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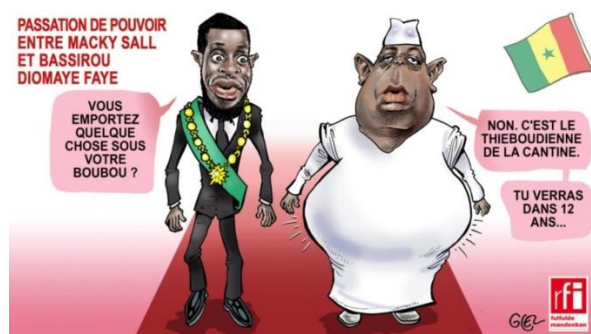
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# Peaceful transition of power in Senegal: How realistic are the new hopefuls' prospects?

Dirk Kohnert <sup>1</sup>

*Radical change of power or more of the same?*<sup>2</sup>



Source: © [Damien Glez](#), RFI, 5 April 2024

**Abstract:** The election of Bassirou Diomaye Faye as President of Senegal on March 24, 2024, after a turbulent electoral process, reflects the resilience of Senegal's democratic institutions. It provides an opportunity to strengthen transparent governance and combat inequality. It was the first time since Senegal's independence from France in 1960 that an opposition candidate won already in the first round of presidential elections. Western media tried to show that Faye, who was portrayed as a "left-wing pan-Africanist," wanted to promote authentic African culture to break with post-colonial Western influence. However, the political orientation of the Faye-Sonko duo corresponds to that of the "Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity" (Pastef), an organization founded by Sonko in 2014. Although their formulations sound radical, their main goal is to strengthen the country's national independence. Faye, a graduate of the renowned elite school ENA, likes to see himself as the heir to two Senegalese thinkers who are, a priori, diametrically opposed: Léopold Sédar Senghor and Cheikh Anta Diop. They had a common goal: to make Senegal and the other African countries independent and self-reliant. This nationalist orientation will also bring the new government in Dakar closer to the neighbouring military juntas that rule Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. Paris, which has always been keen to preserve its post-colonial presence, including military bases, the CFA franc and the French language, is now forced to follow events. Faye and Songo have promised to renegotiate the terms of the French-backed CFA currency as well as oil and gas contracts with foreign companies. However, the government in Dakar will soon have to adapt to the harsh reality of economic inequality. It must live up to its election promises to fight corruption, put national economic interests first and create jobs for the country's population, notably for the young unemployed. Around 60% of unemployed are under 25 years old. The gap between economic potential and poverty levels is fuelling frustration. There is a sense of exclusion among youth, making them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups. The new president also intends to renegotiate fisheries agreements and develop local production for both food and industry to ensure food security while reducing costly imports. However, likely subsidies for essential goods could lead to conflicts with the IMF over program implementation. As far as the creation of a sovereign currency is concerned, it makes sense to implement existing plans to replace the CFA franc within ECOWAS in favour of the independent currency, the 'eco'.

**Keywords:** presidential elections, social movement, peaceful transition of power, nationalism, Pan-Africanism, decolonization, anti-imperialism, monetary policy, socio-economic inequality, economic development, self-sustainability, migration, West Africa, Senegal

**JEL-Code:** E26, E42, E64, F15, F35, F52, F54, I31, N17, N47, O15, O17, O55, Z13

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<sup>2</sup> Cartoon on the transfer of power between Macky Sall and Bassirou Diomaye Faye. - Balloon: "Are you carrying something under your boubou? ... No. It's *Thieboudienne* from the canteen. You'll see in 12 years". [Le regard de Glez sur la passation de pouvoir au Sénégal](#). © Damien Glez/RFI, Dakar, 5 April 2024.

# 1. Introduction

**Cartoon 2: from prison to President ...**



Source: © Victor Ndula, [twitter \(X\)](#), 27 March 2024

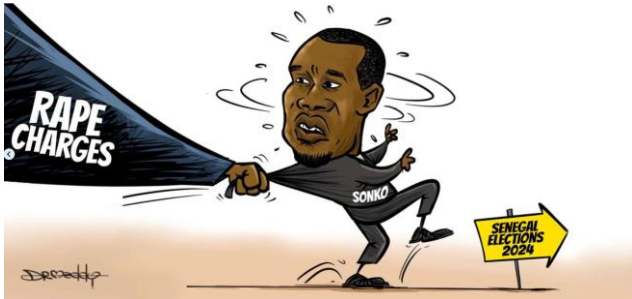
The results of the [Senegalese presidential election on 24 March 2024](#) were greeted with surprise and relief not only by the electorate but also by the African and international community. [Bassirou Diomaye Faye](#) won the race Faye with nearly 54 % of the vote after three years of political turmoil, including deadly riots and the imprisonment of the main opposition candidates, which brought the country's democracy to the brink of collapse. When the incumbent [Macky Sall](#), who had ruled the country for 12 years (2012-2024), tried to extend his rule by any means, [Senegal's Constitutional Court](#) finally intervened. Sall reversed course, an [amnesty law](#) was passed and thousands of political prisoners were released (Hammerschlag, 2024). It was the first time since Senegal's independence from France in 1960 that an opposition candidate had won in the first round of elections. Faye, 44, became the youngest president in Africa and the country's history when he was sworn in on 5 April to lead the country for the next five years. He took over from incumbent [Macky Sall](#), who had ruled the country for 12 years (2012-2024). Opponents blamed him for high [youth unemployment](#) and a related [migration](#) crisis that has reached record levels in recent years. Over 60 % of Senegal's population is under 25 years old (Hammerschlag, 2024). Also, the fishing agreement concluded in 2014 between the European Union (EU) and Macky Sall which opened Senegalese waters to large European vessels, was taken as a symbol of 'injustice' (Le Cam, 2024).

