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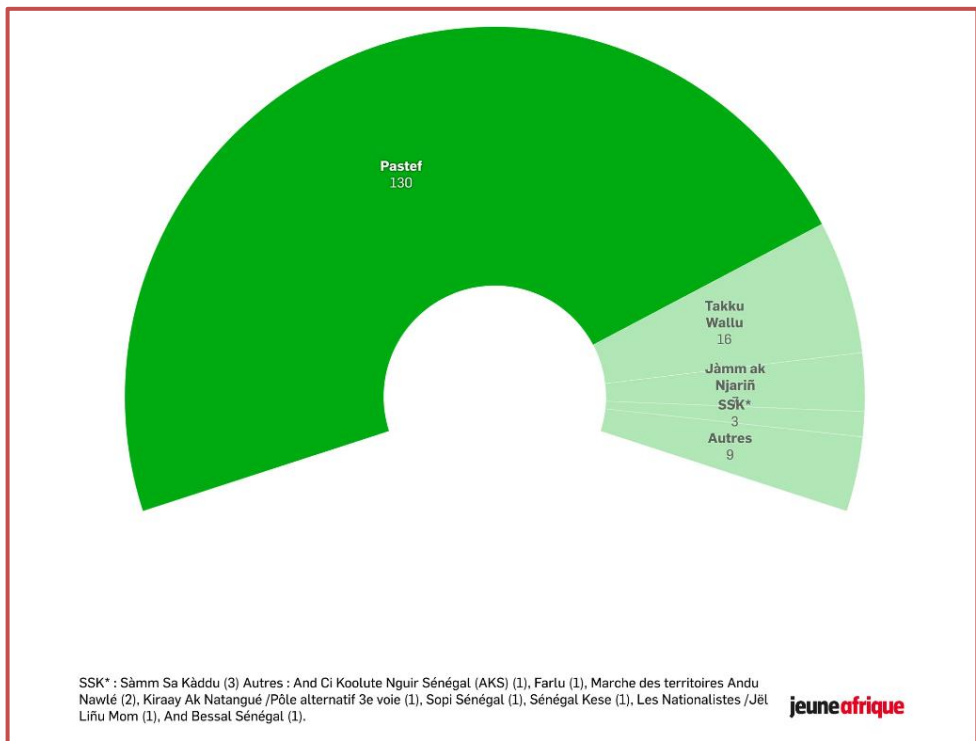
**Senegal Monthly Briefing December 2024**

**Senegal Summary 12 December 2024**

*The Conseil constitutionnel (constitutional council) confirms on 27 November the results of the 17 November legislative elections, confirming that the ruling **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef)** won 130 seats out of a possible 165. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** (2024-present) embarks on a Gulf tour, meeting with leaders in the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** and in **Qatar** to discuss cooperation and raise Senegal's profile. Speaking at the **Doha Forum**, Faye reports that he is making progress in his talks with junta-led **Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger**.*

**As expected, Pastef wins legislative elections**

The **Conseil constitutionnel** (constitutional council) published the final results of the 17 November legislative elections on 27 November, confirming that the ruling **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef)** won 130 seats out of a possible 165. This majority held by a single party is one of the largest in Senegal's history, with the closest being that of the **Parti socialiste**, which held 103 out of 120 seats in 1988.<sup>1</sup> Former president **Macky Sall's** (2012-2024) new coalition, **Takku Wallu Senegal**, won 16 seats, while former prime minister **Amadou Ba's Jamm ak njariñ** coalition won seven seats and **Dakar** mayor **Barthélémy Dias' Sàmm Sa Kàddu's** coalition won three seats.<sup>2</sup> The remaining seats were won by smaller coalitions/parties as indicated below:



Source: Jeune Afrique

This majority should allow President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** (2024-present) and prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** to push through their planned reform programme. The results reaffirm Faye and

<sup>1</sup> Le Monde, 27 Nov 2024

<sup>2</sup> Le Monde, 27 Nov 2024

Sonko's popularity while confirming that the political class is no longer interested in the politics of former leaders such as Sall and Ba.

