** Why do you think revolution swept so many African nations following their independence from European rule?
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **REVOLUTION** Imagine you are a reporter covering a revolution in one of the African nations. Write a **headline** and **article** describing it.

**INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY** INTERNET ACTIVITY

Use the Internet to examine the current status of two countries discussed in this section. Choose from various economic, governmental, and social statistics and display your information in a **comparison chart**.

**INTERNET KEYWORD**  
*country profiles*