



IPSS

Institute for Peace
& Security Studies
Addis Ababa University

PEACE & SECURITY REPORT

SENEGAL CONFLICT INSIGHT



May 2022

The purpose of this report is to provide analysis and recommendations to national, regional and continental decision makers in the implementation of peace and security-related instruments. The opinions expressed in this report are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies.

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CONTRIBUTORS

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SITUATION ANALYSIS

POPULATION	GDP PER CAPITA (PPP)	LIFE EXPECTANCY (YEARS)
16 MILLION	\$ 3,395	67.9
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)	NEIGHBOURS	RECS
Index: 0.512 Rank: 168/189	Guinea Guinea-Bissau The Gambia Mauritania Mali	ECOWAS

Country Profile and Demographics¹

The Republic of Senegal is a West African country that achieved its independence from France in 1960. The official language of Senegal is French and the vast majority of the population practice Islam.² The country has a wide variety of ethnic and linguistic groups, with the largest being the Wolof, Fula, and Serer people. The Wolof are the largest ethnic group in Senegal at 43%; the Fula and Toucouleur (also known as Halpulaar'en,) (24%) are the second largest group, followed by the Serer (14.7%).³ Senegal has had one of the most peaceful democratic transitions of power in Africa and has never experienced a military coup. However, despite decades of political stability, Senegal still faces serious development challenges and an internal power struggle. Compound to this is the conflict of Casamance in Senegal's southern region that has persisted for decades under a "no war, no peace" situation. While the Casamance conflict, which is considered to be West Africa's longest-running civil conflict, is on a relatively low intensity compared to conflicts elsewhere in West Africa, Senegal's southern region of Casamance continues to alternate between clashes and negotiations with implications for national and regional stability.

1. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COG>
 2. Catholicism is the second largest religious group in Senegal.
 3. http://westafrica.com.ua/en/senegal_engl

CAUSES

POLITICAL FACTORS

Despite decades of political stability and regular presidential elections in Senegal, there has been a number of pre-elections discords that have triggered the country's political crisis and internal power struggle. The country's Constitutional Council's decision to allow former President Wade to run for a third term in 2012⁴ was criticized at both national and international level, leading to demonstrations in the capital city, Dakar and other parts of the country. There has equally been a number of protests against the legitimacy of President Macky Sall's government. For instance, President Macky Sall's government amended and implemented in 2018⁵, electoral laws that limited eligibility criteria in the 2019 presidential elections.⁶ Two of his main political rivals were further prohibited from standing in the election. The reasons were that Karim Wade of the Senegalese Democratic Party and popular opposition figure, Khalifa Sall (former Dakar mayor), had respectively, been convicted of illicit enrichment and embezzlement of public funds.⁷ Both decisions sparked protests from the opposition and civil society groups who considered the 2018 electoral reform to be untimely and believed President Macky Sall was trying to suppress the opposition.

The arrest of Ousmane Sonko, one of Senegal's main opposition leaders, in March 2021, further revived a wave of protests from his supporters and the opposition across Senegal, who viewed his arrest as another attempt from the government to prevent political challengers from running for the 2024 presidential elections. Repeated imprisonment of potential presidential candidates, the highly controversial 2019 constitutional reforms, which included abolishing the post of prime minister and further consolidating power in the hands of the president, as well as concerns that President Sall might violate the constitution and run for a third term in 2024, are some of the triggering factors for Senegal's ongoing political turbulence. Moreover, the ongoing low-level Casamance conflict between the Government of Senegal and the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC), a separatist movement fighting

for the independence of the country's southern region, has caused socio-political instability and insecurity in Senegal.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

President Sall's term in office has been marked by a number of commendable development activities such as the construction of Diamniadio,⁸ the construction of a new international airport east of Dakar, the expansion of the country's transportation network, particularly with the inauguration of the Regional Express Train (TER), and the extension of electricity distribution to some rural areas that previously did not have access to electricity. Despite evident positive development under the government's flagship Plan for an Emerging Senegal (2015–2035), Senegal remains confronted with significant socio-economic challenges. Deepening poverty, unemployment and limited access to basic services such as health care and education are some of the main obstacles to the country's economic development. Senegal has an illiteracy rate of more than 50%⁹ and an unemployment rate that increased to 22.60% in the first quarter of 2021 from 16.70% in the fourth quarter of 2020,¹⁰ with about 39 % of the population living below the poverty line.¹¹ It is among the world's least developed countries, ranking 66th out of 116 countries in the 2021 Global Hunger Index.¹²

