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## One term too many?

***Wednesday, February 22, 2023 - While West Africa has entered a period of particularly serious political and security tensions, Senegal seemed to be one of the last countries in the region where democracy remained the bedrock of society. However, many signals suggest that President Macky Sall is seeking a third term in office, which is unconstitutional and a source of serious socio-political turmoil.***

For several months, rumors have been circulating that the Senegalese president wants to remain in power even though the fundamental law does not allow him to do so. In September 2022, the banning of a concert organized by Tournons La Page on term limits in Dakar for "risk of disturbing public order" seemed to confirm them. All of this, together with continued pressure on the opposition and journalists, has put the issue of constitutional change at the heart of the debate, creating tensions that could degenerate into fraternal conflicts like those experienced in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, and Chad when their leaders decided not to respect their constitution. These tensions resulted in some cases in military coups, putting a brutal end to any democratic momentum.

The Senegalese people have already risen up against Abdoulaye Wade's desire to remain in power and have, for this reason, been an example for the sub-region of democracy and respect for human rights, including freedom of expression and demonstration. The restriction of civic space in the country is disturbingly challenging these rights in the country and is leading to the rise of tensions which, as we have seen in other countries in the region, is a source of destabilization and undermining of development.

We, the signatory organizations, call on Macky Sall to avoid the trap of a third mandate and to open a national consultation to calm the situation and

spirits by committing to respect the Constitution and maintain Senegal as an example of democracy in Africa. The West African region is greatly shaken by the rise of violent frictions and the occurrence of a situation of instability in Senegal, in connection with a third mandate, is very worrying.

**Signatory organizations :**

1. AfricanDefenders (Pan African Defenders Network)
2. African Network of Constitutional Lawyers
3. AfricTivistes
4. Africans Rising
5. Agir ensemble pour les droits humains
6. Civicus
7. **Front Citoyen-Togo Debout**
8. Tournons La Page