

REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

State House Newsletter

# KEEPING THE PROMISE THE NDP AT WORK



President Barrow lays foundation stone

for Major Developments in URR



▲ Ensuring Judicial Independence



▲ Constitutional Review Commission



▲ Launching the OMVG Electricity Project

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# Acknowledgment

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Our sincere thanks also go out to all those who have supported in one way or the other. The great feedback, recommendations, and interests shown have come a long way in getting the team fired up and motivated to get the newsletter out on a regular basis.

The production process could not have been possible without the cooperation of the security, protocol, and administrative departments at the presidency. The Office of the Secretary General and Cabinet Secretariat deserve special mention. For want of memory, we cannot name every single individual or institution that has shown support throughout this entire time. However, we take satisfaction in that fact that you sure know yourselves. We are grateful, and thank you very much!

## Meet the Media and Communications Team:

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# Overview

Volume four (4) of the State House Newsletter is a great resource for anyone interested in understanding the daily activities of the president both in and out of the country. The strict methodological and journalistic thoroughness applied in this edition has broken down the hectic schedules of the presidency into a simple yet sophisticated language for the understanding of all and sundry.

Combining wit and creativity, Volume 4, which covers the reporting period August-December 2018 and January-August 2019, encapsulates everything between daily governance, astute diplomacy, overseas engagements, and intimate connections with the grassroots. Beyond the humility that the president is widely known for, this edition depicts a leader who is widely loved and cherished by his people, and enormously respected by his peers, both within and outside Africa. It reveals a leader who has dedicated every available time and resources into advancing the progress, peace, and prosperity of a country he has sworn to serve. As readers would come to find out in the pages that follow, an overwhelming number of Gambians has bought into that vision, putting personal and party political considerations aside, ready to match toe-to-toe with the president in realizing his vision for the country.

This edition looks at activities aimed at consolidating the governance and democratization efforts of the president, and government by extension, ranging from Cabinet resolutions and reshuffles, reforms initiatives of the civil service and security sector, and transitional justice programmes such as the National Human Rights Commission, Constitutional Review Commission, and the Financial Inquiry Commission into the wealth and assets of the former president. It also highlights other functions carried out by the president to consolidate the viable democratic gains registered through maintaining the independence of the judiciary and strengthening the hands of the parliament in holding the executive to account.

The newsletter catalogs the close connection between the president and masses at the grassroots from across the country. It looks at the warm reception that the president receives whenever he goes out and the teeming mass of people that thronged the State House periodically to show solidarity with his development aspirations. Complementing that, is the constant flow of world-renowned leaders in politics, business, development that continue to visit the country out of sheer respect for the president and the incredible success the country has made in ensuring the peaceful return of democracy and good governance. This publication also covers such visitations like the royal visit of the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.

The middle part of this issue focuses largely on the president pursuit of regional and global peace in West Africa and beyond, fostering enviable ties with our next-door neighbour, Senegal, and other regional powers like Nigeria, Mauritania, among others. It also captures in great details the fruitful diplomatic relationship with major powers like China, robust international relations at the UNGA, and OIC Summits as well as regional commitments like the AU Summit, ECOWAS, and so forth. The traditional meetings with Gambians abroad during overseas travels have also been covered at length.

These and many more engagements of the president have been dealt with in minute detail, providing a ringside account of activities of the president in this reporting period.

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Director of Press and Public Relations  
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**Social Media Platforms:**



@BarrowPresident



BarrowPORG



(@Presidency\_GMB)



PresidencyGambia)



State House of The Gambia

Website: [statehouse.gov.gm](http://statehouse.gov.gm)



# GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRATIZATION

## CABINET MEETINGS



*Cabinet in Session*

### Policies and Programmes

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow continues to lead Cabinet meetings where policies and programmes toward the realization of the National Development Plan 2018-2021 are discussed and approved. These include the rehabilitation and construction works of the road network and sewage of the City of Banjul, ICT for development, the ECOWAS Regional Electricity Access Project, among other important issues.

- **37 kilometers road network in Banjul** includes the reconstruction of the entire drainage network; as well as reconstruction of the ring canal connected to the drains.
- The implementation shall be done in tandem with the **development of the Port of Banjul**.
- Cabinet approved a proposal for a levy on specific items to **finance the development of sports** in The Gambia.

- A policy paper on a ten-year guide for a Road Map on ICT for Development 2018 - 2028 was also approved.
- The vision of the ICT for Development Policy is to improve the quality of life and enrich the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of The Gambian people through the development, deployment, and exploitation of ICT within the economy and society to accelerate the nation's development in the emerging information and knowledge-driven technological age.

## Cabinet: Gambia's Economy to Grow by 6.6 % in 2018 Fiscal Year

At a special Cabinet meeting that focused exclusively on the economic outlook and expected revenue performance of the 2019 fiscal year, Cabinet was informed that The Gambia's economy is expected to grow by 6.6 percent by the end of 2018 from 4.6 percent in 2017.

Tighter fiscal measures aimed at saving over a billion Dalasi for the Gambian economy were also agreed upon. The measures, which seek to instill fiscal discipline and financial prudence, include a temporary freeze on all recruitment in the civil service unless it is extremely necessary.

Other measures include restricting sector travels in line with the approved budget, and the implementation of the vehicle policy to streamline government expenditure.

In a bid to cut on cost and prioritize for national development some of the Gambian missions and embassies abroad will be closed or downsized.

In the same vein, Cabinet approved the digitization of government payment system in order to minimize cash transactions in the government systems. The digital shift is envisaged to solve the problem of leakages in public finance thereby maximizing earning, particularly from the domestic revenue base of the economy.

A favorable agricultural sector, trade, and good governance are mainly responsible for the projected growth. Good governance has especially contributed to boosting great confidence in the economy, as well as the subsequent fiscal streaming, and the boom in the tourism sector.

Gambians took a bold initiative in 2016 to see a change in lifestyle and also how the economy and the country are governed. This initiative is reflective of the system change in moving away from the cash economy to a digital economy, which will help the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to track economic activities.



# INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

## UK MPs PARTNER WITH GAMBIAN COUNTERPARTS



*President Barrow receives UK Parliamentarians at the State House*

A five-member group of British Parliamentarians, led by Lord German (OBE), were accompanied to the State House by the Chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee of the National Assembly of The Gambia, Honourable Sidia Jatta. The parliamentary group sought an audience with President Barrow to update him on the activities they have been undertaking, such as efforts to collaborate to revise and standardize the Standard Orders for The Gambian parliament.

## INAUGURATION OF LAND COMMISSION

A Land Commission was set up in September 2018 to look into the challenges of land administration and address conflicts emanating from land matters in the country.

For a country whose democracy had been shaken and corrupted, there was a strong need for redress in this sector. It is against this background that President Barrow described the inauguration as “another milestone in our effort to put the country on the right path”.

The tasks of the commission are important parts of the strategic priorities of the National Development Plan (NDP): *“restoring good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and empowering citizens through decentralisation and local governance”*.

The Commission has an advisory role on policy matters relating to land administration to ensure that the policies are transparent and implemented.

## NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

In a bid to consolidate Human Rights in The Gambia, the Barrow government established a National Human Rights Commission that is mandated to protect and promote the human rights of the people in The Gambia. President Adama Barrow assured the full independence of the newly created Commission while presiding over the swearing-in of its members at the State House in Banjul on the 13th February 2019.

The five-member commission, comprised of seasoned human rights activists chaired by Emmanuel Joof.

### NHR Commissioners

**Mr. Emmanuel Joof - Chairperson**

**Ms. Jainaba Jom - Vice Chairperson**

**Imam Baba Leigh**

**Mr. Njundu Drammeh**

**Dr. Agnes Adama Cambell**



*President Barrow poses with National Human Rights Commission members*



## INAUGURATION OF AUDIT HEADQUARTERS

Accountability and transparency in governance are at the core of the Barrow administration hence the *raison d'être* of the civil service reform programme currently underway. Realizing how central oversight institutions like the National Audit Office (NAO) are in that crusade, the government became quite supportive in their quest to have a conducive work environment. To execute their mandate of ensuring accountability of the Executive, Legislature, and entire apparatus of State, a proper work environment is essential. It is against this backdrop that the president and the top brass of the government witnessed the inauguration of the office complex of the national audit office.

