

A Political History of the Meru Community of Kenya

As told through their elected representatives, 1961-2021

Charles Hornsby
December 2021

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Limitations

- Excludes Local Government throughout.

Meru Political History

A history of elected Meru MPs

The Meru Community are defined here as the members of eight or nine closely related and linguistically mutually intelligible Bantu communities:

- the Igoji, Imenti, Tigania, Miutine and Igembe in the north (roughly forming Meru district today)
- the Mwimbi, Muthambi, Tharaka and the more distinct Cuka/Chuka (roughly forming Tharaka-Nithi District today)

Together these peoples live (or lived in the late colonial and early independence era) mostly to the east and south east of Mount Kenya.

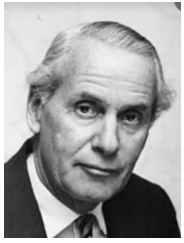
Otherwise defined as those ethnic groups speaking Kimeru dialects and predominantly living within the boundaries of Meru District at independence

All elected MPs and above since 1961 elected for greater Meru seats have been Meru, bar one exception, Rahim Dawood, a Meru resident and speaker of Asian origin since 2013.

Barring the reserved seats for women, only once was a woman ever elected in a Meru seat, Annarita Karimi, 1975-78 (who ended up in prison) .

Meru Political History

A history of elected Meru MPs
1957



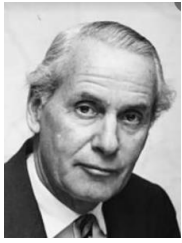
Governor
Renison



Pre-Independence Central Province
(including Embu and Meru)

Meru Political History

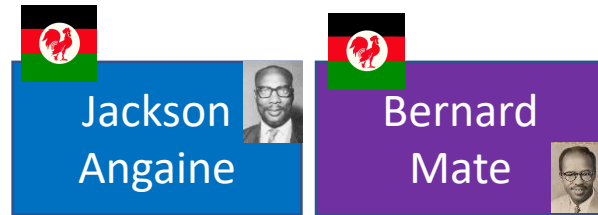
Feb 1961: The Kenyatta Election



Governor Renison



Ronald Ngala
(KADU)

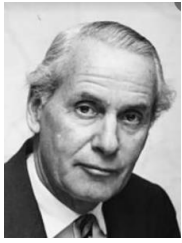


Meru Dual Seat

Ngala forms minority government

Meru Political History

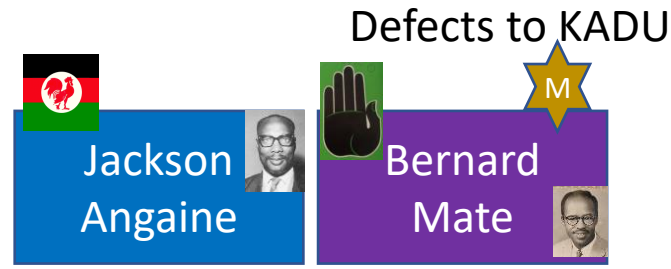
May 1961



Governor Renison



Ronald Ngala
(KADU)

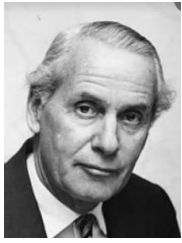


Meru Dual Seat

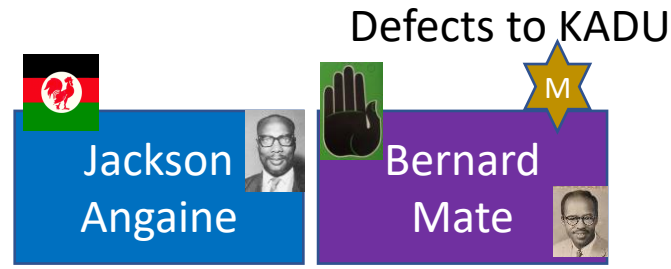
Mate Nominated by Ngala as a minister

Meru Political History

May 1961



Governor Ronald Ngala
Renison (KADU)



Meru Dual Seat

Mate Nominated by Ngala as a minister



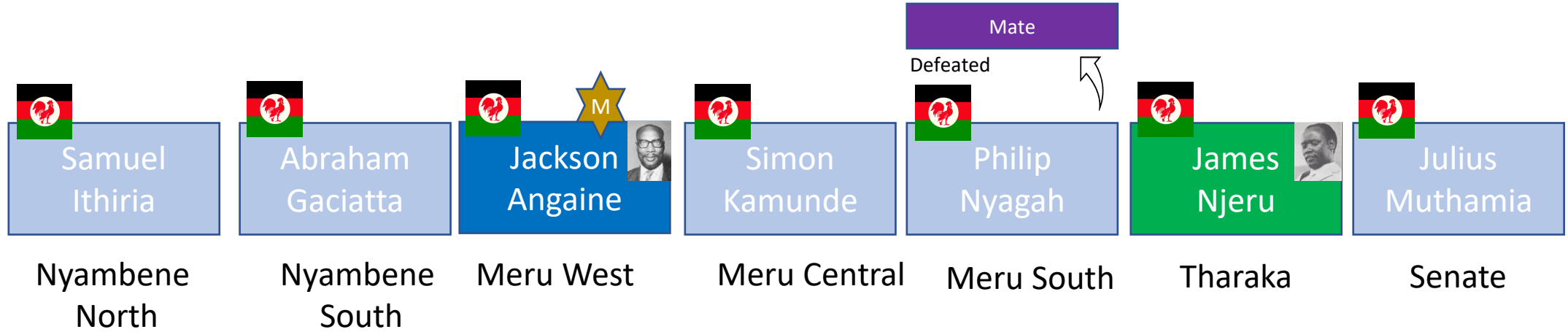
Governor Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya
Macdonald (KANU)



Ronald Ngala
(KADU)

Meru Political History

1963: For Self-Government



Isiolo Senate

*Neighbouring Isiolo
elected a Meru
Senator in 1963*

Kenyatta appoints Angaine as the “Meru Minister”

