

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

### Senegal Briefing April 2019

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#### Senegal Summary 15 April 2019

*President Macky Sall (2012-present) is sworn in for a second presidential term ending in 2024 and commits to national dialogue with the opposition. Sall intends to abolish the position of prime minister and institute a presidential regime, reportedly with the aim of better coordinating government action. He reappoints Mahammad Boun Abdallah Dionne as prime minister. The new 32-member cabinet includes technocrats such as Amadou Hott in the newly created economy, planning and cooperation portfolio and Mouhamadou Makhtar Cisse as petroleum and energy minister.*

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#### President Macky Sall sworn in for second presidential term

President **Macky Sall** (2012-present) was sworn in for his second term as **Senegal's** president on 2 April after emerging victorious from the 24 February presidential election.<sup>1</sup> At the inauguration ceremony, President Sall outlined his political agenda for the next five years of his presidential mandate.<sup>2</sup> The inauguration took place at the **Diarnadio Exhibition Centre**, 30 km outside of the capital **Dakar**, and saw the attendance of close to 3,000 invitees, including 18 heads of state and government.<sup>3</sup> Most of Senegal's **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** counterparts, as well as leaders from other **African** regional blocs, attended.<sup>4</sup> In addition, some notable former elected heads such as **Nigeria's** former president, **Olesugun Obasanjo** (1999-2007), **France's** former president, **Nicolas Sarkozy** (2007-2012), and former **United Kingdom** prime minister **Tony Blair** (1997-2007) were present.<sup>5</sup>

While taking the oath of office, President Sall swore to devote all his force *"to defend the constitutional institutions, territorial integrity and national independence and spare no effort for the achievement of national unity"*.<sup>6</sup> Sall also declared his intention to dutifully serve and safeguard the interests of Senegal.<sup>7</sup> **Cour Constitutionnelle** (constitutional court) president **Pape Oumar Sakho**, who presided over the oath taking ceremony, commended the transparency that characterised the voting process during the presidential elections.<sup>8</sup> Sakho encouraged the opposition to turn the page on disputes that emerged from the election, especially since they did not lodge any legal appeal regarding elections:<sup>9</sup>

*"No irregularity was likely to affect the credibility of the ballot."*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>2</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>3</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>4</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>5</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>6</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>7</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>8</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>9</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>10</sup> Pape Oumar Sakho quoted in Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

Sakho concluded by noting that with new economic prospects opening up for Senegal, there will be greater expectations for President Sall to live up to the opportunities they may bring.<sup>11</sup>

Following the swearing-in ceremony, President Sall outlined the social, educational and health related improvements which were achieved during his previous mandate, saying the **Plan Senegal Emergent II (PSE II)** was certain to consolidate these positive results.<sup>12</sup> PSE II is the second phase of Senegal's medium-term economic development, which runs from 2019-2024. President Sall highlighted that greater emphasis will be directed during his second term towards supporting youth entrepreneurship, promoting the digital economy, creating professional training centres,<sup>13</sup> and improving the condition of women.<sup>14</sup> He also promised to modernise public administration, preserve the environment and improve public hygiene and sanitation, as well as construct 100,000 low-cost housing units.<sup>15</sup>

In a landmark declaration, Sall promised to organise a national dialogue with all societal stakeholders.<sup>16</sup> This followed the announcement he made after the confirmation of his election victory in March (see *ARC Briefing Senegal March 2019*).<sup>17</sup> Sall recognises that 41.22% of Senegalese voters – 1.82 million – did not vote for him and there is a need to diffuse any tensions that the opposition might carry over from the presidential campaign.<sup>18</sup> In his speech on Senegal's national day on 4 April, Sall reiterated his commitment to dialogue, saying it would be undertaken in the spirit of openness, to strengthen social ties and promote healthy patriotism.<sup>19</sup>

Despite President Sall's optimism in regard to the national dialogue, opposition candidate **Ousmane Sonko**, who emerged third with 15.67% of votes, expressed scepticism.<sup>20</sup> Sonko said he does not believe that Sall deserved to win the presidential election and does not acknowledge his legitimacy.<sup>21</sup> Sonko claimed the three other opposition candidates share this point of view and see no urgent need to hold a national dialogue.<sup>22</sup>

Nonetheless, President Sall has a clear agenda heading into his second and last presidential term, which will be guided by PSE II. His success will be determined to a large extent by the cabinet he chooses to execute the strategy (see below).