The COVID-19 pandemic further compounded dire economic conditions in Senegal, with services such as tourism, transport and exports particularly affected. Socio-economic hardships that have worsened with the government's strict containment measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, creates seething resentment towards President Sall's government and pose security threats in Senegal. Moreover, unregulated fishing by foreign boats, weakens economic opportunities of Senegalese fishery communities, thereby contributing to unemployment and irregular migration. Resentment among the southern Diola people (from both real and perceived discrimination and marginalization) against the Wolof, Senegal's northern dominant ethnic group, also exacerbate tensions in the country.

4. The 2001 constitution limited presidents to two terms.

5. President Macky Sall had previously initiated a constitutional referendum in 2016 to cut presidential mandates from seven to five years. This was however seen by many as part of a broader trend by President Sall to reshape some of the rules of the political game in Senegal.

6. Two electoral bills of the 2018 electoral reform required candidates in the presidential election to collect a certain number of signatures before their candidacy can be validated.

7. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/senegals-political-turbulence-reveals-a-justice-system-in-crisis>

8. Diamniadio is a planned city near Dakar that was intended to ease congestion in the capital by providing new space for government, business, and industry. The new city's industrial park was deemed a special economic zone, making it attractive for business investment.

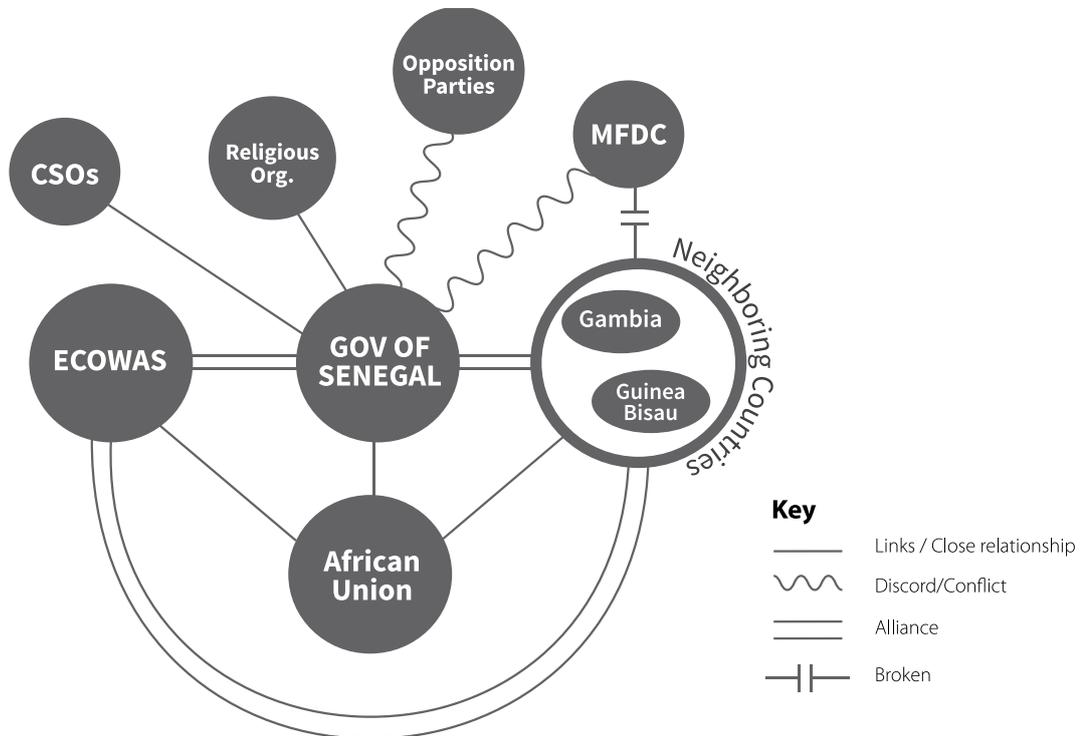
9. <https://lesenegalquejadore.com/2021/09/10/senegal-le-taux-danalphabetes-estime-a-plus-de-50/>

