

State House Newsletter



Brussels, EU



Beijing, China



Commonwealth, London



Banjul, The Gambia

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Office of the President, State House, Banjul

Acknowledgment

It has been another challenging but exciting half-year. Special thanks to all those who made the first half of 2018 engaging, exciting, and challenging. Special appreciation to the new members of the media team at the State House for their input after joining us in the first quarter of the year. The credit for the pictures go to the Presidential Photographer, Sulayman Touray.

We are also grateful to the many incredible men and women behind the scenes who continuously give us courage, hope, and inspiration to dare and march on. We acknowledge the supporting roles of the now-replaced Secretary-General and Head of Civil Service, Honourable Habib Saihou Drammeh, and Secretary to the Cabinet, Mr. Ebrima Ceesay. The team spirit displayed by colleagues in the Protocol and Security divisions is worthy of mention. Thank you, team, for the dedication and professionalism, let us remain focus to realize our goal in the New Gambia. The contributions and sacrifices of the team and our families are recognized and noted.

Meet the Media and Communications Team:

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Momodou Jallow	Producer/Reporter (GRTS)
Biran Mboob	Cameraman (GRTS)

Overview

The third edition of the **State House Newsletter** is a cascade of engagements of the President of the Republic of The Gambia, His Excellency Adama Barrow. It spells out governance policies, the reforms agenda, vision for the promotion of education and youth empowerment, regional peace and integration, among others, as embedded in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2021. It also features the President's engagements with international partners and on the global stage.

The main issues in this edition of the **State House Newsletter** include outcomes of meetings with Cabinet; development partners at the national, regional and international levels. It highlights information on curbing of the youth migration through support for investment in education, advocacy for youth empowerment and adding value to higher education.

At the presidency, the six months under review witnessed a lot of engagements, provides a glimpse into the future of the country under the current administration. From Banjul to Belgium, Faraba to Fatoto, the President demonstrated his belief in the true idea of a "New Gambia" based on promoting the agenda of national cohesion and harmony, reflecting highest hope in the potentials of our country, and rebranding its tattered image in the comity of nations.

Moreover, the president's engagements with health experts from around the world clearly manifest the high level of political will and premium he places on the attainment of affordable, quality primary health care service for all Gambians.

The seriousness of the Barrow government in promoting good governance and uplifting Gambians from want and poverty has earned the country global support, recognition and admiration. The speed and frequency at which nations and development partners from all over the world continue to renew relations with the country are indicative of the strong degree of confidence the world has in the Barrow administration.

In the thick of things and every step of the way, the Media and Communication Unit of the State House has been at hand to tell the stories as they come. We are fired up, yet humbled, by the immense engagement and interest that the public, both within and without, continue to exhibit in the affairs of the presidency. We are motivated by the increase of almost 70% in followership of the official Facebook page of the President - **Barrow PORG**, as well as the overwhelming 161% increase in the last six months of the number of followers on the official twitter handle of the president - **@BarrowPresident**. Our resolve to tell the story in a multiplicity of ways have motivated the creation of additional channels of communication for the presidency on Facebook and Twitter.

Within the short span of existence on both Facebook (**@PresidencyGambia**) and Twitter (**@Presidency_GMB**), the **State House of The Gambia** page is up and running with more than 20,000 followers (Facebook), and it is fastly becoming the first point of reference for news and updates about the presidency. The YouTubeChannel, State House of The Gambia, is also in full swing and is being constantly updated with interesting content. Additionally, the Media team has also started running a television programme called the President's Diary. The programme, which is designed to highlight the activities of the President in a month, is entirely produced and presented in-house by the Media and Communications Unit.

The official State House handles on both Facebook and Twitter (State House of The Gambia, Presidency_GMB) as additional platforms to boost communications with the public.

The website (www.statehouse.gov.gm) continues to be updated and serves as the first point of reference for news about the presidency. It registered 885,692 hits by August 2018. The YouTubeChannel, State House of The Gambia, is also in full swing and being constantly updated with content. Additionally, the Media Team started a television series called The President's Diary. The programme is designed to highlight the activities of the President per in a month, is entirely produced and presented in-house by the Media and Communications Unit.

While we appreciate the overwhelming interest, it has also challenged us to work harder to improve and meet the demands of modern political communication. It is our fervent hope and belief that this edition of the State House Newsletter will further articulate the programmes and policies of the Barrow administration.

Amie Bojang-Sissoho

Director of Press and Public Relations
Office of the President

PROGRESS CARD!



Agribusiness training for Youths (192 per group)

Sectoral Policies Revised in line with NDP2018-2021

Solar-powered Water Systems for 25 communities

20 Youth & Women Trained in Aquaculture

1 group trained in improved techniques in fish processing

Gunjur & Tanje Ice Plants Repaired

D50Million revenue accrued from fishery license

Surplus fish catches delivered to Prisons, Hospital and Army Camps

Ban of Plastic Bags Enforced

Banking sector registered asset growth of 15.8 percent in 2018

Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 4.6 percent in 2017

New forestry law Enacted

Transparency: Non-cash Payments at the Ministry Finance

President Barrow pledged 10% Monthly Salary to NDP

Japan Eye-marks \$1Million for Youth in Agriculture

Basse-Koina Road and Bridges' constructions in Progress

Lamin Koto-Passamance Road Partly Tarred

Electricity Stabilised in most parts of the country

GOVERNANCE

CABINET MEETINGS

The Cabinet convened on 14th, January 2018 for an intensive two-day session to discuss and bring the President up to speed with various national development issues across the board. From tourism, agriculture, telecommunication to the economy, diplomacy, and international relations, the quarterly exercise witnessed presentations from Cabinet Ministers about how far they have gone in complementing the development aspirations of the President as enshrined in the development blueprint - the **National Development Plan 2018-2021**.



Cabinet Meeting in January 2018

The Cabinet in January 2018 discussed The Gambia's role in fostering **regional integration** through active participation in the regional economic bloc, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Discussions also centered on the presidency of the ECOWAS Commission.

Members were also briefed about the state of progress of the ongoing road construction projects in the Upper River Region (URR), and the latest developments on the port expansion project as well as the level of activity at the Banjul Port.

The high-level government meeting came shortly after the Minister of Agriculture embarked on a nationwide tour to abreast himself with the condition of farming throughout the country. Minister Omar Jallow reported on the outcome of his meetings with the farmers, dialogue on post-harvest loss reduction and agro-processing; and the joint ministerial synergy between African Ministers of Agriculture and Finance.

On the **diplomatic front**, the Cabinet heard updates about the 72nd United Nation's General Assembly in the United States, the President's visit to the People's Republic of China, and the progress of the Migration for Sustainable Development project, coupled with the Gambians in the Diaspora and their contribution in the dawn of the "New Gambia".

In terms of **tourism**, Cabinet members were briefed on marketing strategies being employed globally to market the country as a tourism destination. Moreover, the Minister highlighted the participation of the country in global tourism events such as the World Tourism Forum held in China in September 2017, the Tourism Stakeholders' Meeting held in Brussels in October 2017; and the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers held in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, in November 2017.

In terms of the environment, the Cabinet was informed of the need for more partnership in the management of protected areas of our national ecosystem and forest parks. It also got updated on the result of a temporary twelve-week resumption of the timber re-export business in the country.

As far as telecommunication is concerned, the Cabinet discussed liberalizing the international gateway for other eligible non-government operators and internet service providers to compete, and the outcome of the African Union meeting on Communication.

CIVIL SERVICE TOP BRASS MEET THE PRESIDENT

In the bid to have efficient and effective public sector institutions that are responsive to the needs of the citizens and other stakeholders, over 144 senior government administrators attended a day meeting presided over by His Excellency, Mr. Adama Barrow, the President of the Republic of The Gambia.

The meeting, which was held in January 2018 at the State House in Banjul, brought together all the ministers, permanent secretaries, deputy permanent secretaries, heads of parastatals, and other senior officials. It was called for the President to orientate and engage senior civil servants on key issues relating to the Public Sector Reform (PSR), which is a cardinal component of the president's reforms agenda. The PSR seeks to complement the eight strategic priorities of the National Development Plan (2018-2021).

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION MEMBERS TAKE OATHS

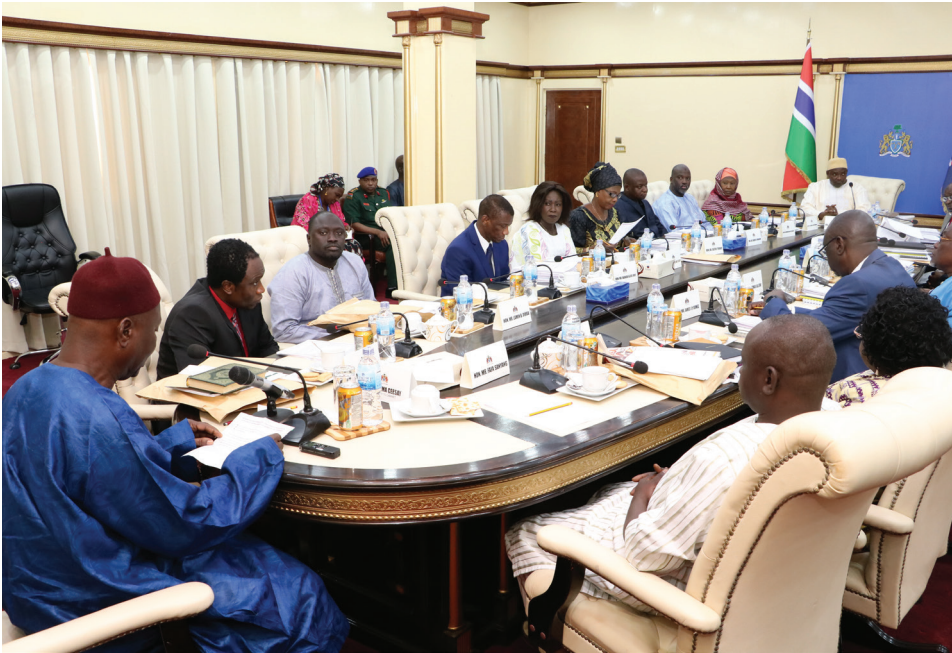


President Barrow poses with the newly sworn-in members of the Public Service Commission

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow on February 10th, 2018 presided over the swearing-in of the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Mr. Lamin Samateh, and another member, Mr. Lamin Sam Jaiteh; coinciding with a cabinet meeting at the State House. The duo swore to the prescribed oaths of office, secrecy, and allegiance to the Republic of The Gambia.

