

Senegalese artists call on President Bassirou Diomaye Faye to sanction Israel over Gaza genocide

Germaine Acogny, Ken Bugul, Mati Diop and Alain Gomis among more than 100 Senegalese artists asking the President: “what role will your government play in retrieving international law from Gaza’s rubble?”

Leading filmmakers and writers are among over a hundred Senegalese cultural workers calling on President Bassirou Diomaye Faye to join other world leaders in sanctioning Israel over “the horror unfolding in Gaza”. In a [letter](#) published today by African Artists Against Apartheid - Senegal, award-winning filmmakers Mati Diop and Alain Gomis, pioneering dancer and choreographer Germaine Acogny and renowned writer Ken Bugul say: “the Senegalese people are waiting for action”.

Senegal is a member of [The Hague Group](#), a global bloc of states which launched a year ago to take “coordinated legal and diplomatic measures” against Israel. To mark its founding, the leaders of South Africa, Malaysia and Colombia issued a joint statement, saying, “either we act together to enforce international law or we risk its collapse. We choose to act, not only for the people of Gaza but for the future of a world where justice prevails over impunity.”

Those joining today’s statement, including filmmaker Pape Badara Seck, actor Josephine Mboup, film critic Baba Diop and curator Salimata Diop, say, “the perpetrators of Israel’s genocide—as it has been recognised by the UN—are still afforded total impunity to continue to kill, and to continue their illegal occupation and regime of apartheid”. They call on President Bassirou Diomaye Faye to end diplomatic and economic ties with Israel, and prevent transfers of military materiel to Israel through Senegal’s territorial waters and ports.

In July last year, a number of states, including South Africa and Namibia, [announced](#) at The Hague Group’s Bogotá conference that they would implement a series of sanctions against Israel. Senegal was not among the states joining the initiative. Today’s letter calls on President Bassirou Diomaye Faye to “participate fully in The Hague Group, and mobilise African states to join”, as well as to “ensure Israel will not be reinstated to Observer status at the African Union”. Israel was suspended from the African Union in 2023.

One signatory to the letter, the writer, researcher and artist Tabara Korka Ndiaye, added: “In Palestine, women are targeted specifically for their capacity to give life. It is being spoken about a femi-genocide, as lives, bodies, and minds of women and girls are intentionally destroyed for being Palestinian and women. In Senegal, the year has started with the first femicide on January 3rd, while we are still waiting for accountability of the 18 known femicides in 2025. For me, this is the same systematic violence trying to create a hierarchy among human beings. We have to refuse dehumanisation by all means!”

In 2018, Dakar was selected by the International Olympic Committee to host the upcoming Summer Youth Olympic Games, making Senegal the first African state to do so. The artists are calling on the President to “support growing international efforts to ban genocidal Israel from sports”, including from this year’s games in Dakar. They added, “it is in times of crisis that nations forge their greatness. Africa, which has experienced slavery, colonialism and apartheid, must say no to injustice and oppression... Mr President: what role will your government play in retrieving international law from Gaza’s rubble?”. Read the full letter [here](#).

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