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SENEGAL, TWO YEARS INTO THE MACKY SALL ADMINISTRATION

STABILITY, BETTER GOVERNANCE BUT FEW TANGIBLE RESULTS

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The peaceful transition of power from President Abdoulaye Wade to President Macky Sall in April 2012 raised high expectations among the people of Senegal. They had been frustrated by the political class under Wade. From 2000 to 2012, Wade had introduced a range of institutional reforms designed to gradually increase his power, and in doing so he largely ignored the needs of the people. As a result, many political parties and civil society organisations joined together to form an extra-parliamentary opposition. In 2007 this grouping boycotted the parliamentary elections and created a national assises (Assises Nationales). However, the President was not prepared to recognise the solutions that it presented in 2009 for resolving the country's political crisis (Charte de la gouvernance démocratique).

When Wade stood for an unconstitutional third term of office in 2012, the voters refused to endorse him. The Senegalese people were no longer prepared to support his regime and turned out in force to protest in the run-up to the 2012 elections, urged on by the M23 opposition movement.¹ In March they achieved their aim and he was voted out of office. These opposition groups still exist in a more condensed form and are observing political events. They are waiting for the new Sall government's declarations of intent to turn into positive reforms, and so far they have abstained from political protests. Whether this will last depends on the performance of the Macky Sall

1 | M23 stands for Mouvement des forces vives du 23 Juin 2011 du Sénégal.

administration. Since his election two years ago, he has managed to stabilise certain policy areas. However, many people are still disappointed because they feel very little real progress is being made.

THE CHALLENGES FACING THE NEW PRESIDENT

In his Yonnu Yokkuté (The Path to Prosperity) program, Macky Sall set out five priorities: agricultural reforms to resolve the food crisis; price reductions in basic foodstuffs; ending the energy crisis; settlement of the Casamance conflict and streamlining government institutions.² Other topics on his agenda included tackling the serious

problems in the education system and the country's high rates of unemployment. Shortly after taking office, a new food crisis broke out. In order to protect those who were worst-hit, the President promised 20 to

Shortly after Macky Sall took office, a new food crisis broke out. In order to protect those who were worst-hit, the President promised 20 to 25 billion CFA francs in state aid.

25 billion CFA francs³ (30 to 38 million euros) in state aid. He also wanted to invest 2,000 billion CFA francs (3,500 million euros) over five years in agricultural development in order to avoid further food crises in the long term. This is the equivalent of the annual budget of Senegal. In spring 2012, the price of basic foodstuffs such as rice, sugar and cooking oil soared. For example, 50 kilograms of rice rocketed from 18,000 (27 euros) to 24,000 CFA francs (36 euros). Sall announced temporary price reductions of ten to 20 per cent by subsidising or giving tax relief to traders until such time as a permanent solution was found. The cost of this has been estimated at 50 billion CFA francs (75 million euros).

Action was also needed on energy supplies. The frequent and lasting power cuts suffered by industry and private households had often led to violent demonstrations. Former President Wade had hoped to resolve the energy supply crisis with his Takkal Plan.⁴ But this plan revolved around the extremely costly leasing of power plants, so in the long term a new solution had to be found to Senegal's energy supply.

2 | Rémi Carayol, "Sénégal: les cinq priorités de Macky Sall", *Jeune Afrique*, 10 Apr 2012, <http://jeuneafrique.com/Article/JA2673p024-029.xml1> (accessed 24 Apr 2014).

3 | Franc des Colonies françaises d'Afrique (FCFA).

4 | "Plan Takkal", Société Africaine de Raffinage, <http://sar.sn/3-PLAN-TAKKAL.html> (accessed 24 Apr 2014).

In the run-up to the 2012 elections, the Casamance region was once again the scene of violent attacks. Although the Wade government had promised a speedy resolution to the conflict, after twelve years in power there was still no lasting peace. His successor Macky Sall announced that he would approach the conflict openly with the involvement of all sides, including the rebels and the neighbouring countries of Gambia and Guinea Bissau.

Another of Sall's priorities was to reduce the cost of government and introduce an audit of all national institutions with a view to restoring their credibility. He announced that he would reduce his government from 40 ministers to 25, close certain foreign embassies and do away with unnecessary and costly governmental structures. Reductions were to be made to the high telephone bills racked up by government workers (27 billion CFA francs per annum, equating to one per cent of the government's annual budget) and to the large fleet of official vehicles. He also announced an investigation into whether local councils should continue to receive salaries. The Takkal Plan, along with major construction and privatisation projects (for example the national edible oil company Suneor), were to be subjected to audits and any instances of misappropriation handed over to the judiciary.



Abdoulaye Wade with then French President Chirac in 2005: During his term of office Senegal's President implemented his patronage system in many government institutions. | Source: © Philippe Wojazer, AP, picture alliance.