### Is Senegal moving towards a presidential regime?

Prime minister **Mahammad Boun Abdallah Dionne** caught observers off-guard on 5 April by announcing that Senegal would abolish the position of prime minister in the medium term.<sup>23</sup> According to Dionne, the rationale behind the decision is to improve executive and administrative efficiency.<sup>24</sup> However, critics argue that President Sall may be moving towards

<sup>11</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>12</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>13</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>14</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>15</sup> Afrique Confidentielle, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>16</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 2 Apr 2019

<sup>17</sup> Quotidien Sud, 4 Mar 2019

<sup>18</sup> Quotidien Sud, 4 Mar 2019

<sup>19</sup> Afrique Confidentielle, 4 Apr 2019

<sup>20</sup> Jeune Afrique, 24 Mar 2019

<sup>21</sup> Jeune Afrique, 24 Mar 2019

<sup>22</sup> Jeune Afrique, 24 Mar 2019

<sup>23</sup> RFI, 5 Apr 2019

<sup>24</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

a presidential regime to avoid clashes in implementing his agenda and to quash any potential succession disputes in his final term.

In what is traditionally the first step in the formation of a new government, Dionne submitted his resignation and that of his government to President Sall on 5 April.<sup>25</sup> Sall reappointed Dionne as prime minister on 6 April, tasking him with the formation of a new cabinet.<sup>26</sup> Dionne's reinstatement was no surprise – he is a close ally of President Sall and had served as prime minister from July 2014 until his resignation. He also served as Sall's chief of staff when Sall was prime minister under former president **Abdoulaye Wade** (2000-2012).<sup>27</sup> In anticipation of the abolishment of the position of prime minister, Sall simultaneously appointed Dionne as minister of state, secretary general at the presidency, a position he will occupy full-time while exercising duties as prime minister.<sup>28</sup> Dionne said the services of the prime ministry will be transferred to the general secretariat of the presidency.<sup>29</sup> Dionne claimed the removal of the position of prime minister will reduce bottlenecks in decision-making and permit quicker responses to urgent development related issues such as universal access to healthcare and employment.<sup>30</sup> Secretary general at the presidency **Jean Simon Ndiaye** echoed this rationale stating that President Sall wanted to instil “*a new dynamic and flexibility in government action and also desires direct contact with ministers and heads of administration*”.<sup>31</sup>

Such a change would entail reorientation of the responsibilities of the executive, judiciary and legislature.<sup>32</sup> In order to effect the change, the government needs to amend **Article 36** of the constitution.<sup>33</sup> Article 36 stipulates,

*“The president determines the policy of the nation. The government applies it under the leadership of the prime minister.”*<sup>34</sup>

Removal of the prime minister position signals that Senegal is moving towards a centralised presidential regime, a development that has its critics.<sup>35</sup> Senegal-based public law expert Professor **Ndiogou Sarr** believes that although Senegal is currently in a grey zone between a presidential and parliamentary regime, there is already too much concentration of power with the president.<sup>36</sup> Sarr claims the decision to abolish the prime minister's role will lead to greater administrative inefficiency and is not a prudent move.<sup>37</sup>

This is not the first time the position of prime minister has been removed from cabinet in Senegal's political history. Former president **Leopold Sedar Senghor** (1960-1980) abolished the president of council (equivalent of prime minister) in 1970.<sup>38</sup> Former president **Abdou Diouf** (1980-2000) made a similar move and suspended the post of prime minister from