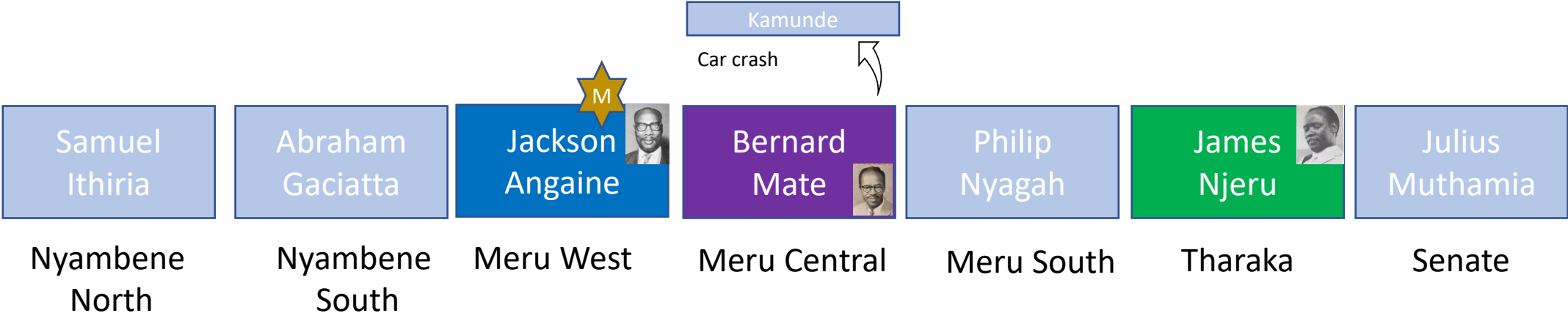
KANU wins all seven seats. No KADU candidates win (including Mate)

Meru Political History



One Party State
(Part 1):
1964-66

1965



Lawi
M'Nkubitu

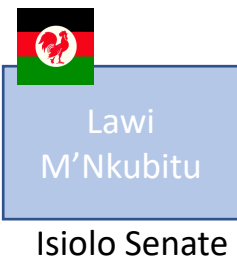
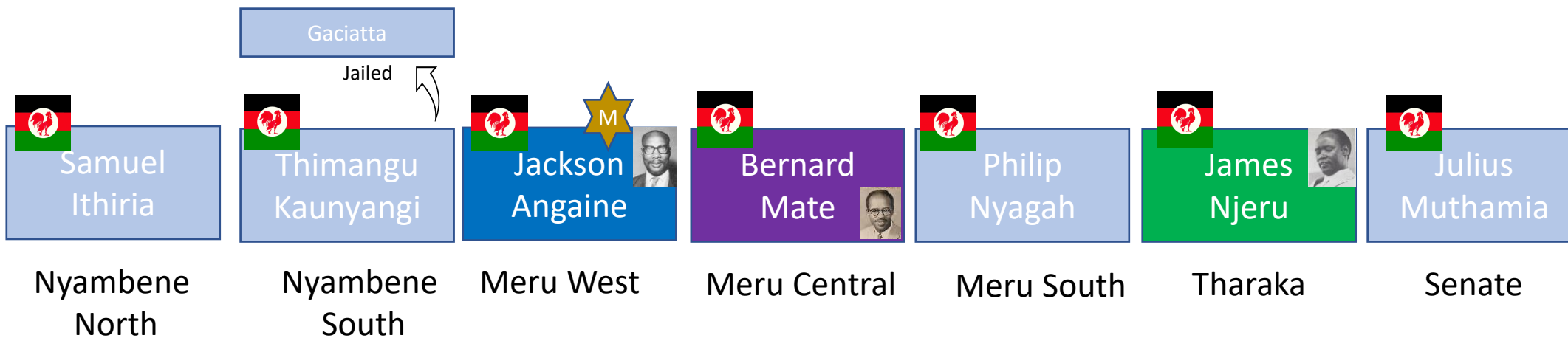
Isiolo Senate





Meru Political History

1966: Little General Election - KPU vs KANU



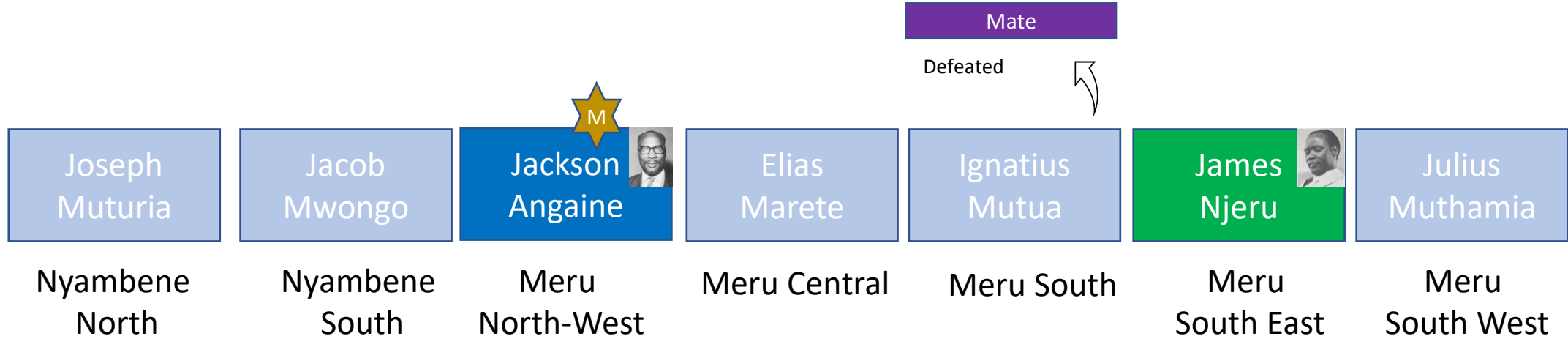


Meru Political History



One Party State
(Part 2):
1969-82

1969



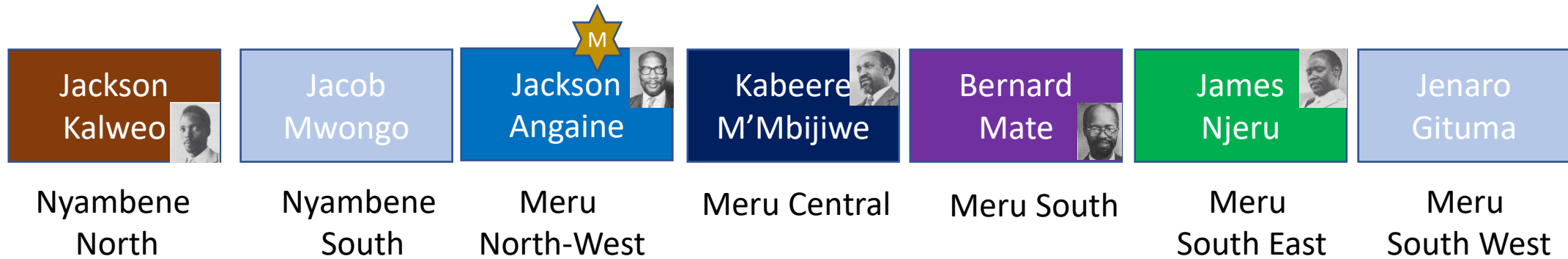
KPU Banned, return of one-party state. Senate abolished and boundary redistribution. Angaine and Njeru reelected, Mate defeated