Congratulating the new commissioners, the President said he was confident that they are equal to the task, describing them as people of great reputation who are known to be humble, principled and hard-working. While stating that the government is happy to have them in its fold, the President expressed optimism that their services would add a great value to the civil service.

Newly sworn-in Chairman Samateh spoke on behalf of his colleagues and pledged to ensure that competent and qualified personnel are appointed throughout the civil service. He also assured the president that they would support his government's ongoing reform process of the civil service.



President Barrow poses with the newly sworn-in members of the Public Service Commission

RENOWNED GAMBIAN PROFESSOR SWORN AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE TRUTH COMMISSION (TRRC)



President Barrow and Executive Director Jallow

a vital part of the judicial service reforms process aimed at ensuring national reconciliation, healing and justice for the victims of the rights violations of the former regime.

“It is very important to establish the truth to take the right and informed decision to compensate the victims of the former regime but also to reconcile as a nation. That does not mean that those who committed human rights abuses will not be brought to justice”, the President assured.

The President of the Republic, His Excellency Adama Barrow has sworn in renowned US-based Gambia professor of African Studies, Dr. Baba Galleh Jallow, as the Executive Secretary of the much anticipated Truth Reconciliation and Reparations Commissions (TRRC).

The transitional justice mechanism was established to investigate the human rights abuses of the past 22 years under the former regime. It is a

NEW JUDGES TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

Three new judges from the Federal Republic of Nigeria were sworn by the President of the Republic, His Excellency Adama Barrow. The trio have been recommended for services by the Nigerian Judicial Service Commission through a technical assistance programme between the two countries since independence.

“Barely a year ago, I swore-in eight Gambian Judges to allow Gambian nationals to participate effectively in the dispensation of justice and strengthen our judicial system,” President Barrow said, maintaining that justice is key to peace and development. He added that it is a crucial factor for positive transformation of society.

President Barrow expressed delight for the support that the Federal Republic of Nigeria continues to provide to The Gambia in various disciplines. “The Technical Assistance provided through the three judges serves to nurture and reinforce the bilateral ties between the two countries. The services of the Nigerian Judges in our legal system add a lot of value to our national experience, and contribute tremendously to expediting the justice delivery process,” he added.

Justices Patience oseyi Onajite-Kuejubola, Usman Alh. Musale and Ademola Bakre, took the oaths of office, allegiance to The Gambia, and secrecy before the President and members of cabinet.



CIVIL SERVICE REFORM PROCESSES

Secretary General consults with Permanent Secretaries



Secretary General Consults with Permanent Secretaries

The Secretary-General and Head of the Civil Service, Mr. Habib Drammeh (now replaced), in February 2018, hosted permanent secretaries from across the government at the State House to exchange ideas about administrative best practices and management systems. This was in the in the spirit of stimulating more productivity in the civil service.

According to officials, the high-level interaction was meant to strengthen harmony and rebuild the confidence of senior government officials in taking up their responsibilities since they are accountable for their institutions. The move was premised on the considered view that stronger coordination, understanding, and teamwork would be a vital strategy towards the effective implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP 2018-2021). In the same token, the senior officials were urged to strengthen coordination between the Office of the Secretary-General and their Ministries.

Leading the discussions, Honourable Drammeh highlighted various management tools and instruments designed to instill professional work ethics and efficient service delivery in government administration. The Secretary-General also outlined the importance of communication and monitoring mechanisms within the government system.

The meeting detailed out various administrative instruments, such as the General Orders (GO) and the Code of Conduct, as examples of documents designed to guide civil servants. As much valuable as they are in instilling professionalism and political independence in the line of duty.

At the end of the synergy, the Officials recommended, amongst other things, to sensitize their respective teams on the country's development blueprint, strengthen close partnership and collaboration and encourage more communication in the bid to efficiently provide services to Gambians.

Office of the President Strategic Planning Meeting

The Secretary-General and his team engaged in a series of consultative meetings to develop a strategic plan for the Office of the President. The meeting reviewed existing roles, functions and development strategies to come up with a workable policy framework and strategy that would ease the cardinal function of the Office of the President in the monitoring, communication, and coordination of government operations. The internal exercise resulted in a draft Strategic Plan for the Presidency that would be presented to the wider staff member of the State House for validation.



SECTORAL BRIEFINGS ON THE STATE OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In March 2018, His Excellency, President Adama Barrow convened the first periodic sectoral briefing at his office in order to keep tabs on the progress being made on the implementation of the National Development Plan across the government.

The Office of the President introduced these periodic briefings with government departments and agencies as a strategy to carry out its oversight function over other sectors of government, with the hope of smoothening coordination of activities as well as improving effective and efficient management.

It could be recalled that President Barrow recommended that the quarterly review of the NDP implementation be institutionalized as a monitoring mechanism during the sectoral briefings held in January 2018. The initiative forms part of the overall strategic systemic reforms currently ongoing at the presidency to improve monitoring and strategic communication of the flagship priority programmes of the President in the National Development Plan.

Flanked by their technical experts, Cabinet Ministers took turns to brief the President about how they're carrying out the NDP agenda at ministerial level since its launching in January 2018. The Ministers also shared their respective strategic plans aimed at harmonizing them with the stated goals and objectives of the NDP.

BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

According to the officials of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MOBSE), their plan entails aligning gender disparities and bridging the rural-urban divide. They are working to reduce access to schools from 3 kilometers to 2 kilometers. Plans for retaining girls in school to complete the full cycle of basic and secondary education and the provision of quality education featured prominently in the deliberation.



President Barrow presides over the first sectoral presentations at State House

HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology stated that they aimed to enhance affordable access to institutions of higher learning by transforming public tertiary institutions into centers of advanced education. In effect, it means converting the Gambia College, Management Development Institute (MDI) and Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) into universities.

Higher Education officials also reported that technical vocational education training has been decentralized through regionalized centers of excellence across the country. Additionally, the Higher Education Ministry plans to work with the private sector to ensure that higher education curricula are in tandem with the needs of the job markets and industries. MOHERST officials announced that they are responsible for managing scholarship awards at tertiary institutions, and their priority, in that regard, is to encourage professional specialization.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE - MOICI

MOICI's presentation outlined strategies with targeted timeframes to enhance e-government, cyber security as well as liberalizing the international telecommunications gateway. The ministry also reported that a national information and communication policy and strategy were being drafted and are near completion.

AGRICULTURE

Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) announced the completion of an internal review process of its ten-year policy plan for 2017-2026, launched the national agriculture investment plan (GNAIP). With the support of Japan and China, the Agric officials said they have completed the revitalization of an information database of action plans.

They also informed the President of a number of ongoing projects designed to support farming communities with a more robust tidal irrigation technique. Other strategies intended to add value to local products were also shared with the gathering.

The ministry officials revealed that negotiations were underway with relevant development partners and Gambians in the Diaspora to promote investment in mechanized and commercial agriculture. This strategy is meant to empower the youth to venture into lucrative agribusiness. Accordingly, the initiative would help in the attainment of food self-sufficiency, widen the revenue base of local farmers and other stakeholders that are involved in the agricultural value chain as well as increase the foreign currency reserve of the country.

FISHERIES, WATER RESOURCES, AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MATTERS

The Minister of Fisheries announced the successful revision of all its internal policies to reflect modern trends in fisheries in order to be able to recognize, respond and address the new challenges of the sector.

Outlining its activity report, the officials reported that twenty-five communities have been provided with solar-powered water systems, twenty youth and women got trained on aquaculture, and another set of women trained in improved techniques in fish processing. The ice plants in Gunjur and Tanji have been repaired and installed with a refrigerator truck to reduce post-harvest loss, the Minister reported. They also revealed that initial analysis has shown an increase in the stock of fish and marine resources in the country, adding that part of the surplus catch is shared daily with the prisons, hospitals and the army.

Furthermore, Fisheries officials revealed that between January and March 2018, they generated a total revenue of D50 Million Dalasi for the government, which complements financial assistance generated from development partners such as FAO, AfDB, World Bank, the Saudi government, among others.

ENVIRONMENT & FORESTRY

Environment and Forestry highlighted the significance of creating the right policy environment to be able to effectively function as expected, which, explained the formulation of requisite policies geared towards protecting and preserving the country's marine and water resources.