The national duty of the audit office was acknowledged by President

Barrow at the inauguration of the NAO headquarters, stating that "the NAO has the special role of enhancing proper financial management and governance for the realisation of the NDP goals."

President Barrow maintained that his Government is determined to strengthen efficiency and effectiveness in public administration to promote accountability and good governance, through checks and balances.



# CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

## PRESIDENT BARROW PICKS VETERAN CIVIL SERVANT AS SECRETARY GENERAL



*S.G. Camara takes Oath of Office*

Transforming the Civil Service remains a recurring priority of the government; it embodies calls for professionalism and commitment to nation-building. In the process of changing the collapsing system inherited from the past regime, the human resources of the state must march up to the change Gambians committed to in 2016.

On the 17th September 2018, Mr. Ebrima O. Camara and Mrs. Roheyatou Kah vowed to remain steadfast and pursue the cause of rebuilding our national institutions by accepting to serve as Secretary General and Head of the Civil Service, and Deputy Secretary to Cabinet, respectively.

The newly appointed Secretary General, Ebrima Camara, after taking the oaths of office, said:

*“We already know the objectives and the plans of the government. It is time for us to*

*deliver effectively and efficiently to the people whose expectations are high and can only be best managed if we give our best to them”.*

## SENIOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS EMBARK ON STAFF RETREATS

The government’s reform programmes include transforming the civil service into an accountable, result-oriented and performance-based body that can translate the increasing state resources expended in public institutions into tangible deliverables for the benefit of The Gambian people.

It is in this context that Permanent Secretaries and Heads of state-subsent institutions and state-owned enterprises participated in a series of staff retreats on the need to establish a political and administrative culture characterized by accountability and transparency, respect for ethical and professional standards, strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and coordination across the government.

The newly created Department of Strategic Policy and Delivery (DSPD) at the Office of the President is taking a lead in asserting the important monitoring and coordination roles of the Office of the President. The ultimate objective is to provide technical advice to the President and help define and implement his government’s vision.



To further enhance coordination, the DSPD updated the Cabinet on its role and responsibility at a presentation held at the Cabinet Office in due course.

## THE FINANCIAL ENQUIRY COMMISSION SUBMITS ITS REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

The Commission set up in 2017 to investigate the financial dealings of the former President, Yahya Jammeh and his associates, commonly called the Janneh Commission, submitted its nine-volume report to the President at a ceremony held at the State House in March 2019.

The Report is currently under review in preparation for a White Paper to be presented to Cabinet. According to the 1997 Constitution, the President has six months to review the report and its recommendations.

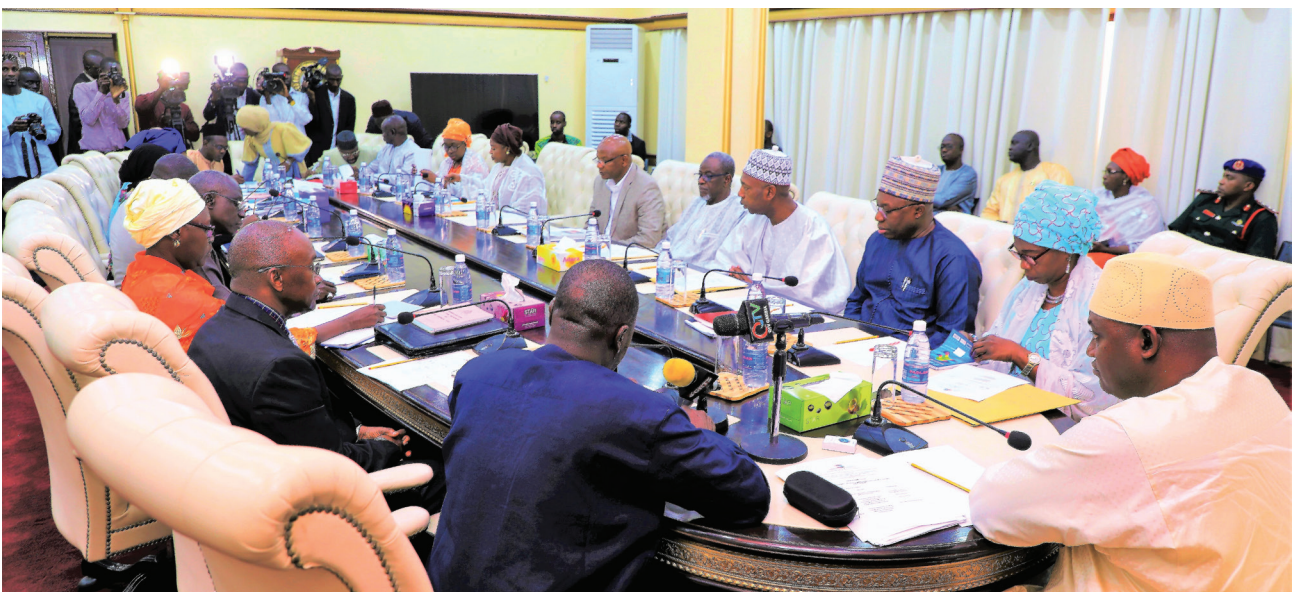
## CRC CONSULTS WITH THE EXECUTIVE

In May 2019, the Executive branch of government President Barrow met with the members of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) as part of the National Consultations with stakeholders to review the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia. The consultations form part of efforts to produce a draft Constitution that will be subjected to a referendum as part of the Institutional reform processes.

The CRC chaired by Dr. Cherno Jallow reached out to the Cabinet for open discussions on issues deemed important to the Executive. Issues discussed include the term limit for presidency. President Barrow added his voice stating that the prospective constitution should be inclusive and not alienate citizens based on age or status: *“The Constitution should be all-inclusive. Let the Gambia People decide who they want to elect as their representative”*.

The Executive also submitted a written contribution to the CRC for consideration.

### ▼ The CRC consults with the Executive



# CABINET RE-SHUFFLE

## ‘I SHALL BE BY YOUR SIDE’ - NEW VICE PRESIDENT ASSURES PRESIDENT BARROW



*VP Darboe takes Oath of Office*

At his swearing-in ceremony as the second Vice President of the Republic of The Gambia under the Barrow government, Hon. Ousainou Darboe vowed to remain committed and loyal to President Adama Barrow and assist in delivering a *“free, democratic Gambia at peace with itself.”*

Vice President Darboe, who before the appointment was serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Gambians Abroad, was sworn-in alongside eight other Cabinet Ministers at a ceremony held at the State House in November 2018.

*“As your Vice President, I pledge to spend my every waking moment to help you, our elected leader, pursue the agenda and vision outlined for The Gambian people”, VP Darboe stated. “The Gambia you envisioned is one that reflects the aspirations of our people with an emphasis on strengthening diversity, unity of purpose in the pursuit of social justice and entronement of the supremacy of the rule of law,”.*

Pursuing the right attitude to nation-building would allow citizens to deliver with vigor and seriousness for the benefit of all Gambians, he added.

Congratulating the new appointees, President Adama Barrow emphasised that The Gambia needs the right institutions, policies, and human resource base to establish the right norms and fight against corruption in all public institutions.

*“Our individual attitudes towards work will reflect on our collective achievements, hence we must serve as examples and take positive steps to make major reforms in our institutions to promote transparency and accountability,” President Barrow urged the officials.*





*The Ministers that were sworn-in Dr. Isatou Touray, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; Lamin N. Dibba, Minister of Lands, Regional Government and Religious Matters; Mambury Njie, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs; Amadou Sanneh, Minister of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment; Hadrammeh Sidibeh, Minister of Youths and Sports; Dr. Momodou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad.*

## DR ISATOU TOURAY SWORN-IN AS THIRD VICE PRESIDENT IN CABINET RESHUFFLE

Consistent in his determination to deliver for the Gambian people, President Barrow effected another Cabinet reshuffle on the 28th March 2019. Speaking at the swearing-in ceremony President Barrow called on Cabinet Ministers and the entire civil service machinery to forego personal and political interests in favor of the greater good of the people. The remarks were made during the swearing-in of Dr. Isatou Touray as the third Vice President of the Republic, in addition to four other Cabinet Ministers and several Permanent Secretaries.