10. <https://tradingeconomics.com/senegal/unemployment-rate>

11. <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000135589/download?ga=2.174654498.1007510079.1645004848-384647280.1643367917>

12. Ibid

ACTORS



THE GOVERNMENT

Senegal is a presidential republic with the President serving as both the head of state and head of government. President Macky Sall's Alliance for the Republic–Yakaar (Alliance pour la république, APR), founded in 2008 is the country's ruling political party. It is the dominant party in the United in Hope coalition (Benno Bokk Yakaar), which holds a large majority at the parliament with 125 /165¹³ seats at the unicameral National Assembly.¹⁴ The Government is committed to improving economic growth through its flagship Plan for “an emerging Senegal in 2035, with a cohesive society under the rule of law“. It equally implements policies to improve security and uses its armed forces of approximately 17,000 personnel in the army, air force, navy, and gendarmerie to deter unrest and maintain national integrity as well as regional stability. The Senegalese forces have been involved in both regional and international peacekeeping missions. Senegal deployed a battalion to the Democratic Republic of Congo to participate in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in 2000¹⁵, a US-trained battalion to Sierra Leone

for the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in 2001, troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)¹⁶ and participated in the Saudi Arabian-led military intervention in Yemen against the Shia Houthis in 2015.

Moreover, the Economic Community of West African States mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG), deployed in January 2017, comprised mainly of Senegalese soldiers. Senegal enjoys cordial relations with its neighbors and maintains diplomatic and economic relations with countries such as France, the United States of America (USA) and China. It is member to several regional and international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States. The Heads of State and Government of the AU notably elected H.E. Macky Sall, as the new Chairperson of the African Union for the year 2022.

13. http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2277_E.htm

14. Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in Senegal by July 2022

15. On 1 July 2010, the Security Council, by its resolution 1925, renamed MONUC the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to reflect the new phase reached in the country.

16. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma>

OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES

The republic of Senegal has more than 200 opposition parties¹⁷ and a well-established multiparty system that is guaranteed by constitutional provision. The objective of these opposition parties, mostly grouped in coalitions, is to attain national power and prevent incumbent president Sall from seeking a third term in office. The Winning Coalition - “Wattu Senegaal”, led by the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) of former President Abdoulaye Wade, is the largest opposition coalition in Parliament with 19 seats at the National Assembly, followed by the “Mankoo Taxawu Senegaal” Coalition which is the second largest opposition with 7 seats at the National Assembly.¹⁸ About 20 opposition parties have now coalesced under the Yewwi Askan Wi (“Liberate the People” in Wolof) coalition, led by one of President Sall’s main opponent, Ousmane Sonko of the Patriots of Senegal for Ethics, Work, and Fraternity party (PASTEF). The coalition brings together several opposition leaders including the former mayor of Dakar, Khalifa Sall of the “Mankoo Taxawu Senegaal” who co-founded the coalition in 2021 with Ousmane Sonko, as well as the Party for Unity and Rally (PUR)¹⁹, founded in 1998 and led by Cheikh Mouhamadou Moustapha Sy. After winning key cities (Dakar and Ziguinchor) during the January 2022 local elections, the Yewwi Askan Wi coalition aim at reiterating their victory during the July 2022 parliamentary elections. The 2022 local and parliamentary elections are believed to be for Ousmane Sonko, third in the presidential election of 2019, a warm-up round before the presidential election of 2024, of which he could be one of the main candidates.

