

Press Release on the Human Rights Situation in the Republic of Senegal following the Postponement of the Presidential Election to December 15, 2024

February 14, 2024

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Commission) is closely monitoring and is deeply concerned by the human rights situation in the Republic of Senegal following the postponement of the presidential election initially scheduled for February 25, 2024.

The Commission is profoundly troubled by the multiple consequences that have followed the announcement of the election's postponement, including: the suspension of Internet access; the repression of peaceful demonstrations by law enforcement with the excessive use of tear gas, as well as numerous arrests and detentions, including those of journalists; and allegations regarding the deaths of three demonstrators.

The Commission condemns the use of violence by both demonstrators and law enforcement, and urges the latter to avoid any use of lethal force and to implement the Guidelines for the Policing of Assemblies by Law Enforcement Officials in Africa (2017).

The Commission reminds that the right to life is protected by the African Charter (Article 4). The same applies to the right of access to information and freedom of expression, which are also enshrined in Article 9 of the Charter and in the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (2019). The right to freedom of assembly and demonstration is likewise provided for by Article 11 of the African Charter. The Commission calls on the State of Senegal to guarantee and protect all of these rights in accordance with its obligations under the African Charter and other international and regional human rights instruments to which it is a Party.

The Commission invites the Senegalese Government to take all necessary measures to restore order and stability, preserve democracy and peace, and ensure full respect and protection of the human rights of all Senegalese people. Furthermore, it strongly encourages all stakeholders to consult and engage in dialogue, respecting the principles of the rule of law.

Hon. Commissioner Selma SASSI SAFER,

Rapporteur Commissioner on the human rights situation in the Republic of Senegal

