

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

## Senegal Monthly Briefing August 2026

## Senegal Summary 27 August 2026

*The opposition coalition, Front pour la défense de la démocratie et de la République (FDR), pressures President Bassirou Diomaye Faye (2024-present) to set a date for the local elections, which will be the first test of Faye's newly launched Kiiraay-Les Patriotes républicaines and its support. An International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff team arrives in Dakar on 19 August for the eighth IMF mission since Faye's election, picking up discussions with the government on a potential programme. As part of its austerity measures, the government raises fuel prices on 15 August, stating that it is no longer able to allocate 47 billion FCFA (\$83.7m) to fuel subsidies for the period 15 August to 15 September.*

## Opposition pushes Faye to set local election date

The opposition coalition, **Front pour la défense de la démocratie et de la République (FDR)**, has increasingly [pressured](#) President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** (2024-present) to set a date for the local elections, which will be the first test of Faye's newly launched **Kiiraay-Les Patriotes républicaines** and its support. The FDR – of which the **Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef)** of Faye's former prime minister and political ally, **Ousmane Sonko**, is a member – is calling for local election dates to be set, with Sonko accusing Faye of delaying the elections.

Religious leaders have joined the call for Faye to set a date. The **Ligue des Imams et Prédicateurs du Sénégal** (league of Imams and preachers of Senegal) met on 15 August, [calling](#) on authorities to respect electoral timetables and deadlines. Former president **Macky Sall** (2012-2024) postponed the 2024 presidential election, sending the country into a period of political uncertainty after a tense build-up and creating concern over Senegal's democratic status. Sonko's criticisms have played on these events, [telling](#) supporters on 8 August:

*"The Senegalese did not vote for this. They fought to change the system, but today it is this same system that is in the palace and is still organising itself."*

Municipal and departmental authorities' mandates end in January 2027 but Faye has still not set the voter registration and election dates. The electoral code [requires](#) that the decree setting the date be published 80 days before the election; if no decree is published by November, it could push the election into 2027. To delay the election, parliament will have to pass legislation. However, the **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) is dominated by Sonko's Pastef, which could strike any legislation down.

Faye's political advisor and former prime minister, **Aminata Touré**, has [reported](#) that the electoral law allows the president to extend the mandate of municipal and departmental councillors to the end of 2027, but this has not been confirmed. Local media outlets have also reported rumours that Faye met with the **Conseil constitutionnel** (constitutional council) to discuss the potential postponement and even combining local elections with legislative elections (Faye can exercise the right to dissolve the national assembly from December).

Faye launched his new party in July. With most of his political support initially coming from Pastef, he is not in a strong position heading into the local elections, as he has not consolidated support as a separate political power to Sonko. Any possibility of postponing the elections would likely rest with the constitutional council or other legal apparatuses, but the prospect that Faye may seek to delay the elections is a concern and would lead to heightened tensions between himself, Sonko and the majority party in the national assembly.

## IMF mission in Senegal as financing support comes from other sources

An **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** staff team arrived in **Dakar** on 19 August for the eighth IMF mission since Faye's election, picking up discussions with the government on a potential programme. A court of auditors found in February 2025 that the former administration had misreported/not disclosed true levels of debt, pushing Senegal's debt to 132% of GDP. The country's undisclosed debt is [estimated](#) to be \$13 billion. Senegal has been in negotiations with the IMF after it suspended its \$1.8 billion programme with Senegal in October 2024 over the misreported data, but no programme has been agreed upon. The IMF has [requested](#) several reforms be implemented ahead of any programme agreement, including the centralisation of public debt management, which has been handled across several entities, and an improvement in the quality of debt data.

Ahead of its visit, the IMF released an update on Senegal's economy, [noting](#) that it has been resilient amid the global situation, buoyed by strong growth in the hydrocarbons sector – a sector that would benefit from the current **Middle East** conflict. Higher export values have helped to improve the budgetary balances but have been largely offset by higher petrol imports – Senegal cannot refine its own petrol to meet domestic demand yet – and the government's high energy subsidies. Risks also remain due to the country's significant financing requirements and its limited financing options. The IMF also noted that it is monitoring authorities' implementation of reforms. Notably, the statement reiterated that any decision on debt management strategies – such as restructuring – lies with Senegal's authorities but that any IMF programme will be based on sustainable debt prospects and policies that support this. An IMF programme remains key for Senegal to help reduce its debt vulnerabilities.

While the country continues negotiations, other sources of financing have come forward. The **African Development Bank (AfDB)** [announced](#) on 31 July that it had approved 20 billion FCFA (\$35.57m) in financing Senegal, to help support public finance reforms, domestic resource mobilisation and attract private investment. Specifically, the financing is [intended](#) to modernise the tax administration, improve public debt management, implementing the structural reforms highlighted in the court of auditors report, and to strengthen the business environment to attract investment. Following this, the **World Bank** confirmed via its vice president for **West and Central Africa, Ousmane Diagana**, that it would [release](#) 340 billion FCFA (\$604.83m) to Senegal to be directed towards several sectors, including agriculture, transportation and resilience building.