In that line, the Minister reported that his Ministry had validated a strategic plan and enacted the Forestry Act of 2018. In partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, they have also developed the agriculture and natural resource policy. Several projects also designed to develop community forest parks, protect biodiversity, and address environmental threats in coastline areas. A biodiversity strategy is being implemented with other stakeholders to encourage women into bio-entrepreneurship.

In the area of environmental protection, the ban on plastic bags is being enforced. In this regards, a container loaded with plastic bags meant for domestic circulation in the country has been intercepted at the point of entry. The Ministry used the opportunity to clarify that the municipalities, and not NEA, are responsible for waste collection. It, however, shared strategies being employed in the management of waste at the Bakoteh dumpsite.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY

Energy

A roadmap has been developed to stabilize and expand the generation and distribution of electricity throughout the country. It was reported that part of the rural electricity grid is being sourced from neighboring Senegal in the spirit of Senegambia integration.

Other projects being developed to make electricity more reliable and sustainable are the OMVG hydro-electric initiative, coupled with other emergency strategies such as the KAR power ship from Turkey, the 9MW and 30MW of Electricity generation in Brikama and Kotu, respectively. With support from the World Bank and the European Union, these projects are ensuring stability in the supply of electricity in urban areas. It was announced that an upcoming project for Soma and Brikama under the OMVG to stabilize electricity in order to spur investment in industries and other areas to develop the economy is underway.

The Energy officials added that there is a current deficit in the investment of about USD\$200million. This is an essential missing investment which would allow further investment in renewable energy generation for an appropriate energy mix. In turn, this would help reduce the cost of energy to allow industrialization to thrive in the economy.

Petroleum

The President was also informed about the state of progress of the exploration of the oil and gas potentials of the country. It was reported that ten companies have been identified for the tendering and evaluation of the wells.

FAR Ltd, an Austrian company, working with PETRONAS of Malaysia, made progress in the exploration of blocks A2 & A5. However, the Gambia National Petroleum Company is responsible for downstream exploration.

Other minerals

The Department of Geology is working on minerals exploration in the Upper River and in the West Coast Regions. Studies are ongoing to reduce dependency on sand in the country.



Photo:L-R: Cross section of participants at sectoral presentations, and Map of beneficiary countries of the OMVG Energy

MINISTRY OF TRADE, REGIONAL INTEGRATION, INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

The Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Employment gave a briefing about its policy review processes conducted to develop policies that are meant to improve the industrial and trade strategies for standardization. The officials also announced that the Labour Bill was ready and has been sent to the Ministry of Justice for legal advice.

In the area of fostering youth employment and engagement, the Minister reported on the Youth Empowerment Project, which has trained 1,037 youths by first quarter of 2018 on market orientation in partnership with the Ministry of Youths & Sports. Also, twenty youths have been supported with startup projects.

In the spirit of encouraging more public-private partnerships, the trade and industry Ministry took the lead role in launching an investment and export zone in partnership with leading private estate developers, TAF (GIETAF Enterprise) initiative in the Airport area. Other notable activities reported by the officials included: a conducted sensitization on ECOWAS trade liberalization strategy, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with GCCI to strengthen cross-border trade, negotiations on the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

At the conclusion of the exercise, the President thanked the sectors for the presentations and reiterated the need to harmonize and align activities across all sectors of the government to ensure proper coordination of efforts in realizing the National Development Plan. On the environment and agriculture, President Barrow observed that greater attention should be given to the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security. He advised the ministries to look into alternative innovations for mitigating the effects of climate change. The president urged Gambians to take advantage of the vast land and water resources that the country is endowed with to engage in agriculture.

In the area of fisheries, President Barrow called on Gambians to actively engage in the fishing industry indicating that it has the potential to significantly reduce the rate of unemployment in the country. The President was impressed with the system of transparency put in place by the Ministry of Fisheries in eliminating physical cash payment. He cited a similar best practice in Rwanda.

Moreover, President Barrow congratulated National Water and Electricity Company-NAWEC for the significant progress it has registered in reliably supplying and distributing electricity in the country. He emphasized the importance of electricity and water in development and attracting serious investment in the economy. The Ministry was urged to be innovative in getting funds to solve the energy sector and explore the pledges made to improve the steady supply of electricity.



Additionally, the President called for more Gambian partnerships for the sustainable growth of the economy while urging foreign companies to do more to deliver on their corporate social responsibilities. He re-emphasized that the government also has a responsibility to make sure that the various sectors always act in the supreme interest of the country and the people.

President Barrow commended all the ministries for a job well done, calling on all to support and collaborate to ensure that the NDP succeeds. He added that the NDP is the guide to all government sectors and that all ministries should work to achieve its targets through innovative means.



President visits Kotu Power Station to assess works

INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY: Gambia @53

In celebrating this year's Independence Day, President Adama Barrow called for a reflection on the state of the nation over the past 53 years, hence the theme of the celebration: **THE "NEW GAMBIA" FOR REFLECTION AND SOUL - SEARCHING FOR INCLUSIVE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**



President Barrow inspecting the Guard of Honour during Independence celebrations 2018

Together, the citizens ushered the New Gambia into a world of hope, he said, noting that this shall be jealously guarded to preserve the freedom and dignity of all Gambians. ***"We should continue to nurture the spirit of unity to build the New Gambia that we want and deserve,"*** President Barrow said in his address at the national event held at the McCarthy Square. ***"Peace is priceless, that is why my government would tirelessly work towards safeguarding this peace to be able to set our development agenda on the right path,"*** he added.

"In shaping the New Gambia, my government has begun the task of steadily reforming the government machinery. The reforms would put in place the instruments for best practices we formulate in governance through the policies and practices in the execution of our duties. This would also include a cultural and attitudinal change in the timely execution and delivery of our work. In this regard my administration would focus not only on service delivery but also on the quality of work expected of public servants."

The President maintained that every artificial barrier that prevents the application of creativity, innovation and service delivery system would be completely overcome.



Their Excellencies, Former President Sir. Dawda Jawara, President Adama Barrow



President Adama Barrow expressed gratitude to ex-president Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara and Lady Chilel Jawara for honoring his invitation to attend the Gambia's 53rd Independence Anniversary celebration. The former President's attendance despite old age signified his desire to see democracy thrive in The Gambia. He provides support and encouragement to President Barrow and his administration. His presence brought nostalgia to many and re-echoed the desire for The Gambia to once again take its rightful place amongst nations that respect human rights, democracy, and rule of law. President Barrow said the attendance of the former President was an honour and has demonstrated that Gambians are all one big family, no matter their political and ideological differences.

President Barrow prides his administration on re-connecting the Gambian democracy where Sir Dawda Jawara's government left it in 1994. He called on all Gambians to continue to nurture peace, unity, and respect for the rule of law and work for the advancement of the nation.



L-: A crosssection of crowd, security and school children at the Independence celebrations

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The President in April and May 2018 joined hundreds of thousands of Gambians to cast his ballot in the Local Government, Mayoral and Chairperson Elections respectively. On both occasions, one of the wives, First Lady Fatou Bah and Lady SarjoMballow; along with the Chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), and senior State House officials accompanied the President to vote at a polling station in Old Yundum, where he resided before presidency.



GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP): \$1.7Billion pledged by partners

Since the new administration came to office, it has been consulting and working to produce a national strategy to the country's development. In January 2018, the National Development Plan 2018-2021 was officially launched at the national level at a ceremony led by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. It brought together government officials and partners from the European Union, United Nations Development Programme staff in the Gambia and Civil Society Organisations.



National Launch of the National Development Plan 2018-2021 at the State House in Banjul



President Barrow, VP Tambajang, State Officials and Diplomats at launch of NDP in Banjul

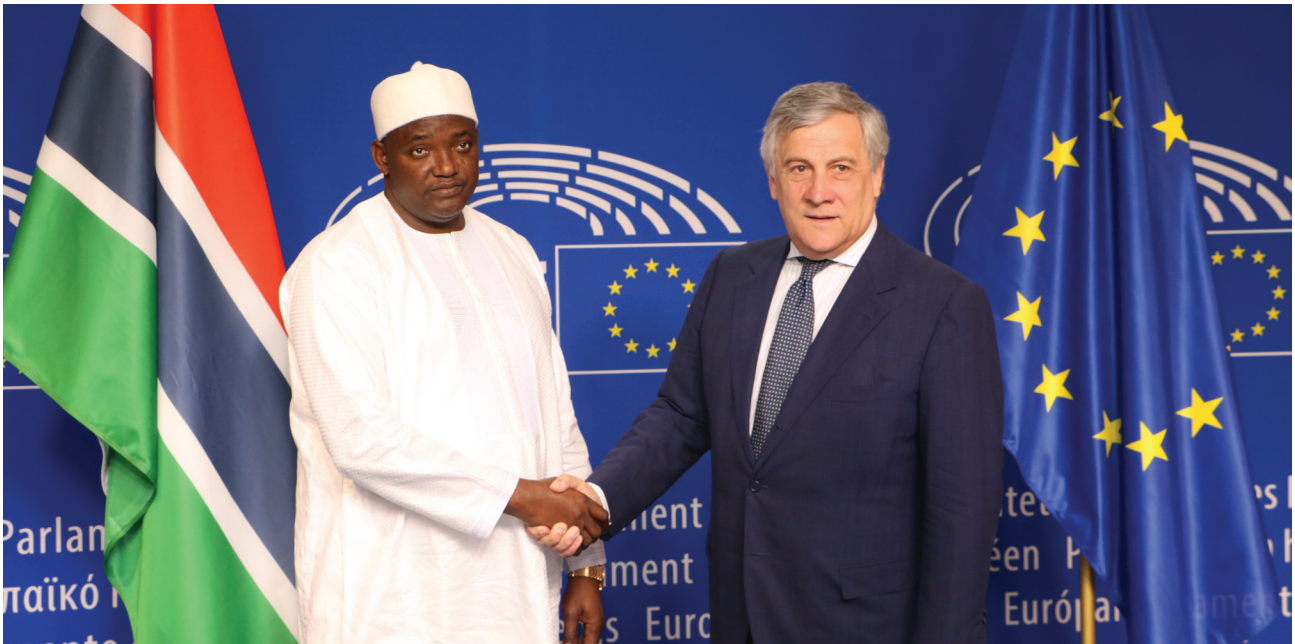
In its bid to galvanise support for the Brussels International Conference in May 2018, His Excellency, President Adama Barrow presided over the UN High Level Peace Building meeting in New York in April, 2018. On the sidelines engaged partners to support the Brussels conference on The Gambia to raise fund for the execution of the National Development Plan 2018-2021.

