

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Senegal Briefing December 2018

Senegal Summary 12 December 2018

The ruling Benno Boff Yakaar (BKK) presidential coalition and its constituent parties, Alliance pour la République (APR), Parti Socialiste (PS) and Alliance des Forces de Progrès (AFP), officially endorse President Macky Sall (2012-present) as their candidate for the 24 February presidential elections. Uncertainty persists as to whether opposition candidates Karim Wade and Khalifa Sall will be allowed to run in the 2019 presidential elections. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) reports that Senegal generated \$219.6m in revenue from its extractive sector in 2017, an 8.5% increase from 2016.

Ruling BKK coalition endorses President Macky Sall as presidential candidate

Senegal's ruling coalition, **Benno Boff Yakaar (BKK)**, has officially endorsed President **Macky Sall** (2012-present) as its candidate for the 24 February presidential elections.¹ The BKK's confirmation of Sall's candidature will significantly increase his chances of being re-elected for a second seven year-presidential mandate. The BKK gave its endorsement on 1 December at an event attended by an estimated 10,000 individuals at the recently inaugurated **Dakar Arena**.² Present at the meeting were a host of heads of states and other dignitaries from neighbouring countries, including **Mauritania's** President **Mohamed Ould Aziz** (2009-present), **Cote d'Ivoire's** President **Alassane Ouattara** (2010-present), **Gambia's** President **Adama Barrow** (2017-present) and **Liberia's** President **George Weah** (2018-present).³

Prior to the BKK endorsement, President Sall's party, the **Alliance pour la République (APR)**, confirmed him as the APR's candidate at its extraordinary congress on 30 November.⁴ BKK coalition members, the **Parti Socialiste (PS)** and the **Alliance des Forces de Progrès (AFP)**, had also endorsed Sall on 27 November.⁵ The PS and AFP are respectively led by 2007 presidential candidate **Ousmane Tanor** and **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) president **Moustapha Niasse**.⁶ According to **Mor Ngom**, president of the APR parliamentary group, these endorsements were necessary to demonstrate the BKK's strength and diversity.⁷ Communication minister **El Hadj Hamidou Kasse** claims this diversity gives the BKK a significant advantage over the opposition:⁸

"The BKK coalition parties embrace liberal, nationalist, progressive and republican political ideologies."⁹

¹ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

² RFI, 2 Dec 2018

³ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁴ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁵ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁶ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁷ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁸ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

⁹ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

In thanking the coalition leaders for their confidence, President Sall reiterated the advantage of diversity.¹⁰ Sall also emphasised the need for all BKK coalition members to remain united to repeat the success they enjoyed in the 2012 presidential elections.¹¹ Sall promised to consolidate peace in the troubled **Casamance** region if re-elected.¹² **Ziguinchor** (Casamance region) mayor **Abdoulaye Balde** recently pledged his support for President Sall.¹³ Balde is also president of the opposition **Union Centriste du Senegal (UCS)** and historically an ally of former president **Abdoulaye Wade** (2000-2012).¹⁴ His support for Sall will bolster the BKK's chances of drawing votes from the opposition.

The multitude of endorsements by the main parties of the presidential coalition will increase the BKK's confidence in the lead up to the presidential elections. APR national administrative secretary **Abdourahmane Ndiaye** underlined the importance of the coalition's support for president Sall.¹⁵ The BKK has won every election since 2012.¹⁶ The APR obtained 26% of registered votes in the first round of the 2012 presidential election but with the support of coalition partners, it received 65% of votes in the second round.¹⁷

Uncertainty remains as to whether the imprisoned ex-mayor of **Dakar**, **Khalifa Sall**, and former minister **Karim Wade** will be allowed to run for presidential office (see below). This significantly reduces the pool of credible opposition candidates and leaves **Ousmane Sonko** as President Sall's most serious opposition challenger.¹⁸ Sonko is a former tax inspector who is currently a member of parliament (MP) for the opposition **Pastef les Patriotes**.¹⁹

Although Sall is favoured to win the election, he is under pressure from his ruling coalition to improve Senegal's economic situation and fully implement the second phase of its medium-term economic strategy, **Plan Senegal Emergent II**.²⁰ Senegal has a reputation as one of **sub-Saharan Africa's** least corrupt countries, ranking 66th out of 180 countries in the 2017 **Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index**.²¹ Transparency International acknowledged Senegal as one of the countries that has made significant progress with respect to reducing corruption since 2012.²² If the February elections appear to deliver political stability, this is likely to bolster Senegal's attractiveness as an investment destination.