Two of the new Cabinet Members were women increasing the total count of women

in the Cabinet to four. They were the Minister of Women, Children, and Social Welfare, Mrs. Fatou Kinteh, and the Minister of Agriculture, Mrs. Amie Fabureh. Others were Dr. Ahmadou Samateh as Minister of Health, and Mr. Lamin Jobe as Minister of Trade, Regional Integration, and Employment.

The latest Cabinet reshuffle has contributed to advancing gender representation in decision making more visible, with the appointment of the new female ministers. It was historic to have for the first time an entire ministry dedicated women's affairs as well as the first female minister of agriculture since independence in 1965.





*New VP, Dr. Touray takes Oath of Office*



*New Agriculture Minister, Hon. Amie Fabureh takes Oath of Office*



*New Minister of Women, Children, and Social Welfare, Mrs. Fatou Kinteh, takes Oath of Office*



# SECURITY SECTOR REFORM PROGRAMME

## ECOWAS SUBMITS REPORT ON WEAPONS ASSESSMENT IN THE GAMBIA



*President Barrow receives the ECOWAS Weapons and Small Arms report*

On October 22, 2018, President Barrow got presented with the ECOWAS report on the assessment of weapons and small arms in The Gambia following the departure of former President Yahya Jammeh.

The sub-regional group conducted the exercise in 2017. It was headed by a team of specialists from Small Arms Division of ECOWAS, Mining Action Group, Bonn International Centre (BICC), the Defense and Security Advisor of ECOWAS to The Gambia, and the Commander of the regional peacekeeping force in The Gambia – ECOMIG. “We knew there was a lot of small arms

proliferation”, ECOWAS Special Envoy to The Gambia, Mrs. Vabah Gayflor said as she led the team to State House.

*“We also know that it requires technical expertise to manage all of that and the infrastructure that is in place to make sure the country was safe”.*

Minister of Interior, Hon. Ebrima Mballow said the report revealed “where these weapons are, their nature and capacity. The assessment team had done their work judiciously to compile a comprehensive report for the government”.

# BUILDING CONFIDENCE

**“DEMOCRACY SHOULD NOT BE MISINTERPRETED AS A LICENSE TO DISRESPECT PEOPLE OR DISREGARD THE LAWS OF THE LAND”  
- PRESIDENT BARROW**



*President Barrow meets Gambia Police Force Senior Command*

History was made when President Barrow granted audience to the Senior Command of The Gambia Police Force, being the first time in 37 years that a sitting president of the Republic met with the Police High Command at the Presidency.

Cognizant of the significance of the day, President Barrow used the occasion to call on all citizens to abide by the law in order to maintain national peace, stability, and

progress. He added that no one should take the law into their own hands; instead, aggrieved individuals should follow due process and procedures in line with the law. The Police must endeavor to remain non-ethnic and non-political in the execution of their duties to earn the trust and confidence bestowed on them.



## THE ARMY IN AGRICULTURE: GAF SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Aside from its core responsibility of protecting the territorial integrity of the country, The Gambia Armed Forces is also mandated by the 1997 Constitution to provide social services to the public, such as health care services and civil engineering needs. In a meeting with its Commander in Chief, the President of the Republic at the State House, the Chief of Defence Staff, Lieutenant General, Massaneh Kinteh introduced a group of Egyptian investors interested in partnering with the army in the area of agriculture.

Similar consultations were held by potential investors to introduced GAF to Agriculture in order to minimize dependence on central government, encourage entrepreneurship, and sustainability in the armed forces. The notion was premised on the view that the army, in times of peace, could engage in agriculture to substitute its subvention from government.

▼ *Army Chief of Staff introduces Egyptian investors to President Barrow*





## SECURITY FORCES DECORATED FOR SERVICES TO NATION

Senior officers of the Gambia Armed Forces from various ranks were decorated in recognition of their services to the nation. In a ceremony at the State House, the Commander In Chief, President Adama Barrow reminded the officers that the promotion was in recognition of their dedication to duty, encouraging them to remain steadfast, and not rest on their laurels. The officers were promoted to the rank of Major and Colonel.



- ▲ 1 *President Barrow decorates promoted army officers*
- 2 *Promoted army officers take Oath*
- 3 *Cross section of attendants at the decoration event*
- 4 *Family photo of the President Barrow and the army senior command*



# STATE OPENING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY 2018



*President Barrow (left) set to address the National Assembly of The Gambia; Speaker Mariam Jack-Denton (right)*

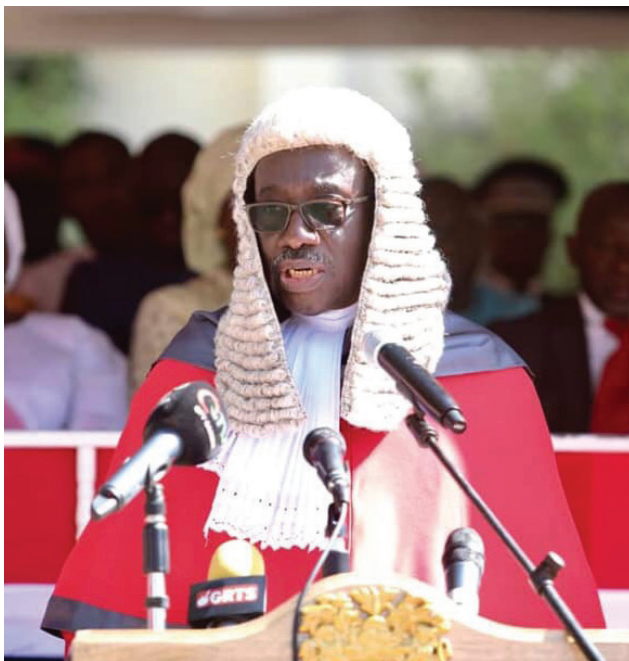
President Barrow's speech during the State of the Nation Address in the 2018 Legislative year focused largely on the plans of his government in delivering the new Gambia that all could be proud of; one that would provide a conducive place where all Gambians can realize their full potentials.

He reiterated his vision of leading a country that is anchored on empowered institutions that would guarantee and protect the rights and dignity of all citizens irrespective of their political, ethnolinguistic and religious differences. It is in the same spirit that he constituted transformational and institutional reforms programmes such as the Constitutional Review Commission, among others, to re-engineer The Gambia for all.



## LEGAL YEAR

Celebrations of the advent of the Legal year started in 1982 until 1994, when it abruptly stopped. The Judiciary resumed the celebration of the auspicious event on the 3rd January 2019. The occasion was a symbolic celebration of judicial independence in the New Gambia, characterized by impartiality and fairness. Efforts to improve the condition of service of judicial staff in order to administer justice and address the backlog of cases in the courts were recurring themes in the statement of the Chief Justice.



*Chief Justice of The Gambia  
His Lordship, Hassan B. Jallow*

His Lordship, Hassan B. Jallow revealed that President Barrow was living up to his public and private assurances of non-executive interference in judicial administration, pointing out that his government was pushing for policies that would ensure financial independence and autonomy of personnel management.





## 54TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE GAMBIA

18th February - Independence Day of The Gambia - marks an important day in the country's national calendar. This year's, the 54th anniversary, was characterized by spectacle, pomp and celebration. The

highlights included the recognition of the role of members of The Gambia Armed Forces, especially in maintaining neutrality and peace during the political impasse that followed the 2016 Presidential elections. The Independence message delivered by the president brought to the fore the need to reconcile as a nation and leave a legacy of tolerance, peace, and commitment to the progress of the nation for the benefit of the next generation.



*(Up) - President Barrow inspecting the independence military parade; (Down left) - President Barrow observing the National Anthem; (Down right) President Barrow greets crowd of spectators*

# THE SCORE CARD

## GALLUP RESEARCH: OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF GAMBIANS HAS CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT ADAMA BARROW



*GALLUP Report showing majority of Gambians said life is getting better in the country under Barrow*

World-leading US-based research company, Gallup, has found that 72 percent of Gambians, nearly three in four residents, has approved of President Adama Barrow's leadership.