The Brussels Conference on The Gambia's National Development Plan (NDP 2018-2021) has been widely described as a success due to the global support for The Gambia's return to democratic rule and focus on development and progress.

In May 2018, His Excellency led a high-powered delegation to Brussels where a €1.45 billion financing pledge was secured from Gambia's development partners. "It demonstrates the country's shift from isolation to acceptance as a member of the global family of nations."

The pledges garnered would go into supporting the implementation of the government's development blueprint, the National Development Plan (NDP).

The conference was co-organised by the European Union in its quest to galvanize international support for the development agenda of President Barrow's government.



President Barrow shakes hand with the EU Commission President J. Juncker

President Barrow during the conference presented a €1.6 billion financing plan out of the €2.4 billion total estimate financing package. The rest of the financing would be sourced from the progressive fiscal measures being carried out by the government.

For the President, the pledges signify a strong global desire to stand in solidarity with his government in its forward march for a just, peaceful and prosperous Gambia.

His Excellency, Neven Mimica, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation who co-chaired the conference along with the President, described the event as “a great success for a country that has decided to change its history”.

President Barrow used the opportunity at the conference to call on the international investors to take advantage of the limitless business and investment opportunities in The Gambia, announcing that the country is ready for business.



President Adama Barrow on a panel with EU and UN officials in Brussels



A roundtable meeting between Gambian and EU Officials during the Brussels meeting in May 2018

The president said his government would not waver in its drive to provide an enabling and sustained environment for private sector development through tax incentives and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) as enablers for job and national wealth creation.

President Barrow maintained that the private sector is a cardinal ally in government's development agenda, as it is recognized as the engine of growth. Thus, strategies have been developed and aligned with the NDP to encourage the development of the private sector through entrepreneurship, trade, and industry.

The President also informed the gathering that the financial management reforms being spearheaded by his government are paying a dividend. He reported that interest rates in The Gambia have started going down, while lending to the private sector is significantly improving. These strides are attributed to the steps being taken by the government to reform the unfavorable laws and reduce some taxes to spur investment.

On the fringes of the International Business Forum, President Barrow met with the President of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani. Their discussions centered on agriculture with a focus on value addition, mechanisation, and agro-processing with the aim of creating jobs for the youth as well as the enable growth of the economy.

‘GAMBIA OPEN FOR BUSINESS’ – BARROW TELLS INVESTORS

President Adama Barrow has called on international investors to take advantage of the business and investment opportunities in The Gambia, announcing that “the country is ready for business”.

Addressing the International Business Forum, on the sidelines of the International Conference for The Gambia in Brussels, the President said that his government has gone far in addressing the inherited financial and economic management challenges that eroded investor confidence and seriously limited private sector investment and foreign direct investment inflow into The Gambia.

The Gambia Investment and Exports Promotions Agency Act and the national investment policy provide adequate investment guarantees to investors. “The country is a member of several multilateral organisations that protect and safeguard international investments, such as the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and the International Centre for the Settlement of International Disputes,” President Barrow said.

President Barrow stressed that the private sector is a cardinal ally in his development agenda by emphasising that his government recognizes the private sector as the engine of growth. In this regard, he said strategies have been developed and aligned with the NDP to encourage the development of the Private sector through entrepreneurship, trade, and industry.

The National Business Council was to be established to serve as the platform for continuous engagement with the private sector, was also launched.



PRESIDENT BARROW PLEDGES 10% SALARY TO FINANCE NDP

Upon arrival from the Gambia Conference in Belgium in May 2018, President Adama Barrow told reporters at the airport that he would dedicate 10 percent of his monthly salary to supporting the implementation of the National Development Plan.

The President and delegation received a rousing welcome upon arrival from Brussels, where donors pledged support towards funding the country's development blueprint. The European Union alone committed €149Million, in addition to the already Euros 225Million since 2017.

At the airport, the President described the trip as a success and urged all Gambians to unite in supporting the national development plan.



THE BANJUL SEAPORT

SEAPORT REGISTERS 16% INCREASE IN CARGO

As a trade gateway, The Gambia Ports Authority recorded a huge rise in the volume of cargo transactions recorded in the year 2017. According to President Adama Barrow, cargo volume has gone up by 16% to 2.5 million tonnes in the said year. He made the announcement during the signing ceremony of a collaboration agreement between the Gambia Ports Authority and the Port of Antwerp International (PAI), which is a subsidiary of Antwerp Port Authority.

“Container volumes also experience 12% growth during the same period as the port now handles more than 100,000 containers,” President Barrow said. Gambia government attaches special interest to the Port of Banjul’s transformation into a modern deep seaport and a leading trade and distribution centre for West Africa and beyond.

The Gambia Ports Authority has been operating for the past years with limited infrastructure, which was why it couldn’t handle the ever-increasing volume of cargo coming through. The Port had to grapple with numerous challenges in terms of space constraints and congestion, both within the existing terminals and the access roads within the city leading to the Port of Banjul, he added.

Banjul-Antwerp Ports’ Agreement

On the sidelines of the historic donor Conference in Brussels, the Port of Antwerp International (PAI), the consultancy and investment subsidiary of Antwerp Port Authority, and APEC, its maritime training centre, and the Gambia Ports Authority signed an agreement to build the capacity of Gambians dockworkers.



President Barrow, the CEO of the Port of Antwerp, Kristof Waterschoot

The Port of Banjul’s transformation into a modern deep seaport to enhance its potential to serve as the leading trade and distribution centre for the vast West African market and beyond is a priority for the country’s economic growth.

Port of Belgium to build capacity of Gambian Dockworkers

The Port of Antwerp, Belgium, announced plans to set up training for the dock workers in The Gambia in collaboration with its maritime training centre, APEC. The port of Antwerp has already trained around 130 port professionals from Banjul in Antwerp, through its specialist institute (APEC) that has been training maritime professionals from all over the world since 1977.



The Port of Antwerp

The Managing Director of The Gambia Ports Authority (GPA), Mr. Abdoulie Tamedou, and the CEO of the Port of Antwerp, Kristof Waterschoot, signed the agreement on behalf of their various institutions.

As part of the agreement, the Port of Antwerp would play an advisory role while the two sides would examine how the ports can collaborate even more closely in the future.

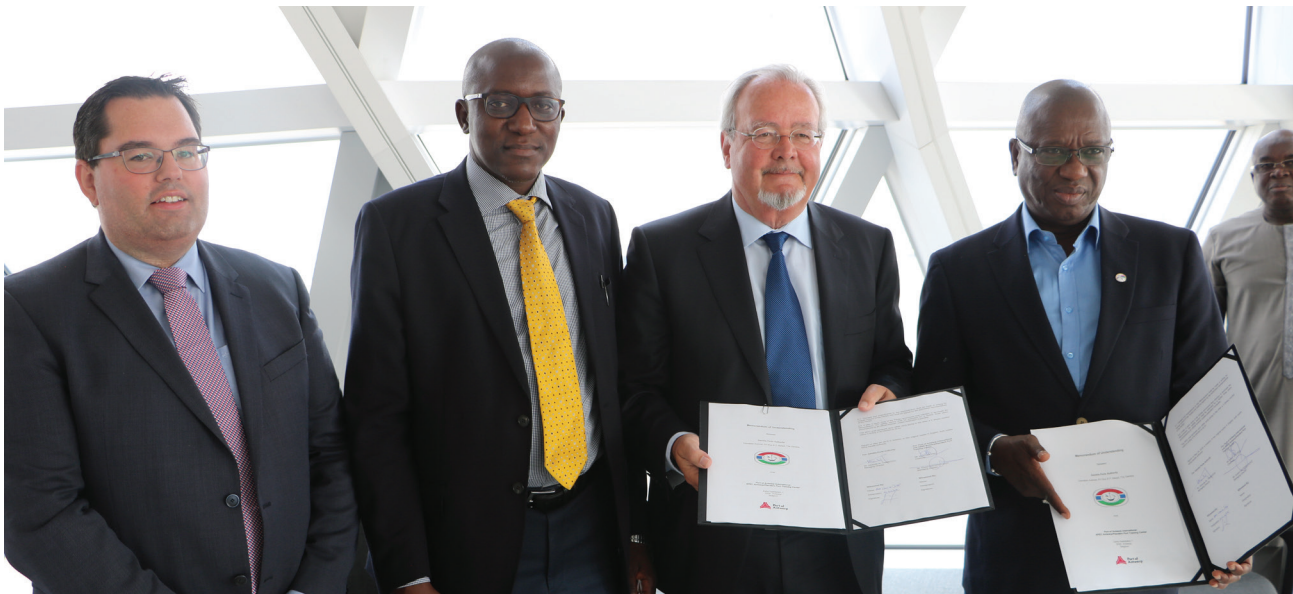
The port of Antwerp, where the synergy between maritime, logistics and industrial activities create a unique platform, is an inspiring example for the port of Banjul. “We are most impressed with Antwerp and so, are very pleased with this collaboration agreement that would allow us to call upon its expertise. We look towards the future with great confidence,” Managing Director of Gambia Ports Authority, Abdoulie Tamedou, explained.