Will Karim Wade and Khalifa Sall be allowed to run?

The **United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR)** has requested Senegalese authorities to re-examine the 2015 guilty verdict that condemned opposition **Parti Democratique Senegalaise** presidential candidate **Karim Wade** to six years imprisonment and a fine of €220m (\$250m).²³ If Senegalese authorities accede to this request, this could increase Wade's chances of being able to run in the February 2019 presidential elections. The **OHCHR** reached a decision on 22 October in response to a

¹⁰ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

¹¹ RFI, 2 Dec 2018

¹² RFI, 2 Dec 2018

¹³ Sud Quotidien, 1 Dec 2018

¹⁴ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

¹⁵ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

¹⁶ Agence Presse Senegalaise, 30 Nov 2018

¹⁷ Jeune Afrique, 1 Dec 2018

¹⁸ Jeune Afrique, 19 Feb 2018

¹⁹ Jeune Afrique, 19 Feb 2018

²⁰ Sud Quotidien, 28 Nov 2018

²¹ Corruptions Perception Index 2017

²² Corruptions Perception Index 2017

²³ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

complaint that Wade's lawyers lodged in May 2016.²⁴ The OHCHR decision noted that the March 2015 guilty verdict of the **Cour de Repression de l'Enrichissement Illicite (CREI)** (court against illicit enrichment) against Wade did not follow due process.²⁵ The OHCHR said the CREI had not permitted Wade to appeal the verdict at a judicial institution with higher authority.²⁶

As a result of the CREI judgement, Wade cannot run as a candidate in the upcoming presidential race, despite being released from prison after he was granted presidential clemency in June 2016.²⁷ According to Article 131 of the electoral code, any individual who has been sentenced to at least five years imprisonment is not allowed to have their name appear on the electoral list.²⁸ According to the revised constitution approved in April, an individual must register on the electoral list in order to be an eligible presidential candidate.²⁹ Although Wade registered on the electoral roll at the Senegalese embassy in **Kuwait** in April, the interior ministry confirmed in July that his name would be removed from the list.³⁰

Wade's lawyer, **Seydou Diagne**, says the OHCHR decision is a step in the right direction.³¹ Diagne noted that all the appeals made on behalf of Wade at courts outside of Senegal have been ruled in favour of Wade.³² In February and June 2013 the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice in Abuja (Nigeria)** ruled that Wade should be tried at the **Haute Cour de Justice** (higher court of justice) rather than at the CREI.³³ The court also ruled that the CREI had violated Wade's presumption of innocence.³⁴ Furthermore, in 2015 the **UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention** declared that Wade had been imprisoned arbitrarily.³⁵

Justice minister **Ismail Madior Fall** said the CREI verdict could not be annulled because the OHCHR is not a judicial institution.³⁶ State lawyer **Bassirou Ngom** also believes the OHCHR decision will have no impact because the CREI followed all the right procedures.³⁷ Nonetheless, Wade's legal team promised to keep finding solutions that will enable him to run for president. Wade's legal team filed an application at the ECOWAS Court of Justice on 6 November.³⁸ The application accuses the Senegalese government of not abiding by its international legal obligations by not allowing Wade to run for presidential office.³⁹ This step appears to be the last hope for Wade to be eligible to participate in the elections.⁴⁰ However,