Faye told a cabinet meeting on 20 November, when provisional results had been published, that the focus is a *"coherent and pragmatic systemic transformation of Senegal"* with an immediate focus on dealing with the high cost of living and unemployment and longer-term goals of revitalising the economy.<sup>3</sup> Sonko and the elected 130 officials met on 24 November to discuss the way forward.<sup>4</sup>

The new **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) met on 2 December for its first sitting. Notably, Sonko was elected as president of the national assembly in the legislative elections but gave up this role to maintain his prime ministership on 2 December.<sup>5</sup> Transport minister **El Malick Ndiaye** was elected on 2 December to take up the role instead, prompting him to resign from his ministerial role. Faye appointed **Yankhoba Diémé** as transport minister later that day.

Outside of implementing reforms, the national assembly will now be able to vote on key issues, including the 2025 finance bill, which has to be adopted before the end of December.

### Faye embarks on Gulf tour...

President Faye embarked on a **Gulf** tour, meeting with leaders in the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** and in **Qatar** to discuss cooperation and raise Senegal's profile in the Gulf region. Faye met with UAE President Sheikh **Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan** (2022-present) on 5 December to discuss bilateral relations and ways to increase cooperation in sectors such as investment, energy, trade and development. The two leaders praised ties between the countries and expressed intention to build a deeper, longer-term partnership in key areas.<sup>6</sup> In June, the **Dubai Chambers** carried out a trade mission to Senegal during which CEO **Mohammed Ali Rashed Lootah** reported that the UAE's investment in Senegal had reached \$846m between 2011 and the end of 2023.

Following this, Faye attended the **Doha Forum** in Qatar on 7 December. The forum brings together global leaders, including presidents and ministers, to discuss global challenges. On the side lines of the forum, Faye met with Qatar's Emir, **Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani**, and prime minister, **Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani**, to discuss enhancing cooperation.<sup>7</sup> Since Faye's election, there have been several high-level meetings between Senegalese and Qatari diplomats and ministers, including foreign affairs minister **Yassine Fall** and Qatar's ambassador to Senegal, **Youssif bin Shaban Al-Sada**, in November, and Sonko and Al Sada in June.

A senior presidency official noted that Faye's visit to these Gulf countries is in line with his commitment to *"forging strategic alliances that address Senegal's economic and social challenges"*.<sup>8</sup> While Senegal has historically had strong ties to **France** and the wider **European Union (EU)**, Faye appears to be pushing for a diversification of these relations, and Gulf countries have become an increasingly popular option for **African** leaders across the board.

### ... and reports progress in talks with junta-led countries

Speaking at the Doha Forum, Faye reported that he was making progress in his talks with junta-led **Burkina Faso, Mali** and **Niger**, which announced plans in January to withdraw from the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**. The countries' withdrawal comes into effect in January 2025.

ECOWAS appointed Faye as a facilitator in July to try to mend relations with the three countries.<sup>9</sup> Faye noted that while there is nothing to prevent these three countries' new confederation, the **Alliance**

<sup>3</sup> RFI, 21 Nov 2024

<sup>4</sup> Jeune Afrique, 25 Nov 2024

<sup>5</sup> Jeune Afrique, 2 Dec 2024

<sup>6</sup> Senenews, 6 Dec 2024

<sup>7</sup> Senenews, 8 Dec 2024

<sup>8</sup> Senenews, 8 Dec 2024

<sup>9</sup> RFI, 9 Dec 2024

**des États du Sahel (AES)** (alliance of Sahel States) from existing, this should not mean the “disintegration” of ECOWAS.<sup>10</sup> Faye also called for the regional bloc to work on reforms to adapt to the challenges facing it while publicly addressing some of the concerns raised by the three countries, namely that ECOWAS has been unsupportive in helping them combat their insurgencies. Faye stated that if ECOWAS countries have security problems, “*we all have security problems*”.<sup>11</sup>

An ECOWAS summit is scheduled for 15 December, during which the junta-led countries’ withdrawal could be finalised. As Faye correctly noted, ECOWAS remains a key framework for member countries to resolve crises in the region, and the withdrawal of these three countries will escalate security risks in the region. This is a scenario that countries which have thus far been largely unaffected by jihadist insurgencies, including Senegal, **Côte d’Ivoire** and **Ghana**, would want to avoid as much as possible. However, without significant progress before the weekend, it is likely that Faye’s ‘mission’ to bring these countries back into the bloc would have been unsuccessful.