Faye and [Ousmane Sonko](#) had fought a fierce battle, with the 'African Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity' ([PASTEF](#)) supporting the duo. The opposition party was founded by the banned [Ousmane Sonko](#), 50, who was already PASTEF's candidate for the [2019 presidential election](#) (Kane, 2024). Sonko was a member of the [National Assembly](#) from 2017 to 2022 and since 2022 mayor of the city of [Ziguinchor](#) in the [Casamance](#) (Schwikowski, 2024), which has been plagued by periodic unrest stirred up by a separatist movement, the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance ([MFDC](#)).

Just ten days before the presidential election, Faye and his mentor, the charismatic leader Ousmane Sonko, were still detained by [Macky Sall's](#) fading government. Sonko, who had been barred from running in 2023 following a controversial conviction for corruption and defamation, had entrusted the candidacy to his friend and PASTEF co-founder Faye, whose candidacy was validated by the [Constitutional Council](#). Faye, too, had been imprisoned on charges related to his critique of the court's ruling in Sonko's defamation case. He was

released on 14 March 2024, ten days before the election. Therefore, the campaign period was already unusually short. Several other candidates encouraged their supporters to rally behind Faye, as did former President [Abdoulaye Wade](#) on behalf of the opposition Senegalese Democratic Party ([PDS](#)) (Kelly, 2024).

**Cartoon 3:** Rape charges against Sonko prevented him standing for elections

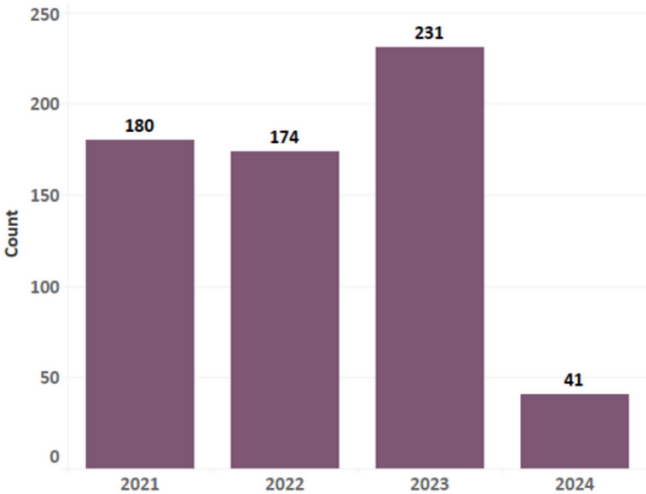


Source: © RFI Hausa, [Facebook](#), 8 December 2022

Faye and his party campaigned on the basis of offering a ‘rupture’, i.e. the break from the approaches of the past. His strongest opponent was former Prime Minister [Amadou Ba](#), who represented the ruling coalition ‘Benno Bokk Yakaar’ (BBY, [United in Hope](#), in [Wolof](#)). The incumbent president, [Macky Sall](#), did not stand. After a long period of uncertainty about his intentions to extend the constitutional two-term limit and the ensuing political violence, he decided to respect the Constitution (Kelly, 2024).

This smooth and peaceful election was particularly remarkable for Senegal, which had been seen as a guardian of democracy and stability before the past three years of violent political confrontation in the neighbourhood of [West Africa's 'coup belt'](#) (Hammerschlag, 2024). In recent years, the military has taken power in five neighbouring [Sahel](#) countries, [Mali](#) (2020; 2021), [Chad](#) (2021), [Guinea](#) (2021), [Burkina Faso](#) (2022) and [Niger](#) (2023), albeit under politically dubious circumstances (Acheampong, 2024).