“West Africa is a very important region for us, and it is our ambition to further strengthen our position there,” said Port Alderman, Marc Van Peel, who is also Chairman of the Port of Antwerp International (PAI), expressing delight at the new collaboration with The Gambia.



Officials of The Gambia government and Port of Antwerp

The Gambia's socio-economic well-being hinges on developments in international trade. It is therefore essential that Gambia's major trade gateways, that is, the seaport, airport, and telecommunications systems are developed and sustained to effectively compete in the sub-region.



Officials of The Gambia government and Port of Antwerp

PORT OF BANJUL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS 2018 - 2021

The Gambia Ports Authority (GPA), as encapsulated in the provisions of Ports Act 1972, is currently administering, operating and managing the Port of Banjul, the Ferry Services, the Banjul Shipyard and Banjul Fisheries Jetty. The GPA has also been rendering annual subventions for the administration of The Gambia Maritime Administration since its inception in 2006.

The Government under the leadership of H.E. Adama Barrow attaches special interest to the Port of Banjul for having a direct impact on the socio-economic well-being of the citizens of the country.

There is an immediate need for implementation of the capacity improvement projects identified under the Port of Banjul Master Plan. This is ever more urgent as the port experienced a surge in container volumes of 12% growth during December 2017, as it now handles more than 100,000 containers.

To this end, emphasis shall be made for the dredging of the access channel to attract deeper draft vessels, construction of new jetties to accommodate more ships, investment in open storage areas and warehouses, construction of logistics platforms for value-added activities. The current expansion project of the GPA aims to improve the capacity and efficiency of the port of Banjul, and transform it into one of the best ports in the sub-region with a quick turnaround time of vessels, fast handling and customs clearance, easy documentation, and overall International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) compliance.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: CLARION CALL FOR PEACE

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow joined world leaders at the UN General Assembly in New York, United States calling for a collective commitment to the building of sustainable peace in the world.

In a statement delivered at the high level UN peace building forum held in honour of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, President Barrow made a strong case for preventive diplomacy as means of ensuring lasting peace. He also informed the UN General Assembly of the progress being registered on the national front in terms of reforms in the security sector, economic stability, youth empowerment, and the processes towards establishing the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC) as important steps in sustaining peace.



Their Excellencies, President Barrow and the UN SG A. Guterres during the High-Level Peacebuilding Summit in New York

President Barrow re-echoed his government 's commitment to consolidate the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights which are strong pillars of good governance. According to him, his government 's efforts include the establishment of a constitutional review commission as part of the process to strengthen democracy and ensure that due processes are followed and independence of the judiciary guaranteed.

Development partners have provided tremendous financial and moral support towards the peacebuilding process in The Gambia. The President re-echoed the need to continue this partnership to sustain the peace in the country. The Gambia's Development Plan outlines priorities which support sustainable peace and development. It has created the environment for civil society engagement in constructive criticism to sustain the peace that now exists in the country. Recognition of the pivotal role of civil society in building and sustaining peace is essential for the citizenry to develop their full potential.

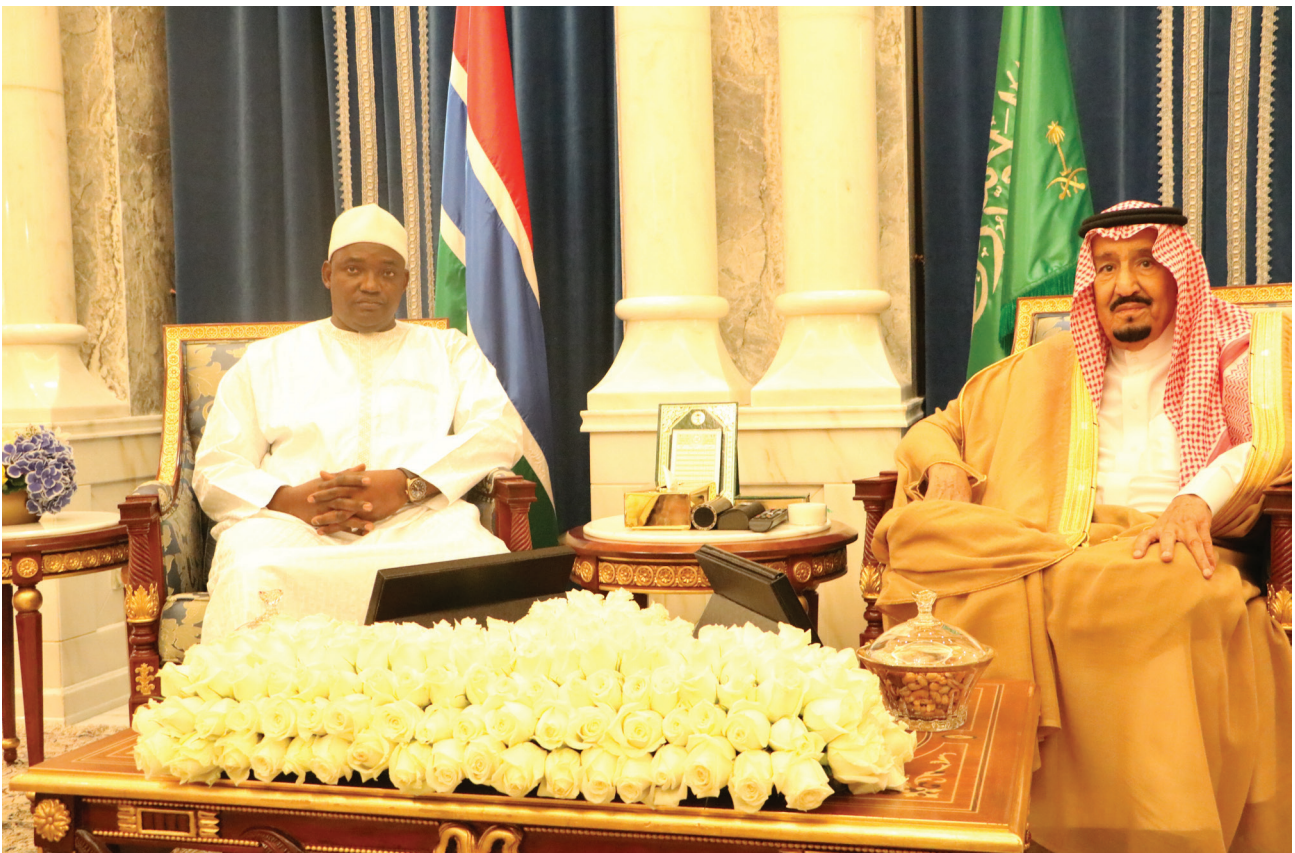
STATE VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow on June 4th embarked on a state visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to discuss the forthcoming Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit scheduled to be hosted by The Gambia in 2019.

The OIC Summit is the largest gathering of world leaders. Given that the global gathering would undoubtedly embolden The Gambia's foot print on the global stage, the government leaves no stone unturned in mobilising global support to ensure a successful hosting.

The president was accompanied by a high level government delegation as well as the First Lady of the republic. He was received on arrival at the airport by a high ranking member of the Royal Court of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Governor of Madina.

While in Saudi Arabia, President Barrow used the opportunity to perform Umrah.



PRESIDENT BARROW HOLDS TALK WITH GAMBIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY



In the push to see the prices of basic food commodities drastically reduced for the convenience and affordability of Gambian consumers, on Monday 4th June, President Adama Barrow convened a consultative meeting with major importers of the Gambia business community at State House in Banjul.

The primary objective of the discussion was to dialogue the prices of basic consumer goods in relation to tax incentives put in place by the government for importers. The President wanted to understand why ordinary Gambians were not benefiting from the tax cuts in terms of pricing in spite of the tax reductions and incentives.

Since the beginning of the year, the government installed a series of tax incentives and concessions, including a 10% reduction on import duties, to encourage reduction of prices of basic commodities.

Based on the foregoing, the President admonished the businessmen to cooperate with the government to find solutions to the price hikes of basic commodities in the country. President Barrow was quite unambiguous in expressing concern that the tax reductions, particularly the 10% reduction on import duties, have not translated into reduction in prices of rice or other basic consumer goods. President Barrow emphasized that the reductions ought to be reflected on the lives of consumer Gambians; thus, the business community should work towards reducing the prices of basic commodities.