Restoring the link between politics and moral and ethical values was high on Macky Sall's agenda. Corruption and nepotism were to be banned and every citizen should receive equal treatment in the eyes of the law and in public life. Land distribution is a key issue in this respect. Wade was constantly in breach of the 1960 law stating that common arable land was the property of the state. This allowed the caliphs of the main Muslim brotherhoods, domestic and foreign investors and ministers in the Wade government to take ownership of large swathes of land. This desire for personal gain triggered protests in the Senegal River Valley and some demonstrators were even killed.

Resolving the land issue is crucial to achieving social equality in Senegal. For example, in the Kedougou region, multinationals are mining gold while the people who have been driven from their land often receive no compensation. In the Thiès region, the granting of licences for phosphate and lime extraction has aroused great resentment. The mining companies pay little attention to environmental standards, and this has been linked to an increase in health problems among the inhabitants of the mining areas. The compensation that should have been paid to the inhabitants has generally ended up in the hands of state authorities, with the local people only receiving a fraction of what is due to them.

In the region around the capital, Dakar, there is barely a square metre of land that remains undeveloped. This is also true of the coastal region, where it is officially not permitted to build because of the threat of erosion. In many places, access to the sea has been blocked by large hotels and shopping centers. In contrast, the majority of people live crammed into densely populated neighbourhoods, often with no electricity, clean drinking water or sewage.

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The education crisis⁵ came to a head two years ago when professors and teachers went on strike for three months to demand higher wages and better working conditions.

5 | "L'Université Cheikh Anta Diop à la croisée des chemins", *Les Cahiers d'Alternance*, No. 15, KAS Senegal and CESTI, Dakar, 16 Jul 2012.

Schoolchildren and university students were threatened with losing a whole academic year. Macky Sall promised to hold talks with the teachers' unions and student councils. More apprenticeships, new schools and universities were to be set up, but above all the quality of school education and vocational training was to be examined and improved, along with the creation of new jobs.⁶

The Wade government increased the number of elementary school teachers. High school graduates could teach in elementary schools after a mere three months of training. This certainly helped to address the lack of teachers, but it was clearly not linked to improvements in pedagogical and subject-specific training. What is more, the different types of schools (state-run, Muslim and Catholic) followed parallel curricula, which led to differences in quality. The number of students attending university has soared. After the second semester, all students could hitherto claim a basic grant, so this has certainly made it easier for many more students to attend university. However, the Senegalese labour market does not have the capacity to absorb so many graduates in jobs that match their qualifications.

Access to clean drinking water, improvements to rural infrastructure and flood defences were also included in

Sall's program along with the issue of social harmony, which was particularly threatened in Dakar due to the increase in criminality.

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With regard to the health sector, the new President was keen to introduce a general health insurance scheme. When he took office, he found himself facing many challenges but lacking the finances to tackle them effectively. So immediately after his election, Macky Sall called on his bilateral and multilateral development partners to help him resolve the country's most pressing problems.

6 | Ute Bocandé and Andrea Kolb, "Senegal: Kleine Regierung, große Wirkung?", KAS Country Report, Apr 2012, <http://kas.de/senegal-mali/de/publications/30721> (accessed 24 Apr 2014).

THE POSITION AFTER TWO YEARS OF THE SALL ADMINISTRATION

At the beginning of his term, Macky Sall devoted himself to addressing his country's social needs, as promised in his election manifesto: the food crisis, high food prices and the education crisis. Today, institutional reforms and the new decentralisation strategy (Acte III) are some of the new President's main reform projects, along with his National Strategy for Economic and Social Development in the period from 2013 to 2017. The latter is based on the vision of the Plan Sénégal émergent (PSE), which is to be executed by 2035 and which prioritises the following sectors: transport, energy, agriculture, drinking water, education, health, tourism, social security and environmental protection.

Resolving the Agriculture Crisis

In Senegal, improvements to people's quality of life and the avoidance of food crises are largely dependent on agriculture, but reforms in this sector have been slow in coming. Private agricultural companies are the only ones that are currently making profits, generally at the expense of small farmers. To be specific, large domestic and particularly international agribusinesses have established themselves in the Senegal Valley and are growing sugar cane, tomatoes and rice on the land of dispossessed farmers along the Senegal River. In many regions, foreign companies (particularly from China, Italy and Spain) are undertaking large-scale cultivation of fruit and vegetables. This production requires huge quantities of water, which these companies access using their own pumping plants. This has resulted in ground water levels dropping in the surrounding villages, making life even harder for small farmers.