The IMF mission will be in Senegal until 1 September. Notably, the national assembly confirmed on 25 August that it would be [launching](#) a non-partisan commission of inquiry into the total-return-swap deals that Senegal entered last year to help raise \$1.2 billion to meet financing needs. The IMF has criticised such deals, especially transparency around the deals. The national assembly did not give reasons for the inquiry but opposition lawmaker, **Aissata Tall Sall**, introduced the motion, questioning the terms and implications of the deals. The inquiry will take six months, and by then, it is hoped that an IMF programme would have been agreed upon, limiting any potential fallout from the inquiry's findings, if anything untoward is found.

## Government increases petrol prices

As part of its austerity measures, the government [raised](#) fuel prices as of 15 August, citing that it was no longer able to allocate 47 billion FCFA (\$83.7m) to fuel subsidies for the period 15 August to 15 September. Gasoline increased by 70 FCFA (\$0.12) per litre to 990 FCFA (\$1.76), and diesel by 75 FCFA (\$0.13) to 755 FCFA (\$1.34). The government has already [spent](#) 245 billion FCFA (\$436m) on subsidies this year, against an annual budget of 250 billion FCFA (\$444.91m). If it had continued to subsidise fuel, the government would have spent approximately 1.06 trillion FCFA (\$1.88 billion) this year.

The government [highlighted](#) that the conflict in the Middle East has increased oil prices and that it had held off increasing prices for as long as possible. It also argued that the increase in prices brings them back in line with December 2025 levels, when the national assembly initially approved the fuel

subsidy regime; gasoline would be 1,019 FCFA (\$1.81) per litre and diesel 1,044 FCFA (\$1.86) per litre. This has led the government to [revise](#) its fuel subsidy bill upwards to 729 billion FCFA (\$1.29 billion) for this year.

Despite the government's justification, the move is unpopular and has become a political issue. Former Dakar mayor and opposition figure, **Khalifa Sall**, [described](#) the overall debt situation and subsequent need to increase fuel prices as a “disaster”. Sonko [said](#) the move is linked to “externally imposed conditions” – hinting that the IMF is to blame – and could be the start of a series of measures that increasingly burden Senegalese. He added that as the head of government, he had refused for such reforms to be implemented.

Fuel subsidy cuts are not the government's only austerity measure. In preparation for the 2027 budget, the funds [allocated](#) to constitutional institutions and ministries has been capped at 2.4 trillion FCFA (\$4.27 billion), a 288 billion FCFA (\$512.54m) reduction compared to 2026. The government is [forecasting](#) a budget deficit of 4.9% of GDP in 2027, forcing it to reassess its priorities. Director general of the budget, **Massamba Dieng**, noted that the government needs to prioritise existing infrastructure and development projects before starting new projects, to avoid spending unnecessary resources. Cuts to subsidies and the slowdown in development will be deeply unpopular and there will be pushback from the population. It will continue to be a political issue, placing pressure on Faye at a time when he is trying to shore up support for his new political outfit.

### Planner

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

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

Jan 2027 **(Senegal)** Local elections

2029 **(Senegal)** Presidential elections

### Chronology

25 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Bloomberg**. Parliament orders an inquiry into total-return-swap deals the country entered last year to raise \$1.2 billion to meet financing needs;

24 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Sika Finance**. Australia-headquartered **Resolute Mining** reports that it more than doubled its half-year profit to \$162.6m, up from \$71m in the same period in 2025, driven by strong gold production from its operations in **Mali** and Senegal;

22 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Senenews**. **United States (US) State Department's** 2026 report notes that Senegal successfully met the minimum requirements for fiscal transparency by reliably publishing comprehensive budget documents and maintaining independent public audit standards;

18 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Jeune Afrique**. **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) adopts a law requiring the president, national assembly president and prime minister to declare and publish their assets at the beginning and end of their terms of office;

17 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Reuters**. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** will send a full staff team to Senegal from 19 August to 1 September to advance discussions on policies and reforms that could underpin a new lending programme, signalling progress in negotiations;

17 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) Senenews**. Senegal increases premium petrol prices by 70 FCFA (\$0.12) to 990 FCFA (\$1.75) per litre and diesel by 75 FCFA (\$0.13) to 755 FCFA (\$1.33) per litre from 15 August;

13 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal) APS**. Senegal's planned 2027 expenditure for ministries and state institutions has been set at 2.45 trillion FCFA (\$4.33 billion), nearly 288 billion FCFA (\$509m) below the 2026 budget, reflecting the country's financial constraints;

9 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Senenews*. Opposition **Alliance pour la République (APR)** urges President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye**'s government to respect the electoral calendar and hold local elections between 24 December 2026 and 23 January 2027;

6 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Senenews*. Senegal secures renewed financial support from major international donors, including CFA20 billion (\$35m) from the **African Development Bank** and CFA340 billion (\$595m) from the **World Bank**, signalling renewed confidence in the country's economic management;

3 Aug 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Reuters*. **African Development Bank (AfDB)** approves 20 billion FCFA (\$35.4m) in financing to help Senegal strengthen its public finance management as the country grapples with a debt crisis;

30 Jul 2026 **Dakar (Senegal)** *Senenews*. A growing political rivalry between President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** and **Assemblée nationale** (national assembly) speaker **Ousmane Sonko** is reportedly overshadowing economic priorities, raising concerns about policy paralysis and reduced focus on urgent challenges;

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Please contact us by email [info@africariskconsulting.com](mailto:info@africariskconsulting.com)

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