Mr. Tony Banner, speaking on behalf of the business community in the Gambia, hailed the 10% reduction of tax on rice as a good incentive for the business community. He, however, lamented that extra charges incurred from delays at the Gambia Ports Authority (GPA), among other factors, contributes towards the price hikes.

PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES AU DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

In February 2018, President Adama Barrow received in audience the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ambassador Thomas Kwesi Quartey in his office at the State House. The Gambia is an important member of the AU and the continental body has followed with keen interest the developments in the country since the transition. The Barrow administration's efforts to reform the civil service, education sector, and provide food security are key areas of interest to the Union in its bid to advance the continent through integration.



President Barrow, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union, Ambassador Thomas Kwesi Quartey receives



Speaking during the courtesy call, Ambassador Kwesi Quartey reaffirmed the AU's interest to support the Gambia in its reform programme and transition to democracy and good governance. The president said he recognizes the importance of mobilizing and galvanizing the human resource capacity of the country in order to realize the democratic change that Gambians fought for. The stringent censorship and heavy-handedness of the former regime, he observed, has led to the loss of most Gambian intellectuals to the international community. Therefore, the need to re-connect with Gambian intellectuals and encourage their return to contribute to national development is great. The Gambian leader also used the opportunity to reiterate the country's commitment to the

international protocols it has signed and said his administration is willing to open up to the world to end the country's isolation.

AU EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION IN RWANDA

President Adama Barrow joined colleague African Heads of State and Government in Kigali, Rwanda, to attend the Extraordinary Session of the African Union on the Continental Free Trade Area. For the first time, AU member states reached an agreement to strengthen African integration through trade and commerce.

Africans leaders hold true to the idea that African integration could be realized only through economic integration - breaking down of all trade barriers that hinder the free flow or movement of goods within the continent.



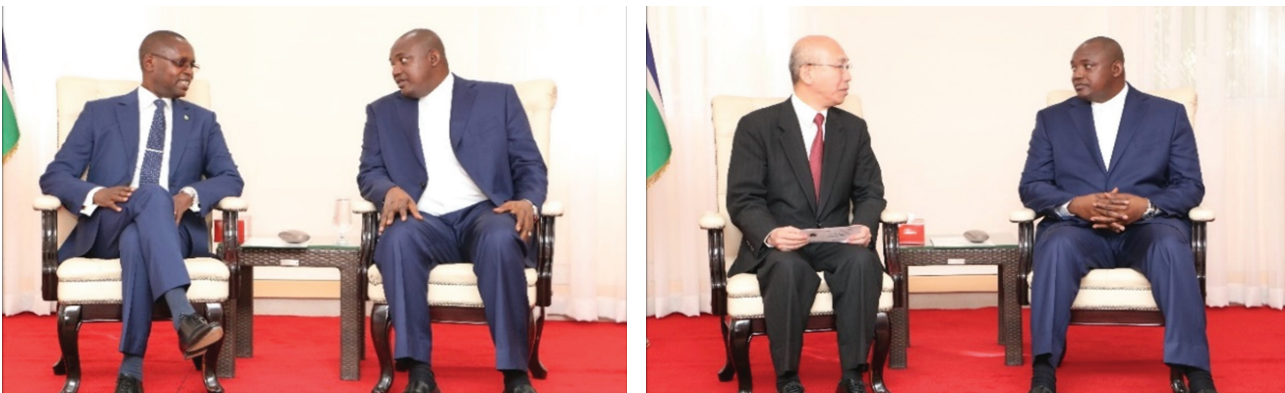
President Barrow joins AU Heads of State and Government at the Rwanda Summit

DIPLOMATS PRESENT CREDENTIALS

As a sign of the return of global respect for The Gambia, President Barrow continues to receive envoys and diplomats from countries all over the world that are interested in forging a relationship.

In the first quarter of 2018, new diplomatic envoys from Japan, Mali, Rwanda, Angola, Romania, and Brazil were at the Presidency to present letters of credence. They expressed the desire of their governments to strengthen ties with The Gambia. The diplomats also delivered messages of solidarity and brotherhood to President Barrow, whilst congratulating him on his presidency.

Their Excellences, Shigero Omori of Japan, Binta Kane-Cisse of Mali, Dr. Mathias Harebamungu of Rwanda, and Daniel Antonio Rosa of Angola, all expressed their commitment to strengthening ties with The Gambia beyond the diplomatic front to other areas of development, especially youth empowerment, agriculture, trade, tourism, security, information technology, governance, fisheries and petroleum.



L- President Barrow with the Rwandan Ambassador; R – President Barrow with the Japanese Ambassador

In addition to the presentation of his credentials, the Japanese Ambassador Omori announced his government's commitment to disburse an immediate support to The Gambia in the form of a huge stock of rice worth over D110Million, equivalent to \$USD1.5M. Additionally, the Japanese government was ready to support youth empowerment initiatives through the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in partnership with the International Organisation on Migration (IOM). The Ambassador also announced an extra one million dollars for youth participation in agriculture.

Presenting her credentials, Romania Ambassador Stefol said her country would continue to support and strengthen ties with The Gambia through the European Union and bilateral cooperation.



L- President Barrow with the Romanian Ambassador; R – President Barrow with the Malian Ambassador



L- President Barrow with the Barzil Ambassador; R – President Barrow with the Kosovo Ambassador

Brazilian Ambassador, Rocha Junior pledged to work with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency to embark on an assessment mission to map out possible and concrete areas of cooperation with urgency. He regretted that earlier cooperation in the area of animal husbandry with the former regime did not yield the desired results.

Ambassador Ghasi presenting his letter of credence noted the importance of diversity and respect for all in building bridges of friendship and solidarity.



President Barrow with the Angolan Ambassador

The Ambassadors discussed the various areas of cooperation that could be strengthened with The Gambia. Trade, agriculture, cultural exchange and tourism, Information, Communication and Infrastructure, sports and capacity building through education and training were identified as possible areas of cooperation.

GAMBIA REJOINS THE COMMONWEALTH

At an Executive Session of the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth held at Lancaster House in London, His Excellency Adama Barrow expressed delight to the Commonwealth for re-admitting The Gambia to its community of nations.



CHOGM Leaders

The Gambian President conveyed gratitude to the Commonwealth member states for the strong support in fast-tracking the re-entry of The Gambia into the Organisation. He recognized the critical role played by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt. Honorable Patricia Scotland in facilitating the process that led to Gambia's re-admission. The Gambia's re-admission into the Commonwealth of Nations is a significant achievement for the country, due to the immense socio-economic benefits to Gambians both home and abroad.



President Barrow

The Gambia is playing a functioning democracy through the restoration of good governance, rule of law, respect for human rights and independence of the Judiciary. The Commonwealth is bound to provide special assistance to its small member states, like The Gambia. In the past, the Commonwealth Foreign Technical Cooperation provided The Gambia with technical assistance in various fields of development such as education.



Commonwealth Heads of State going to meeting during CHOGM2018

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

The Gambia is known for its religious tolerance and peaceful inter-faith co-existence. In keeping with those values, President Adama Barrow welcomes various religious denominations. Major religious events such as Easter and Eid-UL-Fitr. These are declared public holidays and the President extends best wishes to all during their feasts.

One of the historic events in the Catholic Calendar in The Gambia was the ordination of the first Gambian Bishop, His Lordship, Bishop Gabriel Mendy. President Barrow was optimistic that the ordination of Bishop Mendy would further strengthen the relations amongst Gambians of all denominations and religions. It was a solemn occasion for all Gambians, the first time a citizen amongst the Catholic community was elevated to that position.

During a courtesy call at the State House, the President urged the Bishop to continue to promote peaceful co-existence amongst Gambians, clearly demonstrating that the President attaches great importance to the respect and protection of fundamental human rights of every Gambian, as guaranteed by the supreme law of the land, irrespective of one's belief.

Moreover, it further exemplifies the cordial relations and religious tolerance among religious denominations in order to foster a perpetual peaceful co-existence among Gambians.

