

Senegal suspends European and North African flights over coronavirus

16 March 2020

Senegal will suspend flights from 7 European and North African countries, the government said on Monday, in the latest move by an African nation to stem the spread of coronavirus.

The West African state has recorded 27 coronavirus cases to date, with many of the initial cases detected in people who had arrived from virus-stricken Europe.

Flights to and from France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Algeria and Tunisia will no longer run from Wednesday, Senegal's Tourism Minister Alioune Sarr told a press conference on Monday.

He added that the measures will last for 30 days. Cargo and medical flights will be exempt.

The government took the decision in order to avoid the capital Dakar's international airport becoming "a contamination and transmission zone," Sarr said.

But the move also comes amid fears that poor medical infrastructure means that African countries are at greater risk from [coronavirus](#) outbreaks.

Last week, Senegalese President Macky Sall announced [school closures](#) and called a halt to celebrations of Senegal's 60th anniversary of independence from France, in order to combat the spread of the virus.

Islamic authorities in the country have also asked the faithful to not attend several religious festivals planned for this month.

Twenty-eight African countries have recorded infections so far, according to an AFP tally, with many seeking to limit public gatherings and some having closing their borders to non-residents.

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