

Comoros Cases, 1970-2012
Last Updated: 22 January 2018

torg	gname	onset	min	max
T2558	MPA/REPUBLIC OF ANJOUAN	5-Sep-97	1997	1998
T2593	MPA-SOC		1998	1998

I. MPA/REPUBLIC OF ANJOUAN

Torg ID: 2558

Min. Group Date: 1997

Max. Group Date: 1998

Onset: 1997

Aliases: Mouvement Populaire Anjouanais/Republic Of Anjouan, Anjouan Peopleês Movement / Republic Of Anjouan, Anjouan Peopleês Movement/Republic Of Anjouan, Mouvement Populaire Anjouanais / Republic Of Anjouan, Mpa / Republic Of Anjouan, Mpa/Republic Of Anjouan

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1997

Group End: 1997 (repression)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

The MPA formed in 1997 as the merger between two political movements, the Organization for the Independence of Anjouan and the Separatist Movement of Anjouan (Seddon 2013, 359). The MPA formed in reaction to the 22nd Anniversary of Comoros Independence when a violent mob demonstrated against the Anjouan's local government (Shariff 1997). Ibrahim formally organized supporters from this mob and existing political organizations to formally secede on August 3, 1997 (Shariff 1997; Canada IRB 1999). The MPA was an ethno-nationalist separatist group that fought for Anjouan to secede from Comoros; a separate faction led by Chamassi Omar wanted France to recolonize (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 697; Canada IRB 1999). The group's first violent attack was in September 1997 after the leader of the MPA, Abdallah Ibrahim, declared independence and Comoros deployed troops to put down the rebellion (Shariff 1997; Gleditsch et al. 2013, 697; Lobban and Dalton 2017).

Geography

The MPA claimed territory on Anjouan (IRIN News 2001; New York Times 1997). The group clashed with security forces in Anjouan (Shariff 1997).

Organizational Structure

The leader of the MPA was Abdallah Ibrahim, who was the most encouraging member of the political association with France during its activity (IRIN News 2001; Gleditsch et al. 2013, 697). Ibrahim declared himself president of Anjouan (DADM n.d.). Ibrahim was 80 years old in 1998 (Lobban and Dalton 2017).

The MPA had a political wing, which took control over the local government (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 698).

External Ties

The group wanted France to recolonize Anjouan (Gleditsch et al. 2017, 697; New York Times 1997). France said it did not support the movement and would not endorse it (New York Times 1997).

The group opposed a militia led by Said Omar Chamassi (DADM n.d.).

Group Outcome

On September 7, 1997, 200 to 300 Comorian troops invaded Anjouan to put down the rebellion (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 697). In October 1997, 99% of Anjouans voted for independence (DADM n.d.). The OAU imposed sanctions on Anjouan in response to the sepaarist group (DADM n.d.). The conflict lasted until 2001 when both sides reached an agreement (BBC 2017). The MPA and Comoros entered negotiations and reached an agreement in 2001 (Gleditsch et al. 2013, 697). The Fomboni agreement reached a settlement to the issue (IRIN News 2001). In 2003, leaders on Comoros reached a power-sharing agreement (BBC 2017).

II. MPA-SOC

Torg ID: 2593

Min. Group Date: 1998

Max. Group Date: 1998

Onset: NA

Aliases: Anjouan Peupleês Movement - Said Omar Chamassi, Anjouan Peupleês Movement - Said Omar Chamassi Faction, Mouvement Populaire Anjouanais - Said Omar Chamassi, Mouvement Populaire Anjouanais - Said Omar Chamassi Faction, Mpa - Soc, Mpa-Soc

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Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1998

Group End: 1998 (ceasefire)

Part 3. Narrative

Group Formation

In 1998, the leader of the MPA secessionist movement Abdullah Ibrahim was acting as de facto president of the Republic of Anjouan (CNN 1998). A new militia, led by Chamassi Said Omar, formed around 1998 to protest Ibrahim and demand his resignation (CNN 1998). Omar’s militia supported secession and recolonization by France (CNN 1998). The group’s first violent attack was in July 1998 when it invaded Ibrahim’s office and declared a pseudo-coup over the secessionist movement (BBC 1998; CNN 1998). There is no evidence of politicized opposition against the Comoros government.

Geography

The group operated on the island of Anjouan in Comoros (CNN 1998).

Organizational Structure

The group’s leader was Chamassi Said Omar (CNN 1998; BBC 1998). Omar was a blind former French soldier (BBC 1998). It was seen as a local militia with no formal political wing (CNN 1998). No information on the group’s membership was found.

External Ties

The group fought against the MPA (BBC 1998).

Group Outcome

In March 1998, Ibrahim appointed Omar as Prime Minister (DADM n.d.; BBC 1998a). In July, Omar launched a pseudo-coup against Ibrahim to take control over the movement (BBC 1998b). The two militias clashed as late as December 1998 when Omar seized control of Mutsamudu from MPA forces (BBC 1998c). The OAU negotiated a ceasefire between the two militias in 1998 (DADM n.d.).

Notes for Iris:

- both the cases revolve around the island of Anjouan. Members on the island want to secede and rejoin France. These two groups formed to reunite to secede.
- the first group is very violent; the second group might not even be violent
- France didn't want to intervene, but Comoros didn't want to fight this group
- the second group opposed the first group's
- the group today still has some partial autonomy, but it's no longer violent
- the Comoros government persists to this day
- the Comoros government was a French colony until 1975 and the rebellion broke out after about 20 years