²⁴ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

²⁵ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

²⁶ Jeune Afrique, 15 Nov 2018

²⁷ Jeune Afrique, 20 Jun 2018

²⁸ Jeune Afrique, 20 Jun 2018

²⁹ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

³⁰ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

³¹ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

³² Jeune Afrique, 15 Nov 2018

³³ Jeune Afrique, 15 Nov 2018

³⁴ Jeune Afrique, 15 Nov 2018

³⁵ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

³⁶ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

³⁷ RFI, 15 Nov 2018

³⁸ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

³⁹ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

⁴⁰ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

even if Wade obtains favourable judgement, Ngom stated that any decision from the ECOWAS High Court is not binding on the state.⁴¹

Dakar's former mayor, **Khalifa Sall**, also faces the prospect of not being able to run for the presidential race in February. Sall announced his candidature for the presidency on 26 July⁴² despite being sentenced to five years in prison and a fine of 1.8 billion FCFA, (\$3.1m) along with three others, for receiving cash advances.⁴³ On 30 August, the **Cour d'Appel de Dakar** (Dakar court of appeal) rejected Sall's appeal and upheld his sentence.⁴⁴ Sall is still awaiting judgement from an additional appeal he made at the **Cour Suprême** (supreme court) and will appear before a judge on 20 December.⁴⁵ Khalifa Sall's adviser, **Moussa Tine**, claims President Sall is using the judiciary to prevent Khalifa Sall from running for president.⁴⁶ Former minister and PDS member **Amadou Sall** (no relation) agrees, claiming the former mayor's imprisonment is intended to protect President Sall from serious competition in the upcoming election.⁴⁷

The ongoing legal troubles of two of Senegal's most prominent political figures have dominated the Senegalese political landscape over the past few years. Karim Wade was designated as the PDS presidential candidate on 21 March 2015, but was sentenced to prison on 23 March.⁴⁸ Since his release from prison in June 2016, he has been in self-imposed exile in **Qatar**.⁴⁹ Wade has announced his imminent return to Senegal on several occasions, most recently in November.⁵⁰ However, his declaration did not come to reality. It is widely believed that Karim Wade will be arrested upon arriving in Senegal on the basis of his failure to pay the €220m (\$250m) fine after he was released from prison.⁵¹

In an interview with **France**-based media organ **France 24**, President Sall denied allegations that the Senegalese judiciary is being used to fight political battles.⁵² President Sall went on to describe the judiciary as "*a responsible and independent institution*".⁵³ President Sall stated that if he is re-elected, he would consider the possibility of granting Khalifa Sall and Karim Wade amnesty.⁵⁴

Even if both individuals are allowed to register on the electoral roll, they will be confronted with other challenges. Karim Wade is a French passport holder and Senegalese presidential candidates are not allowed to hold dual nationality.⁵⁵ It is unknown whether Wade has renounced his French citizenship.⁵⁶ Sall was expelled from the Parti Socialiste (PS) in December 2017⁵⁷ and has yet to be endorsed by another political party. His chances for

⁴¹ Jeune Afrique, 9 Dec 2018

⁴² Jeune Afrique, 9 Sep 2018

⁴³ Jeune Afrique, 30 Aug 2018

⁴⁴ Jeune Afrique, 30 Aug 2018

⁴⁵ Jeune Afrique, 11 Dec 2018

⁴⁶ RFI, 13 Nov 2018

⁴⁷ RFI, 13 Nov 2018

⁴⁸ Jeune Afrique, 20 Jun 2018

⁴⁹ Jeune Afrique, 15 Nov 2018

⁵⁰ Quotidien Sud, 17 Nov 2018

⁵¹ Jeune Afrique, 11 Dec 2018

⁵² RFI, 13 Nov 2018

⁵³ RFI, 13 Nov 2018

⁵⁴ RFI, 13 Nov 2018

⁵⁵ Jeune Afrique, 11 Dec 2018

⁵⁶ Jeune Afrique, 11 Dec 2018

⁵⁷ Jeune Afrique, 9 Sep 2018

election would be highly compromised if he did not have a political party to run under. Candidates have until 26 December to register on the voters' roll.⁵⁸

