

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Senegal Monthly Briefing December 2022

Senegal Summary 21 December 2022

The Assemblée nationale (national assembly) rejects a motion tabled by the opposition Yew Askan Wi (YAW) coalition to censure prime minister Amadou Ba. YAW coalition deputy Massata Samb causes a brawl in parliament after slapping ruling Benno Bokk Yakaar (BBY) coalition member of parliament Amy Ndiaye in a parliamentary session on 30 November. The incident comes amid rising tensions between BBY and YEW following the legislative elections in July in which BBY nearly lost its comfortable majority. Prime minister Amadou Ba arrives in France to co-chair the fifth Franco-Senegalese Intergovernmental Seminar with his counterpart, Elisabeth Borne, on 8 and 9 December, which ends with a 100 billion FCFA (\$161.6m) donation from France to Senegal.

Parliament rejects opposition motion to censure prime minister ...

The **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) rejected a motion to censure prime minister **Amadou Ba**, tabled by the **Yew Askan Wi (YAW)** opposition coalition, on 15 December.¹ The motion to censure Ba is yet another example of rising tensions between the opposition and ruling coalition (see below). The YAW introduced the motion after Ba presented the general policy statement on 12 December. Opposition members of parliament (MPs) strongly criticised Ba after his presentation, accusing him and his government of creating a “nightmare” **Senegal**.²

YAW parliamentary group president **Biram Soulèye Diop** tabled the motion to censure Ba, claiming the prime minister did not want to submit to a vote of confidence by MPs following his general policy statement and describing it as an attempt by Ba to block democratic norms.³ The motion needed 83 votes to pass, but received only the 55 votes from YAW MPs out of the total 165 deputies who voted.⁴ The **Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS)/Wallu Sénégal** coalition, which has 24 seats in parliament, abstained from voting, and no MP from the ruling **Benno Bokk Yakaar (BBY)** coalition voted in favour of the motion.

Diop addressed the national assembly prior to the vote, accusing the government of imprisoning opponents, a lack of transparency and quality education, and falling short in its fight against corruption.⁵ YAW MP **Guy Marius Sanga** also accused Ba and his government of having a neo-colonial policy and pledging allegiance to **France**.⁶ The comments came a few days after Ba had been in France to co-chair the fifth **Franco-Senegalese Intergovernmental Seminar** (see below).

Ba also addressed the national assembly prior to the vote, calling on MPs to reject the motion:

“The responsible commitment of the honourable representatives of the people to purely and simply reject this inopportune motion of no confidence.”⁷

Ba is considered a technocrat in Senegal’s political realm and does not engage in political exchanges. However, the motion of censure prompted him to tackle the opposition head-on and call out the motion as baseless, dismantling many of the arguments presented by the opposition.⁸ Ba claimed that the censure motion was written prior to delivery of the general policy statement and was not based

¹ Anadolu Agency, 15 Dec 2022

² Jeune Afrique, 13 Dec 2022

³ Press Afrik, 15 Dec 2022

⁴ Lejecos, 15 Dec 2022

⁵ Jeune Afrique, 16 Dec 2022

⁶ Jeune Afrique, 13 Dec 2022

⁷ Le Quotidien, 15 Dec 2022

⁸ Senepius.com, 16 Dec 2022

on the statement's content but instead was planned by the opposition as an attempt to make the country ungovernable.⁹

The rejection of the motion to censure Ba is another loss for the YAW in parliament. The opposition coalition attempted to block the budgets presented in the 2023 finance bill for certain institutions that the coalition deems “useless” and “budget-consuming”.¹⁰ The opposition also caused tensions during the September vote of the new president of the national assembly, which ended in the police being called to allow the vote to proceed (*see ARC Briefing Senegal Sep 2022*).