THE MOVEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES OF THE CASAMANCE (MFDC)

The Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) is a separatist movement fighting for independence in Casamance, Senegal’s southern region bordering The Gambia. The movement was founded in 1982 and later formed an armed wing in 1985, which has been able to carry out occasional attacks on state and military targets since 1990. The military wing of the estimated 2,000-4,000²⁰ MFDC fighters split into two factions in 1991; the MFDC-Front Sud, which is the core military force of MFDC and the MFDC-Front

Nord. The MFDC finances itself mainly from looting and timber trafficking across the borders of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau and amassed supporters mainly from the Jola people.²¹ There has been fewer clashes between the MFDC and government forces since Salif Sadio, the leader of MFDC, declared a unilateral ceasefire in 2014, following talks between the government and the MFDC in Italy. However, the MFDC has been blamed by the Senegalese government for recent reports of violence and sporadic attacks that presents a threat to national security.

The fragmentation of the MFDC which is now composed of several warlords and political leaders, with some armed factions acting independently from the political wing, has led to rivalries between the various factional leaders in search of legitimacy and systematic rejection by one faction of agreements signed by other factions. This has complicated the prospects of peace in Casamance and has reasserted the government’s refusal to discuss the substantive issue: The movement’s independence claim.

NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES: GUINEA-BISSAU AND THE GAMBIA

Guinea Bissau plays an important role in Senegal’s ongoing conflict dynamics due to the interconnections between the ethnic Jolas, Balantes and Mandingos of Northern Guinea Bissau and the Casamance region of Senegal. The same interconnection, together with clashes between MFDC and the Senegalese soldiers on Gambian soil makes the role of The Gambia equally significant. These two countries have been key actors in the Casamance peace process and have hosted about 17,300 refugees (10000 in Guinea Bissau and 7300 in The Gambia) from the region of Casamance.²² Despite undeniable contributions to peace efforts in Casamance by The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, their double-edged game also helped stall these same peace efforts. For instance, Guinea-Bissau was accused on many occasions by the Senegalese government of supporting the MFDC both materially and financially.²³ The Gambia has faced similar allegations with former president Yahya Jammeh accused of providing assistance to the MFDC. It is, however, inconceivable for President Adama Barrow of The Gambia, who came to power in 2017, to maintain links that his predecessor had

17. <http://democracyin africa.org/politicalpartiesinsenegal/>

18. http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2277_E.htm

19. PUR won three seats at the 2017 parliamentary election.

20. M. Evans, ‘Senegal: Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC)’, Chatham House, African Programme, December 2004, p.9.

21. The Jola or Diola are an ethnic group found in Senegal, the Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau.

22. <https://odihpn.org/publication/the-casamance-conflict-out-of-sight-out-of-mind/>

23. <http://www.cihablog.com/five-5-reasons-that-explain-the-permanent-failure-of-peace-agreements-in-casamance/>

established with the MFDC.²⁴ President Adama Barrow, as well as President Umaro Sissoco Embalo of Guinea Bissau are both allies of President Macky Sall and provide valuable support to Senegal in its quest for peace and security in the region of Casamance.²⁵

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

Religious organizations and civil society organizations (CSOs), including sector-based pressure groups and campaigners for human rights, democracy and development are key actors in Senegal's political and socio-economic crises. The Women's Platform for Peace in Casamance, founded by two major organisations, namely Kabonketoor and Usoforal (working for peace in Casamance) was created so that women could make their contribution in the Casamance peace negotiations. It equally seeks to strengthen women in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau's involvement and contribution to peace, security and stability in the sub-region.²⁶ Religious and traditional leaders such as the Sufi brotherhoods (tariqas) are equally major political actors and have been instrumental in the dynamic of restoration of lasting peace in Casamance. Senegal also abodes several other CSOs, many of which operate under the Movement for the Defence of Democracy (M2D) coalition. These CSOs have been active in mobilizing anti-government protests as tension heightens over the country's worsening political and socio-economic situation.