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In the region around Kaolack, Fatick and Diourbel, where farming is dominated by peanut cultivation (and depends on global market prices), Suneor exploits its monopoly as the only edible oil company by paying low wages and refusing to agree any minimum purchase quantities. It can often take months for peanut farmers to dispose of their

production. Instead, low-quality oil is imported from countries such as Brazil for internal consumption, while Suneor produces high-quality cooking oil for export. This has led to the population of areas such as Kaolack sinking further into poverty and many people feeling forced to move away from the region.



President Macky Sall in Casamance in March 2014: The promised agricultural program to promote rice production in the region has not yet been introduced. | Source: © MAXPPP, Photo Panapress, picture alliance.

The prices of essential foodstuffs such as rice, sugar and oil were slightly reduced immediately after Sall took office. This initially resulted in traders holding on to their goods in the hope of keeping prices high. As all products are imports, in the end a solution was found using tax waivers to compensate for the negative effects of price reductions on traders. However, government-imposed reductions in food prices and rents (the latter were pushed through in January 2014, despite widespread protests)⁷ seem to contradict the President's liberal rhetoric. When the government examined the issue with consumer protection experts, it was more a question of how to support local production and the consumption of local produce. Macky Sall promised to introduce a major agricultural program to promote rice production by small farmers in the Casamance

7 | "Baisse Du Loyer: Voici Le Tableau Des Nouveaux Tarifs!", *Dernière minute*, 24 Jan 2014, <http://derniereminute.sn/baisse-du-loyer-voici-le-tableau-des-nouveaux-tarifs> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

region. The aim was to improve the region's economy but also to contribute to the peace process. However, to date this program has not yet been introduced.

The Never-Ending Saga of the Energy Crisis

The electricity supply is one of the greatest challenges facing the Sall government. The International Monetary Fund has warned that the running deficit of Senegal's energy sector could cost it two per cent in economic growth every year.⁸ The Sall government is still paying out considerable sums for energy imports, meaning that it is plunging deeper into debt and remains dependent on imports. On the one hand, the government talks of a shift towards alternative energy, while in reality it has so far made little use of renewable energies, particularly the potential of solar power.⁹ In contrast, Dakar recently ratified the agreement signed by Wade with Seoul according to which the Koreans would be allowed to build a coal-fired power station in Senegal. This will certainly not make Senegal more autonomous in terms of its energy production. Instead, it will continue to incur debts in the construction of the power plant and the resulting permanent coal imports.

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Third Decentralisation Reform and Stability in Casamance

The Acte III decentralisation reform is a renewed attempt to strengthen the local authorities. Macky Sall is keen to increase their funding in order to improve efficiency. The following changes are designed to simplify the previous structure of these authorities: the upgrading of rural *communautés* to the status of communes (*communalisation universelle or intégrale*); the upgrading of *départements* and

8 | *The Africa Report*, No. 56, Dec 2013-Jan 2014 (prognoses 2013 and 2014).

9 | The objective is to achieve 20 per cent of energy generation from renewable sources by 2017, but at present the national figure is only four per cent. Cf. Arnaud Zagbaï, "Sénégal: Le Gouvernement sénégalais s'engage à la promotion des énergies renouvelables", *Médiaterre*, 21 Feb 2014, <http://mediaterre.org/afrique-ouest/actu,20140221151823.html> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

the dissolution of the previously higher-ranking regions (*départementalisation*); and the enhancement of the natural characteristics of geographical, cross-*département* areas (*territorialisation*).

However, this well-meaning attempt at introducing reforms is controversial. It comes at a time when the territorial reform of 1996 with the creation of new regions and the transfer of key competences to the local authorities has achieved first positive results. The local population of the new and remote regions like Kedougou regard the dissolution of the region as local authority as a step backwards. There are many who seem to view the regionally subordinated *département* as too weak and unable to counter-balance the central authority. Furthermore, it is criticized that such a fundamental reform could not be carried out correctly until the local elections in June, potentially even causing problems during these elections.

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President Sall's legitimacy is strongly dependent on resolving the Casamance conflict. Failure to achieve this will result in negative consequences for national and local politics.

The Casamance region's favourable agricultural conditions are being inadequately exploited. The region could also be used much more intensively as a transport route from the coast to the interior, and also as a trading route with neighbouring countries. The civil population can only pursue their agricultural activities to a limited extent, because armed rebels are blocking access to arable land and land mines also present a serious threat. War economies have long been operating in the unstable border regions between Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. These are headed up by transnational gangs engaged in smuggling drugs, arms and people and that have close ties to rebel groups in the Casamance. It is therefore easy for regional conflicts to spill over into the unstable Casamance region.