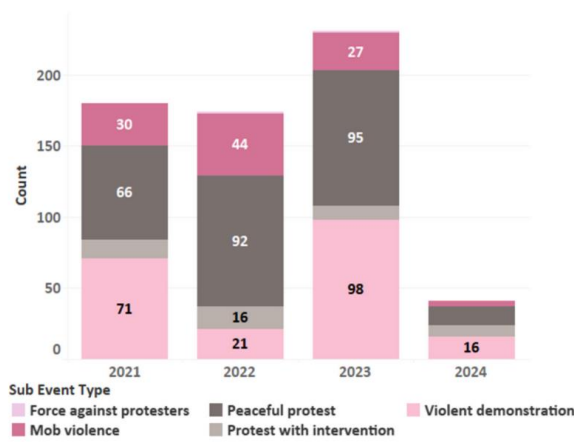
**Graph 1:** cases of civil unrest in Senegal, 2021-2024



Cases of civil unrest in Senegal between 01 January 2021 and 23 February 2024. Data: ACLED

Source: [Castor Vali](#), Global Risk Management, 28 February 2024

**Graph 2: breakdown of civil unrest in Senegal, 2021-2024**

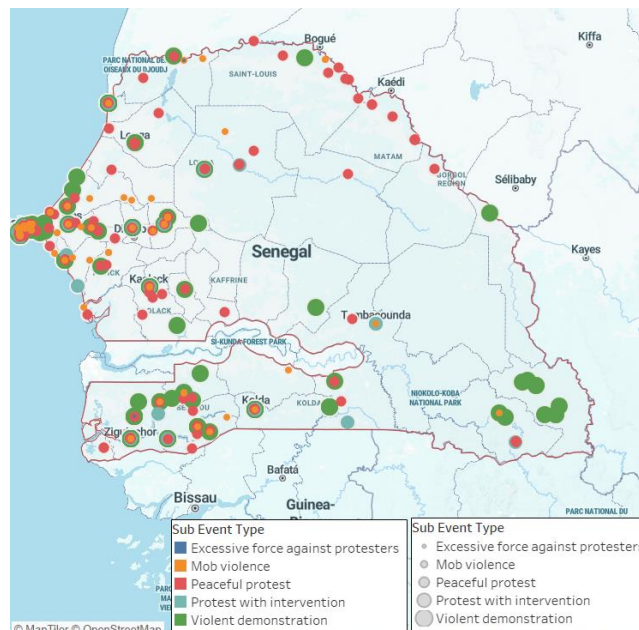


Breakdown of civil unrest in Senegal between 01 January 2021 and 23 February 2024. Data: ACLED

Source: [Castor Vali](#), Global Risk Management, 28 February 2024

The ‘Collective of Civil Society Organizations for Elections’ ([COSCE](#)) had activated a network of long-term observers in each of [Senegal’s 46 county-sized departments](#). These observers monitored the pre-election process leading up to the presidential polls. Alongside their partners, COSCE and the [AfrikaJom Center](#) acted as neutral facilitators to maintain channels for dialogue between the opposing sides. They also involved religious leaders, who then called on political actors to continue dialogue and act to maintain stability and peace. In particular, the intervention of the Caliph General of the [Mourides](#), [Serigne Mountakha Mbacké](#), leader of a religious order widely respected by Senegalese across party lines, facilitated peacekeeping and dialogue with political leaders to defuse tensions (Boiro, 2024).

**Graph 3: Rising Storm: Senegal’s Political Crisis**



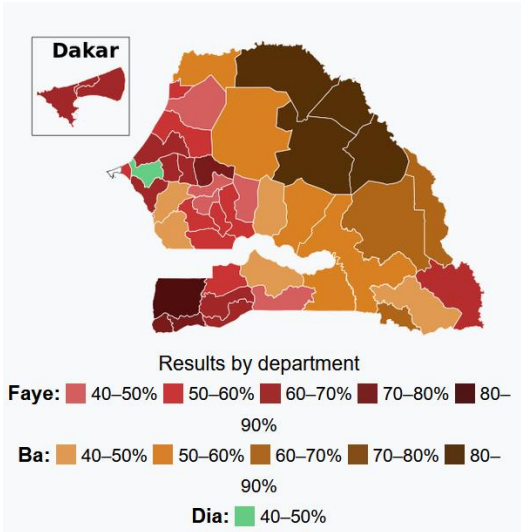
Source: [Castor Vali](#), Global Risk Management, 28 February 2024

On 9 April 2024, the President and Sonko, whom he appointed as his Prime Minister, held their first Council of Ministers, declaring the government's five priorities: youth, purchasing

power, justice, economic sovereignty and the consolidation of national unity (RFI, 2024). Faye is likely to push for institutional reform to reduce the power of the president, who wields overwhelming influence over parliament and the prime minister, whom he appoints, and to strengthen the independence of the judiciary (EIU, 2024). Already on 5 April, Sonko unveiled his new streamlined cabinet of 25 ministers and five permanent secretaries, almost half from PASTEF ranks. [Abdourahmane Sarr](#), a monetary specialist who has worked at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been appointed Minister of Economy (Ollivier, 2024).

