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From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
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From: Nuland, Victoria J
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Senegal shows democracy can prosper in Africa: Clinton



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August 1 US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told Senegal on Wednesday it was proof that democracy could prosper in Africa, as she began her 11-day whirl around the continent.

"If anyone doubts whether democracy can flourish in African soil, let them come to Senegal," Clinton said during a speech at Dakar's Cheikh Anta Diop University.

"Americans admire Senegal as one of the only countries in West Africa never to have a military coup."

Her speech came after a closed-door meeting with President Macky Sall, who won a rocky election in March. His predecessor Abdoulaye Wade conceded defeat after pushing the nation into crisis with a controversial third term bid.

While Clinton noted the restoration of constitutional order in countries such as Niger and Guinea after coups, and a host of credible elections in the last year, she said too many nations' democracy was still threatened.

While Senegal has been a beacon of democracy, two of its neighbours Mali and Guinea-Bissau suffered coups this year.

Guinea-Bissau has long been a problem child, no elected president has ever finished a term in office, and Clinton warned its "already weak economy ... is collapsing" and drug trafficking growing.

Mali was one of the region's stable democracies until a March coup which created a vacuum in the vast desert north where extremists have taken control, raising fears that it may become a new terrorist training ground.

"The old ways of governing are no longer acceptable. It is time for leaders to accept accountability, treat their people with dignity, respect their rights, and deliver economic opportunity," said Clinton.

"And if they will not, then it is time for them to go."

Clinton, who first visited Senegal in 1997, outlined President Barack Obama's Africa strategy: to promote development, boost growth, trade and investment, advance peace and security and strengthen democratic institutions.

She leaves Dakar on Thursday to head to the world's newest nation, troubled South Sudan, via Uganda.

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