Macky Sall set up a high-level advisory group and in 2013 the rebel organisation, the MDFC (Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance), declared itself willing to enter talks. Other bodies such as the Community of St. Edigio, the Collectif des Cadres Casamançais and other

national and international organisations are working discreetly, but effectively, towards peace talks. The various rebel groups are involved in the talks and now almost all sides seem ready to enter into serious peace negotiations. In Senegal's planned third decentralisation reform (Acte III), the Casamance is to become an economic and geographical *territoire* pilot region for local self-government and thus achieve a degree of autonomy. If consistently followed through, this would prove to be a clever manoeuvre. It seems to provide a way of moving closer to a resolution to the conflict.

Institutional Reforms

One of Macky Sall's first planned institutional reforms was to reduce the cost of government. To this end, he created a national commission (Commission nationale de réforme des institutions, CNRI), headed up by the Chairman of the Assises Nationales, Amadou Makhtar Mbow. 59 presidential agencies were abolished, the presidential jet was sold and the embassies and consulates in Madagascar, Cuba and Indonesia closed. By dissolving the Senate, Sall also reduced the number of government ministers, but at the same time he created new posts. There are currently 34 ministries, as opposed to the 25 that were announced.¹⁰ The President has also reinstalled the Economic and Social Council and expanded it by including responsibility for the environment (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental). This hardly represents a streamlining of government.

In February 2014 the Commission for Institutional Reform (CNRI) handed Macky Sall its findings.¹¹ More than 150 proposed constitutional changes are aimed at decentralising party and state. Plurality of offices is to be prevented, and it should be made easier for citizens to participate and keep a check on public agencies. Four members of the government have criticised these proposals because they seem to be heading in the direction of a new constitution. Macky Sall is presumably reluctant to take this step.

10 | "Composition du gouvernement", Government of Senegal, <http://www.gouv.sn/Decret-no-2013-1223-du-02.html> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

11 | Mehdi Ba, "Excès de zèle?", *Jeune Afrique*, 54, 23 Feb-1 Mar 2014.

To date, the salaries of local authority chairmen and mayors have not been cut, but only village heads still receive expenses. Government spending in the energy sector also remains high. There seems little chance of achieving the objective of reducing the budget deficit to 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2014. However, the government has been able to make savings on pensions and civil servants' salaries. A detailed investigation conducted in early 2013 confirmed suspicions that for many years pensions had been paid out to deceased civil servants.¹² The investigation also showed that hundreds of civil servants were still drawing salaries after they had left office.

One of the current administration's major aims is to prosecute cases of corruption in the former Wade government. To this end, Macky Sall created the Office national de lutte contre la fraude et la corruption (OFNAC) and established a court charged with fighting illegal enrichment (Cour de Répression de l'Enrichissement Illicite). In April 2013, Karim Wade, one of former President Wade's sons, was arrested and charged with corruption and the misappropriation of state funds. His assets in foreign accounts are estimated at 115 million euros.¹³ Under his father, he headed up several ministries (air transport, energy, international cooperation with Arab and Asian states, infrastructure, territorial administration). He was commonly known as the "Minister for Heaven and Earth". Proceedings are underway against another five ministers.

In April 2013, Karim Wade, one of former President Wade's sons, was arrested and charged with corruption and the misappropriation of state funds.

Another scandal affecting the ex-ruling PDS party relates to former minister Aida Ndiongue. She is accused of embezzling some 70 million euros under Wade and has been in detention since December 2013.¹⁴ The former head

12 | "Rapport de l'audit physique des agents de l'État: Des morts, des agents absents du Sénégal..., payés par l'État", leral.net, 6 Jul 2013, http://leral.net/Rapport-de-l-audit-physique-des-agents-de-l-Etats-Des-morts-des-agents-absents-du-Senegal--payes-par-l-Etat_a88592.html (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

13 | Frédéric Couteau, "A la Une: Karim Wade derrière les barreaux", *RFI*, 18 Apr 2013, <http://rfi.fr/emission/20130418-une-karim-wade-derriere-barreaux> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

14 | Mohamed Tidiane Niaye, "L'argent présumé illicite d'Aida Ndiongue évalué à 47 milliards 675 millions", *Agence de Presse Sénégalais*, 17 Jan 2014, <http://aps.sn/newsedit/spip.php?article123579> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

of the land register office, Tahibou Ndiaye, also went to prison. However, he managed to buy his freedom in August 2013 by paying back the 7.9 billion CFA francs the court had convicted him of embezzling. These kinds of court proceedings have weakened the remaining opposition from the old administration. Whether this continues will be demonstrated in the local elections planned for June 2014.

But the new government is not exactly a shining example of transparency. The Office for Public Tenders (Direction Centrale des Marchés Publics) has accused the Sall government of awarding 24 per cent of contracts without a public call for tenders in the last six months of 2012. As a result of this, in September 2013, Sall dismissed a number of ministers as part of his government reshuffle. Finance minister Amadou Kane was replaced by the former director of the tax authority, Amadou Ba; and Prime Minister Abdoul Mbaye was replaced by former justice minister and human rights advocate Aminata Touré. By calling this figurehead of the protest movement to serve in public office, Macky Sall has managed to largely neutralise the potential for protest in civil society. The current political opposition is therefore made up of the remains of the PDS and a few civil society groups that have not yet been absorbed into the coalition.

