

## Polity IV Country Report 2010: Senegal

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Polity:</b></td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Democ:</b></td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Autoc:</b></td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Durable:</b></td> <td></td> <td>10</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Tentative:</b></td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change	<b>Polity:</b>	7	7	0	<b>Democ:</b>	7	7	0	<b>Autoc:</b>	0	0	0	<b>Durable:</b>		10		<b>Tentative:</b>		No		
Score:	2009	2010	Change																						
<b>Polity:</b>	7	7	0																						
<b>Democ:</b>	7	7	0																						
<b>Autoc:</b>	0	0	0																						
<b>Durable:</b>		10																							
<b>Tentative:</b>		No																							
SCODE	<b>SEN</b>	CCODE	<b>433</b>	Date of Report	<b>1 June 2011</b>																				
<b>Polity IV Component Variables</b>																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
3	3	4	6	2	4																				
<b>Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)</b>																									
End Date		19 March 2000		Begin Date																					
				20 March 2000																					
<b>Polity Fragmentation: No</b>																									
<b>Constitution</b>	2001																								
<b>Executive(s)</b>	President Abdoulaye Wade (DPS); initially directly elected in March 2000; reelected, 25 February 2007, 55.9%																								
<b>Legislature</b>	Bicameral: National Assembly (150 seats; 90 directly elected, 60 proportionally elected; most recent elections, 3 June 2007): Coalition for Change 2007 (SOPI 2007): 131 Other parties: 19 Senate (100 seats; 35 indirectly elected, 65 appointed by president; most recent elections, 19 August 2007) Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS): 34 And-Jef/African Party for Democracy and Socialism (AJ/PADS): 1 Appointed: 65																								
<b>Judiciary</b>	Constitutional Court																								

### Narrative Description:<sup>1</sup>

#### **Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)**

Citizens of Senegal have long held the constitutional right to select their chief executive through multiparty elections. However, the Senegalese Socialist Party's (PSS) hegemonic control over the institutions of political life, which it had dominated since independence in 1960, made a mockery of this constitutional right. Abdou Diouf, presidential successor to Leopold Senghor, ruled Senegal from 1981 to the spring of 2000 largely through the widespread distribution of political patronage and the use of electoral fraud. Two

<sup>1</sup> The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

key events paved the way for the electoral victory of long-time opposition candidate Abdoulaye Wade in the March 2000 presidential election. First, in 1997 a National Electoral Observatory (ONEL) was established to guarantee electoral transparency in future elections. Second, the pre-Christmas coup in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire, which ousted long-time ruler Henri Bedie after he attempted to steal the elections in his country, weakened the resolve of Diouf supporters in the PSS to manipulate the electoral process. Held in an environment of widespread electoral violence between pro-government and opposition supporters, President Diouf was able to win the first round of the presidential election in February 2000. However, the President was unable to garner the necessary 50% of the popular vote required to prevent a run-off election. Through a series of political arrangements in the opposition camp prior to the second round of balloting in March, opposition candidate Abdoulaye Wade was able to consolidate his political support and defeat President Diouf with over 60% of the popular vote. Wade was reelected in February 2007 with 56% of the vote. While opposition candidates charged that Wade was elected through fraud, observers from the Economic Community of West African States declared the election to be "free and fair."

**Executive Constraints: Substantial Limitations (5)**

Political power in Senegal had traditionally been highly centralized. The ruling Socialist Party, guided by the strong leadership of Leopold Senghor and Abdou Diouf, had controlled political life in Senegal for over four decades. The legislature, while open to opposition viewpoints, had little direct control over the executive branch. The judiciary, like the legislature, had also been subservient to the wishes of the executive branch and the ruling PSS. The election of Abdoulaye Wade in March 2000 has fundamentally restructured the nature of executive constraints in Senegal. While widely regarded as a "do-nothing applause gallery" when Senghor and Diouf were in power, with the election of President Wade in the spring of 2000 this body, dominated by opposition PSS members, actively sought to constrain the actions of the executive branch. Initially lacking the necessary two-thirds vote in the legislature to dissolve the National Assembly and call for new elections, President Wade sought to alter the constitution to resolve this crisis. Following the conduct of a successful constitutional referendum in January 2001, President Wade dissolved the legislature and called for new legislative elections. The April 2001 National Assembly elections consolidated Wade's power base by giving his supporters, winning 89 out of 120 seats, control over the legislative branch. President Wade's power was further consolidated in the aftermath of the June 2007 legislative elections, which provided the pro-Government SOPI coalition with 131 of the 150 seats. These elections were boycotted by the opposition who claimed that the electoral roles were outdated and that the system lacked a truly independent electoral commission. While Wade had promised to "parliamentarize" the political system when he assumed office in 2000, he has largely failed to deliver on this promise. The political system remains dominated by the office of the presidency. The judiciary remains weak and does not represent a real check on executive authority.

**Political Participation: Political Liberalization: Limited and/or Decreasing Overt Coercion (9)**

Senegal has a long history of participatory politics. Since 1974 Senegal has been a multiparty system in which over 30 legal parties actively organize and compete for political power. Despite the functioning of multiparty politics in Senegal, the PSS exerted hegemonic control over the political arena through its dominance of the bureaucracy, its ability to distribute state patronage, the widespread use of electoral fraud and, as a last resort, through political intimidation. With the recent electoral victory of Abdoulaye Wade to the office of president, the hegemony of the PSS has been weakened, although their presence is still felt in the legislative and judicial branches of government and in the bureaucracy. Despite the liberalization of the political order in recent years, it is important to remember that Senegal's most powerful political figures are not the politicians but the leaders of the country's Islamic Sufi brotherhoods, to which a very large proportion of Senegalese belong, and whose influence pervades every aspect of the life.

In July 2005 Idrissa Seck, one of Senegal's most popular politicians and leading contenders for the presidency, was arrested on charges of fraud and of threatening state security. Seck was deputy leader of Wade's PDS and served as prime minister from November 2002 until April 2004. President Wade had sacked Seck because of a growing political rivalry between the two. The imprisonment of Seck emboldened the opposition to President Wade and led to a split in the ruling Democratic Party of Senegal. Seck was released from prison in February 2006.

Partisan political violence continues to be a staple feature of electoral politics in Senegal and conflict in the secessionist province of Casamance, despite promises by President Wade to seek a negotiated settlement, continues unabated. The conflict broke out over claims by the region's people, the

Catholic Jola, that they were being marginalized by the Wolof, Senegal's main ethnic group. The Casamance Movement of Democratic Forces (MFDC) signed a peace agreement with the Wade government in March 2001, but some hard line elements in the MFDC have rejected this compromise and continue to press for independence. After a period of calm in 2004, low level violence resumed in 2005 and has continued sporadically since that time.