The African Union Panel of the Wise Statement on Senegal

1. The African Union Panel of the Wise notes with appreciation the 3rd July announcement of H.E. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, not to seek the office of the Presidency for a third consecutive term through a constitutional amendment. The Panel commends the President for the astute decision taken on the issue that had, in recent months, divided the people of Senegal and concerned the regional and international communities.

2. The Panel wishes to recall that Senegal has long served as one of the best examples of democratic governance in Africa and has been a source of inspiration for many continentally and globally. As democratic norms and values create an enabling environment for peace and prosperity for all, Senegal needs to continuously nurture the democratic consolidation that has been ongoing in the country since 2000.

3. Relatedly, the Panel also wishes to express concern about the general democratic backsliding occurring across the Continent, including proposed constitutional amendments to extend terms of office or curtail term limits and attempts at tapering citizens’ civil liberties. Notably, the increasing disregard for the rules of conducting free, fair, credible elections needs vigilant attention. Irregularities have in recent years marred elections within the Continent that, if left unaddressed, will facilitate the further deterioration of the conduct of electoral democracy and continued backsliding of democracy in Africa.

4. Finally, the Panel wishes to congratulate the people of Senegal for standing firm for democracy to ensure peace, prosperity, and stability in their country.

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