24. <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/442747/politique/sans-yahya-jammeh-enfin-la-paix-en-casamance/>

25. <https://www.africanews.com/2021/02/11/senegalese-army-promises-to-resettle-displaced-people-on-reclaimed-territory/>

26. <https://awdf.org/plateforme-des-femmes-pour-la-paix-en-casamance-pfpc/>

CONFLICT DYNAMICS

While Senegal is considered one of the most stable countries in Africa, with three peaceful political transitions, the presidential election of 2012 was the landmark for the more recent phase of the country's political crisis. The election was controversial due to former president Wade's candidacy for a third term despite the fact that the 2001 constitution limited presidents to two terms. The decision of the Constitutional Council to validate Wade's third term candidacy resulted in large demonstrations of protests across the country by opposition movements, including M23 and Y'en a Marre. In the end, the then leader of the opposition, incumbent president Macky Sall of the Alliance for the Republic (APR) party, won the election and ensured the continuation of the country's peaceful and democratic transition. Prior to president Sall's re-election in 2019, an electoral reform that limited eligibility criteria was implemented. Two of Senegal's main opposition figures, Khalifa Sall and Karim Wade were equally banned from running in the 2019 presidential election because of their criminal records. Both decisions were seen by the opposition as President Sall's plan to silence the opposition and limit the number of his potential challengers, thereby triggering a series of protests across the country.

In response to the political crisis that followed his victory in the controversial presidential elections of February 2019, President Macky Sall initiated a national political dialogue on May 28th, 2019. The dialogue, which was boycotted by the opposition due to issues relating to its neutrality and credibility, its agenda, as well as guarantees for its implementation, failed to appease tensions. Political tensions were further apparent with the arrest of President Sall's main political rival, Ousmane Sonko, on 03 March 2021 for 'disturbing public order.' His arrest sparked a series of protests and clashes between security forces and his supporters who regarded accusations²⁷ against Sonko to be politically motivated. About 590 people were injured while at least 11 died in what is described as one of the most violent demonstrations in the history of Senegal.²⁸ While the protests were mainly about the arrest of opposition leader Ousmane Sonko, they were equally a reaction to widespread discontent emanating from socio-economic austerities that have worsened with the government's strict

27. Ousmane Sonko also faced rape allegation.

28. <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/senegals-political-turbulence-reveals-a-justice-system-in-crisis>

measures to slow the spread of COVID-19.



The Senegalese government is equally involved in one of West Africa's longest-running civil conflict with the Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC). The MFDC has been fighting for the independence of Casamance, the southern area physically isolated from the rest of Senegal by The Gambia. Since the beginning of the Casamance conflict in 1982, three governments have managed the conflict: the Government of Presidents Abdou Diouf, Abdoulaye Wade and Macky Sall. Several attempts by these governments to end the Casamance conflict, including ceasefire agreements of 31 May 1991, 8 July 1993, 27 December 1999, 30 December 2004 and 2014 were unsuccessful. This is in part due to the disintegration of the MFDC into factions and the government's refusal to discuss MFDC's main demand – granting independence to Casamance.²⁹ As a result, the southern region of Casamance continues to alternate between negotiations and clashes. The conflict has claimed thousands of civilian and military casualties (about 3000-5000³⁰ deaths), forced many to flee (about 50,000³¹ displaced) and devastated the region's economy. Although Senegal is a relatively stable democracy, sustainable peace remains elusive in the southern region of Casamance as it continues to be plagued by intermittent violent incidents and sporadic low-intensity fighting between the Senegalese forces and factions of the MFDC. Moreover, the Katiba Macina, a jihadist group originating in the Mopti region in Mali, threatens to extend the Malian unrest into neighboring countries, particularly Senegal, which has so far been spared from jihadist attacks.

29. <http://www.cihablog.com/five-5-reasons-that-explain-the-permanent-failure-of-peace-agreements-in-casamance/>

30. <https://www.rulac.org/browse/conflicts/niac-in-senegal>

31. Ibid

CURRENT RESPONSE ASSESSMENT

REGIONAL RESPONSE

The African Union (AU), tasked with ensuring that its member states abide by the democratic principles of free and fair elections, deployed an Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) to Senegal in 2012³² and 2019.³³ The EOM's mandate was to monitor and assess both presidential elections in line with relevant AU instruments like the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). A series of recommendations were formulated by both missions based on their observation and findings. This included the need for constant political dialogue amongst all stakeholders in the electoral process in order to promote consensus on critical political issues.³⁴ The AUC Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, equally issued a diplomatic statement³⁵ following the 2019 presidential elections, wherein he encouraged the people of Senegal to settle all matters relating to electoral processes through peaceful means. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also authorized the deployment of an EOM in Senegal to oversee the 2012 and 2019 presidential elections.³⁶ Both EOM released statements through which they urged all Senegalese nationals, political leaders and their supporters to promote the spirit of dialogue in the political and economic interest of their country. Regional actors have however remained more or less silent with regards to the ongoing Casamance conflict.³⁷