Meru Political History



1974



Most MPs changed, but Angaine and Njeru unaffected. Mate returned, Kalweo and M'Mbijiwe first elected



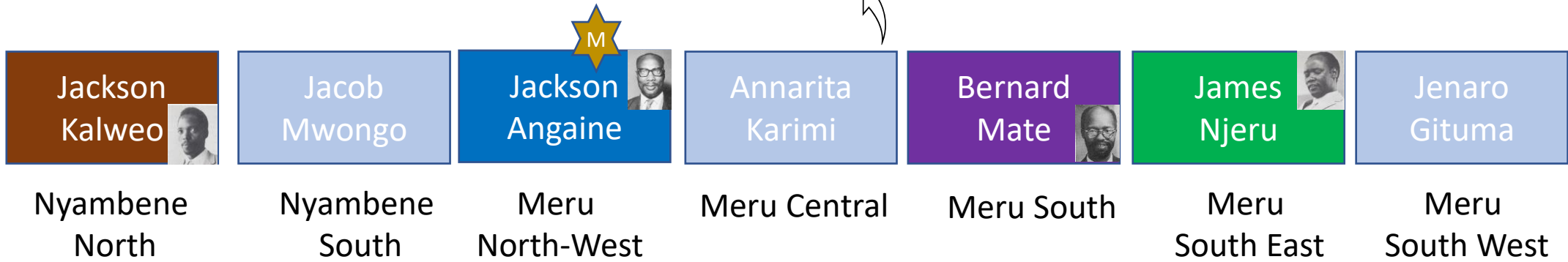
Meru Political History



1975

M'Mbijiwe

Nullified & barred in petition

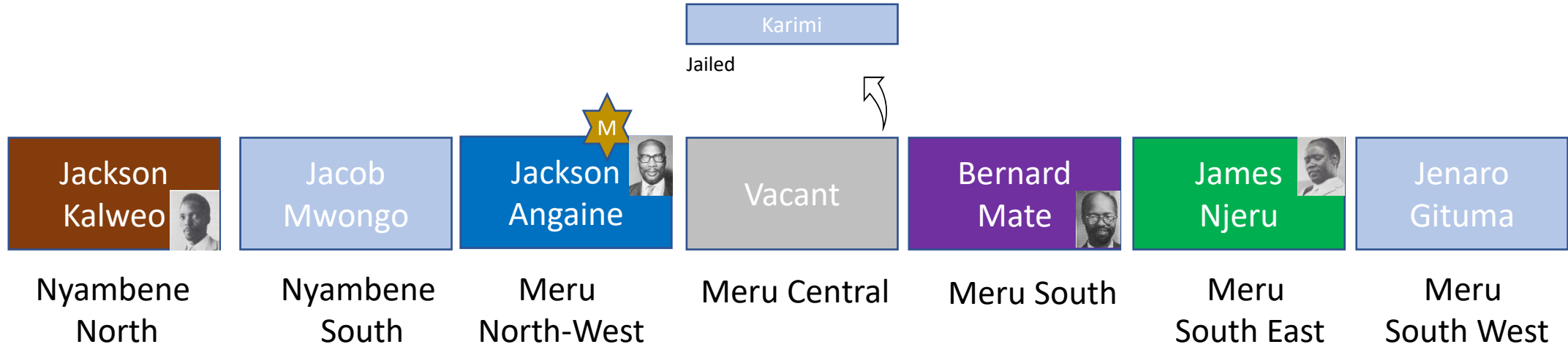




Meru Political History



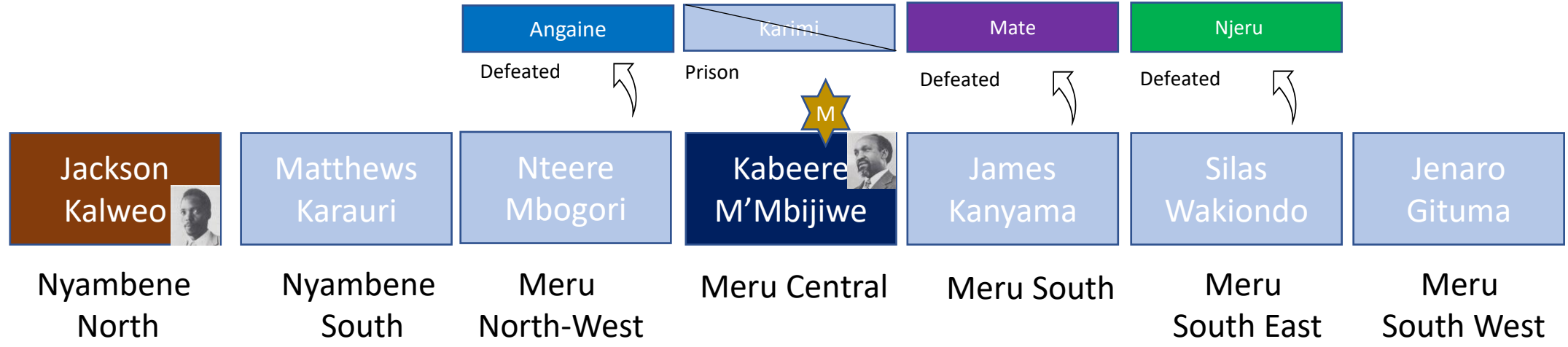
1978





Meru Political History

1979



Moi's new broom sweeps away both Angaine and Njeru. M'Mbijiwe replaces Angaine as "Meru Minister"