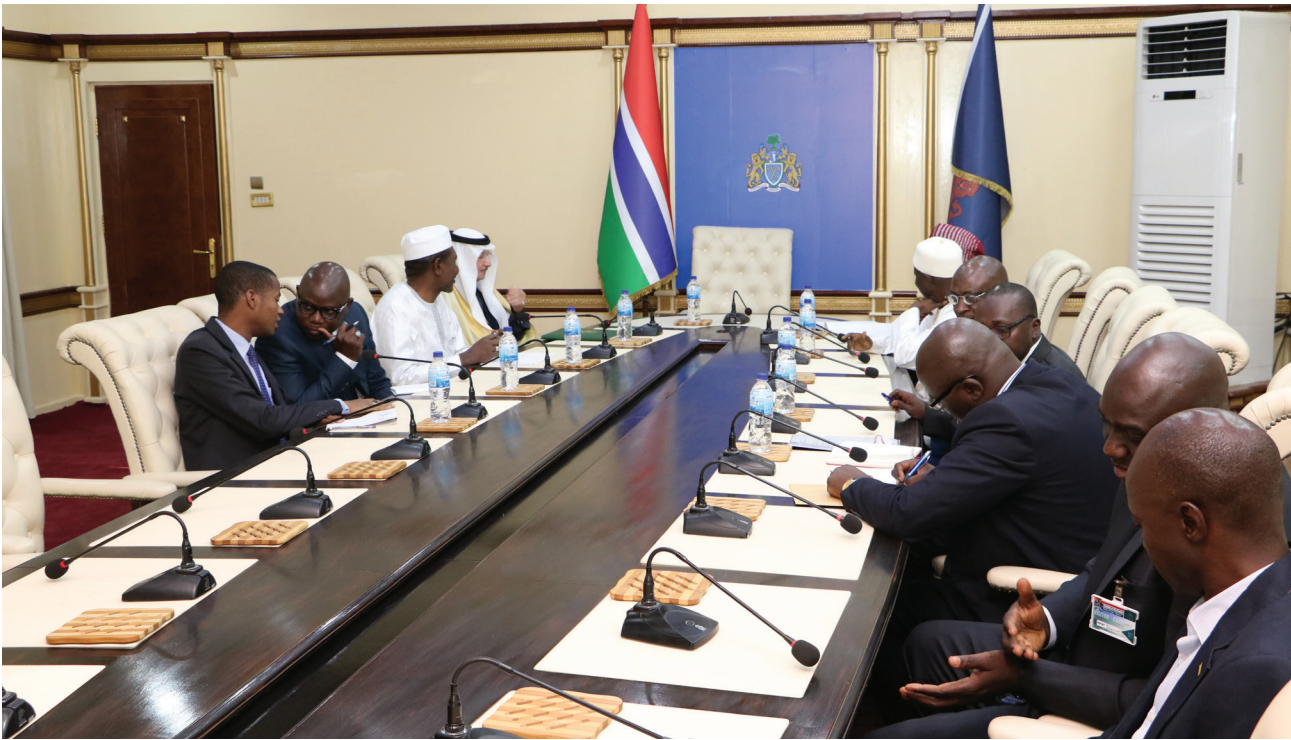


President Barrow and leaders of the Christian Community



Madina Suwaneh religious leader calls on President Barrow

In a similar but separate engagement, President Barrow met with the Secretary-General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, His Excellency, Dr. Yousef Bin Ahmed Al Othaimen and discussed the preparation for the OIC Summit of Heads of State in 2019. The President expressed delight for the visit and assured them of The Gambia's preparedness to host the summit, which is the second largest global organisation, second only to the UN.



President Barrow receives the O.I.C. S.G. at the State House



O.I.C. S.G. Dr Yousef Bin Ahmed Al Othaimen House

As the 57-member country organisation gears towards its next Summit in The Gambia, the Secretary General, Dr Yousef Bin Ahmed Al Othaimen, embarked on a familiarisation visit to assess the level of preparedness in the country. At a closed meeting with senior government officials, the OIC team was given assurance that the government was in full gear to host biggest Muslim Organisation.

Taking into account the country's ongoing peaceful transition under President Barrow, there could not have been a better time to receive world leaders of the Islamic Ummah. It is an opportunity to expose and cement bilateral relationships with OIC member countries.

Locally, several steps have been taken in preparation for the OIC 2019 Summit: from the establishment of a ministerial committee, to the setting up of a national OIC secretariat and local organizing committee.

Secretary General Al Othaimen revealed that several OIC partners are supporting The Gambia's efforts to successfully host the summit. He also hailed the friendly nature of Gambians and said it would be an opportunity to learn about Gambian culture. He emphasized the importance of peace, adding that his organization denounces violence associated with Muslims because Islam teaches peace and love.

NETWORKING FOR INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

GERMAN INVESTORS EXPLORE GAMBIAN MARKET

German investors in various spheres of development including agriculture, infrastructure, energy, development finance, sports business have expressed interest in exploring the opportunities available in the country.

The visit gave them a better understanding of the infrastructural needs of the country and would enable them explore possibility of public-private partnership in The Gambia.

President Barrow welcomed the delegation and informed them that the energy, agriculture, tourism, health and infrastructural development are amongst the top priorities of his government. The President explained that a high market for rice production exists in The Gambia, as only 13% of the rice consumed in the country is grown locally.

The infrastructural development would provide access to The Gambia and open other areas such as tourism to the country's hinterland. Since healthcare access is also linked to good infrastructure and that energy is key in all these, the German businessmen should consider the opportunities in value-added production which would provide access to other markets in the region.



Such would create job opportunities for young people and curb irregular migration. "The reason young people are going through the 'back-way' is that they are not engaged in viable economic activities," argued President Barrow.

The Gambia is open to partners who would support its national development agenda in its drive to realize its National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2021.



German Member of Parliament, Mr. Johannes Selleh, leading the team to the State House said the shared democratic values and the struggle for prosperity motivated them to visit. Mr. Selleh added that the visit of the German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in December 2017 was another motivating factor.

Foreign Trade and Development Policy and Development Cooperation Adviser, Judith Helfmann-Hundack of German Africa Business Association engaging in The Gambia gave them insight into the importance President Barrow attaches to the priority areas of the National Development Plan (NDP), and areas for partnership with the private sector.



Laying the Foundation Stone of GIETAF at the Airport

TURKISH INVESTORS HOLD TALKS WITH PRESIDENT BARROW



President Barrow in a bilateral meeting in Turkey

President Adama Barrow and Erdogan of Turkey attach great importance to the bilateral partnership between their two countries. Following discussions during President Barrow's visit in Turkey, a team from the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency was dispatched on a mission in The Gambia.

Their aim was to assess the situation for the renovation of the country's main referral hospital, expansion of the National Assembly and to explore other possible areas of cooperation and intervention areas. Turkey is willing to further support The Gambia as it prepares to host the OIC in 2019.



President Barrow in a bilateral meeting in Turkey

SUPPORT TO EDUCATION

WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATION COUNCIL COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT BARROW

The bid to improve the quality of education requires leaders to express political will and commitment to education for the development of Africa. To demonstrate the desire to advance education, President Barrow encouraged a five-member delegation from the West African Examination Council (WAEC) to strive harder to bring excellence in the region's education.

The President commended the Council for being a model of African integration and added that there is capacity and knowledge in Africa, thus, there is no excuse for failure. He added that Africa is on the right direction by focusing on democracy as the way forward and there was optimism about African integration. The Gambian leader said Africa can learn best practices from others by putting emphasis on science and technology as key areas to the continent's development.

The Minister for Basic and Secondary Education, Honourable Claudiana Cole led the delegation from the West African Examination Council - WAEC, with members from Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. They were in The Gambia attending the 66th Annual General Meeting of WAEC in Banjul.



UNIVERSITY OF THE GAMBIA HONOURS GAMBIAN LEADER AS 1, 286 GRADUATE

At his first convocation as Chancellor of the University of The Gambia, His Excellency, President Adama Barrow witnessed the graduation of 1286 students from undergraduates to Masters' levels for the year 2015, 2016 and 2017.

The graduating students studied in various disciplines –Education, Community Building and Design, Sciences, Law, Business Administration, and Medicine. The new fields of study include Information Technology and Communications, Tourism and Hospitality Management.

President Barrow and the First President of the Republic of The Gambia, Alhajie Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara were conferred with Doctoral degrees (Honoris Causa) of the University of The Gambia.



President Barrow at his first convocation engagement with the University of The Gambia

PEACE AND SECURITY



GAF High Command calls on President Barrow as their Commander in Chief

MEETING WITH THE GAMBIA ARMED FORCES HIGH COMMAND

In a bid to foster and entrench perpetual peace and boost the morale of security forces in the country, President Adama Barrow, in his capacity as the Commander-In-Chief of the Gambia Armed Forces, met with the senior Command of the Gambian Armed Forces.

During a frank discussion between the Commander-in-Chief and the Armed Forces High Command, the President urged them to accept the verdict of the people and move on with the agenda to advance the country. He described the meeting as "a family re-union" - and in a family, each member has a responsibility and that goes with challenges.

The GAF members were urged to take up their role to defend the country and remain loyal to the Gambian people and the government of the day to ensure stability.

The President emphasised the role ECOMIG played during the impasse but also acknowledged the maturity GAF displayed by respecting his order for them to stay in their barracks. "We won the war, let us maintain the peace and collaborate with others like ECOWAS," he asserted.

Responding to their challenges, President Barrow informed them that plans have advanced to have an academy to support the capacity building of members. The President reminded them that governance is a process and that his government would do what it could to support them. He concluded that as a leader, he wants to leave a positive legacy not by how long he stays in power but what he is able to achieve.

The Chief of Defence Staff, Lt. Gen. Massaneh Kinteh made a presentation and gave an overview of GAF history, its structures, vision and reform activities. He highlighted the restructuring activities they undertook to strengthen the capacity of the forces, the challenges, and recommendations to modernize the army. The detailed briefing outlined logistical issues, infrastructure and other needs of GAF. The meeting also gave an opportunity for other members present to express their loyalty to the country through their Commander-in-Chief.



President and the Chief of Defense Staff, Gen. Kinteh

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

WOMEN AND YOUTH PEACE RALLY AT SOMA, LRR

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2018, His Excellency, President Barrow participated in a peace and reconciliation rally in Soma, Lower River Region.

The rally, organised by women and youth of the region, was aimed at bringing together people from across political parties, to reconcile and promote peace, stability, and tolerance in The Gambia.

Speaking at the event, the President promoted the principle of One Gambia, One People and One Nation, preaching social cohesion and harmony in the country. True to his desire for an all-inclusive New Gambia, the President met with politicians from the former regime and people from Foni to promote peace and reconciliation.



