

SPEECH BY H.E, PRESIDENT ADAMA BARROW
AT THE SWEARING OF JUSTICE O.M.M. NJIE TO THE SUPREME COURT,
JUSTICE NACEESAY SALLAH-WADDA TO COURT OF APPEAL AND
MRS HADDY JOBE TO THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION
VENUE: STATE HOUSE, BANJUL
DATE: 1st JUNE 2022

Your Excellency, the Vice President,
The Honourable Chief Justice,
Honourable Ministers,
Judges of the Superior Courts present,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a gratifying moment for me to preside over the swearing-in proceedings of another set of eminent Gambians appointed to our Apex Court and the Independent Electoral Commission, respectively.

The elevation of Justice Omar Njie now raises the number to six Gambian Supreme Court Justices appointed by my government since 2017. Proudly also, we now have a female Gambian as President of the Court of Appeal in the person of Na Ceesay Sallah-Wadda.

There is no doubt that we have delivered on our promise to Gambianise the Judiciary, which is the only way to minimise our dependence on external judges for the operations of our Judiciary. Similarly, we expect Madam Haddy Jobe's appointment as Commissioner of the Independent Electoral Commission will add value to the work of the Commission.

My government is aware of the key role the judiciary plays in the quest for a stable and progressive nation wherein we uphold the rule of law, and all are equal before the law.

This is critical for the achievement of our goal to promote access to justice, economic prosperity, increased foreign direct investments, and enjoyment of peace and harmony.

It is undisputed that the law places a heavy burden on judges whose role it is to dispense justice. This is a difficult role to play, and it requires Judges to be neutral and fair in their approach to cases brought before them.

As Judges, distinguished scholars, the matters you preside over, your treatment of litigants and the ruling and judgments you deliver contribute significantly to peaceful co-existence and order. Furthermore, you play a crucial role in boosting public trust in our judicial institutions as the right forum to settle differences. Your work can strengthen our growing democracy considerably and guarantee peace and stability.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In view of all these, I must reiterate my government's commitment to supporting and developing the Judiciary for the realisation of the objectives outlined in its new strategic plan.

I assure you of our determination to remedy the current infrastructure deficit, with a view to modernising our judiciary and improving the terms of service of judicial officers.

Public confidence in the Judiciary, as the last resort for justice, grows when we have the right calibre of judges presiding over the Courts.

I am optimistic that, with the quality of judges in our superior courts, the Judiciary will continue to uphold the doctrines of their noble profession, by acting with honesty, independence, impartiality, and integrity in the discharge of their duties.

I advise that you give special attention to the development of a Judicial Training Institute to build the capacity of the Judicial Officers and staff.

I trust that the in-coming Justice of The Supreme Court and the new President of the Court of Appeal will contribute extensively to the effective and speedy dispensation of justice in The Gambia.

Together with Commissioner Jobe, I believe strongly that their appointments will boost the moral and professional standing of their respective institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, in December, last year we witnessed the retirement of two Justices of the Supreme Court, Hon. Justice Raymond Sock and Hon. Justice Gibril Semega-Janneh. Justices Sock and Janneh served the Judiciary with distinction and retired with honour.

I thank them for the service they honourably rendered to the nation and wish them a happy and restful retirement.

I congratulate Honourable Justice Omar Njie on his elevation as Judge of the Supreme Court of The Gambia, Justice Na Ceesay Sallah-Wadda as President of the Court of Appeal and Madam Haddy Jobe as Commissioner of the Independent Electoral Commission.

We wish you a successful tenure in the service of the nation, particularly in the administration of Justice and the conduct of free, fair, transparent, and credible elections in the country.

I thank you for your attention.