Both PASTEF leaders, Faye and Sonko, had already long before the election championed ideas such as creating a national currency, strengthening national sovereignty as well as regional integration within the framework of ECOWAS countries, and combatting corruption. They also want to distance Senegal from Western powers, particularly the former colonial ruler, France, although Faye was a graduate of the renowned French elite school, [Ecole Nationale d'administration](#) (ENA) (Schwikowski, 2024). Given Senegal’s oil and gas discoveries, the duo called for a strategic approach toward contract negotiations to ensure that citizens reap the benefits. Senegal also faces a high rate of youth unemployment, a dynamic of irregular migration the management of which may require a migration governance policy, and challenges posed by the high cost of living (Kelly, 2024).

**Graph 4:** *Senegalese presidential election, 2024<sup>3</sup>*  
*Results by department*



Source: [2024 Senegalese presidential election](#), Wikipedia

The Faye-Sonko duo want to promote African ‘[authenticity](#)’ and thus place themselves in the lineage of two Senegalese thinkers, a priori diametrically opposed, i.e. [Léopold Sédar Senghor](#) and [Cheikh Anta Diop](#) (Amselle, 2024). Yet the ‘[negritude](#)’ defended by Senghor, conceived as a value opposed to [Islam](#), was not far removed from the ‘[Afrocentrism](#)’ of Diop. Beyond a ‘left pan-Africanist’ or ‘populist’ orientation, the new team now in power in Senegal would be closer to the military juntas now leading [Mali](#), [Chad](#), [Guinea](#), [Burkina Faso](#) and [Niger](#), who share the pan-Africanist and nationalist orientation. Having failed to anticipate this development, [Paris](#) has no choice but to watch events unfold, always motivated by the desire to save what can be saved, i.e. the military bases, the CFA franc and the French language (Amselle, 2024; Kohnert, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Source: [2024 Senegalese presidential election](#), Wikipedia; BSMIsEditing, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.

# 1. Lessons learned from Sankara ?

**Cartoon 4:** *Will the 'Sonko-Faye' duo develop along the lines of 'Sankara vs. Compaore'?*



Source: © [Primo Media Rwanda](#), YouTube, 2024

The [Faye–Sonko](#) duo is often compared with the historic example of the [Sankara–Compaoré](#) duo in [Burkina Faso](#). President Thomas Sankara, often called the [Che Guevara](#) of Africa, was viewed by supporters as a charismatic and iconic figure of the [1983 revolution](#), and a powerful advocate for [Pan-Africanism](#), and [labour rights](#) (Harsch, 2017). His alignment with the radical leaders of his time, such as Libya's [Muammar al-Qaddafi](#), Mozambique's [Samora Machel](#) and Cuba's [Fidel Castro](#), pitted him against the West, particularly the former colonial power [France](#), but also imperialist powers such as the [United States](#) and neighbouring African countries. He launched an unprecedented series of social, ecological, and economic reforms. He combated social injustice, poverty, and corruption, fighting for women's rights, direct forms of democracy, economic sovereignty, and environmental justice. However, some of his policies alienated elements of the former ruling class, including the tribal leaders (Peterson, 2021).

Blaise Compaoré, initially a close associate of Sankara in the 1980s, led a coup in October 1987 in which Sankara was killed. Eight years after his deposition in 2014 he was tried, and in April 2022, he was found guilty by a special military tribunal of complicity in Sankara's murder (BBC 2022). Sankara's revolution was then replaced by Compaoré's technobureaucratic style of leadership. Compaoré operated through a pseudo-democratic process based on undemocratic elections in a semi-authoritarian system. His rule came to an end on 15 October 2014 when he attempted to extend his rule by changing the constitution. Protests by students, trade unionists and activists, particularly women activists, turned into a massive civil mobilisation, not only in the capital [Ouagadougou](#) but also in the countryside. Finally, the core segments of his military defected, and he was forced to flee to neighbouring [Côte d'Ivoire](#) (Bonniecse, 2015; Frère & Englebert, 2015).

Sankara remained an almost mythical hero for many young people, even beyond his country across [Sub-Saharan Africa](#). In early 2008, also the [Senegal](#)-based rapper [Didier Awadi](#) released a hard-hitting song, *Bang Bang/Woye*, and a series of accompanying videos, linking hunger to the huge gap between rich and poor, and interspersing his lyrics with quotes from Sankara, condemning the capitalist and imperialist systems (Harsch, 2013). This enduring legacy has continued to the present day, focusing on [nation-building](#) and the need for ['patriotism'](#) to defend, build and modernise one's country. Sankara sought to create a state that would derive its legitimacy not from a colonial geographical designation, but from the diverse peoples who lived within it. This effort to tap into [indigenous culture](#) was consciously pan-