An even higher percentage (75%) is also confident in the honesty of the election process under the leadership of President Adama Barrow.

Along with the confidence they have in Barrow, Gambians showed signs of hope that their living standards are getting better.

Nearly two in three Gambians (65%) said their standard of living is getting better, the highest result among ECOWAS member countries that participated in the 2017 polls.

The pioneer public opinion polls in the US and the world by extension released their findings on The Gambia on Tuesday, 7th August 2018 in Washington, DC, US.

The results of the poll are based on face-to-face interviews with 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, and conducted in The Gambia between December 14 and 26, 2017.

"The Gambia sits at a crossroads. In the first year of their president's leadership, residents exhibit confidence in their new government and the democratic process that put it there," the poll concluded.



The research organization observed that the government's "sound fiscal policy such as reducing debt and investing in irrigation and other commercial farming infrastructure in an effort to return farming to a viable backbone of The Gambian economy" is indeed paying a dividend.

The outcome of the polls, however, suggests that the government must not rest in its laurels, and needs to augment economic improvement to continue to meet the expectations of the public.

Meanwhile, Freedom House, another US-based research institute, has reported that freedom in the Gambia has seen a remarkable improvement compared to what used to obtain a few years ago.

"[Gambia's] political rights rating improved from 6 to 4, and its civil liberties rating improved from 6 to 5 due to the installation of newly elected President Adama Barrow into office in January 2017 and the holding of competitive legislative elections in April 2018.

Among other successes associated with the departure of former president Yahya Jammeh, included the return of exiled journalists and activists, release of political prisoners, declaration of assets by ministers, and the press union began work on media-sector reform."

According to them, the "freedom" level in The Gambia has progressed from "Not Free to Partly Free".

## GAMBIA 'ON RIGHT TRACK' IN STATE OF THE WORLD CHILDREN REPORT

The UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa, Mrs. Marie Pierre Poirier stated that The Gambia "is on the right track" based on the assessment report of the State of the World's Children 2018. The Gambia gains high points in water and urban-rural disparity - two elements of the assessment that served as indicators.

She revealed this at a meeting with His Excellency, President Adama Barrow in December 2018. The UNICEF Regional Representative said this situation has made their team "very happy" about the progress being registered by the government in Banjul.

"We know that production of food is just one piece of the puzzle, and many parts of the region have food production yet malnutrition exists there," she added.

Mrs. Pierre Poirier said it is a credit for The Gambia to have been the country where this evolution agenda is taking place. She said that "very promising good practices" from The Gambia were being shared by the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA).

"The latest data are being analyzed by various departments of your government, and they are showing that the situation of children is starting to improve [in The Gambia]. We will be following the government to get the final review," she told President Adama Barrow, quoting from Mandela that the 'status of the children shows the wealth of the nation'.

President Adama Barrow said to achieve its goals, the government needed genuine development partners to support the country because the government couldn't do it alone.

*“We are moving with the NDP as our guide. The success of our interventions, with the support of development partners, will form the bases of our legacy,”* he added.



*Gambian children at a public rally*

## **PRESIDENT BARROW IS THE ‘MOST TRUSTED POLITICAL LEADER’ IN THE GAMBIA - AFROBAROMETER RESEARCH SHOWS**

A national survey sanctioned by Afrobarometer in November 2018 revealed that an overwhelming majority of The Gambian population said President Adama Barrow is the most trusted political leader in the country.

The study that assessed the performance of the Barrow administration, among other things, showed that almost 7 out of every

10 Gambians rate the President top ahead of a host of national political institutions and officials, such as opposition politicians, national assembly members, the army, electoral commission, judicial officials and the police. Only religious and traditional leaders, who scored 85% and 71%, respectively, come ahead of the President. That, according to most analysts, is not surprising given that The Gambia is a highly conservative religious society.

The nationally representative survey, which was conducted between July and August 2018, examined public perception of trust and corruption across all sectors in the country.



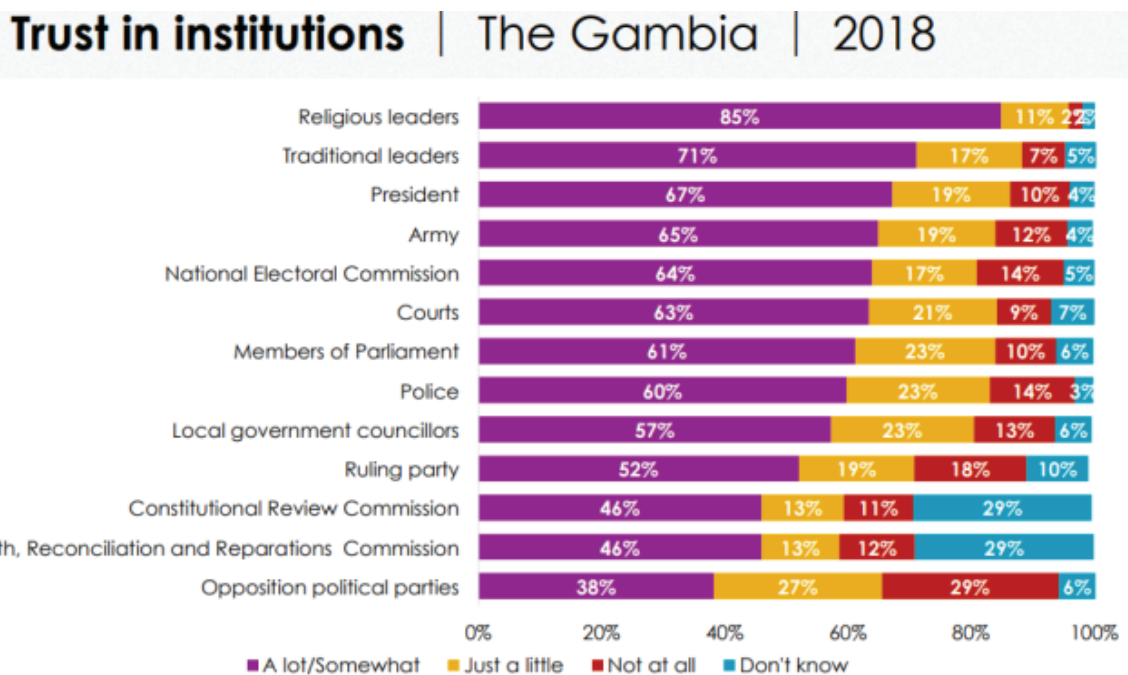
One thousand two hundred (1200) adults from across the seven regions of the country, in both urban and rural areas, took part in the survey.

The study further showed that close to half of The Gambian population (46%) believes that corruption is reducing in the country under President Adama Barrow. Additionally, more than half of the population (55%) is confident that the authorities would take action when

corruption is reported. Only a tiny chunk, two out of ten, perceives the President and his officials to be corrupt.

Sixty-six percent (66%) believes that ordinary Gambians can make a difference in the fight against corruption.

Afrobarometer is a pan African public opinion research think-tank that operates in over 33 countries on the continent.