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

As far as international responses are concerned, the United Nations through its different agencies and programs have been providing assistance for refugees fleeing the Casamance conflict. Moreover, the UN through its Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,³⁸ and its Special Envoy for West Africa, Mohamed Ibn Chambas,³⁹ appealed for calm while urging protesters and security forces to refrain from further escalation of violence that was triggered by the arrest of opposition leader Ousmane Sonko on March 2021. Similarly, and with the aim to support Senegal in consolidating its democratic institutions, the European Union (EU) deployed an Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) to oversee the 2012 and 2019 presidential elections. While the EU EOM hailed the peaceful and democratic transition of power in Senegal during the 2012 elections,⁴⁰ it raised concerns over the controversial electoral reform that limited eligibility criteria in the 2019 elections and emphasized on the need to guarantee the neutrality, transparency and efficiency of Senegal's electoral commission.⁴¹

The Republic of Senegal equally has a strong bilateral relations with France who is its number one trading partner and leading investor.⁴² The French government provides developmental assistance to Senegal (human and sustainable development) and supports the strengthening of the country's democratic governance. Senegal is also the leading beneficiary of France's structural defense and security cooperation with its security and armed forces receiving most of their training and equipment from France.⁴³ Other international partners such as the United States (US) and China have also provided financial and humanitarian support to Senegal with the aim of advancing inclusive economic growth, democracy, human rights, women's empowerment and regional stability.

32. https://au.int/sites/default/files/pressreleases/30023-pr-final_preliminary_statement_senegal.pdf

33. <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20190220/african-union-election-observation-missions-deployed-nigeria-and-senegal>

34. https://au.int/sites/default/files/pressreleases/30023-pr-final_preliminary_statement_senegal.pdf

35. <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20190305/statement-chairperson-commission-elections-senegal>

36. <https://old.ecowas.int/publications/en/election/sn2012.doc>

37. ECOWAS officials were part of a mediation delegation along with Gambia Armed Forces, Police Force and Red Cross Society. Their collective efforts led to the release of seven Senegalese soldiers who were captured in Jan 2022 by the MFDC.

38. <https://www.barrons.com/news/un-chief-calls-for-de-escalation-of-senegal-violence-01614971410>

39. https://unowas.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/210305-srsg_senegal_eng.pdf

40. https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/24366/eu-election-observation-mission-senegal-2012_en

41. https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/senegal_moe_ue_2019_rapport_final.pdf

42. <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/senegal/>

43. Ibid

SCENARIOS

BEST CASE SCENARIO

The best case scenario would be the peaceful and democratic transfer of power from incumbent president Macky Sall at the end of his two five-year presidential terms in 2024. A peaceful pathway to succession during the upcoming 2024 presidential elections will ensure the continuation of the country's peaceful and democratic transition and will consolidate Senegal's longstanding reputation as one of Africa's most stable democracies. It will equally mitigate electoral conflicts, ethnic tensions and socio-economic challenges that are triggers of violent demonstrations across the country. Moreover, the decimation of MFDC through military operations will prevent the escalation of the separatist group's attacks into other regions of the country that are not directly affected.

WORST CASE SCENARIOS

The worst-case scenario for the Republic of Senegal would be an unconstitutional change of government through the amendment of the constitution that will enable president Macky Sall to run for a third term in 2024. This will lead to unprecedented violent protests and unrest in a country that has prided itself for decades as a beacon of political stability in Africa. Particularly in a conflict-prone West African region where constitutional devices were used by Guinea's overthrown President Alpha Conde and Alassane Ouattara of Ivory Coast to extend presidential terms. Other worst-case scenarios could also be the secession of the Casamance region from the rest of the country

as well as the extension of jihadists operations into Senegal. Under these worst-case scenarios, political instability will heighten, socio-economic hardships will worsen and social cohesion will deteriorate. These scenarios could also jeopardize the country's Plan for an emerging Senegal by 2035 and further exacerbate human rights violations. It could also imperil the implementation of continental development frameworks such as the African Union Agenda 2063, 'the Africa We Want', and the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Senegal.