More recently, YAW coalition deputy **Massata Samb** provoked a brawl in parliament after slapping BBY MP **Amy Ndiaye** in a parliamentary session on 30 November. Ndiaye threw a chair at Samb in retaliation before another MP tackled her to the floor.¹¹ Ndiaye had made comments over the previous weekend, criticising opposition **Parti de l'Unité et du Rassemblement (PUR)** party religious leader Serigne **Moustapha Sy**, who was not in favour of President **Macky Sall** (2012-present) running for a third term. Samb, a member of PUR, was addressing parliament on these comments when the incident occurred. The incident comes as tensions between the BBY and YEW continue to climb, following the legislative elections in July in which the BBY nearly lost its comfortable majority (*see ARC Briefing Senegal Aug 2022*).

The incident drew further negative attention on social media, raising questions about the culture of violence against women in Senegal.¹² The incident took place during the **United Nations'** 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign. Samb and the MP who tackled Ndiaye, **Mamadou Niang**, were both arrested, and it is reported that they will face charges.¹³

PM arrives in France

Prime minister Amadou Ba co-chaired the fifth **Franco-Senegalese Intergovernmental Seminar in France** with his counterpart, **Elisabeth Borne**, on 8 and 9 December, which ended with France donating 100 billion FCFA (\$161.6m) to Senegal. The funds are intended to help Senegal bear the additional economic costs caused by the **Russia-Ukraine** conflict, which has led to a cost-of-living crisis in Senegal and a weakened budget after the government implemented subsidies.¹⁴ Several other issues were also discussed at the seminar, including education, sport and culture, economic development, sustainable agriculture, defence and security.¹⁵

The trip was Ba's first official one abroad after being appointed to the prime minister role in October. Its success bodes well for his reputation, particularly after facing down a vote of censure (*see above*).¹⁶ Ba was accompanied by foreign affairs minister **Aïssata Tall Sall**, interior minister **Félix-Antoine Diome** and economy minister **Oulimata Sarr**, who all discussed other issues with their counterparts.¹⁷ France noted its plans to streamline and strengthen its security cooperation with Senegal but also raised concerns over the number of young Senegalese who are trying to reach **Europe** illegally.¹⁸

France's budgetary support is notable as the last time Senegal received such a donation from its former colonial master was in 2012. According to France, the financial assistance has not been needed up until this point.¹⁹ While the funds are an acknowledgement of the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on Senegal, their timing coincides with France losing influence among its allies in **West Africa**

⁹ Press Afrik, 15 Dec 2022

¹⁰ Sud Quotidien, 16 Dec 2022

¹¹ Reuters, 1 Dec 2022

¹² Reuters, 1 Dec 2022

¹³ Africanews, 16 Dec 2022

¹⁴ Le Quotidien, 11 Dec 2022

¹⁵ Africanews, 9 Dec 2022

¹⁶ Jeune Afrique, 25 Nov 2022

¹⁷ Africanews, 9 Dec 2022

¹⁸ Jeune Afrique, 25 Nov 2022

¹⁹ Le Quotidien, 11 Dec 2022

such as **Guinea** and **Mali**. Senegal is set to begin gas production in 2023 at both its **Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA)** and **Sangomar** fields, to which several European countries have been vying for access, including France (*see ARC Briefing Senegal Nov 2022*). France is a leading investor in Senegal and its largest trading partner, which alongside events such as the intergovernmental seminar, indicates that the relationship between the two countries remains strong, which France may be looking to take advantage of.²⁰

What lies ahead in 2023?

Senegal will be looking forward to a prosperous new year as production of its GTA offshore gas field and Sangomar offshore oil field is set to begin. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has forecast that Senegal's economic growth will reach 8.3% in 2023 while the government is anticipating economic growth of 10.1%, driven by oil and gas production. European countries are likely to continue courting Senegal for access to its gas supplies following its agreement with **Nigeria**, **Morocco** and **Mauritania** for the development of a gas pipeline that will run from Morocco via West Africa to Europe. Depending on the details of the agreement, Senegal may also be able to use the pipeline to supply Europe.

Political tensions will continue to climb throughout 2023. Sall has still not announced if he will run in the 2024 presidential elections, but the longer he puts off the announcement, the more political tension the delay creates. If he does run, his announcement is likely to cause protests and unrest.