territorial, based on a specific African identity, a reliance on [social mobilisation](#) and local [self-help](#) projects, and a national economy based more on domestic markets and interests. His policy also included the [empowerment of women](#) and to overcome customary division of labour through the grassroots Committees for the Defence of the Revolution ([CDRs](#)) (Harsch, 2013). The latter installed a system aiming at a solidary instead of an imperial mode of living, in respect of the post-developmental normative boundaries of self-determination with a focus on local production and consumption with fair prices. The CDR's (national) post-developmental politics were even inclusive beyond state boundaries because of South-South solidarity and because non-nationals could become normal members of the CDRs and thereby participate in politics. Thus, the CDR broke with nationalist ideas of segregation and enclosures. Yet, in the end, this revolutionary approach failed. The government was reproached for a too authoritarian style, e.g. concerning its coming to power via a coup d'état, its top-down way of educating the people and above all its oppressive and in some cases very violent dealing with dissidents (Faye, 2023).

In 2011, the Senegalese movement [Y'en a Marre](#) (I'm fed up), founded in early 2011, took up, developed and adapted these ideas to mobilise the country's population, especially its youth. It pursued a broader agenda of projects to support its goal of promoting a "NTS" (Nouveau Type de Sénégalais / New Type of Senegalese). The NTS agenda was based on the understanding that strong national institutions can only be built on a society of responsible and engaged citizens who act with integrity and expect the same from their leaders (Nelson, 2013; Kohnert & Marfaing, 2019). It made explicit reference to Thomas Sankara, who was just 33 when he became president and 37 when he died, and his courage in standing up to [la Françafrique](#), the system of French neo-colonial domination of Burkina Faso and its neighbours (Kohnert, 2022). Y'en a Marre networks developed among the youth across the continent and in the diaspora, creating a space for African unity and [pan-Africanist](#) thinking in the name of [Thomas Sankara](#) and [Amilcar Cabral](#), the leader of [Guinea-Bissau's War of Independence](#) to whom the movement paid homage by continuing the anti-imperialist struggle and forming a community-based alternative (Latuner, 2018).

## 2. Economic repercussions of Faye-Sonko's regime change

**Cartoon 5:** *You need to reform*<sup>4</sup>



Source: © [Gado](#), Godfrey Mwampembwa, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Cartoon on misguided structural reform programs of IMF and World Bank and the impact of aid. © [Gado](#), Godfrey Mwampembwa, 2006.



The envisaged 'rupture' of the Faye-Sonko duo in international affairs and economic policy included not only the renegotiate of the terms of the French-backed [CFA currency](#) and the introduction of the '[eco](#)' but also a reassessment of oil and gas contracts.

Already in November 2019, the eight West African nations of the [WEAMU](#) (UEMOA in French), had adopted a proposal to withdraw their currency reserves from the [French central bank](#), which evoked controversial reactions. The proposal was an outcome of the long-standing controversy on the ill-adapted and increasingly anachronistic [CFA franc](#), harshly condemned as neo-colonial heritage by internationally renowned (former) African officials and critics of the CFA franc, including Togo's [Kako Nubukpo](#), ex-officer at the Central Bank of West African States ([BCEAO](#)) and former Togolese minister. Already in July 2019, the leaders of the sub-region had adopted a proposal to introduce a single currency, labelled '[eco](#)', originally restricted to the [West African Monetary Zone](#) (WAMZ), for the entire [Sub-Saharan region](#) by 2020. In the first phase, countries with their own currencies ([Gambia](#), [Ghana](#), [Guinea](#), [Nigeria](#) and [Sierra Leone](#)) were to launch the *eco*. In a second phase, the eight [UEMOA](#) member countries that have in common the [CFA franc](#) ([Ivory Coast](#), [Senegal](#), [Burkina Faso](#), [Mali](#), [Togo](#), [Niger](#), [Benin](#) and [Guinea-Bissau](#)) would follow suit. Now they decided to vest the reserves with the Senegal-based [BCEAO](#). However, in December 2019, the French and Ivorian presidents, [Emanuel Macron](#) and [Alassane Ouattara](#), surprisingly declared that the (Francophone) WAEMU member states would abandon the CFA first to adopt the *eco*, irrespective of WAMZ Anglophone member states, by unilaterally transforming the CFA franc to *eco* by 2020. This caused a sharp protest of the latter, notably [Nigeria](#), the by far biggest of West African countries, because [Abuja](#) suspected [Paris](#) to continue its one-sided Africa policy and its post-colonial relations under the guise of assisting an 'independent' West African currency. In May 2020, the French Council of Ministers passed a bill that prepared the way to abandon the West African CFA franc for the *eco*. The bill has still to be confirmed by the parliaments of WAEMU member states and France. Characteristically, it did not address one of the most controversial aspects of the CFA, i.e. the linkage of the currency to the monetary policy of Paris and the fixed parity with the [Euro](#). Thus, Paris undermined the long-lasting ambitions of WAMZ member states with its divide-and-rule policy. In June 2021 the ECOWAS announced 2027 as the new date to launch the *eco*. However, further delays are probable because of the repercussions of, the political Sahel crisis and growing threats of [Islamist terrorism](#) (Kohnert, 2022). After having defended a clean break with this currency, a legacy of colonization, the Faye-Sonko duo focused on negotiations at the community level. According to them, the ideal would be to leave the CFA franc with the *eco* within the framework of [ECOWAS](#). However, in January 2024, the new military dictatorships Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso announced their intentions to leave the bloc. Failing to find a consensus, Sonko said he would consider taking the country's sovereignty into his own hands, as [Mauritania](#) did when it left the [CFA franc](#) in 1973 (Douet, 2024).