The appointment of Aminata Touré has been welcomed around the world. She made her name during the trial against the former dictator of Chad, Hissène Habré, and through her work for human rights. However, there have been growing tensions between Touré and Macky Sall. Sall's supporters have accused the highly-popular Touré of weakening the President and reducing his chances of re-election. There are fears of yet another cabinet reshuffle, the third since Sall took office.

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Macky Sall is also attracting strong criticism from his own ranks because he has accepted people into his ruling coalition – and rewarded some with high-ranking positions – from different parties and with different ideologies. Like his predecessor, the current President was elected by a broad party coalition. So the government and presidential office are made up of liberals, socialists and former communists.

Sall is keen to hold fast to his role as moderator, as his APR party (Alliance pour la République) is currently too weak to achieve major successes in the upcoming local elections.

The President's party is more attractive at regional level. Many local politicians can expect election success if they switch to the President's party. This not unusual party political nomadism can also be observed in the Sall administration. Politicians and voters alike are keen to bat for the strongest team if it means they can gain personal advantage. In addition, voting decisions in Senegal are generally made based on individuals and personalities.

So far, the Sall government has failed to address the problem of illegal land distribution in systematic fashion. On the contrary, land continues to be given away at will, for example in Diogoye and other places in the "vegetable belt" near Dakar, in the Kedougou region and along the Senegal River.

Social Issues

Senegal is one of the poorest countries in the world. Half of the population can neither read nor write, 46.7 per cent of people live on less than two U.S. dollars a day,¹⁵ and according to the World Health Organisation, child malnutrition has actually increased.¹⁶ The population is growing by almost three per cent a year, urbanisation is increasing as people migrate from rural areas and the high birth rate continues to soar (Table 1).

The country's education system remains in a state of crisis. Although the government was able to curtail the strikes by the teachers' unions and recently signed an agreement that addressed many of the unions' concerns, morale among teachers remains low and the level of school drop-outs is still high. In recent times, a number of new elementary, secondary and grammar schools and even some new universities have been established in order to at least

15 | The World Bank, "Sénégal", 2012, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/senegal> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

16 | United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2014 Aperçu des besoins humanitaires. Sénégal", Nov 2013, https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/HNO_2014_Senegal_FR.pdf (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

meet the quantitative targets of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. However, the quality of education still leaves much to be desired and job opportunities for high school and college graduates remain scarce.

Table 1

Facts and figures on Senegal

Population	13.7 million (2012)
Population growth	2.9 per cent (2012)
GDP	14.05 billion U.S. dollars (2012)
Per-capita GDP	797 U.S. dollars (2012)
Life expectancy	63 (2011)
Inflation	1.4 per cent (2012)
People below the poverty line	46.7 per cent (2011)
Child mortality	5 per cent
Urban population	43 per cent
Adult literacy	50 per cent
International aid	1.1 billion U.S. dollars
Foreign direct investment	338 million U.S. dollars
Mobile phone usage	88 per cent
Main export	Phosphates

Sources: Authors' own compilation. The World Bank, n. 15;
The Africa Report, n. 8.

At present there are very few state-run vocational schools, and university degrees often fail to meet the needs of the labour market. Many new, private colleges and vocational schools have been set up, but they tend to act as a collecting tank for students with no school-leaving qualifications and provide no guarantee of a job. A government body is officially responsible for checking the quality of education offered by private institutions, but for financial and staffing reasons, these education offices are unable to carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. Macky Sall has set up a

special commission to tackle fundamental reforms to the education system, but it has not been working yet to full extent due to financial reasons.

In the summer months there are often water shortages, and this became a serious issue in September 2013, when Dakar's municipal water supply broke down. For weeks, this capital city of four million inhabitants was unable to supply households with running water, leading to a serious risk of social unrest, as happened in the summer of 2011. Even though the damage was quickly fixed and there have been no supply problems since, maintaining rural water supplies still represents a major challenge.



Village school in Djirne: In recent times, a number of new schools and even some universities have been established in order to at least meet the quantitative targets of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. | Source: © KAS Senegal/Mali.

So far, the Sall government has not been able to significantly improve the infrastructure of rural areas, although new connecting roads between larger towns and cities were built in his first two years in office. Many places, including district capitals are still only accessible by dirt roads that are impassable during the rainy season. There are plans for the country's rail network to be completely refurbished and expanded with help from the Chinese, which should help to resolve some of the inland transport and supply problems. However, this is unlikely to result in more jobs for the Senegalese, as the Chinese investors will bring their own workers with them.

