Do processes of political and economic reform interrelate? Is there a negative or positive correlation between political and economic liberalisation? Are democratic or authoritarian systems better equipped to carry out economic reforms intended to secure growth? These broad questions of research have long occupied political scientists. An escalating Third World debt crisis, coupled to major shifts in the economic policies of the US and UK in the early 1980s, brought issues of economic liberalisation to the centre of academic attention. In the 1990s; the wave of democratisation following the fall of the Soviet Union initiated a major and influential scholarly debate on dual reform process. In this chapter I review the theoretical debates on the interconnections between political and economic reforms. As the discussion will reveal, the role of interest groups has been given great consideration in the academic debates on processes of economic and political reform. Very recently the literature analysing Africa’s political and economic reform processes has recognised the influential role played by international aid and donors.

Descriptors: Political Reform, Economic Liberalisation, International Cooperation, Aid.