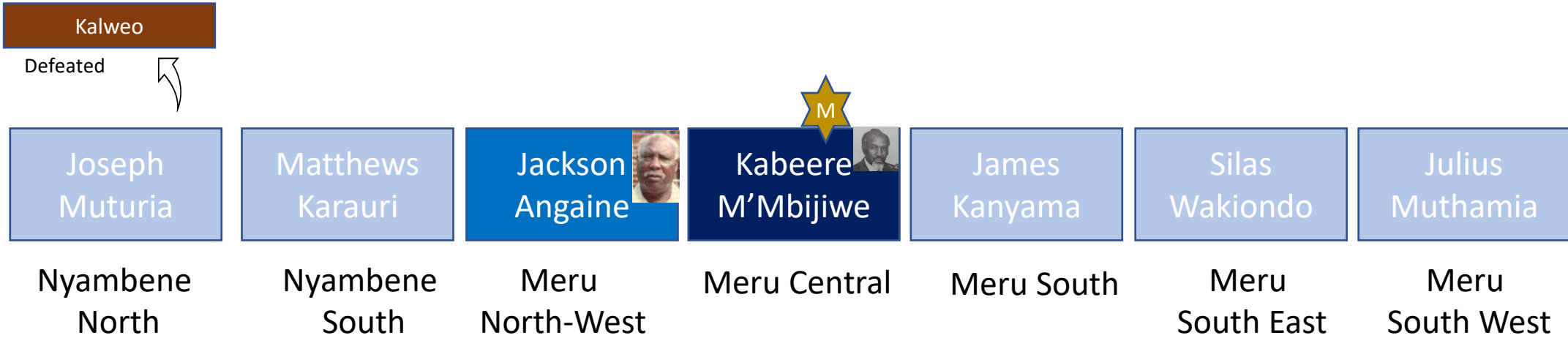


Meru Political History



One Party State
(Part 3): De Jure
1982-91

1983



Sebastian Muthaura

Part-Meru settlement region in neighbouring Isiolo elected a Meru MP in 1983

Isiolo North

Little change, except for Kalweo's defeat (Tarred with the brush of the Njonjo Affair) and Angaine's return (initially to the backbenches)

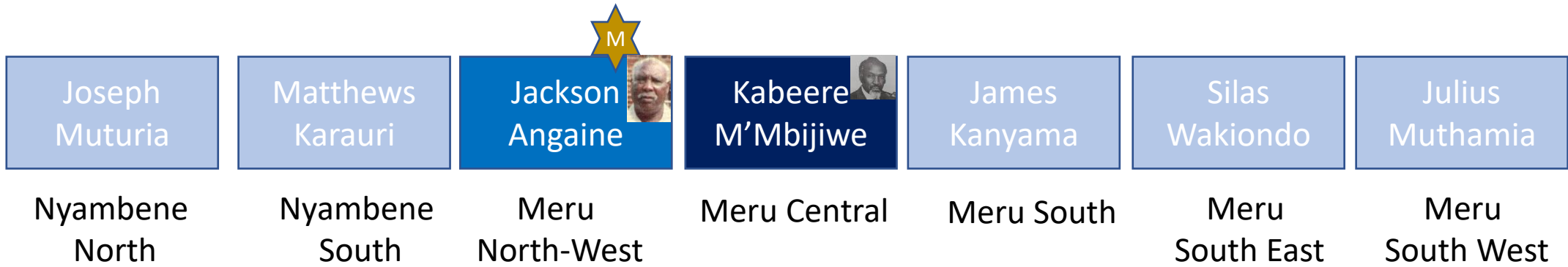


Meru Political History



One Party State
(Part 3): De Jure
1982-91

April 1985



Sebastian Muthaura

Isiolo North

Mbijiwe sacked and Angaine appointed in his place



Meru Political History

1988 (Public Queue Voting)

Kalweo

Barred

Joseph Muturia

Ntonyiri

Joseph Malebe

Igembe

Matthews Karauri

Tigania

Jackson Angaine 

Imenti North



Kirugi M'Mukindia 

Imenti Central

Kabeere M'Mbijiwe 

Imenti South

Ignatius Mutua

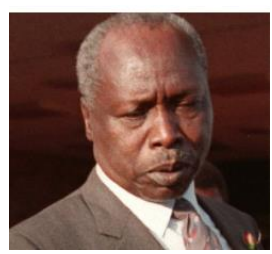
Nithi

Francis Kagwima

Tharaka

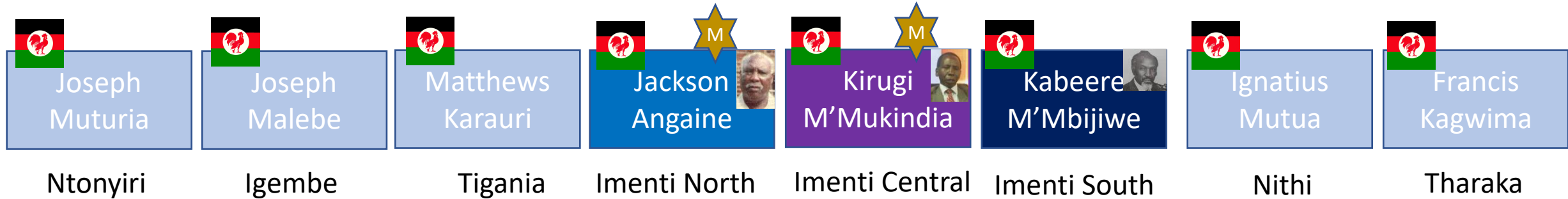
Angaine re-elected and remains minister to 1992

Constituency boundary redistribution
1986 added 1 seat



Meru Political History

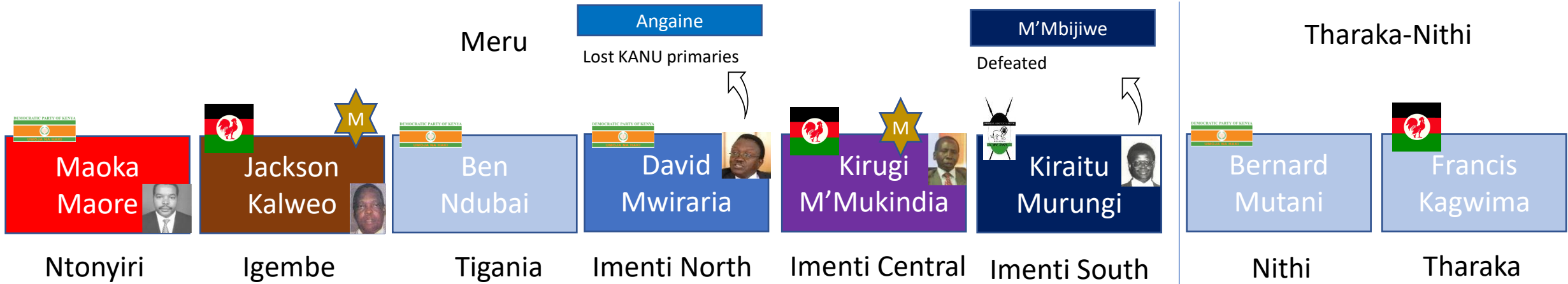
Jan 1992: Multi-Party Democracy returns



No Meru MPs formally defect to the opposition, but to help stem the tide, M'Mukindia appointed second Meru minister Jan 1992