PEACE RALLY AT FARABA BANTA, KOMBO EAST

Clashes between some members of the Police Intervention Unit (PIU) and the community of Faraba Banta, Kombo East in June 2018 led to some loss of lives, properties and several injuries.

President Adama Barrow attended a peace rally in the village on a day of prayers for the victims of the incident. Before delivering a message of compassion and reconciliation, the President joined the community at a mass Friday Prayers. . It was meant to express his government's sincere condolences to the families for their losses. He also visited the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital and met the wounded that were hospitalized there from the incident.

He instructed for a full investigation into the matter to determine the actions needed to address the situation and prevent a recurrence in any part of the country.

The Faraba incident was a lesson for all Gambians to learn to deal with their concerns according to the laws of the land in a responsible and civil manner, as a sure way to jointly build a better and brighter Gambia for all. In order to establish the truth and enable government to take the right decision and a well-informed course of action, a Commission was set up to investigate the Faraba incident in July 2018.



PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES SUB-REGIONAL MILITARY OFFICIALS

President Adama Barrow on the 28th February 2018 held two separate engagements with visiting armed forces from the sub-region.

First, he met the Nigerian Ambassador to The Gambia, Oluwasegun Ibidapo-Obe who accompanied over forty members of the Nigerian Armed Forces at the State House.

Rear Admiral A. A. Osinowo, Commander, Course 26 of Nigerian Defence College and team's mission was to conduct research on the theme: "Post Conflict Peacebuilding in The Gambia - Lessons for Nigeria." Observations were made on the role of the military in politics using the Gambian military and the 2016 political impasse as case study. Looking inward in finding solutions in The Gambia and within ECOWAS was applauded by Rear Admiral Osinowo, who suggested that to overcome the challenges during the next phase of peacebuilding in The Gambia, GAF has an important role to play in the decisions to move The Gambia to greater height.



President Barrow with the visiting military officers from the Nigeria Defence College

Introducing the delegation, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Yankuba Drammeh, expressed gratitude and assured President Barrow of the commitment of GAF to maintain peace and stability in the country.

As part of the course requirement for graduation, the Nigerian Defence College undertook a regional tour of key countries to conduct primary research.

Africa is taking the right direction towards democracy and the ECOWAS bloc took a bold decision to support the maintenance of peace and democracy in The Gambia. The leadership of Nigeria was amongst those who stood up against the Gambian dictator in 2016.

The security forces were advised to learn from the direction the world is heading.

Meanwhile, the ECOWAS Military Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG) Commander, Col. Magette Ndiaye, took leave of President Barrow at the end of his tour of duty in The Gambia. He briefed the President on his mission and thanked the government for its cooperation. Colonel Ndiaye informed the Gambian leader about his observations and said The Gambia Armed Forces conducted its duties with professionalism.

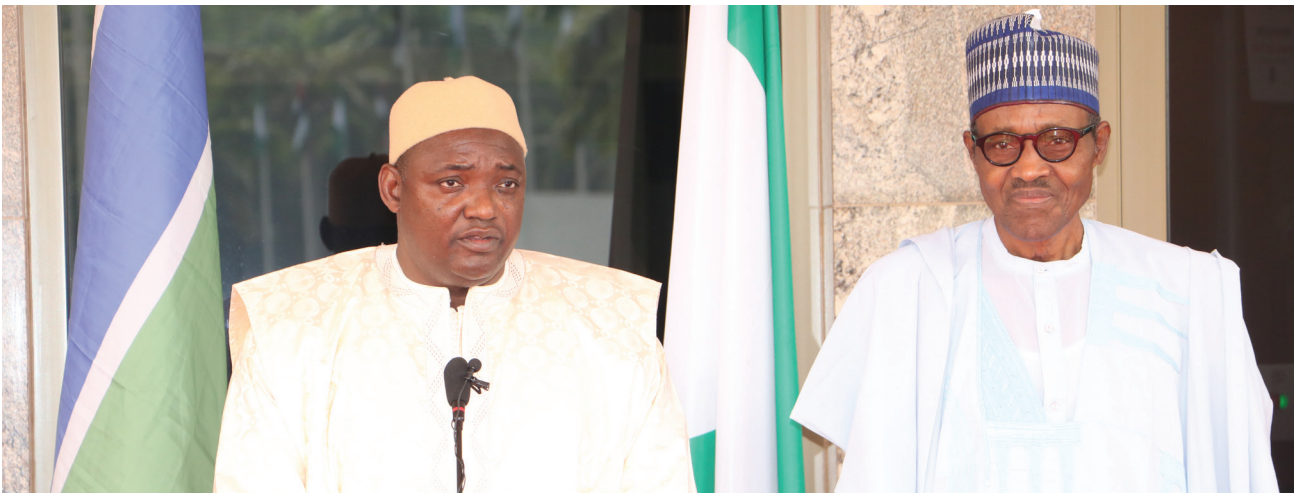
Under the Barrow leadership, the ties between The Gambia and Senegal has reached its height in history. Senegal, through ECOMIG, continues to contribute to maintaining peace and stability in the country. Colonel Ndiaye was accompanied by Col. Fulgence Ndoure, who took over from him as Commander, as well as the Deputy Chief of Defense Staff, Yankuba Drammeh and State Guard officials at State House.



President Barrow with the outgoing Commander of ECOMIG Forces

SUB-REGIONAL INTEGRATION

NIGERIA: President of the Republic of The Gambia traveled to the Federal Republic of Nigeria for an official working visit in January, 2018, to thank his Nigerian counterpart for standing for the people of The Gambia in times of dire need.



President Barrow and H.E. Muhammadou Buhari

SENEGAL: The Presidential Council meeting between The Gambia and Senegal presided over by Presidents, Macky Sall and Adama Barrow of Senegal and The Gambia, respectively, took place in the Gambia at the Kairaba Beach Hotel, March 2018. The Presidential Council meeting which was preceded by a technical meeting of Experts and Ministers resulted in the signing of a Joint Communiqué between the Republic of The Gambia and Senegal covering trade, security, tourism, environment and culture sectors.



President Barrow and H.E. Macky Sall

31ST AU HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT MEETING IN NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA



President Barrow engaged with his colleague Heads of States at the 31st Session of the African Union in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The Summit dealt with the African Continental Free Trade Area, Institutional reforms in the AU, Anti-corruption and a Common Position on ACP amongst other issues.

Theme of Summit :
**“WINNING THE FIGHT AGAINST
 CORRUPTION: A SUSTAINABLE
 PATH TO AFRICA’S
 TRANSFORMATION”**



53RD ECOWAS HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT SUMMIT IN LOME, TOGO



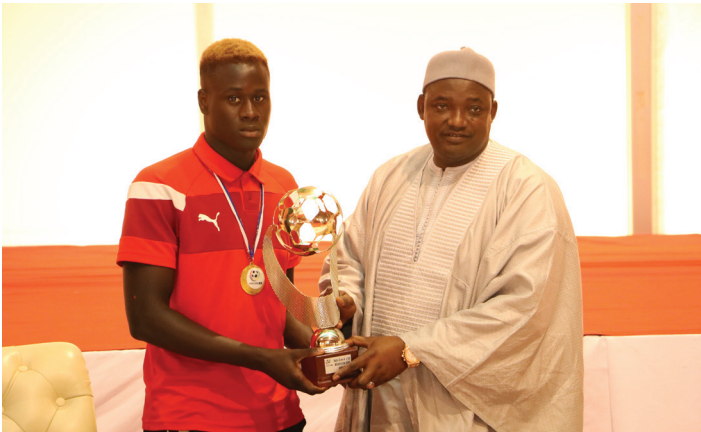
The progress and challenges in the implementation of ECOWAS Programmes, the situation of the economic, political and security environment in the region and how the ECOWAS Commission is addressing the issues.

The financial constraints of the Commission, irregular migration and its impact on the region, and ECOWAS institutional reform that is aimed at creating efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission to

respond to the needs of the community were high on the agenda. The Gambia highlighted Peace and Security and the role of ECOMIG forces in the maintenance of peace and security in the country and the operationalisation of the ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority, which The Gambia is the host.



SPORTS



The U-20 presents the trophy to President Barrow

PRESIDENT BARROW MET NATIONAL U-20 FOOTBALL SQUAD

As a football enthusiast, President Barrow interrupted his annual leave to personally convey his joy and congratulations to the National U-20 football team on their stunning victory in the 2018 WAFU Championship.

The President received in audience members of the U-20 team at the State House in Banjul. The young Scorpions were crowned winners of the 2018 WAFU Cup of Nations, following a spectacular performance against the national team of Liberia in Monrovia. Not only were they the only unbeaten side of the tournament, they defeated the host nation to clinch the title.

They were encouraged to not rest but continue to fly the Gambian flag higher. They were accompanied to the State House by members of the Gambia Football Federation and great Gambian football doyens like Biri Njie and other household names in Gambian football.



President Barrow and the National U-20 Team

ANNUAL LEAVE



President Adama Barrow, went on his annual leave for fifteen working days in April 2018. Spending his leave at his home village of Mangkamang Kunda in Jimara district in the Upper River Region of The Gambia accorded him time to interact with his extended family members and friends.

While there, he took the opportunity to visit development works on the Basse-Fatoto road and bridge construction projects. Several national institution officials in the URR, such as the IEC, on him at his village while there. President Barrow advised them to do their best in executing their functions as representatives of various public institutions in the region.

It was the first time the President had visited his home since he became President.

PANORAMA



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