

**STATEMENT BY
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ADAMA BARROW, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
THE GAMBIA**

**EVENT: INAUGURATION OF THE NEW EMBASSY AND
AMBASSADOR`S RESIDENCE AT THE DIPLOMATIC
QUARTERS (DQ) IN RIYADH**

28TH JUNE 2021

Your Excellency, The First Lady,

Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers,
Secretary General, and Head of The Civil Service,
Your Excellency, Mr. Ambassador,
Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Asalamu Alaikum,

I would like to recognise the presence of HRH, the Minister of State for African Affairs, Ahmed Kattan.

First and foremost, I wish to express deep appreciation and thanks to The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, and His Royal Highness, Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud (May Allah preserve them), for the kind invitation for me and my delegation to visit The Holy Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I thank them too, most sincerely, for the generous welcome accorded to us since our arrival in Riyadh.

These are critical times globally, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to claim lives, disrupt social life and devastate economies throughout the world. With this in mind, extending an invitation to an open event of this nature, in any part of the world, is certainly not an easy decision to make.

We recognise and appreciate this wonderful gesture very much indeed. It is, no doubt, a testimony of the very solid and close fraternal relations between the Governments and Peoples of our two countries.

The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, will be pleased to learn that, in compliance with The Kingdom`s directives for all Diplomatic Missions to relocate to a more secure and conducive environment, the plot of land he allocated to The Republic of The Gambia in 1989 for this project, when he was Governor of Riyadh, has been gainfully utilised, and developed successfully during his leadership as King of this noble and friendly nation.

On behalf of The Government and People of The Gambia, and on my own behalf, I convey profound gratitude to him and The Crown Prince for the support they rendered through their

competent officials. We are equally thankful to all those officials for working closely with our Embassy Staff to accomplish this project successfully.

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,

I must admit that the structures are impressively beautiful and solid. They aptly reflect and symbolise the excellent bilateral relations and cordial bonds that so happily exist between the Governments and Peoples of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and The Republic of The Gambia.

I congratulate the Ambassador and staff most heartily on this laudable achievement. Well done!

In May 2017, I visited the project when it was at the initial stages, and have since been requesting for updates periodically from the Ambassador.

I am proud that the Government of The Gambia undertook to fully fund the construction of this beautiful edifice to provide a conducive and secure office and residence for the Embassy and the Ambassador, respectively.

Even though it took seven years to accomplish the project, it is a more sustainable arrangement and a model that could save the country annual rent payments of up to one hundred thousand US Dollars (\$100,000). Indeed, it was worth investing over four million US Dollars to own this magnificent building and its furniture.

Now that it is successfully completed, I advise that good care be taken for the upkeep and maintenance of the buildings and all the equipment and facilities therein to safeguard and preserve the value of these very precious Government assets. The structures can certainly serve as a model for replication in other Diplomatic Missions abroad.

I will encourage the Ministry of Finance to emulate this positive example to construct other embassy offices and residences in countries where we have landed property, such as Senegal, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

Your Excellencies,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Guests,

I now have the honour and pleasure to declare the new Embassy and Ambassador's Residence complexes in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, officially open.
May Allah guide and protect all those who will have cause to use the structures.

I thank you all for your kind attention.

Assalaamu Alaikum Warahmatullah wabarakaatuh.