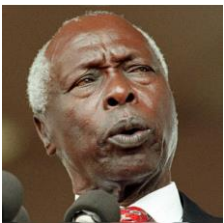
Meru Political History

Dec 1992



Meru and Tharaka Nithi Districts split

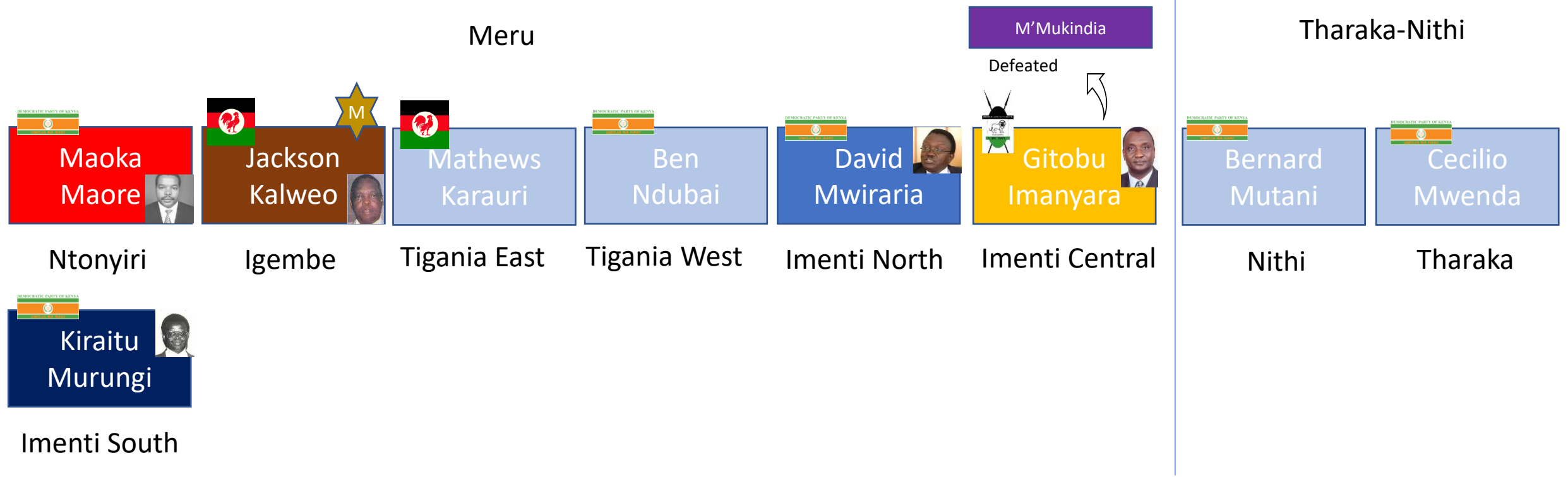
Queue voting abolished 1991. Multi-party democracy returns Dec 1991. Dec 1992 elections DP dominates greater Meru, winning four seats to KANU's three plus Kiraitu Murungi for FORD-Kenya. FORD-Asili is invisible. M'Mukindia and Kalweo both appointed KANU ministers



Meru Political History



Dec 1997 General Election



Boundary redistribution adds one seat. Only Kalweo and Karauri survive strong opposition trend. Most senior figures re-elected. NDP, SDP irrelevant.



Meru Political History

1999

Meru

Tharaka-Nithi

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Maoka Maore



Ntonyiri

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Jackson Kalweo



Igembe

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Mathews Karauri

Tigania East

Ndubai

Died



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Stephen M'Kiira

Tigania West

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

David Mwiraria



Imenti North

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA


Gitobu Imanyara



Imenti Central

Mutani

Nullified in petition



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Eustace Ntwiga

Nithi

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Cecilio Mwenda

Tharaka

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF KENYA

Kiraitu Murungi

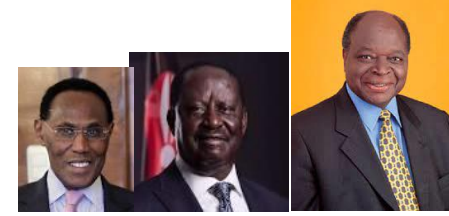


Imenti South

Two By-elections in 1999, both won by KANU






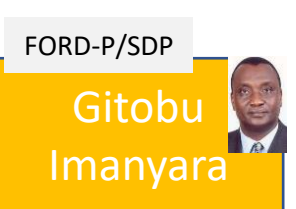
Meru Political History


Late 2002: Uhuru and Rainbow Realignment





Meru

Tharaka-Nithi

 Maaka Maore	 Jackson Kalweo	 Mathews Karauri	 Stephen M'Kiira	 David Mwiraria	 Gitobu Imanyara
Ntonyiri	Igembe	Tigania East	Tigania West	Imenti North	Imenti Central


Kiraitu
Murungi
Imenti South

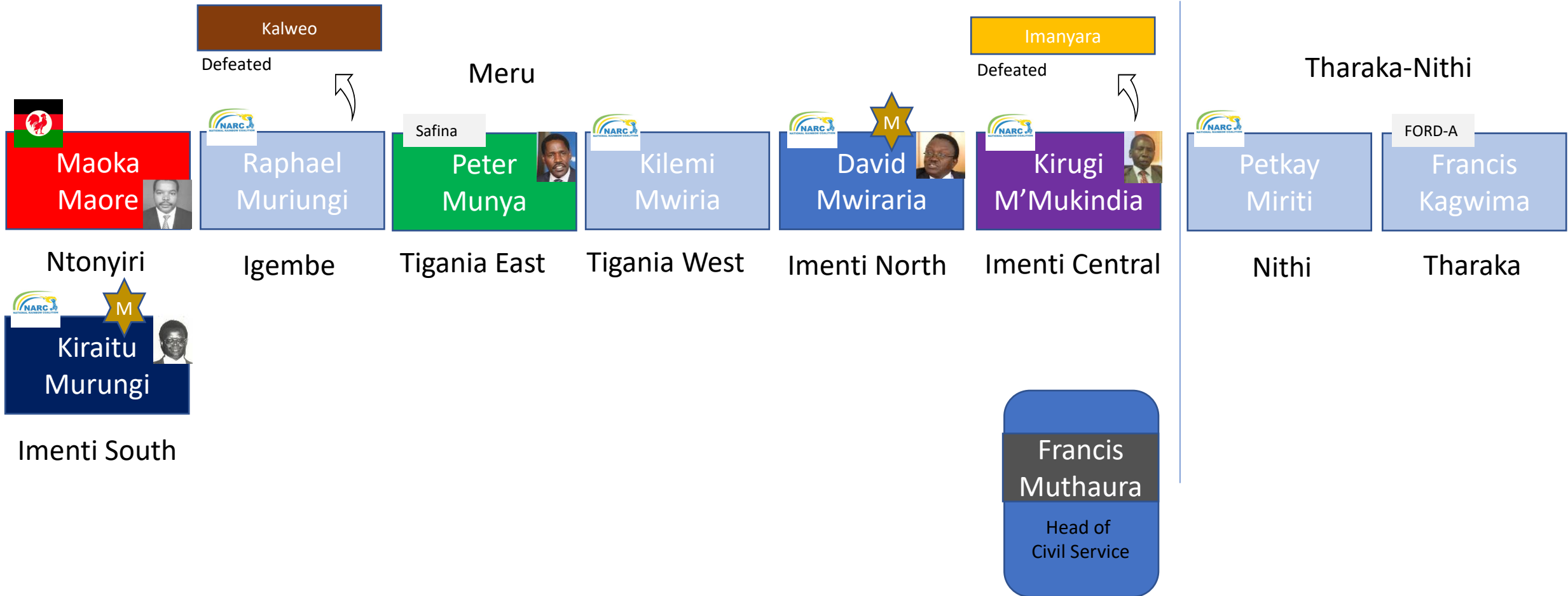
 Eustace Ntwiga	 Cecilio Mwenda
Nithi	Tharaka

