

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Senegal Summary 29 May 2026

President Bassirou Diomaye Faye (2024-present) dissolves his government on 22 May and dismisses prime minister Ousmane Sonko from his position, ending months of tension between the two leaders. Faye nominates seasoned economist and public servant Ahmadou Al Aminou Lo as Sonko's replacement on 25 May. The political change in Senegal is reflected in its foreign-currency denominated bonds, which are trading at deeply distressed levels after the announcement, adding pressure on the government to reach an International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme as soon as possible, as financing options start to shrink.

Faye dissolves government, removes Sonko as prime minister ...

President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** (2024-present) [dissolved](#) his government on 22 May and dismissed prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** from his position, ending months of tension between the two leaders. Faye and Sonko have been at odds over the country's economic crisis, with Faye reportedly open to a programme with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** and Sonko making it clear he did not wish to pursue one, [noting](#) it would be a "shame" for Senegal to follow this route and a "humiliation for our people" (see *ARC Briefing Senegal Nov 2025*). Sonko has also been [critical](#) about the slow pace of legal action against corrupt figures and justice reforms.

The relationship between the two has been precarious since Faye won the presidential election in 2024. Sonko was the ruling **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef)** candidate for the presidency, but a criminal conviction prevented him from running. Sonko was convicted in June 2023 of corrupting youth and given a two-year prison sentence (see *ARC Briefing Senegal June 2023*). After his release from prison in March 2024 following the passing of an amnesty bill, Sonko selected Faye, his aide, to run in his place in the June 2024 presidential election (see *ARC Briefing Senegal Mar 2024*). Faye appointed Sonko as prime minister when he won the election, but the two have since clashed, with Sonko threatening in March to remove Pastef (which is still his party) from government if Faye failed to align with the party's vision (see *ARC Briefing Senegal Mar 2026*). Tensions between the two persisted and during an address on 2 May, Faye [stated](#):

"As long as (Sonko) remains prime minister, it's because he is doing his job properly, and I am satisfied with that. However, the day I am no longer satisfied, I will put Senegal's interests first."

However, Sonko was not out of government for long before a path was set for him to return as the **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) speaker. National assembly speaker – and Sonko ally – **El Malick Ndiaye** [resigned](#) from his role on 24 May, paving the way for Sonko to run for his position. With Pastef holding a majority in the national assembly, his election was expected to proceed smoothly.

The national assembly on 26 May [elected](#) Sonko as its new speaker, with a commanding 132 out of 133 votes. The opposition boycotted the session, citing that Sonko was not a member of parliament (MP) and therefore could not be elected speaker. However, Sonko did win a parliamentary seat in the November 2024 legislative elections but could not be both an MP and prime minister. To run for the speaker position, he reclaimed his MP position. In his first speech as speaker, Sonko said that he and Faye have "profound differences" but that these are over principles rather than power struggles.

Notably, on 28 April, the national assembly [approved](#) an amendment to the electoral code, making Sonko eligible to run in the 2029 presidential election, as it sets aside the rule that barred him from running in 2024. With the path cleared for him to run again and a new position of power in the

national assembly, which his party dominates, the power struggle between Faye and Sonko is likely to continue and could lead to even greater conflict now that Sonko is no longer prime minister. This was already visible when Sonko criticised the appointment of the new prime minister (see below), [noting](#) in his first national assembly address that Pastef was not consulted on his appointment or the formation of the new government.

... and appoints Ahmadou Al Aminou Lo as prime minister

Faye nominated **Ahmadou Al Aminou Lo** as prime minister on 25 May as Sonko's replacement. Lo is an economist who [previously](#) served as head of the Senegal branch of the **Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO)** (central bank of **West African** states), as state minister to the presidency overseeing the steering of the **Senegal 2050** development plan, and secretary general of the government. Given the country's economic situation (see below), it is unsurprising that Faye chose someone with an economic background.

Lo [graduated](#) from the **Prytanée militaire de Saint-Louis** before pursuing his master's degree in economics from **Cheikh Anta Diop University**. He also completed an executive master's in Islamic finance through the **INCEIF University** in **Malaysia**. Most of his career was with BCEAO, where he worked in several positions before being appointed national director of the Senegal branch in 2016. He became secretary general of the bank in 2024. Through his time at BCEAO, he advised on Senegal's **Eurobond** issuance and its first IMF programme. He has already been actively involved in the current negotiations and reportedly attended IMF meetings with former finance minister **Cheikh Diba**. Lo has [stated](#) that when he was with the BCEAO, he saw and warned about inconsistencies in debt reporting by the government and raised the alarm with authorities.

Local media report that Lo contributed to the restructuring of the Senegalese banking sector in the 1990s and has more recently worked on the roadmap for the [proposed](#) new regional currency, the Eco, balancing demand for change to the regional currency while defending its stability and use.