### What to look for in 2025

Senegal’s economy will be at the centre of its 2025 developments. With his new majority in the national assembly, President Faye can implement his planned economic reforms – mainly reducing budgets and spending – and follow through on campaign promises which were delayed by the former ruling party’s opposition in the national assembly. Following the discovery that Senegal’s debt is higher than originally anticipated, its programme with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** also requires adjustment. This is expected by the middle of the year, which could also impact the initial requirements of the programme, such as ending subsidies or cutting spending further.

Alongside this, Senegal’s offshore gas production is anticipated in 2025, which will bolster revenues. However, Faye’s administration is still in the process of reviewing the initial contracts signed for these projects and could still push for the state to have a greater share of gas revenue. In light of the higher debt figures, this is an increasingly likely scenario.

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<sup>10</sup> RFI, 9 Dec 2024

<sup>11</sup> APA News, 9 Dec 2024

## Planner

Q4 2025 **(Senegal) Grand Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA)** offshore gas field production of natural gas is set to begin;

2027 **(Senegal) Yakaar-Teranga** gas project set to begin production;

## Chronology

9 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) AFP**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** says he is making progress in talks with junta-led **Burkina Faso, Mali** and **Niger** about their decision to withdraw from the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**;

9 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Egypt Today**. Defence minister **Birame Diop** meets with **Egypt's** ambassador to Senegal, **Khaled Aref**, to discuss bolstering cooperation in the field of defence and combating terrorism;

6 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) APA News**. **Colombia** opens its embassy in Dakar;

5 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) News.az**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** meets with **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** President Sheikh **Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan** to discuss bilateral cooperation;

2 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance**. **Elhadji Malick Ndiaye** is sworn in as **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) president, at 41 the youngest in Senegal's history, and President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** replaces Ndiaye, formerly the land transport minister, with **Yankhoba Diém**, whose role as labour minister is assigned to **Abasse Fall**;

2 Dec 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Jeune Afrique**. Prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** confirms he will remain prime minister and will give up the **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) role he won in the legislative election as he cannot hold both;

2 Dec 2024 **Saint-Louis (Senegal) Senenews**. The trial of 80 individuals arrested for electoral violence during the legislative elections on 17 November continues, with the prosecutor seeking a five-year prison sentence for 23 individuals identified as primary instigators;

29 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) APA News**. **Commission de régulation du secteur de l'énergie (CRSE)** (energy sector regulatory commission) denies rumours it is increasing electricity prices and confirms it is working towards a reduction;

29 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) France24**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** says **France** should close its army bases in Senegal as their presence is not compatible with Senegal's national sovereignty;

28 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance**. Senegal and **Belgium** open a **Joint Consultation Committee** for political and strategic dialogue and the launch of their 2024-2029 cooperation programme, worth €40m (\$42.07m);

26 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance**. **National Resources Government Institute** reports Senegal loses 95 billion FCFA (\$151.4m) to illicit financial flows, mainly in the mining sector, per year;

26 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Sene News**. **Centre des Hautes Études de Défense et de Sécurité** (centre for advanced defence and security studies) hosts an international meeting under the theme 'Sovereignty and Security in West Africa and the Sahel';

22 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) APA News**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** and his **Russian** counterpart, **Vladimir Putin**, have a telephone discussion focused on strengthening ties and agree on an official visit by Faye to Russia;

22 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) Sene News**. Police arrest former energy minister **Samuel Sarr**, who served under former president **Abdoulaye Wade**, on charges of embezzlement worth 65 billion FCFA (\$104.48m) filed by **West Africa Energy** shareholder **Moustapha Ndiaye**;

21 Nov 2024 **Dakar (Senegal) France24.** The ruling **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef)** wins 130 seats out of 165 in the national assembly elections per provisional results;

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