In addition, the Dakar government wants to renegotiate its oil and gas contracts with major industry players such as [BP](#), [Kosmos Energy](#) and [Woodside Energy](#) Group to increase the state's revenue from these ventures (Blomberg, 2024). Senegal is on the brink of becoming one of the world's fastest-growing economies as it prepares to launch the \$4.8bn [Grand Tortue Ahmeyim](#) (GTA) liquefied natural gas project and the [Sangomar](#) oil development of an estimated 473 million barrels of crude oil. These projects were expected to enable exports of up to 100,000 barrels of oil per day and at least 2.5 million tonnes of [LNG](#) annually. Sonko has repeatedly described these contracts as a 'dispossession' of the Senegalese. This was enough to cause unrest within the sector, after several billion dollars of cumulative investment between the majors and local subcontractors, directly or indirectly (Douet, 2024).

The outlook for [economic growth](#) was also clouded. On the demand side, private consumption growth slowed, reflecting the loss of purchasing power associated with high [inflation](#), while investment was affected by uncertainties related to the socio-political climate. On the supply side, activity in the tertiary sector, affected by social unrest and political tensions, has slowed. Inflation remained high, although it is expected to moderate to 6.1 % in 2023, after peaking at around 9.7 % in 2022, following the fall in international commodity prices and the normalisation of supply chains. Structural vulnerabilities such as low productivity, limited human capital, high levels of informality and youth emigration persisted and were exacerbated by external shocks such as the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and [Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#) (WB, 2024).

The gap between economic potential and poverty levels fuels the population's frustration and sense of exclusion, making them vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups. One example is the [Kedougou](#) gold mining region in the extreme south-east of the country, one of the nation's poorest. It poses a security risk for Senegal, according to the Institute for Security Studies ([ISS, Pretoria](#)) which called for accelerating the formalization of artisanal and small-scale mining to reduce illegal exploitation and strengthen control over the gold marketing chain (Tossou, 2023).

Also, the International Monetary Fund ([IMF](#)) has already cautioned the government and adjusted its economic growth forecast for the country, reducing it to 8.3 % from 10.6 % due to earlier delays in these key energy projects. Further doubts were raised about the legality of previous agreements, in particular an agreement to transfer the [Saint-Louis](#) and Cayar ([Kayar](#)) concessions, which are currently owned by BP. For example, in November 2023, reports emerged that [BP](#) had pulled out of the [Yakaar-Teranga natural gas field](#) offshore Senegal following disagreements with the local government (Blomberg, 2024). Also, the company '[Petrosen](#)', Senegal's national oil company, confirmed a certain 'wait-and-see' attitude. It believed that it will be difficult to renegotiate the Sangomar or GTA contracts, which are already underway, and insists that this last field is shared physically and commercially with [Mauritania](#). Nothing could therefore be done without Mauritania, which had never spoken of renegotiating the contracts (Douet, 2024).

Faye's intentions to 'protect' the oil and gas industry from foreign control could discourage investment in the sector. Also, likely subsidies on essential goods to ease the economic situation of the poor could lead to clashes with the [IMF](#) over programme implementation (EGA, 2024). Moreover, the new government in [Dakar](#) may seek to renegotiate [fishing agreements with the EU](#) to develop local production, both food and industrial, to ensure food security while reducing costly imports (Douet, 2024).

**Graph 5: oil and gas decoded**



Source: [Global Data](#), 2 April 2024

In 2023, Senegal made its entry into the international [sustainable finance market](#) with a EUR 400 million partial credit guarantee from the [African Development Bank](#), exclusively allocated to [green](#) and [social investments](#), in line with Senegal's Sustainable Financing Framework. The operation was aligned with the Plan for an Emerging Senegal ([PES](#)), adopted in 2014 to meet Senegal's economic, social and environmental objectives. The PES is structured around three strategic axes, namely: (i) structural transformation of the economy and growth, (ii) human capital development, social protection and sustainable development, and (iii) strengthening governance, institutions, peace and security (AfdB, 2023).