The police and army are being strengthened by the addition of local police stations in every quarter in Dakar (commissariat de proximité), in an attempt to combat the city's growing crime rates. However, many people still feel unsafe, especially in the outlying areas. Some have reacted by forming unofficial militias, although their willingness to use violence and their lack of professionalism have created problems of their own, and there have even been reports of lynchings.

The universal health coverage (*couverture universelle maladie*, CUM) that was promised when the government came to power was officially introduced in September 2013, but remains at the planning stage due to unresolved funding issues. The aim of the scheme is to increase the number of insured citizens from 18 per cent in 2010 to 95 per cent by 2017, as was announced by Prime Minister Touré in her government statement in October 2013.¹⁷ However, the informal sector is organising, and the new Union of Informal Workers could in the long run also become an agency for implementing universal health coverage.

The aim of the universal health coverage scheme is to increase the number of people with health insurance from 18 per cent in 2010 to 95 per cent by 2017.

One popular move that is, however, in need of closer scrutiny is the introduction of a minimum pension and family allowance for poorer families (*bourse de sécurité familiale*), a concept that originated in Latin America.¹⁸ Under this scheme, up to 250,000 families who live below the poverty line (almost half of the population) receive an annual allowance of 100,000 CFA francs (150 euros). Many observers do not see this as a serious solution but more of an election campaign tactic in a local election year. For one thing, 150 euros is simply not enough for a family to solve its financial problems or make investments in the long term, and the fact that these allowances will be funded out of the education budget means many students will now have to survive without a minimum grant.

17 | "L'intégralité de la déclaration de politique générale du PM Aminata Touré", *Le Soleil*, 28 Oct 2013, http://lesoleil.sn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33040 (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

18 | "La bourse de sécurité familiale", Government of Senegal, <http://www.gouv.sn/La-bourse-de-securite-familiale.html> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

Economic Development

In order to stimulate economic growth and help pass on the benefits to broad sections of the population, the Sall government is adopting an integrative approach with its *Stratégie Nationale de Développement Economique et Social*. It is much more focused on the principle of “inclusive growth” than the previous government. The aim is to reduce absolute poverty and social inequality. However, this approach has not yet produced any concrete results. According to the World Bank, the top 20 per cent of the population still accounts for half of all goods and services consumed.¹⁹ One of the key drivers of this social inequality is the regional allocation of government expenditure.

Economic growth continues to be relatively low, but it is at least stable.²⁰ The government is actually hoping to see an annual growth rate of six per cent by 2017²¹ – a very ambitious target. As a result of sufficient rainfall, good agricultural yields, an increase in the mining of raw materials and higher exports of fruit, vegetables and seafood, Senegal’s exports rose by 18.6 per cent in 2013, which also had the effect of raising the already high import ratio (20.4 per cent) in December 2013. However, in 2013 the overall export rate went down by 0.7 per cent, and the import rate decreased by 0.4 per cent..²²

According to estimates by the International Monetary Fund and the French Directorate General, at least two-thirds of Senegal’s GDP is achieved by the informal sector.²³ In the World Bank’s 2014 *Doing Business Report*, Senegal dropped two places from 176 to 178 out of a total of 189

19 | Groupe Consultatif 2014, *Evaluation quantitative du DSRP-II – Dynamique de la pauvreté monétaire*, 24-25 Feb 2014, 10, <http://www.gcsenegal.gouv.sn/docs/GC2014-012%20-%20Note%20-%20Evaluation%20quantitative%20du%20DSRP-II.pdf> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

20 | N. 15; n. 8.

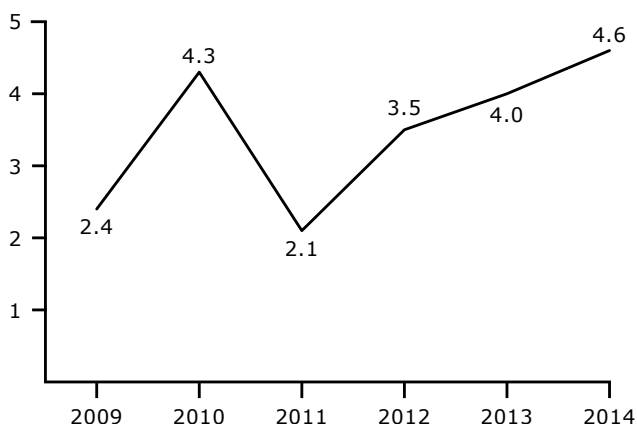
21 | Government statement by the Prime Minister in October 2013, n. 19.

