

## Democracy in Senegal: Postponement of Elections raises concerns

February 8, 2024

February 8, 2024: **Dakar**, Senegal: President **Macky Sall**, who is reaching the end of his second and final term on April 2, 2024, declared on Saturday that the scheduled election would not take place as planned. He stated that this decision was due to disagreements over the final list of presidential candidates, which resulted in the exclusion of numerous opposition candidates.

Most opposition leaders have called for a large mobilization against what they call an **abuse of power**. Senegal is known for its democratic stability, in SW Africa, which has faced a number of military coups.



***Macky Sall, President of Senegal (from 2 April 2012)***

***Chairperson of the African Union (5 February 2022 – 18 February 2023)***

***Prime Minister of Senegal (21 July 2004 – 19 June 2007)***

***President of the National Assembly (20 June 2007 – 9 November 2008)***

***Mayor of Fatick (1 April 2009 – 2 April 2012 and 1 June 2002 – 9 November 2008)***

**Fatick** (Population: 24,243 (2005)) is a town in SW **Senegal**, located between **M'bour** and **Kaolack**. It is the capital of the **Fatick Region** and the **Fatick Department** se. *(Please see the map on page 3)*

**Pape Alioune Dieme**, a resident of Dakar, expressed deep dismay over the decision and voiced apprehension about its constitutional legitimacy.

Prent **Macky Sall's** decision to delay the February 25 vote was attributed to an electoral dispute between the Parliament and the Judiciary regarding certain candidacies, a move that was strongly opposed by opposition figures who denounced it as a "coup."

The **rescheduling of the election for December** and the **blocking of opposition lawmakers from voting** have elicited strong reactions.

President Sall's term, which was originally set to conclude on April 2, is now subject to the effects of this postponement.  
By- **Abel in Burundi**

---- BACKGROUNDER on *Senegal* ----



**The Republic of Senegal, GDP: \$78.55 Bn, (106<sup>th</sup>); GDP/capita: \$4,324 (156<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Population: 18.39 Mn (67<sup>th</sup>)- (2023 estimate); Area: 196,722 Km<sup>2</sup> (86<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Capital: Dakar; Population of Dakar: Department only: 1.18 Mn; metro: 3.9 Mn (2023)**

The country owes its name to the **Senegal River**, which borders it to the east and north.

**HISTORY:** Senegal was a part of the **Jolof Empire**, a confederacy state that ruled modern-day **Senegal, Mali, Gambia** and **Mauritania** from around the **12th century to 1549**.

Eastern Senegal was once part of the **Ghana Empire**, also known as simply **Ghanata**, or **Wagadou**. It was a western-Sahelian empire based in the **modern-day southeast of Mauritania** and **western Mali**. The **Ghana Empire's** latency phase spanned from the 4th century B.C.E to approximately the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E. with the eventual imperial state materializing between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries C.E. The reign of the **Ghana Empire's** last dynasty was from 830 to the 1300s. Thereafter it declined and became a vassal state of the rising Mali Empire in the 13th century. But, the **Ghana Empire's** influence can be felt in the numerous urban centers throughout its former territory. **In 1957**, the **British colony of the Gold Coast**, under the leadership of **Dr. Kwame Nkrumah** named itself **Ghana** upon independence in honor and remembrance of the historic empire, although the geographic boundaries of Dr. Nkrumah's Ghana of 1957 did not overlap with those of the ancient empire.



**Senegal**, a member of the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

ECOWAS comprises **fifteen member** countries. The list of ECOWAS member states: **Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, The Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso** and **Cabo Verde**.

**Note:** Two of the 15 countries - **The Gambia and Cabo Verde** - are not seen clearly in the above map. Please see the two BACKGROUNDERS about these countries in the following pages.

---- BACKGROUNDER on **Cabo Verde** (also called Cape Verde) ----



**Cape Verde: GDP (2023 estimate): \$2.6 Bn (181<sup>st</sup>); GDP/capita: \$4,502 (117<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Population (2021 census): 0.562 Mn (172<sup>nd</sup>); Area: 4,033 Km<sup>2</sup> (166<sup>th</sup>); Density: 123.7/Km<sup>2</sup> (89<sup>th</sup>); Capital and largest city: **Praia on Santiago, Population: 0.159 Mn****

The **Cape Verde archipelago** is in the Atlantic Ocean, approximately 570 Km off the western coast of the African continent, **near Senegal, The Gambia, and Mauritania**. It is a **part of the Macaronesia ecoregion**.



**ECONOMY:** Cape Verde has no natural resource and the country's economy is largely depending upon **tourism**, due to its mild warm climate throughout the year and beautiful landscapes. It is an important commercial center and a useful stopover point along major shipping routes.

**POLITICS:** Cape Verde is a semi-presidential representative democratic republic. According to its constitution, the **President is the head of state** and is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. The **Prime Minister is the head of government** and proposes other ministers and secretaries of state. The Prime Minister is nominated by the National Assembly and appointed by the President. Members of the National Assembly are elected by popular vote for five-year terms. The two main political parties are **African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV)** and **Movement for Democracy (MpD)**.

The foreign remittances from Cape Verde's **large diaspora** ( of more than 700,000 live abroad, predominantly in Europe and USA), often referred to as the **archipelago's "eleventh island"**, make up **12 %** of the country's GDP.



**GEOGRAPHY:** The country is a horseshoe-shaped cluster of **ten islands (nine inhabited)** and **eight islets**. The islands are spatially divided into two groups:

- **The Barlavento Islands (windward islands):** Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal, Boa Vista; and
- **The Sotavento Islands (leeward):** Maio, **Santiago**, Fogo, Brava.

The largest island, both in size and population, is **Santiago**, which hosts the **nation's capital, Praia**, the principal urban agglomeration in the archipelago.

**Three** of the Cape Verde islands, **Sal, Boa Vista, and Maio**, are fairly **flat, sandy, and dry**; the others are generally rockier with more vegetation.

---- BACKGROUNDER on *The Republic of Gambia* ----



**The Republic of Gambia, GDP: \$2.4 Bn, (185<sup>th</sup>); GDP/capita: \$903 (180<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Population: 2.5 Mn (144<sup>th</sup>)- (2013 census), Density: 176.1 Km<sup>2</sup>; Area: 11,300 Km<sup>2</sup> (159<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Capital: Banjul, on St Mary's Island, where the Gambia River enters the Atlantic Ocean, connected to mainland through bridges and ferries**  
**Population of Banjul: city only: 31,300; metro (city & Kanifing Municipal Council): 0.4 Mn**  
**Other cities: Brikama (Population: city only 0.1 Mn, LGA: 0.73 Mn); Serekunda (Population: 0.34 Mn)**

The Republic of Gambia is the **smallest country** in continental Africa. It is **surrounded by Senegal**, except for its western coast on the Atlantic Ocean. It is situated on both sides of the lower reaches of the Gambia River, which flows through the centre of the country and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. The national namesake river demarcates the elongated shape of the country.