Finally, there remains the growing threat of jihadism even in Senegal. [Jihadist groups](#), spread in the region, with countries such as Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso experiencing continued attacks. So far, the moderate Islam of the [Mourides](#) and the special role of youth and women as well as a sense of patriotism among Senegalese could play in mitigating jihadism in Senegal. The existing social capital in the country could be further mobilized to foster trust-building and social cohesion, thereby enhancing the prevention of violent extremism in the country. However, there are concerns that [jihadist groups in Mali](#) could use Senegal to mobilise resources to fund their activities. Thus, Senegalese gold mines in regions close to Mali are perceived by respondents as areas of interest to jihadist groups in Mali and could be targeted by these groups (Bangura & Owusu & Quaye, 2024).

### 3. Conclusion

**Cartoon 6:** *Senegal: white smoke ?*



Source: © Simon Regis, [cartoon movement](#), 5 February 2024

The long-term political and economic implications of the policy agenda set forth by the Faye-Sonko duo in the Senegalese government are promising. Since assuming office, the administration has implemented various reforms aimed at addressing pressing socio-economic challenges. By analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with their policies, this article provides insights into the potential trajectory of Senegal under their leadership.

The Faye-Sonko administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to democratic governance and political stability. Through inclusive decision-making processes and efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, they have fostered a sense of political participation and civic engagement among Senegalese citizens. However, challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies and institutional corruption remain significant obstacles to long-term political stability. Furthermore, the administration's response to opposition voices and civil liberties will be crucial in shaping the country's democratic trajectory.

Economically, the Faye-Sonko administration has prioritized initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable development and reducing poverty. Key policies include investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare, as well as efforts to promote entrepreneurship and foreign investment, although renegotiated to achieve an inclusive and sustainable development. While these measures hold the potential to stimulate economic growth and create employment opportunities, structural barriers such as high unemployment rates and income inequality persist. Additionally, external factors such as global economic trends and geopolitical dynamics may impact Senegal's economic prospects in the long term. By prioritizing investments in critical sectors such as education and healthcare, they aim to improve the well-being of all Senegalese citizens. Moreover, their commitment to transparency and accountability in governance has garnered support from both domestic and international stakeholders. Strategic partnerships with regional and international actors, as well as investments in renewable energy and agribusiness, could drive sustainable development and create new opportunities for employment and innovation. Additionally, ongoing efforts to combat corruption and improve governance could enhance investor confidence and stimulate foreign direct investment.

However, the administration faces several challenges that could hinder the realization of its goals. These include bureaucratic red tape, insufficient infrastructure, and limited access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises. Furthermore, the persistence of socio-economic inequalities poses a significant threat to social cohesion and political stability.

Nevertheless, the administration must navigate potential threats such as climate change, security risks, and regional instability. Senegal's vulnerability to environmental hazards, including droughts and rising sea levels, poses a significant risk to agricultural productivity and food security. Moreover, ongoing conflicts in neighbouring countries could have spill-over effects on Senegal's political stability and economic development.

In conclusion, the policy agenda set forth by the Faye-Sonko administration holds both promise and challenges for Senegal's long-term political and economic prospects. While their commitment to democratic governance and inclusive development is commendable, addressing structural barriers and external threats will be crucial in realizing their vision for a prosperous and stable Senegal. By leveraging opportunities and mitigating threats, the administration can pave the way for sustainable growth and prosperity for all Senegalese citizens.

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**Résumé :** *[Transition du pouvoir au Sénégal : les perspectives des nouveaux espoirs sont-elles réalistes ?]* – L'élection de Bassirou Diomaye Faye à la présidence du Sénégal le 24 mars 2024, après un processus électoral mouvementé, reflète la résilience des institutions démocratiques du Sénégal. C'est l'occasion de renforcer la gouvernance transparente et de lutter contre les inégalités. C'était la première fois depuis l'indépendance du Sénégal de la France en 1960 qu'un candidat de l'opposition gagnait déjà au premier tour des élections présidentielles. Les médias occidentaux ont tenté de montrer que Faye, présenté comme un « panafricaniste de gauche », souhaitait promouvoir une culture africaine authentique pour rompre avec l'influence occidentale postcoloniale. Cependant, l'orientation politique du duo Faye-Sonko correspond à celle des « Patriotes du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité » (Pastef), une organisation fondée par Sonko en 2014. Bien que leurs formulations paraissent radicales, leur principal objectif est de renforcer l'indépendance nationale du pays. Faye, diplômé de la célèbre école d'élite ENA, aime se considérer comme l'héritier de deux penseurs sénégalais a priori diamétralement opposés : Léopold Sédar Senghor et Cheikh Anta Diop. Ils avaient un objectif commun : rendre le Sénégal et les autres pays africains indépendants et autonomes. Cette orientation nationaliste rapprochera également le nouveau gouvernement de Dakar des juntes militaires voisines qui gouvernent la Guinée, le Mali, le Burkina Faso et le Niger. Paris, qui a toujours eu à cœur de préserver sa présence postcoloniale, notamment ses bases militaires, le franc CFA et la langue française, est désormais contraint de suivre les événements. Faye et Songo ont promis de renégocier les termes de la monnaie CFA, soutenue par la France, ainsi que les contrats pétroliers et gaziers avec des sociétés étrangères. Cependant, le gouvernement de Dakar devra bientôt s'adapter à la dure réalité des inégalités économiques. Il doit tenir ses promesses électorales de lutter contre la corruption, donner la priorité aux intérêts économiques nationaux et créer des emplois pour la population du pays, notamment pour les jeunes chômeurs. Environ 60 % des chômeurs ont moins de 25 ans. L'écart entre le potentiel économique et les niveaux de pauvreté alimente la frustration. Il existe un sentiment d'exclusion parmi les jeunes, ce qui les rend vulnérables au recrutement par des groupes extrémistes. Le nouveau président entend également renégocier les accords de pêche et développer la production locale tant alimentaire qu'industrielle afin d'assurer la sécurité alimentaire tout en réduisant les importations coûteuses. Cependant, les subventions probables aux biens essentiels pourraient conduire à des conflits avec le FMI sur la mise en œuvre du programme. En ce qui concerne la création d'une monnaie souveraine, il est logique de mettre en œuvre les plans existants visant à remplacer le franc CFA au sein de la CEDEAO au profit de la monnaie indépendante, « l'eco ».