22 | Senegal National Agency of Statistics and Demography (ANSD), *Repères Statistiques Decembre 2013*, Dec 2013, 7, http://www.ansd.sn/publications/conjoncturelles/ReperStat/ReperStat_12_13.pdf (accessed 30 Apr 2014); n. 15.

23 | N. 8; France’s Ministry of Economy and Finances, “Sénégal”, Trésor, <https://www.tresor.economie.gouv.fr/pays/senegal> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

countries.²⁴ Many business start-ups fail due to excessive bureaucracy, the country's insolvency laws are weak and establishing cross-border trade is fraught with difficulties. Added to this is the fact that the financially weak population is not in a position to invest in entrepreneurial activities. Most people's income is generally only sufficient to meet their own personal needs.

Fig. 1

Economic Growth in Senegal 2009 to 2014 in per cent

Sources: Authors' own chart. ANSD, *Situation Économique et Sociale du Sénégal en 2011*, Feb 2013, http://www.ansd.sn/publications/annuelles/SES_2011_def.pdf (accessed 30 Apr 2014); Directorate of Prognoses and Economic studies (DPEE), *Situation Économique et Financière en 2013 et Perspectives 2014*, Nov 2013, 3-4, http://www.dpee.sn/IMG/pdf/sef_2013_perspectives_2014.pdf (accessed 30 Apr 2014).

Senegal is still extremely dependent on foreign, mostly short-term, loans. In June 2013 the government announced that it planned to issue a ten-year 500-million-U.S. dollar Eurobond in order to provide long-term financing for key infrastructure projects.²⁵ Following the change of government in 2012, international donor countries also agreed

24 | The World Bank, *Doing Business 2014. Economy Profile: Senegal*, 11th Edition, 2013, http://doingbusiness.org/data/exploreconomies/senegal/~/_media/giawb/doing%20business/documents/profiles/country/SEN.pdf (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

25 | Souleye Seneko, "Marchés Internationaux: Le Sénégal Veut Lever 500 Millions De Dollars", Senecoplus, <http://senecoplus.com/marches-internationaux-le-senegal-veut-lever-500-millions-de-dollars> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

to increase ODA funding by seven per cent (2013). In February 2014, Macky Sall arranged an Advisory Group meeting in Paris where he presented his Plan Sénégal émergent (PSE) to donors and development partners. As a result of this meeting, Senegal was able to secure funding commitments of more than 3.7 billion CFA francs (56 million euros),²⁶ double the amount needed. This meant the government would have sufficient funding to implement its development plans in the medium term.

In order to stimulate competition in the communications sector, the government hopes to see a fourth mobile telecommunications provider enter the market (alongside Orange, Expresso and Tigo): Sudatel, whose founder, however, is currently in prison facing charges of corruption and tax evasion. The current government also intends to continue some of the key infrastructure projects started under the Wade government, including the new airport in Diass, 45 kilometres south of Dakar.

However, other plans such as a major mining project have remained on ice for years. The mining group Arcelor Mittal signed an agreement with Senegal in 2007 to mine iron ore but never followed up on the project because of the global economic and financial crisis. Also the government wanted to take away their right to mine the iron ore reserves in Falémé, which prompted the company to take legal action. In September 2013, the dispute was settled in the government's favour, allowing it to begin seeking new investors.

In a 2012 report, Greenpeace claimed that illegal fishing by foreign fishing boats off the coast of Senegal alone amounted to 125,000 tons per year, equivalent to 28 per cent of Senegal's annual catch.

Immediately after taking office, Macky Sall declared that one of his top priorities was to put a stop to the illegal fishing by foreign fishing boats that are largely responsible for the problem of over-fishing off the coast of West Africa. In a 2012 report, Greenpeace claimed illegal fishing by foreign fishing boats off the coast of Senegal alone amounted to 125,000 tons per year, equivalent to 28 per cent of Senegal's annual catch. And in January 2014,

26 | "Plan Sénégal émergent: Les bases d'un programme ambitieux", leral.net, 16 Feb 2014, http://leral.net/Plan-Senegal-emergent-Les-bases-d-un-programme-ambitieux_a106573.html (accessed 23 Apr 2014); cf. "Press Review – Admiring logs results to the Advisory Group Paris", Allodakar, 25 Feb 2014, <http://allodakar.com/?p=4018&lang=en> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

Senegalese authorities seized the Russian factory ship the *Oleg Neydenov*, which was fishing illegally off the south coast of Senegal. The authorities accused the crew of repeatedly fishing illegally in Senegal's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and demanded the payment of fines.²⁷

Meanwhile, fishing experienced another general upsurge with the acquisition of the *Société de Conserverie en Afrique* by the South Korean company Dongwon. The company invested 13.2 billion CFA francs (20 million euros), specifically in order to revive tuna fishing.

