



February 27, 2012

**Statement by Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs**

**Dakar, Senegal**

The United States is pleased to note international and domestic observer reports that Senegal's first round election on February 26 was peaceful, orderly, and transparent. We applaud the Senegalese people for their enthusiasm, patience, and civic engagement in making the voting process as smooth as possible. We congratulate the candidates, political parties, poll workers, security services, civil society, journalists, and the Autonomous National Elections Commission (CENA) for their professional conduct in showcasing democracy in Senegal.

Early results indicate that a second round of voting is highly likely. The United States government, just like the Senegalese people, looks forward to the National Vote Tabulation Committee's formal announcement of provisional results soon. We call upon all political party leaders and their supporters to follow the rule of law and respect the results. We also urge the Tabulation Committee and judicial authorities to thoroughly examine and address any complaints in a fair, transparent, and expeditious manner.

Since its independence, Senegal has been one of America's strongest and most consistent friends in francophone West Africa. During this visit, many individuals, particularly in and around the polling stations, spoke to me about Senegal's peaceful heritage. Despite the tension in recent weeks, I witnessed firsthand the Senegalese people stepping out peacefully into the streets to make their voices heard where it truly counted – at the ballot box. Our relationship has been based on a shared set of principles and ideals: democracy and respect for civil liberty and human rights. Thank you for letting me be part of this historic moment.

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