Maore and Mwenda defect to KANU, Imanyara to FORD People then SDP, Karauri (a Saitoti ally) resigns from Govt



Meru Political History

2002: Moi's Retirement, Kibaki Elected

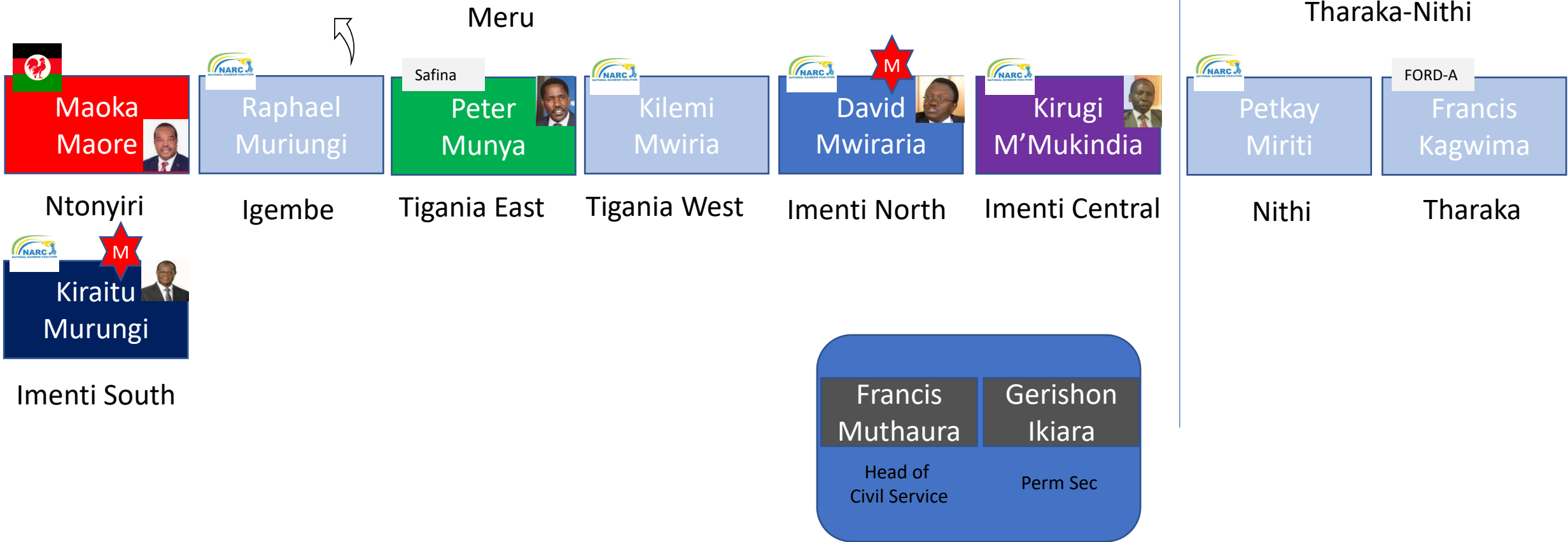


Kibaki defeats Uhuru Kenyatta and NARC (mostly the ex-DP wing) win the region decisively, with only Maore surviving. Mwiraria and Murungi become key ministers in Kibaki's new government alongside Francis Muthaura as Cabinet Secretary



