

The National Assembly is a unicameral body consisting of 80 members, who are elected by direct popular vote for a 4-year term at the same time as the President. Legislative powers are specifically enumerated in the constitution; matters not covered are of a regulatory nature and thus subject to regulation by presidential order. Both the President and the National Assembly may initiate legislation and amendments thereto. Laws passed by the Assembly are submitted for promulgation to the President, who may, if he chooses, either return them to the Assembly for repassage by three-fifths of the members or submit them to the Supreme Court for an advance determination of their constitutionality. Constitutional amendments are initiated by either the Assembly or the President, the latter determining whether they must be approved by popular referendum or whether a three-fifths vote of the Assembly will suffice.

Judicial authority is constitutionally independent of the executive and legislative branches. A Supreme Court, with power to decide the constitutionality of laws and international engagements and to resolve conflicts of competence between the legislature and the executive, is appointed by the President after consulting with the magistrature. A High Court of Justice, elected by the National Assembly from among its members, has jurisdiction over members of the Government accused of crimes and misdemeanors, and over the President if he is accused of high treason by three-fifths of the members of the National Assembly.

There is also an Economic and Social Council with purely advisory functions.

HISTORY

French commercial establishments in what is now Senegal date from the 17th century. The most important early trading ports were St. Louis, Rufisque, and the island of Goree, located just offshore from the modern port of Dakar. During the 19th century the French gradually established their control over the interior regions, which were administered by a protectorate until 1920. Thereafter the whole territory became a French colony.

Indigenous persons born in the four "communes" of Dakar, Goree, Rufisque, and St. Louis acquired rights of French citizenship. Beginning in 1871 they were allowed to elect a deputy to the French Parliament and, at the local level, their own municipal councils. They were alone among the indigenous peoples of former French West Africa to have such rights until the colonial reforms following World War II.

In 1946 a territorial assembly was elected by a restricted franchise and had mainly advisory powers. Senegal also acquired the right to elect additional representatives to the French Chamber of Deputies and to choose Senators for the French upper house and representatives to the assembly of the French Union. The powers of the territorial assembly were gradually expanded and the franchise broadened in succeeding years. In early 1957, as a result of the so-called *loi cadre* reforms, elected representatives were given extensive powers over internal affairs. After the 1958 French constitutional referendum, Senegal became a member state of the French Community with virtually complete internal autonomy.

In January 1959 Senegal and Soudan combined to form the Mali Federation, which became fully independent, within the Community, on June 20, 1960. The federation broke up on August 20, 1960, when Senegal seceded and proclaimed itself the Republic of Senegal.

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The governing party is the *Union Progressiste Sénégalaise* (UPS), led by President Léopold Sedar Senghor. It was founded in 1949 when Senghor and his followers broke from the Senegalese branch of the French Socialist party which had previously dominated local politics under the leadership of Lamine Gueye. Senghor's party soon emerged as the strongest political group in Senegal. It merged with the opposition Socialists in early 1958, and the present UPS was born of this union.

Following the breakup of the Mali Federation in August 1960, President Senghor and Prime Minister Mamadou Dia governed the country together until December 1962, when their political rivalry led to an attempted *coup d'état* by the Prime Minister. Although this was put down without bloodshed, it resulted in Dia's arrest and imprisonment and adoption of a new constitution replacing the former parliamentary system with a presidential system of government. Presidential and parliamentary elections held on December 1, 1963, though unfortunately marred by violence and bloodshed, returned President Senghor to