## GAMBIA SCORES BIG IN LATEST WORLD BANK, FREEDOM HOUSE, OTHERS, RANKING

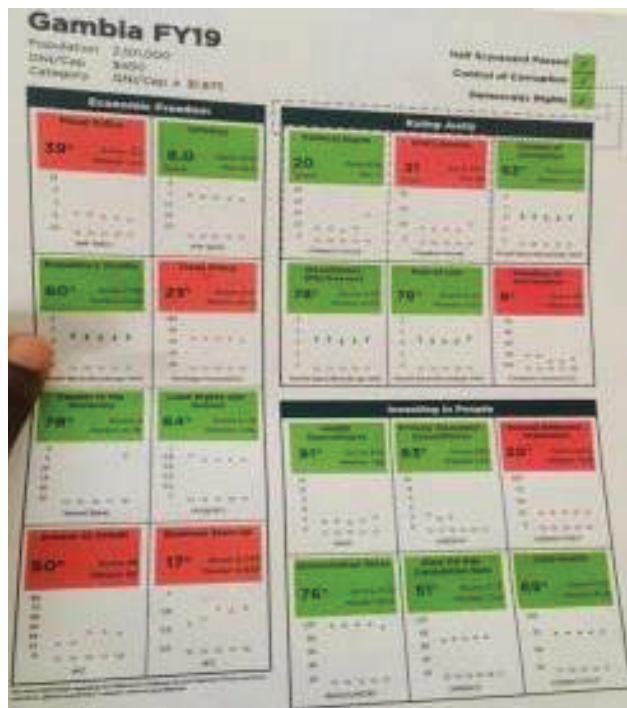
The government of The Gambia got favorable ratings in almost all aspects of political and economic governance in studies supported by fourteen renowned global political and financial institutions, including the IMF, World Bank, and Freedom House, in November of last year.

The scorecard shows that The Gambia, under the leadership of President Adama Barrow, is deemed to be strongly adhering to the principles of good governance, promotion of democratic rights and economic freedom, and investing in the social welfare and wellbeing of the Gambia people.

The Gambia was rated 65% and above in more than half of the twenty indicators used.

The scorecard, which covers the 2019 fiscal year, revealed that the Barrow government made significant gains in controlling corruption, respecting and guaranteeing democratic rights, and investing in the health and wellbeing of citizens, particularly children.

The most significant score was registered in the areas of Health Expenditures, Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law, and Regulatory efficiency, marking 91%, 78%, 78%, and 80%, respectively. The Barrow government is ensuring that it is ruling justly to put the country on the right footing in protecting political rights, control of corruption, standing firm for effective governance and respect for the rule of law.





The Government continues to strive to provide for the needs and aspirations of a population of over two million (2,101,000) with a gross national index per capita of \$450. The scorecard shows that the government performed strongly in the area of economic freedom by controlling inflation, providing a quality regulatory environment, mainstreaming gender in the economy and preserving land rights.

The country investing in its people has also been rated high, 91% and 63% for its health and primary school education expenditures, respectively. The rate of immunization coverage has been pegged at 76%, child health at 69%, and girls' primary school education completion at 51%.

The gender outlook regarding completion of girls' education is positive. This could be further associated with expenditure in primary school education and the advocacy by government and civil society to protect and promote the rights of girl-children.

The advocacy against harmful traditional practices, such as early marriage, female genital mutilation, and sexual abuse, backed by strong government support, is key to providing a protective environment for girls in particular; thus creating the environment for girls to complete their primary education.

However, on the economic front, the country would endeavor to improve its fiscal and trade policies as well as provide opportunities for access to credit and business start-ups. This could be related to the number of young people who find it difficult to have collateral to access loan and initiate their own business.

The number of returnees from irregular migration and a limited number of young Gambians in unskilled areas has an impact on access to credit and business start-ups.

This rating on The Gambia was revealed in a multi-sectoral scorecard by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Economic Organisation, Brookings Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), International Fund for Agricultural Development-(IFAD)/ IFC, Freedom House/CLD, WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF, and CIESIN/YCELP.





▲ *Director of Press and Public Relations, Office of The President: Ms Amie Bojang-Sissoho*

## **Reaction of the Presidential Spokesperson**

The Office of President highly welcomes the progressive facts displayed by the scorecard. It is a big vote of confidence in the Barrow government by world-renowned independent financial and political institutions.

Most importantly, it highlights the seriousness of the Barrow government to meaningfully transform the lives and livelihood of all Gambians. Although we are highly encouraged by the findings, we are equally humbled and fired up to never relent in delivering beyond the expectations of all and sundry in The Gambia.

Using the National Development Plan, the Barrow government would continue to implement progressive and effective economic and political policies that would bring real changes in the lives of ordinary Gambians.

Regarding the gap in access to information, the Office the President is quite optimistic that the new Information and Communication Act being drafted would address some of the challenges raised. It is expected that with more civic education people would understand their rights and responsibilities in a democracy.

In the area of protecting our natural resources, the government has put in place legal mechanisms, among others, to protect our natural resources from corporate overreach. Nevertheless, efforts would be made to improve enforcement.

The Office of the President urges all Gambians to remain determined and work positively towards achieving good governance and accountability, social cohesion and national reconciliation, and a transformed economy for the wellbeing of all Gambians as stated in the National Development Plan 2018–2021. In the same vein, commercial banks are encouraged to work with young people to support start-up businesses.



# ACCOLADES & AWARDS

## PRESIDENT BARROW CONFERRED DOCTORATE DEGREE FOR “EXCELLENT STATESMANSHIP”



The Ghana-based Regional Maritime University in December 2018 awarded His Excellency, President Adama Barrow an honorary doctorate degree for his strong “commitment to democracy, rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights, among others”.

The Chancellor and Chairman of Board of Governors, Dr. James F. Kollie, said, on deciding on the award, the university noted President Barrow’s visionary leadership for a better Gambia as well as the significant contributions he has made to humanity, industry, and education.

In his acceptance speech, President Barrow said he dedicated the award to The Gambian people and expressed delight in sharing the honor of the award with former President, His Excellency, Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, who was also awarded.

## ‘LEADERS MUST SERVE THE PEOPLE’: PRESIDENT BARROW NIGERIA DEFENSE COLLEGE LECTURE

His Excellency Adama Barrow made an exposé on the political cloud and power a united citizenry can pull taking a cue from The Gambian experience. Delivering a lecture at the National Defense College of Nigeria, Abuja, he said all leaders should be aware that if they represent the interest of the people, the people will stand by them; but if they oppress them, the people will abandon them.

*“Therefore, no government can fool itself into believing that it can be business as usual forever. Politicians are often accused of making empty promises, yet they expect to be given the mandate to lead indefinitely. Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and The Gambia have shown clearly that politicians cannot continue to fool the electorate,”* the President said.

The 27-page speech of the president was delivered to a hall-packed audience comprising military officers and students of Course 26 Class. A good number of them already visited The Gambia in April 2018 on a study tour and met the President at the State House in Banjul. The lecture was described as a great resource for students interested in the subject of post-conflict peacebuilding and democracy in the sub-region.

The purpose of the presentation was to examine the importance of democratic principles and its direct link to conflict and post-conflict peacebuilding. It was widely

reviewed to have provided an adequate background that will be useful to students of the college.

President Barrow contended that a working definition was needed in discussing democratic principles and post-conflict peacebuilding. He, therefore, quoted Abraham Lincoln’s definition of democracy as ‘government of the people, by the people and for the people’. The concept and practice of democracy vary globally but there are generally accepted core elements.

*“These elements include freedom, justice, rule of law, respect for the individual rights of each citizen and political pluralism... all citizens must lawfully have a voice and have the freedom and right to form and belong to political parties and to participate in free, fair and open elections that are held periodically to elect their leaders and representatives in accordance with the law. Thus, democratic governance is acknowledged as the political basis for a stable and secure environment to ensure national progress, development, peace and security,”* President Barrow explained.

The separation of powers in relation to the Executive, Legislature, and the Judiciary are key principles in instituting a stable democratic government. (The full lecture on the state of affairs in The Gambia up to January 2017 is available on [www.statehouse.gm](http://www.statehouse.gm)).



# HIGH PROFILE VISITS

The advent of the New Gambia and its democratic dispensation has made the Gambia a darling to many leaders and institutions prompting leaders from across the world to visit The Gambia. Often, their discussions with the president would center on the ongoing reform programmes of the Barrow government, and their eagerness to declare support to the realization of the country's blueprint - the National Development Plan (NDP 2018- 2021).

## PRINCE OF WALES AND THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL VISITS THE GAMBIA

For the first time in history, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall embarked on a historic visit to The Gambia in October 2018. The objective of the royal visit was to shine the spotlight on The Gambia's re-entry into the Commonwealth as well as celebrate the strong bilateral ties that bind The Gambia and the United Kingdom. The Gambia, over the years, benefited significantly from the Commonwealth Scholarship, which accorded some Gambians the opportunity to further their education in the United Kingdom. In honour of the warm ties, the royal guests were formally welcomed at a public ceremony at the McCarthy Square in Banjul, in addition to other special state honours reserved for cherished guests.