<sup>25</sup> RFI, 5 Apr 2019

<sup>26</sup> RFI, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>27</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>28</sup> RFI, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>29</sup> RFI, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>30</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>31</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>32</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>33</sup> RFI, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>34</sup> RFI, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>35</sup> Jeune Afrique, 6 Apr 2019

<sup>36</sup> RFI, 9 Apr 2019

<sup>37</sup> RFI, 9 Apr 2019

<sup>38</sup> La Tribune Afrique, 11 Apr 2019

1983 to 1990.<sup>39</sup> Senegal may also be following the lead of its regional counterparts such as **Benin, The Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leone**, all of which have abandoned prime ministers in their government apparatus.<sup>40</sup>

The government has been keen to brand the desired change as an institutional reform which aims to improve administrative action and improve livelihoods.<sup>41</sup> Presidential communications adviser **El Hadj Hamidou Kosse** says the president does not want to waste time as “*five years go by very quickly*”.<sup>42</sup> President Sall may also be seeking to avoid a clash with heads of government similar to his experience during his first term with **Abdoul Mbaye** and **Aminata Toure**, who appeared to have too much autonomy.<sup>43</sup> The presidential ruling coalition **Benno Bokk Yakkar (BBK)** has a 60% majority in the national assembly, so obtaining the votes necessary to carry out this change should not be problematic.<sup>44</sup>

### President Sall appoints a new cabinet

Prime minister Mahammad Boun Abdallah Dionne revealed Senegal’s new cabinet on 7 April.<sup>45</sup> The new government consists of 32 cabinet ministers and three secretaries of state.<sup>46</sup> This is a reduction from the previous cabinet, which had 39 members.<sup>47</sup> Dionne explained that the selection of 32 ministers was in order to ensure that for the first time, all of Senegal’s 14 regions have a minister.<sup>48</sup> The cabinet shuffle saw the removal of 20 former ministers and the appointment of 16 new individuals.<sup>49</sup> Some of the departments whose ministers were removed from government include agriculture, budget, higher education and justice.<sup>50</sup> There was a slight increase in the number of female members of government, with the percentage rising from 20% to 25% from the previous cabinet.<sup>51</sup> The ministry of economy and finance was reorganised – there will now be a ministry of finance and budget and a separate ministry of economy, planning and cooperation. Some of the more significant appointments are:

- **Abdoulaye Diallo** moves from transport to the newly created ministry of finance and budget;<sup>52</sup>
- **Aly Ngouille** remains interior minister;
- **Amadou Ba** moves from the economy and finance portfolio he occupied from 2014, to foreign affairs;<sup>53</sup>
- **Amadou Hott** is the new economy, planning and cooperation minister.<sup>54</sup> Until his most recent appointment, Hott was the **African Development Bank** vice president in charge of energy, climate and green growth since 2016.<sup>55</sup> Hott has over 20 years of

<sup>39</sup> La Tribune Afrique, 11 Apr 2019

<sup>40</sup> La Tribune Afrique, 11 Apr 2019

<sup>41</sup> Jeune Afrique, 14 Apr 2019

<sup>42</sup> Jeune Afrique, 14 Apr 2019

<sup>43</sup> Jeune Afrique, 14 Apr 2019

<sup>44</sup> La Tribune Afrique, 11 Apr 2019

<sup>45</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>46</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>47</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>48</sup> Agence Presse Senegalaise, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>49</sup> Jeune Afrique, 14 Apr 2019

<sup>50</sup> Afrique Confidentielle, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>51</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>52</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>53</sup> Jeune Afrique, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>54</sup> Jeune Afrique, 14 Apr 2019