Meru Political History

2006: Anglo-Leasing

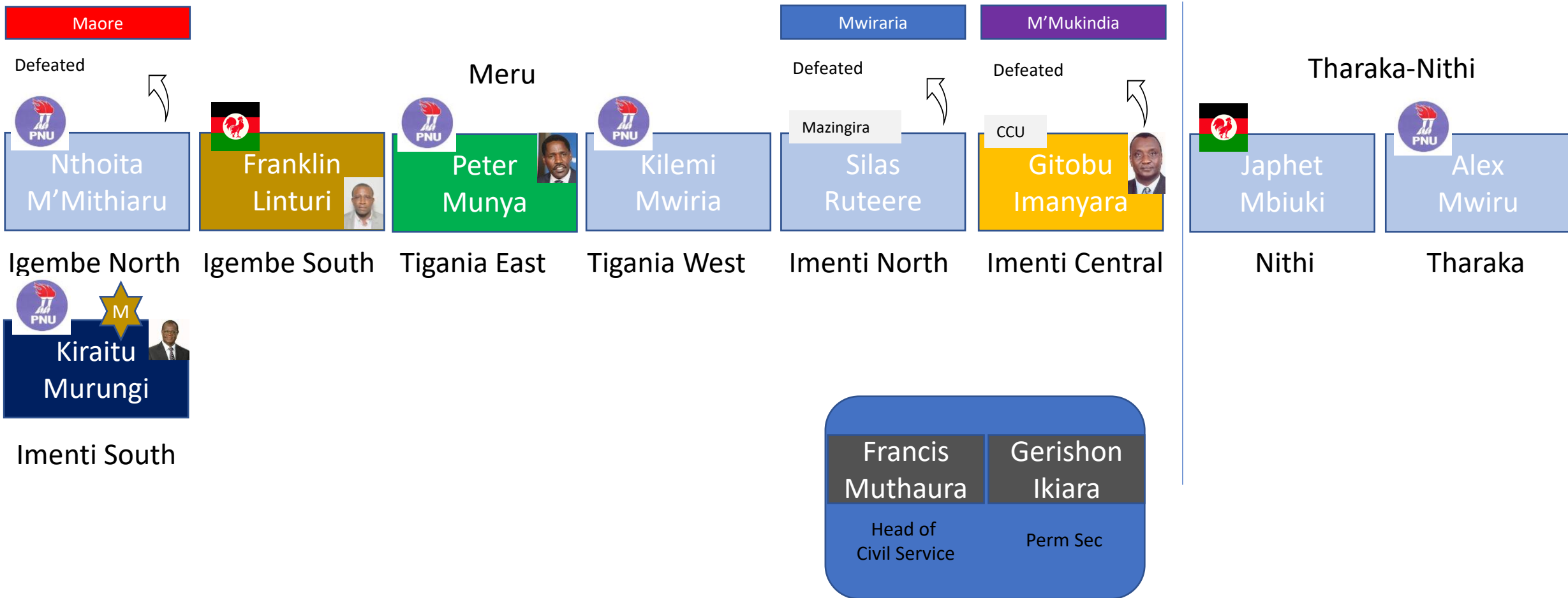


Unaffected by the reshuffles of 2005, Murungi and Mwiraria were both forced out in 2006 over the Anglo leasing scandal. However, they were both reinstated within a year.

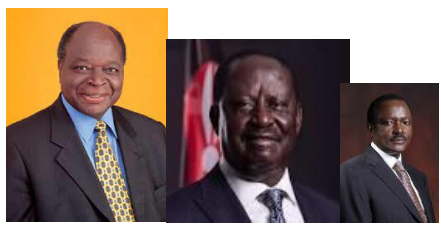


Meru Political History

2007: General Election and Subsequent Chaos

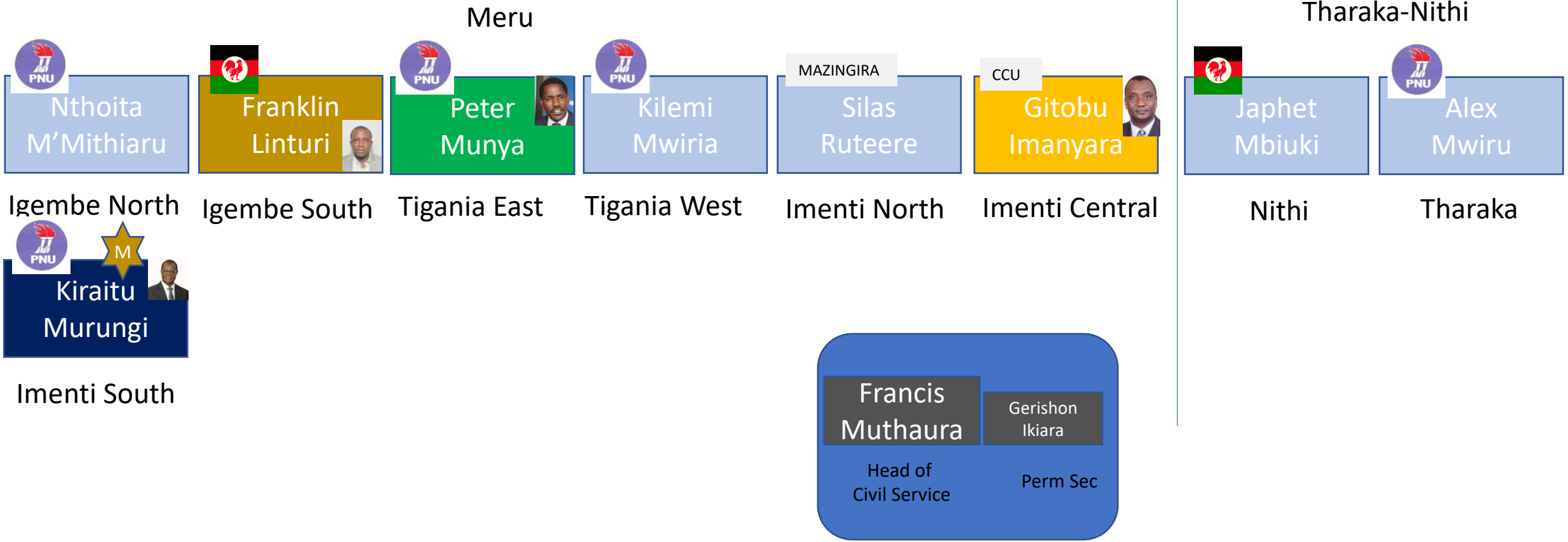


Most NARC leaders end up in the PNU. Murungi and Munya re-elected but Mwiraria defeated. ODM and ODM-Kenya irrelevant here. Murungi only Meru Minister now.