The July legislative elections were a turning point for parliamentary dynamics, and the opposition coalition YAW will continue to challenge the ruling BBY coalition. This could lead to delays in matters that need to be voted on in the national assembly, as seen with the finance budget. In the build-up to the presidential election, YAW is likely to push back even more against the BBY coalition.

Senegal's democracy has long been admired in the volatile West African region. However, 2022 has seen an increasing number of events that analysts consider a backsliding in democracy in Senegal. Election-related violence ahead of the July legislative polls left at least three people dead, while the government has been accused of cracking down on press freedoms (*see ARC Briefing Senegal Nov 2022*). Former president **Abdoulaye Wade** (2000-2012) and opposition leader **Ousmane Sonko** were barred from running in the legislative elections, widely viewed as a move by Sall to crack down on the opposition. The coming year will test the country's democratic values further as election campaigns kick off, creating a risk of social unrest at levels Senegal has not seen before.

²⁰ ARC Senegal analyst

Planner

2023 **(Senegal) Sangomar** offshore oil field production set to begin;

2023 **(Senegal) Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA)** offshore gas field production of natural gas set to begin;

Feb 2024 **(Senegal)** Presidential elections;

Chronology

18 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Agence Ecofin. African Development Bank (AfDB)** approves a loan for \$42m to help **Senegal** develop livestock production and productivity;

17 Dec 2022 **Tokyo (Japan) Agence Ecofin. Senegal's President Macky Sall** arrives for a state visit in **Japan**;

15 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Jeune Afrique.** Journalist **Pape Alé Niang** is released from prison after a month in detention after being accused of undermining national security;

15 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Reuters. Senegal** issues a 150 billion FCFA (\$232.31m) 12-year treasury bond to help finance its 2023 budget;

12 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Dakar Actu.** Prime minister **Amadou Ba** presents his inaugural general policy statement to parliament;

12 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Agence Ecofin. Australia-headquartered Chesser Resources** announces that its **Diamba Sud** gold mine will produce \$1.14 billion in revenue over 7.5 years;

11 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Le Quotidien. France** confirms it will give **Senegal** 100 billion FCFA (\$160m) to help offset the impacts of the **Russia-Ukraine** war;

8 Dec 2022 **Paris (France) Lejecos. Senegal's** prime minister, **Amadou Ba**, and his **French** counterpart, **Elisabeth Borne**, co-chair the fifth **Franco-Senegalese Intergovernmental Seminar**;

7 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Le Quotidien. Coordination of Press Associations (CAP)** holds a sit-in demanding the release of journalist **Pape Alé Niang**;

7 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Lejecos.** Economy ministry indicates the extractive sector recorded annual growth of 2.1% in 2021, citing increased gold and phosphate mining;

3 Dec 2022 **Kayes (Senegal) Le Quotidien. Members of l'Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal (Omvs)** (organisation for the development of the Senegal River) open the new **Gouina** hydroelectric dam, with a capacity of 140 megawatts (MW), which will provide Omvs member states **Senegal Mauritania, Mali and Guinea** with power;

1 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance. Germany** donates 35.5 billion FCFA (\$57.4m) to government for two flagship projects – digitising the public administration and implementing projects in digital technology and renewable energies;

2 Dec 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Le Quotidien.** Member of parliament (MP) **Massata Samb** assaults fellow MP **Amy Ndiaye Gniiby** during a national assembly session;

30 Nov 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance. African Development Bank (AfDB)** approves a loan for 44.6 billion FCFA (\$72.3m) to assist with resource mobilisation, broadening the tax base and economic reforms;

29 Nov 2022 **Dakar (Senegal) Financial Afrik.** Australia-headquartered oil and gas company **Woodside** completes the construction phase of **Senegal's** first floating production, storage and offloading (FPSO) facility for the **Sangomar** project;

28 Nov 2022 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Sika Finance. Islamic Development Bank* approves a loan of \$82m for **Société nationale de commercialisation des oléagineux du Sénégal (SONACOS)** to plant groundnuts, soyabeans and other crops;

25 Nov 2022 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Agence Ecofin.* Parliament approves the 2023 finance bill which has set expenditure at over \$8 billion against expected revenues of \$6.4 billion;

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