MOST LIKELY SCENARIO

The most likely scenario would be the continuation of a "No War, No Peace" in the southern region of Casamance. Under this scenario, the region will continue to alternate between clashes and negotiations. It will therefore experience intermittent violent incidents and sporadic low-intensity fighting between the Senegalese forces and the MFDC. Moreover, the Republic of Senegal would likely experience a democratic transition of power in 2024, thereby reaffirming their position as one of the most successful democratic transitions in Africa.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- Enhancing and promoting democratic practices and cultures, good governance and the rule of law are all within the purview of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). In line with this, the government should vigorously implement the ACDEG and promote vibrant democratic opposition in order to ensure the continuation of the country's longstanding reputation as one of Africa's most stable democracies.
- The government should continue to undertake negotiations with the MFDC in an effort to resolve the Casamance conflict. This will be in line with Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the AU as well as Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063 which aspires for "A peaceful and secure Africa" through the use of mechanisms that promote a dialogue-centered approach to conflict prevention and resolution.
- As per Article 3(f) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU (PSC Protocol), the protection of human and people's rights must be sustained while solutions are being pursued. In this regard, the government should ensure that security operations aimed at preserving national stability are conducted in accordance with relevant human rights instruments to which Senegal is signatory.

TO THE AFRICAN UNION AND ECOWAS

- Although the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and territorial integrity are enshrined in the statutes of the AU and ECOWAS, there is a need for these regional actors to press for the respect of human rights and the rule of law in Senegal. This will prevent a resurgence of violence in the country.
- As the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, remarked in a 2017 address to the United Nations, 'Neglected local crises gather pace and become transnational with broader implications.' The AU and ECOWAS should, therefore, end their silence on the Casamance conflict and step in to prevent further escalation and spillover of the conflict into a West African region that has been prone to conflict.

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THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

CONFLICT TIMELINE 1960-2022

1960 – The Republic of Senegal gained independence under the leadership of President Léopold Sedar Senghor.

1981 – Abdou Diouf became president following the resignation of President Senghor.

1982 – Separatists in the southern region of Casamance formed the Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC).

2000 – Abdoulaye Wade became President, winning the elections against President Abdou Diouf, whose party, the Socialist Party, had been in power for 40 years.

2004 – The government signs a ceasefire agreement with the MFDC aimed at ending the separatist group's operations in the region of Casamance.

2012 – Macky Sall wins presidential elections and his coalition wins parliamentary elections.

2014 – MFDC leader Salif Sadio, who had been fighting for the independence of the Casamance region, declares a unilateral ceasefire.

2016 – Voters in a referendum approve a proposal to reduce the presidential term from seven years to five.

2018 – Electoral reform that limited eligibility criteria in the 2019 presidential elections.

2018 – Karim Wade of the Senegalese Democratic Party and the mayor of Senegal, Khalifa Sall, are convicted for illicit enrichment and embezzlement of public funds.

2019 – February – President Macky Sall is reelected for a second term in a controversial presidential elections.

2019 – May – President Macky Sall launched a national political dialogue to deal with the political crisis that followed his reelection.

2021 – March – Opposition leader, Ousmane Sonko, was arrested for 'disturbing public order.' His arrest sparked a series of protests from his supporters who regarded accusations against Sonko to be politically motivated.

2022 – January – The opposition coalition, Yewwi Askan Wi, won five major cities including the capital Dakar in municipal elections.

Peace and Security Reports

Although key continental and regional institutions have their own early warning reporting systems, policy making within these institutions also benefit from a number of analytical and periodic reports generated by think tanks and research institutes. The Research Unit at IPSS provides brief and critical analyses of the state of peace and security in different African countries as well as critical appraisals of interventions by various African actors. The reports will cover African countries showing positive signs as well as those undergoing negative developments.



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