Meru Political History

2008: Grand Coalition



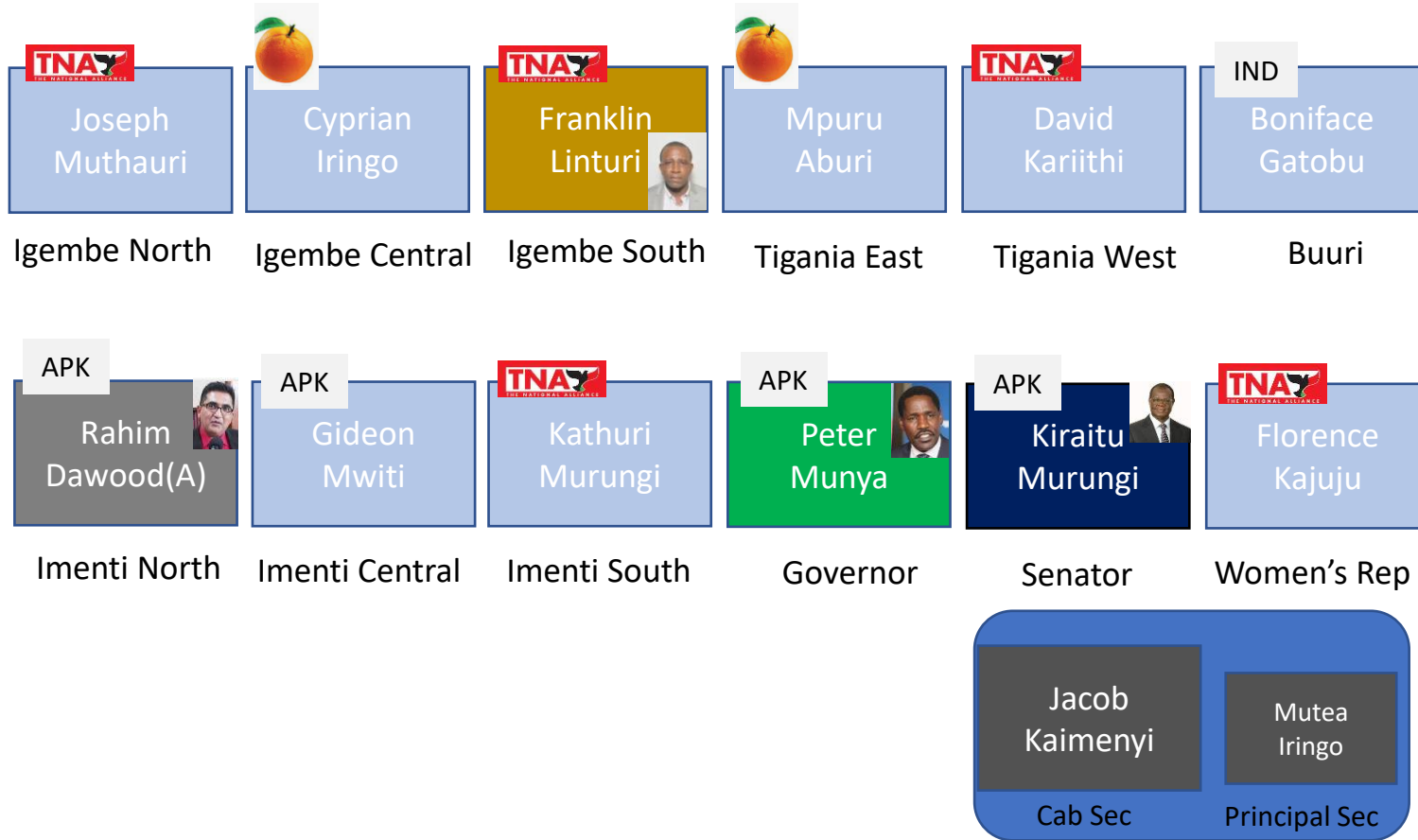
No change



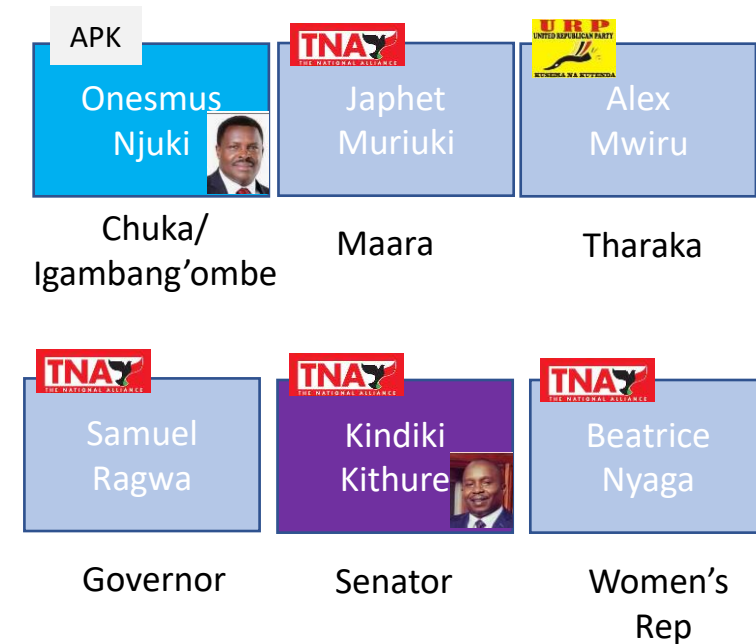
Meru Political History

2013: New Constitution

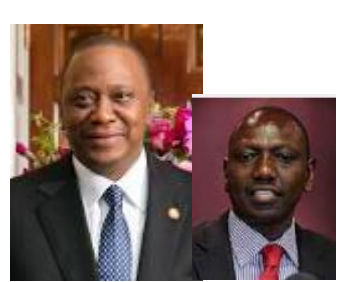
Meru



Tharaka Nithi



New constitution, new boundaries, bicameral parliament, Governors. Ministers (Cab Secs) no longer elected MPs. TNA and URP in alliance win the election and TNA shares results with local Meru party the APK and (surprisingly) ODM. One non-Meru (Asian) MP elected



Meru Political History

2017: Second General Elections under new constitution

Meru

Maaka Maore	Cyprian Iringo	IND John Paul Mwirigi	Joseph Kabebea	John Mutunga	Muthambi Rindikiri
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Igembe North Igembe Central Igembe South Tigania East Tigania West Buuri

Rahim Dawood(A)	Moses Kirima	IND Kathuri Murungi	Kiraitu Murungi	Franklin Linturi	IND Faith Mwangaza
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Imenti North Imenti Central Imenti South Governor Senator Women's Rep

Deafated

Peter Munya	Margaret Kobia
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Appt Cab Secs Jan 2018

Charity Chepkwony

Meru lady married a Kalenjini

Njoro

Tharaka Nithi

Patrick Ntwiga	Japhet Mbiuki	George Murugara
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Chuka/Igambang'ombe Maara Tharaka

Onesmus Njuki	Kindiki Kithure	Beatrice Nyagah
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Governor Senator Women's Rep

TNA and URP merge and absorb APK and other parties into Jubilee, which won a decisive victory, with winning independent and minor party victors still pro-Jubilee.

From fact to opinion
















- The next image captures my understanding of the current political alignment of this group of elected (and appointed) individuals as of December 2021.











Meru Political History

2021: Current estimated alliances

Meru

 Maaka Maore 	 Cyprian Iringo	 John Paul Mwirigi	Joseph Kabebea	 John Mutunga	 Muthambi Rindikiri
Igembe North	Igembe Central	Igembe South	Tigania East	Tigania West	Buuri
 Rahim Dawood(A) 	 Moses Kirima	 Kathuri Murungi	 Kiraitu Murungi 	 Franklin Linturi 	Faith Mwangaza
Imenti North	Imenti Central	Imenti South	Governor	Senator	Women's Rep
 Charity Chepkwony					
Njoro					

Tharaka Nithi

 Patrick Ntwiga	 Japhet Mbiuki	 George Murugara
Chuka/ Igambang'ombe	Maara	Tharaka
 Onesmus Njuki 	 Kindiki Kithure 	 Beatrice Nyagah
Governor	Senator	Women's Rep