Denis Sassou Nguesso was born on 23 November 1943 in Edou, a small village located north of Brazzaville.

In 1956, he was admitted to the regular high school of Paillet Dolisie Raymond, one of the leading educational institutions of the country, in southwestern Congo. Denis Sassou Nguesso remained in the school until he joined the military in the early 1960s, when he was admitted into the Reserve officers’ program at the Mixed Cherchell School in Algeria. His early military career was however marked by the growing interest of Denis Sassou Nguesso in national politics.

He became a Lieutenant in the School of Infantry of Saint-Maixent, France. He returned to Congo-Brazzaville to be one of the first officers to supervise the new Congolese army.

With Marien Ngouabi, the third President of the Congo, he participated in the formation of the Congolese Labor Party (PCT) in 1969 and six years later, became the Minister of Defence and Security in the Marien Ngouabi Government.

In 1980, he was elected president of the Congolese Labor Party (PCT) and President of the Republic of Congo. In the early years of his tenure, Denis Sassou Nguesso initiated a process of political and economic opening-up that brought stability to the country.
In 1986, he became the Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU) and that of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The work with African countries led him to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. It was in this capacity that he participated as a mediator in the political negotiations which resulted in the signing of the New York Agreement amongst Angola, Cuba and the Republic of South Africa, in 1988. The same process paved the way for other achievements of the African continent, namely the independence of Namibia and the release of Nelson Mandela, two years later.

In late 1997, Denis Sassou-Nguesso was returned to the presidency of the country after a number of internal problems that the country had had under President Pascal Lissouba, who had won the first democratic elections held in the country in 1994. During this period, President Sassou-Nguesso organised the National Forum for Reconciliation, Unity and Reconstruction of Congo-Brazzaville.

In 2002 and 2009, he was successively re-elected president of the Republic of Congo. At the beginning of his mandate, he continued the process of forging national unity and launched the project "Le Chemin D'Avenir" (The Way Forward), which proposed a plan of structural reforms for the country up to the year 2025.

Elected for the second time, in 2006, as Chairman of the African Union and non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, he participated in the process that aimed at finding an end to the violence in Darfur, Sudan. President Sassou Nguesso was also, in the same period, the mediator in the peace negotiations between Chad and Sudan.

Since his re-election as President of the Republic in 2009, President Sassou Nguesso has transformed the Congo into a huge construction site.

The conciliatory spirit of President Denis Sassou Nguesso led him once again to the struggle for peace in the Central African Republic and the process that eventually led to the signing of an agreement in Brazzaville, which established the new political transition framework.

President Denis Sassou Nguesso, especially from 1999, was also involved, in the sub-region of the Gulf of Guinea, in the establishment of a framework of peace, security and cooperation among States to guarantee the harmonious development of the region. Thus, having embraced the dream manifested in
the Libreville Summit of 19 November 1999, President Denis Sassou Nguesso was a key driver of the process that led to the signing on 3 July 2001 of the Treaty Establishing the Gulf of Guinea Commission with the Presidents of Angola, Gabon, Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe.

President Sassou Nguesso is therefore one of the founding fathers of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.