<sup>55</sup> Jeune Afrique, 10 Apr 2019

experience in the banking field and studied in France and the **United States (US)**.<sup>56</sup> From 2013 to 2016, he worked in the Senegalese government as the head of the **Fonds Souverain d'Investissements Strategiques (Forsis)** (sovereign fund for strategic investments).<sup>57</sup> He was named a **World Economic Forum** Young Global leader in 2012.<sup>58</sup> Hott will have the task of implementing PSE II and maintaining the strong economic growth that Senegal has achieved since 2015 (see *ARC Briefing Senegal March 2019*).<sup>59</sup>

- **Mouhamadou Makhtar Cisse** replaces **Mansour Elimane Kane** to lead the petroleum and energy ministry.<sup>60</sup> Cisse was CEO of the state electricity corporation, **Senelec**, from July 2015 until his ministerial appointment.<sup>61</sup> During his tenure, Senelec's power production capacity rose from 573 megawatts (MW) in 2012 to 1,130 MW in 2017.<sup>62</sup> The company's profits rose from \$21m upon his arrival in 2015 to \$51.4m in 2016.<sup>63</sup> Cisse is considered an ally of President Sall and was also named as deputy minister of budget in 2013.<sup>64</sup>

Cisse will have the task of accelerating Senegal's foray into becoming a notable oil and gas producer. President Sall intends to make the hydrocarbons sector a major contributor to Senegal's economic prosperity. This has been motivated in large part by the discovery of commercially exploitable gas at the **Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA)** offshore gas field in December 2015 by US-based **Kosmos Energy**.<sup>65</sup> Cisse will oversee national oil company **Petrosen's** sale of 12 additional oil blocks in 2019 in line with the new petroleum code, which is still under deliberation.<sup>66</sup>

The newly appointed government has been instructed to prioritise actions related to the social economy, digital economy, youth development and professional training.<sup>67</sup> It appears President Sall has been able to establish a mix of regime loyalists and new actors whom he believes will be able to put his vision for Senegal into effect. For existing and potential investors in the Senegalese economy, the new government will inspire confidence as important domains such as economy and energy have seen the appointment of highly qualified technocrats.

## Planner

December 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Jeune Afrique*. Municipal elections;

2022 **Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA)** offshore gas field: production of natural gas set to begin

<sup>56</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 10 Apr 2019

<sup>57</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 10 Apr 2019

<sup>58</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 10 Apr 2019

<sup>59</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 10 Apr 2019

<sup>60</sup> Agence Ecofin, 9 Apr 2019

<sup>61</sup> Agence Ecofin, 9 Apr 2019

<sup>62</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>63</sup> Agence Ecofin, 9 Apr 2019

<sup>64</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 8 Apr 2019

<sup>65</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 27 Feb 2019

<sup>66</sup> *La Tribune Afrique*, 2 Oct 2018

<sup>67</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, 8 Apr 2019

## Chronology

11 Apr 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Presidence Senegalaise*. **Egypt's** President **Abdel Fattah-Al Sisi** visits Senegal;

9 Apr 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Agence Ecofin*. **United Kingdom**-based **British Petroleum** awards a detailed pre-project engineering contract (Pre-FEED) to **United States**-based **KBR's** UK operating subsidiary for development phases 2 and 3 of its **Senegal-Mauritania Greater Tortue Ahmeyim** project;

8 Apr 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *RFI*. President **Macky Sall** names a 32-person cabinet;

5 Apr 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *RFI*. Prime minister **Mahammed Boun Abdallah Dionne** presents his resignation as well as that of his cabinet in anticipation of the announcement of a new executive;

2 Apr 2019 **Diarniadio (Senegal)** *Agence Presse Senegalaise*. President **Macky Sall** is inaugurated for a second term;

29 Mar 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Jeune Afrique*. **Proparco**, the private sector development branch of **l'Agence Francaise du Developpement**, intends to open an office in Dakar;

22 Mar 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Agence Ecofin*. The energy ministry reports that more than 42% of people living in rural areas currently have access to electricity;

18 Mar 2019 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Agence Ecofin*. **Australia**-based **Avenira** reports that \$183m will be needed in order to bring the **Gadde Bissik** phosphate deposit into production;

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