



ETHNICITY, ETHNIC CONFLICT AND GHANA'S DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the potential dangers of ethnic manipulation for political capital on one hand, and ethnic conflicts on the other, and how they affect the effort towards consolidating Ghana's fledgling democracy. It contends that the continued spread of ethnic conflicts in the country and the deepening of existing ones, coupled with the negative deployment of ethnicity by politicians for political gain is not only dangerous, but also potentially volatile to the country's emerging democracy. While it points out the inherent efficacy of unity in diversity, it also underscores the fact, that for a fledgling democracy anchored mainly on relatively free, fair and periodic elections, the growing number of ethnic conflicts matched side by side with the polarization of the country on ethnic lines which is also aligned to the political division of the country, is an effective atmosphere for the derailment of the effort towards democratic consolidation. The paper also affirms that the strengthening of democratic institutions and civil society, among others, are key to the effort towards Ghana's democratic consolidation.

Keywords: Ethnicity, Ethnic Conflict, Democratic Consolidation, Ghana.