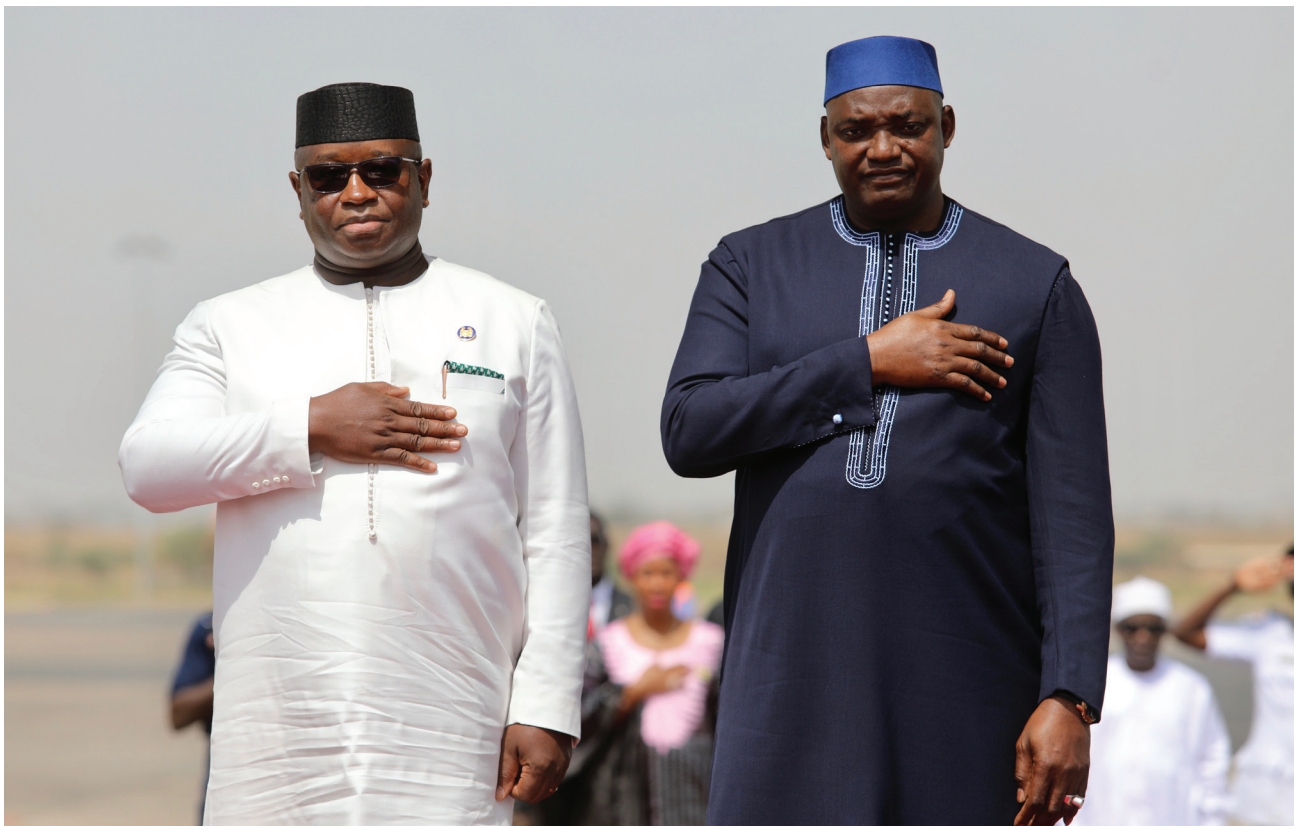
*President Barrow welcomes the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall upon arrival at the Banjul International Airport*



## PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO

### SIERRA LEONE PRESIDENT VISITS THE GAMBIA

Elected in 2018, H.E. President Julius Maada Bio made an official visit to The Gambia in February 2019, accompanied by First Lady Fatima Jabbi Maada Bio. The visit, which coincided with the 54th Independence Anniversary of The Gambia, accorded him the opportunity to have a tete-a-tete with his host, President Barrow, and shared experiences on their role as leaders of democracies.

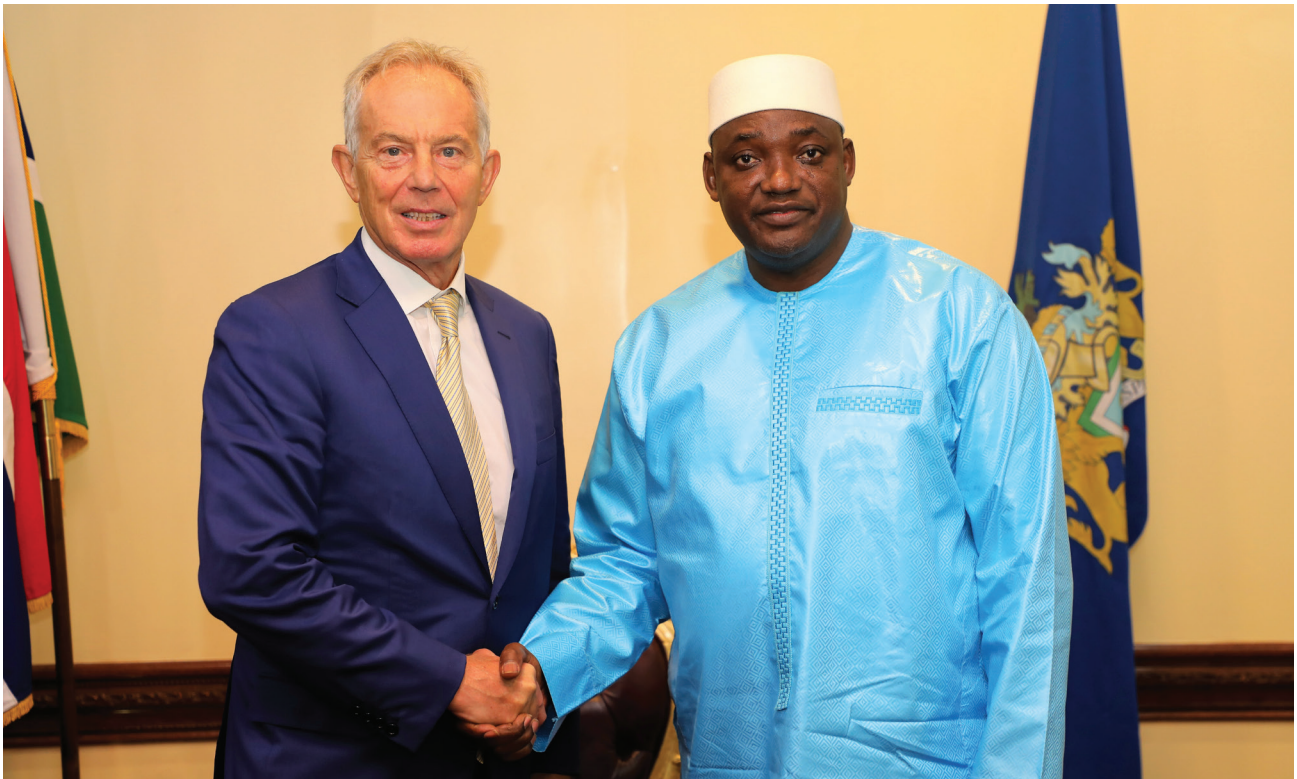


*The arrival of President Julius Maada Bio of Sierra Leone at the Banjul International Airport*



# TONY BLAIR, FORMER UK PRIME MINISTER

## PRESIDENT BARROW IS CLEAR ABOUT HIS PRIORITIES – BLAIR



*President Barrow (right) shakehands with former UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair*

The Executive Chairman of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Rtd. Honourable Tony Blair - former British Prime Minister, assured that his organization would continue to support the Barrow government in attaining the goals of its development blueprint, the National Development Plan (NDP).