**Zusammenfassung :** *[Machtwechsel im Senegal: Wie realistisch sind die Aussichten der neuen Hoffnungsträger?]* – Die Wahl von Bassirou Diomaye Faye zum Präsidenten Senegals am 24. März 2024 nach einem turbulenten Wahlprozess spiegelt die Widerstandsfähigkeit der demokratischen Institutionen Senegals wider. Es bietet die Möglichkeit, eine transparente Regierungsführung zu stärken und Ungleichheit zu bekämpfen. Es war das erste Mal seit der Unabhängigkeit Senegals von Frankreich im Jahr 1960, dass ein Oppositionskandidat gleich in der ersten Runde der Präsidentschaftswahlen gewann. Westliche Medien stellten Faye, als „linken Panafricanisten“ dar, der eine authentische afrikanische Kultur fördern wolle, um mit dem postkolonialen westlichen Einfluss zu brechen. Die politische Ausrichtung des Faye-Sonko-Duos entspricht jedoch der 2014 von Sonko gegründeten Organisation „Patrioten Senegals für Arbeit, Ethik und Brüderlichkeit“ (Pastef). Auch wenn deren Formulierungen radikal klingen, ist ihr Hauptziel die Stärkung der nationalen Unabhängigkeit des Landes. Faye, Absolvent der renommierten Eliteschule ENA, sieht sich gern als Erbe zweier a priori diametral entgegengesetzter senegalesischer Denker: Léopold Sédar Senghor und Cheikh Anta Diop. Beide hatten ein gemeinsames Ziel: Senegal und die anderen afrikanischen Länder unabhängig und eigenständig zu machen. Diese nationalistische Ausrichtung wird die neue Regierung in Dakar auch näher an die benachbarten Militärjuntas heranführen, die Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso und Niger regieren. Paris, das stets darauf bedacht war, seine postkoloniale Präsenz zu bewahren, einschließlich Militärstützpunkten, des CFA-Franc und der französischen Sprache, ist nun gezwungen, den Ereignissen zu folgen. Faye und Songo haben versprochen, die Bedingungen der von Frankreich unterstützten CFA-Währung sowie Öl- und Gasverträge mit ausländischen Unternehmen neu zu verhandeln. Allerdings muss sich die Regierung in Dakar bald auf die harte Realität der wirtschaftlichen Ungleichheit einstellen. Sie muss ihre Wahlversprechen einhalten, die Korruption zu bekämpfen, nationale Wirtschaftsinteressen in den Vordergrund zu stellen und Arbeitsplätze für die Bevölkerung des Landes, insbesondere für junge Arbeitslose, zu schaffen. Rund 60 % der Arbeitslosen sind unter 25 Jahre alt. Die Kluft zwischen wirtschaftlichem Potenzial und Armutsniveau schürt Frustration. Unter Jugendlichen herrscht ein Gefühl der Ausgrenzung, was sie anfällig für die Rekrutierung durch extremistische Gruppierungen macht. Der neue Präsident beabsichtigt außerdem, Fischereiabkommen neu zu verhandeln und die lokale Produktion sowohl für Lebensmittel als auch für die Industrie zu entwickeln, um die Ernährungssicherheit zu gewährleisten und gleichzeitig kostspielige Importe zu reduzieren. Wahrscheinliche Subventionen für lebenswichtige Güter könnten jedoch zu Konflikten mit dem IWF über die Programmumsetzung führen. Was die Schaffung einer souveränen Währung betrifft, ist es sinnvoll, bestehende Pläne zur Ablösung des CFA-Franc innerhalb der ECOWAS zugunsten der unabhängigen Währung „eco“ umzusetzen.