Senegal generates \$219.6m in revenue from extractive sector in 2017

The **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)** annual report on Senegal, released on 19 November, notes that the extractive sector generated \$219.6m in total revenue during 2017.⁵⁹ The 8.5% increase compared to 2016⁶⁰ shows that the extractive sector is becoming an increasingly important component of the Senegalese economy. Mining activity provided \$167.8m or 89.2% of extractive sector revenue while the petroleum sector contributed \$17.8m or 10.8% in revenue.⁶¹ Despite the seemingly low contribution by the oil sector to revenue figures, oil revenue doubled from 2016 to 2017.⁶² This was due in large part to an increase in bonuses paid to the treasury by state-owned **Société des Petroles du Senegal (Petrosen)**.⁶³

Although these figures demonstrate that the Senegalese extractive industry is contributing positively to the country's economy, the extractive sector is far from reaching its full potential. In 2017, activity in the extractive sector accounted for 35.5% of exports but only 1.9% of gross domestic product (GDP).⁶⁴ Nonetheless, this scenario is set to change as Senegal is becoming an increasingly attractive investment destination for firms operating in the extractive domain. **United Kingdom (UK)**-based **British Petroleum** announced in December 2016 that it would invest \$916m in an offshore gas field between Senegal and **Mauritania**.⁶⁵ In May 2017, France-based **Total** signed two exploration and exploitation agreements with the Senegalese government, which will require an investment of \$100m.⁶⁶ **United States (US)**-based **Kosmos Energy** and UK-based **Capricorn Oil** also have well-established operations in Senegal.⁶⁷ Senegal is forecast to produce from 200,000 to 300,000 barrels of oil per day, when it starts production in 2021.⁶⁸

President Macky Sall has committed to making the oil and gas sectors the cornerstone of Senegal's economic development in collaboration with the private sector.⁶⁹ To this end, the final draft of the new petroleum code will be submitted to lawmakers in December.⁷⁰ The new petroleum code is set for adoption in January 2019. It aims to establish a legal framework that attracts investors and enables Senegal to benefit optimally from its resource endowment.⁷¹ The EITI report noted that Senegal is the first country in **Africa** and the fourth globally to have attained good progress in implementing EITI benchmarks with respect to strengthening revenue transparency.⁷²

⁵⁸ Jeune Afrique, 11 Dec 2018

⁵⁹ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶⁰ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶¹ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶² Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶³ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶⁴ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶⁵ Jeune Afrique, 19 Dec 2016

⁶⁶ Le Parisien, 2 May 2017

⁶⁷ Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

⁶⁸ La Tribune Afrique, 2 Oct 2018

⁶⁹ La Tribune Afrique, 6 July 2018

⁷⁰ World Oil, 9 Nov 2018

⁷¹ La Tribune Afrique, 2 Oct 2018

⁷² Jeune Afrique, 23 Nov 2018

Planner

Dec 2018 Dakar (**Senegal**) *Bloomberg*. Parliament to vote on new petroleum code;
 Feb 2019 Dakar (**Senegal**) Presidential elections;

Chronology

8 Dec 2018 Dakar (**Senegal**) *Jeune Afrique*. Senegalese parliament adopts finance bill with 2019 national budget standing at 4,000 billion FCFA (\$6.9 billion);

3 Dec 2018 Dakar (**Senegal**) *Africanews*. Senegal will have the presidency of the **United Nations Human Rights Council** starting 1 January 2019;

1 Dec 2018 Dakar (**Senegal**) *Jeune Afrique*. Ruling coalition **Benno Boff Yakaar (BKK)** endorses President **Macky Sall** as its candidate for the February presidential election;

19 Nov 2018 Dakar (**Senegal**) *Jeune Afrique*; The **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)** annual report on Senegal notes the extractive sector generated \$219.6m in total revenue during 2017, an 8.5% increase from 2017;

15 Nov 2018 New York (**United States**) *RFI*; The **United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR)** requests Senegalese authorities to re-examine the 2015 guilty verdict of opposition **Parti Democratique Senegalaise** presidential candidate **Karim Wade**;

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