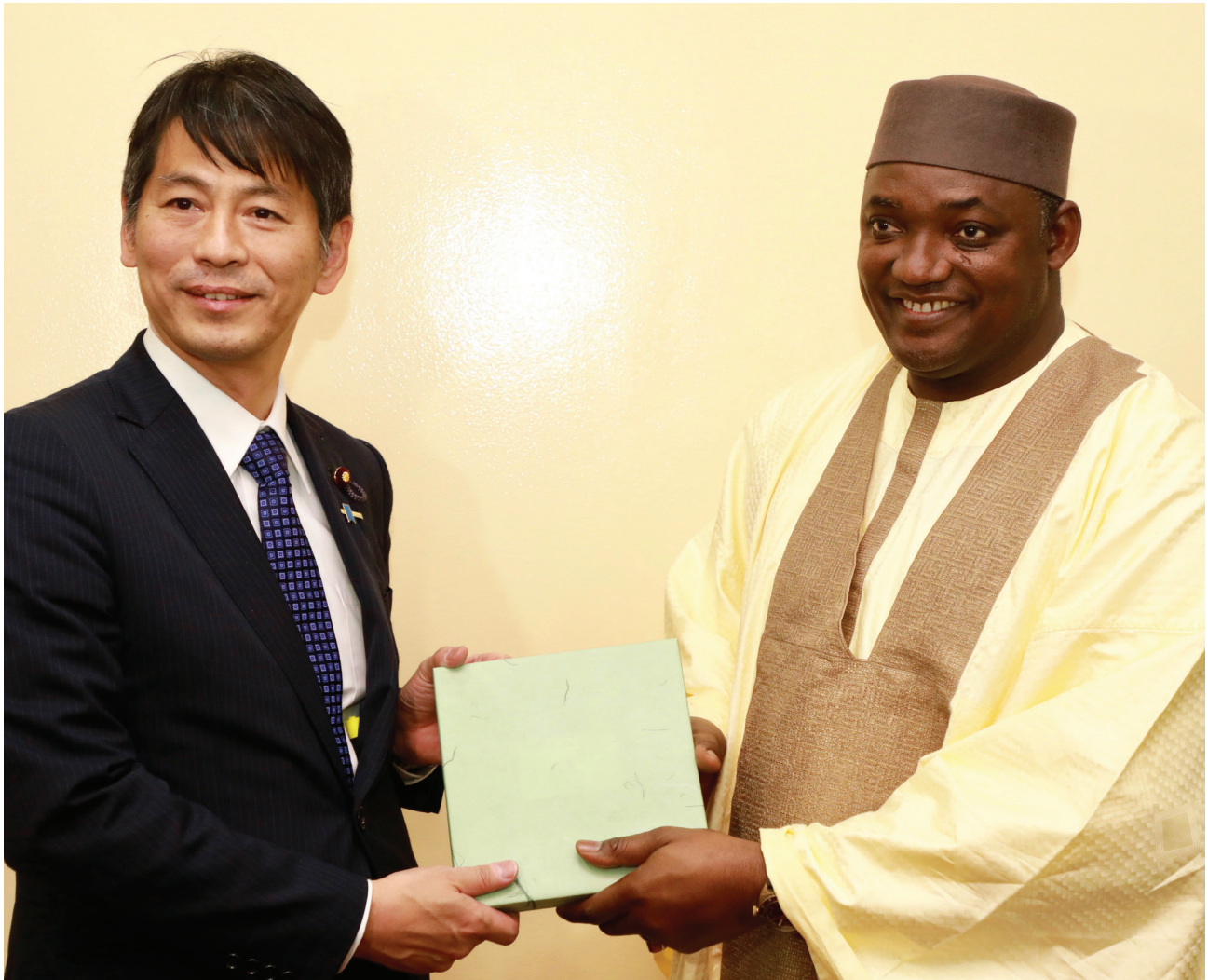
Mr. Blair's declaration of support followed a closed-door audience with President Barrow in November 2018. While telling the press that the task of his organization was to bring in experts that will work alongside government officials in The Gambia, Prime Minister Blair said Barrow was clear about his goals:

*"Talking to the President, I think it is clear what those priorities are: electricity, agriculture, developing the seaport, making the Gambian tourism a key global attraction for tourists. These basically are what the government is focused on and they are able to do that with substantial international support".*

In June 2019, a consultant from Rwanda who once served as the country's Minister for Cabinet Affairs, StellaFord Mugabo joined the Tony Blair Institute team in Banjul to give support to the Office of President over a period of two weeks. During this period, Ms. Mugabo met with senior officials in the president's office to discuss key issues and challenges and share high-level experience in building core systems around the presidency.

# PARLIAMENTARY VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JAPAN H.E. KENJI YAMADA

## GAMBIA - JAPAN TIES: SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP



*President Barrow and the Parliamentary Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan H.E. Kenji Yamada*

President Barrow received Parliamentary Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan H.E. Kenji Yamada in January 2019 at the State House in Banjul. During talks between the two leaders, the president thanked Japan for its support in rebuilding the relationship between the two countries. He noted that The Gambia continues to support Japan in its effort for peace and unity on the global stage.

Japan is one of the most cherished development partners of this government. Recently, it provided support for food security through the agriculture sector and also offers scholarship and human resource development packages, among others, to The Gambia. It also donated tonnes of rice to The Gambia in 2019.



# AU COMMISSION CHAIR, H.E. MOUSSA FAKI

## PRESIDENT BARROW IS ON THE RIGHT PATH – AU CHAIRPERSON



*AU Commission Chair H.E. Moussa Faki, speaking to the media after meeting President Barrow*

In his capacity as the African Union Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat has commended President Adama Barrow for significantly consolidating the values of democracy, good governance, and peace and security in The Gambia. He said President Barrow is setting the country on the right path despite inheriting a difficult situation, stressing that he has succeeded in opening up the country's democratic space.

*"You have inherited a difficult situation but you have set the country on the right path and the right direction. We happy to learn that you are reforming the security sector."*, he stated.

Mr. Faki encouraged The Gambia to consolidate its gains in governance. He also used the visit to discuss important national issues recollecting the factors that motivated them to send an African Mission Team in 2017 to support the country on its security sector reforms.

AU has sent experts to support the reform process, to lay a strong foundation for a level playing ground for elections in 2021. The security sector reforms include right-sizing the security and to further build the capacity of security officials to be responsive to the needs of the people.

This is part of the efforts to establish and maintain peace and stability on the continent.

# SPANISH MINISTER OF INTERIOR

## MIGRATION SOLUTIONS MUST ADDRESS DOMESTIC CHALLENGES IN AFRICA – PRESIDENT BARROW



*Spanish Minister of Interior, Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez and President Barrow during a courtesy call at the State House in Banjul*

The Interior Minister of Spain, Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez was told by President Adama Barrow that any progressive discussion on migration between The Gambia and the Kingdom of Spain, or the European Union in general, must take into account domestic socio-economic challenges facing The Gambia and other African countries as a whole.

President Barrow made the remarks during a courtesy call by the high ranking Spanish official to discuss and strengthen bilateral relations between our two countries. His Gambian counterpart, Honourable Ebrima Mballow accompanied him and the delegation to the State House.



## FOREIGN MINISTER OF FRANCE



France is willing to support the Barrow government, particularly in the area of agricultural development, by investing in Agricultural commercialization and mechanization, said the French Foreign Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian.

Value addition in agricultural production will greatly contribute to food security in the country.

France has been committed to supporting 'New Gambia' from the very beginning. It has pledged €50 Million grant towards agricultural development, urban water supply expansion in The Gambia amongst other areas during The Gambia Conference in Brussels in May 2018.

Such ventures are aimed at creating more job opportunities for the youth, which is a top development priority for the Barrow government.

The Gambian leader called on the French to explore more opportunities and partnerships, especially in the area of tourism, which is the highest foreign exchange earner for the country.

The relationship between The Gambia and France continues to be strengthened since the advent of the New Gambia. The Gambia has gained approval for an Observer Status for in the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF).

