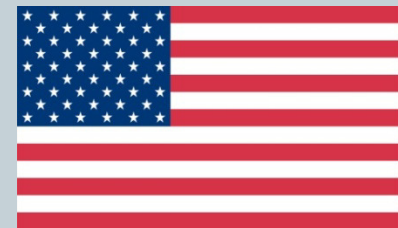


# Basic Political Science



Project supported by the US Embassy in  
Zambia



What is politics about?



?

Is about talking?



# What is Politics?



- WHAT IS POLITICS? Politics derives from the Greek word polis or polity, meaning affairs of the cities. It has to do with public affairs of citizens in the city, community or country.
- Politics involves three key elements that is Power, state and government.
- Greek philosopher Aristotle who is famed for being the father of politics states that man is a political animal. He further states that As such politics is about the wellbeing of the communities

## Continued

- Others scholars have defined politics as “Who gets what when and how?”.
- Max Weber, a German philosopher simply states that politics is the struggle for power
- He is of the view that it is about how individuals and classes of people get and keep political power. I.e. political positions, struggle of actors, resource distribution e.t.c
- Politics can also be understood as the corporatization of the state in terms of policy and legislation.

## Continued



- It is about activities by which officials are chosen and political policies promoted.
- In summary political science is a science dealing with man and his social environment.
- Political science is hence the systematic knowledge of state and government.

# political science 4 clusters



1. Political dynamics:- political parties, groups, associations, participation, public opinion etc
2. Political institutions:- constitutions, government, local government, public administration, economy, comparative political institutions.
3. Political theory:- history of political theory and ideas
4. International relations: interactions between and among states

# Power



- Power is the capacity of an individual or group of individuals to modify the conduct of other individuals or groups in the manner which he or they desire.
- Power can be exercised through influence, persuasion, use of threats or force.
- Democracy doesn't use force but persuasion



# Elements of state power



## 1. NATIONAL CORE

- This is a country's geographical characteristics. They include its location, size, shape

## 2. NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- computerization, mechanization of industrial work etc. What about the transport system are workers for example able to move from one point to the other easily and cheaply?

## 3. NATIONAL ECONOMY

- This is about the basic financial position or healthy of the country. How is the Gross National product? How is the balance of payments status? What about the international financial reserves, does the country have surpluses?

# NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE



# Elements of state power



## 4. NATURAL AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

This is about issues of self sufficiency of the country. Is it dependent on foreign resources, food, machinery, or manpower? Has the country got a surplus in terms of natural resources to be able to export some?

## 5. NATIONAL MILITARY OR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

This is about the countries' national security apparatus. It is one of the most important category of national power as it entails the safety of the country from international aggression or local rebels.



# NATIONAL MILITARY OR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES



## Question and open discussion



**What is the position of Zambia's  
state power in the SADC  
Region?**

## SOME DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH ACQUISITION OF POWER



- Power causes insecurity, the more you acquire power the more insecure you feel and want to be protected and away armed and ready to defend your position.
- Power creates temptation to use it.

# The State & Nation



- **WHAT IS A STATE?**
- A state is a legal and territorial expression involving a population politically organized under one government with sovereign rights.
- **WHAT IS A NATION?**
- A nation is essentially an ethnic one based upon a common heritage, language, culture, sense of identity among the people.

# DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A STATE AND GOVERNMENT



- A government is an administration of a country run by a ruling political party e.g. UNIP, MMD, PF ZANU\_PF, ANC etc. governments come and go but a state persists.
- A government is usually domestic governance/internal politics while a state is more concerned with both internal and international politics.



# Government



- Government is an institution of administration or governance that has the monopoly of the use of authority over the people in a particular state or territory.
- There are two forms of government, i.e. parliamentary and Presidential system.

## ACTIVITY



What do you understand by a parliamentary and Presidential system? Give examples of governments using these systems

# Government systems



- **PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM**

- This is a system with the office of the president or the presidium (including vice presidents). The chief executive is the head of state. President is elected independently of the legislature. His or her powers are usually balanced

- **PARLIAMENATRY SYSTEM**

- The head of state and chief executive are two distinct offices. The head of state functions in a ceremonial role. Chief executive is the head of state. The major difference is between parliament and president is in the election of the CEO as MPs choose HOS) e.g. Ethiopia, Germany etc.

# Social contract theory



- 1. Government is created by a contract which involved the ruler and the ruled.
- 2. All powerful sovereign people agree to create a state and give their ruler some power resulting in a contract being created.

# Social contract theories

- THOMAS HOBBS (1588-1679)

1. There existed no law to govern people. They act as they wish
2. He believed that government did not exist at a certain time and people were free to act as they wish without any law or any law enforcement agent.

- JOHN LOCKE (1632-1704)

1. Locke postulated that men must not be ruled by absolute monarch but place limitations on power. He advised 2 forms of contracts: 1. Man coming together to form society
2. Contracting a ruler and consenting to be ruled in return for guaranteed rights of property.

# PROJECT SUPPORTED