Regional Responsibility

Senegal remains a stabilising influence in a region of West Africa that is subject to substantial political and social upheavals, and Macky Sall appears to be well aware of the responsibilities the country has when it comes to regional issues. For a small country, Senegal has a relatively high number of representatives in international organisations and missions. At the beginning of last year, for example, the Senegalese government sent 500 soldiers to Mali to support the West African ECOWAS task force. Another international success was the setting up in February 2013 of a new court of law to handle the trial of Hissène Habré, the former dictator of Chad,²⁸ with the support of the African Union.

Macky Sall also gave new impetus to the negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the EU, which had been bogged down for years. As the leader chosen to head up discussions on behalf of the ECOWAS countries,²⁹ he was able to negotiate a compromise between the parties. The ECOWAS countries have agreed to a 75 per cent opening-up of their markets over 20 years, while the EU for its part will remove subsidies from exports to West Africa and will provide financial support for infrastructure and energy projects in the region.³⁰

27 | Markus M. Haefliger, "Krach zwischen Senegal und Russland", *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 21 Jan 2014, <http://nzz.ch/-1.18225385> (accessed 23 Apr 2014).

28 | Habré enjoyed political asylum in Senegal under Wade after being deposed in the fall of 1990, but was arrested in June 2013.

29 | Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

30 | "Le compromis sur les APE trouvé sous la supervision de Macky Sall", *Le Soleil*, 25 Mar 2014.

OTHER AREAS WHERE ACTION IS NEEDED AND PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE PROGRESS

Senegal's future lies in economic development and the social security it must bring with it. What is lacking, however, is an economic model that is right for an African developing nation and which is capable of both redistributing wealth and reducing poverty. It is precisely this kind of model that is missing from the current government's 20-year strategy, the PSE. The new government would give some credence to its desire for inclusive growth if it conducted an open political debate on an appropriate economic model for Senegal.

The Muslim community is extremely well organised. Approximately 84 per cent of believers belong to one of the two big Sufi orders.

The government also needs to seriously address the role of religion and its growing influence on the country's politics. The Muslim community (94 per cent of the population) is extremely well organised. Approximately 84 per cent of practising Muslims belong to one of the two big Sufi orders (Mourides and Tijaniyyah), while Christians make up five to six per cent of the population. Many religious adherents also claim to be followers of traditional religions that are practised in parallel with Islam and Christianity. So far, the various religions have been able to co-exist peacefully within Senegal. However, more fundamental interpretations of Islam are on the rise, with more Arab contributors investing in Islamic education, religious buildings and charitable organisations. As a Sahel country, Senegal also borders countries where there are active Islamist terrorist groups.

Although the Senegalese state is basically secular, religious actors have been increasingly exerting more influence on the country's politics since the time of President Senghor. The two largest Muslim brotherhoods in particular have very close ties with the country's political elite. The state has invested in infrastructure projects in the Mourides city of Touba, for example, while preventing Christian minorities in some towns and cities from building churches. The Sall government therefore needs to ensure that religious influence on politics, society and education does not threaten religious freedom.

In this respect, the influence of the Sufi brotherhoods is less of a concern than the rise of more fundamental and extremist Islamic movements. Many graduates of Arab schools and universities have few prospects of finding a job. Spurred on by Arab ideology, it is easy for them to succumb to the temptation to join these movements. This is happening with increasing frequency and experts believe there could be thousands of unknown Islamist extremists in Senegal alongside the faithful who might be tempted to extremism.

Along with religion, gender equality is another factor that continues to play a key role in Senegal's development. Discrimination against women is still firmly rooted in the country's family laws and there has as yet been no harmonising of these laws with the international agreement the country signed on gender equality and the equal treatment of women. While it is true that various regulatory measures relating to gender equality have been introduced, discrimination against women remains both an obstacle to progress and a human rights issue. For women in rural areas in particular, access to political institutions is still very difficult, while many are forced to marry before they reach adulthood and often suffer from domestic violence. Men may legally take up to four wives and have unlimited power over them, leaving women effectively powerless to defend themselves.

President Sall also has to tackle the problem of unresolved territorial disputes. The Casamance conflict is not the only one in Senegal. Senegal's overall stability is seriously threatened by conflicts in the regions bordering Gambia and Guinea, by local conflicts in the Kédougou region and by regional influences coming out of the Sahel. There is a serious need for constructive crisis prevention strategies – and the sooner the better.

The intended reforms announced by Macky Sall remain very much at the planning stage. This includes once again limiting the presidential term of office to five years after it was extended by President Wade. In February, Sall announced in Paris that he is now planning to do this. However, one of the main tasks ahead of him is restoring the government's legitimacy. Failure in this respect could have a negative

impact on his re-election and on the country's democratic progress. Senegal's people increasingly demand tangible results. This will be the gauge by which voters will measure their President at the next elections.