Faye commented during the appointment that Lo has the expertise to help the country navigate its economic situation, with the decree announcing his appointment stating that he [knows](#) "*the inner workings of the economy and finance*". Lo's appointment has not been [confirmed](#) as the national assembly – which Sonko now leads – must still approve his appointment within three months of his nomination. Notably, during his national assembly address, Sonko [noted](#) that he has differences with Lo over issues such as debt management, and that his support for the prime minister would be dependent on the approach he takes to debt management and protecting citizens' purchasing power.

Political instability reflected in Senegal's bonds as IMF discussions continue

The political change in Senegal is reflected in Senegal's foreign-currency denominated bonds, which dropped by 5.7 cents on the euro and four cents on the **United States (US)** dollar, trading at deeply distressed levels. US-headquartered **Morgan Stanley** [commented](#) that investors were pricing higher odds of a debt restructuring following the change in leadership.

Faye earlier in May had [confirmed](#) that he was personally handling talks with the IMF over a new programme, meeting with IMF chief **Kristalina Georgieva** on the sidelines of the **Africa Forward Summit in Kenya** to discuss a way forward. The IMF suspended its \$1.8-billion programme with Senegal in October 2024 after a government audit found that the previous administration had misreported debt levels (see *ARC Briefing Senegal Apr 2025*). Senegal's debt levels are now at approximately 132% of GDP, with the **Middle East** conflict placing more pressure on already strained finances.

Former finance minister Cheikh Diba (who was dismissed when Faye dissolved the government) had included 250 billion FCFA (\$444m) for fuel subsidies this year, but this was before the Middle East conflict, leading Diba to [warn](#) on 22 May that subsidies could exceed the budget by 1.36 trillion FCFA (\$2.41 billion) this year if oil trades as high as \$115 per barrel. The IMF frequently makes subsidy cuts – a politically sensitive issue – a pre-requisite of funding. Sonko had refused requests to raise the

fuel price before his dismissal and expressed his resistance to debt restructuring, which became a point of contention in the negotiations.

Faye's announcement that he was personally handling the IMF talks indicates that he was already bypassing Sonko, likely in an attempt to speed up the process amid increasing economic pressure and dwindling financing options – the country is already locked out of the international market and has all but reached its capacity for borrowing on the regional market. Senegal's increased borrowing on the regional market has [raised](#) concerns over whether debt restructuring would include both external and domestic debt, and if so, what this would mean for the CFA Franc zone.

Planner

6 Jun 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef) congress**

31 Oct – 13 Nov 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Youth Olympic Games**

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

2027 **(Senegal) Local elections**

Chronology

26 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Reuters**. Following his dismissal as prime minister by President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** over a deepening rift regarding reform agendas and a debt crisis, Senegal's parliament elects **Ousmane Sonko** as its new speaker;

25 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Daily Nation**. Parliament's speaker, **El Malick Ndiaye**, resigns, two days after President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** dismissed prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** and dissolved the government following months of internal tension;

25 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Reuters**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** appoints seasoned economist **Ahmadou Al Aminou Lo** as prime minister;

23 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) AFP**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** dismisses prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** and dissolves the government following months of escalating political tensions between the two leaders;

13 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) CNBC Africa**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** confirms he is personally managing negotiations with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** to secure a new lending programme following the October 2024 suspension of a \$1.8 billion package over unreported liabilities;

11 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Senenews**. Tensions between Senegal and the **African Development Bank (AfDB)** have led to a continued deadlock since April, resulting in a freeze on disbursements for 39 projects worth 1.63 trillion FCFA (\$2.9 billion);

9 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Bloomberg**. Lawmakers pass an amendment to the electoral code that clears the path for prime minister **Ousmane Sonko** to run in the 2029 presidential election;

9 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Ecofin Agency**. **Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (BOAD)** (West African development bank) announces it invested nearly 695 billion FCFA (\$1.2 billion) into Senegal between 2020 and 2025, primarily targeting infrastructure, energy and digital transformation projects;

8 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Africa Intelligence**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** is reportedly taking strategic steps to distance himself from his former mentor and current prime minister, **Ousmane Sonko**, amid growing internal friction;

4 May 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Reuters**. President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** warns that the ruling **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (PASTEF)** party risks

collapse due to internal dissension, though affirms that prime minister **Ousmane Sonko**'s position remains secure for now;

29 Apr 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Senenews*. Transport minister **Yankhoba Diémé** notes that Dakar has become a central battleground for economic influence between the **European Union (EU)** and **China** over a strategic €320m (\$342.5m) contract for 380 compressed natural gas buses;

28 Apr 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Al Jazeera*. Following a multi-million dollar migration deal with the **European Union, Mauritanian** authorities launch a mass deportation campaign, rounding up thousands of migrants and asylum seekers for expulsion to **Mali** and Senegal;

24 Apr 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Reuters*. Senegal's recent talks with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** in **Washington (United States)** leave investors uneasy due to significant discrepancies between the government's deficit forecasts and the Fund's more cautious projections;

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