## ATTORNEY GENERAL OF QATAR



*(Left) Qatari Ambassador to The Gambia; (middle) President Barrow; (right) Qatari Attorney General*

The President of the Republic received in audience the Attorney General of the State of Qatar, Dr. Ali Bin Fetais Al-Marri, at the State House. The special envoy observed with great admiration the President's style of leadership and ambition to transform the country.

*"Other countries and leaders request cash and financial support from us but President Barrow requested technical support to promote the rule of law, justice, and good governance. You [referring to President Barrow] choose the Mandela way", he said.*

The Gambia is changing and Qatar wants to be part of that history by providing \$3Million grant to support the transitional justice process. It also funded the training of twelve (12) candidates from the Ministry of Justice, the Police, and Judiciary to undergo training in cybercrime and anti-corruption in Qatar.



# EGYPTIAN INVESTORS

## PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES EGYPTIAN INVESTORS



In the aftermath of President Barrow's visit to Egypt in 2018, a group of Egyptian investors paid a visit to The Gambia. They expressed interest in exploring opportunities in agricultural production, processing, and manufacturing, and other sectors.

The president explained his government's policy on investment stating: "Gambia's pursuit of economic growth includes trade and investment policies that add value to our agricultural production and exports."

# REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY

## 2018 FOCAC SUMMIT



President Barrow was part of the high-level political leaders from Africa that participated at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Summit in Beijing in September 2018. The Summit focused on the China-Africa partnership on industrialization, technological development along with other priorities such as agriculture and youth empowerment.

The Gambia has benefited from its bilateral relations with China to develop its infrastructure in some of the most excluded regions of the country and the construction of the International Conference Center in preparation for the hosting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

## 73RD EDITION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dilating on the theme: *“Making the UN relevant to all people: global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies”* at the 73rd Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, President Barrow placed emphasis on the need for effective global leadership and international cooperation that will render greater good and well-being of all peoples of the world. His statement went further to challenge leaders to take shared responsibility to promote *“a world order that prioritizes peace over insecurity; a world order that eliminates the growing inequalities around the world; and a world order that brings us sustainable development”*.



Closer to home, that responsibility focused on the National Development Plan, which seeks to transform The Gambia by pursuing certain fundamental development objectives as key priorities: infrastructural development, agricultural transformation, macroeconomic stability, job creation, and employment. Seeking to consolidate the democratic gains, good governance, rule of law and respect for human and people’s rights are top on the agenda, President Barrow stressed.

***“In all, our goal is to deliver a fully transformed Gambia that has a future; a country that is energy secure, food-self-sufficient and an investment-friendly destination. We have also begun to exploit and harness the benefits of Information Communication Technology as a catalyst for***

► *President Barrow with the King of Belgium, His Majesty, Phillippe Leopold Louis Marie*

***modernization and youth empowerment.”***

While in New York, the President held several bilateral meetings with world leaders in business, politics, and development like the King of Belgium, His Majesty, Phillippe Leopold Louis Marie, and the Deputy Prime Minister of the country, who doubles as Foreign Affairs Minister. He also met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, His Excellency António Guterres.



▲ *President Barrow with the UN Secretary General António Guterres*

## DAKAR LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL FORUM

In November 2018, global leaders in politics and other walks of life gathered in the Senegalese city of Diamniadio for the 62nd Congress of Liberal International.

The President of Senegal, Macky Sall gave the welcoming remarks, stating that Africa has progressed with democracy by allowing the voices of the people to be heard. It was the first time that President Adama Barrow was in attendance at the Liberal International Forum.

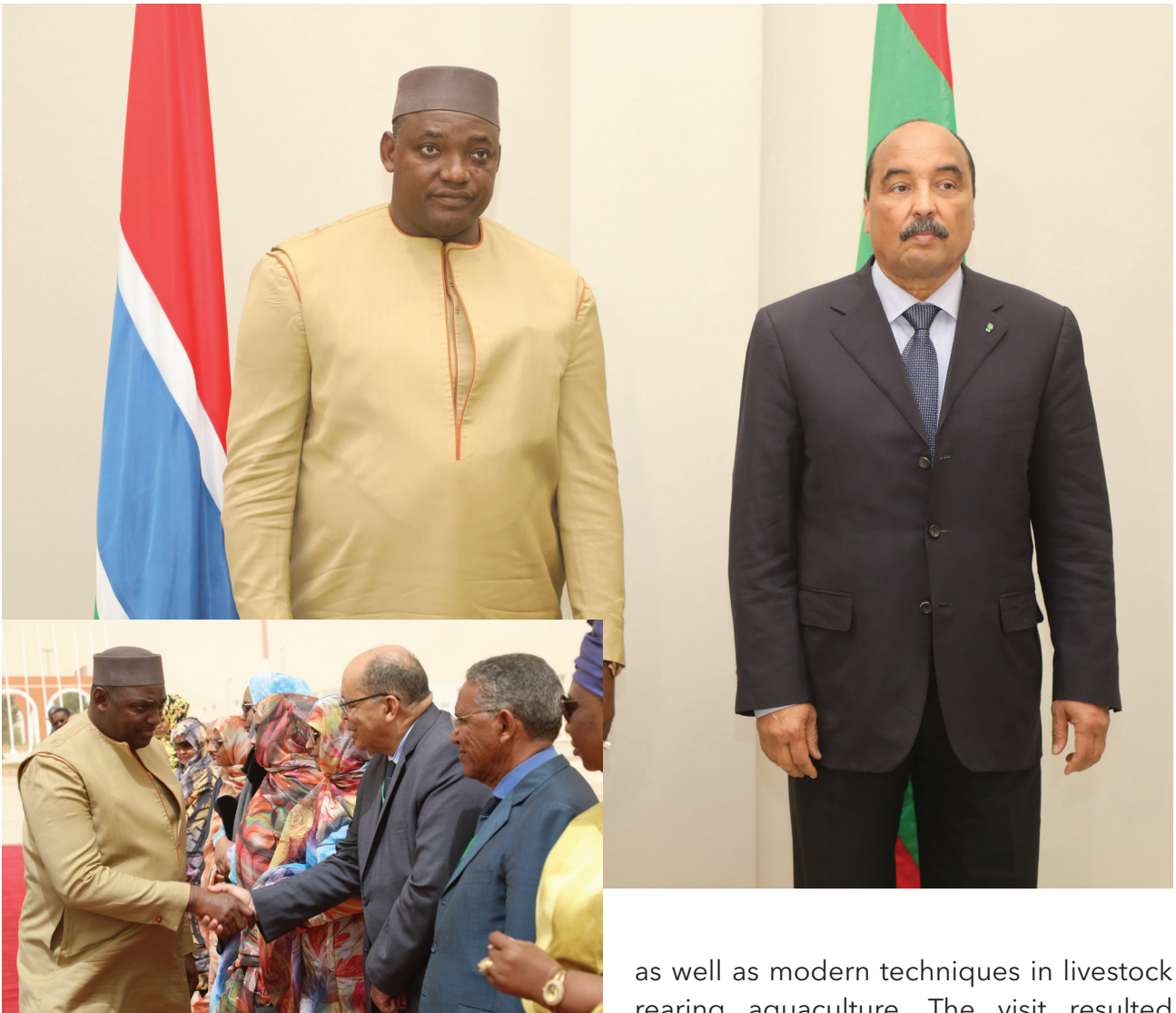
Discussions at the summit brought to the fore liberal values of fighting against inequality, promoting unity, inclusivity, and solidarity for realizing advancement in Africa while highlighting the importance of fair trade for economic growth in Africa.

President Barrow's debut attendance gave him the opportunity to exchange experiences with other regional leaders. Leadership in the current phase of democratic change in Africa and the sub-region, in particular, has raised hope for many and there is a need to work hard to fulfill that optimism.

Few months after the International Liberal Congress, President Barrow returned to Senegal for the inauguration of Macky Sall as the President of Senegal for a second term, which coincided with the 59th independence anniversary of Senegal. He was part of eighteen heads of state and government and thousands of Senegalese supporters in Diamniadio that turned out to show solidarity with President Sall at the swearing-in ceremony.







## OFFICIAL VISIT TO MAURITANIA

Strengthening diplomatic ties, especially with neighbours in the ECOWAS subregion to further enhance integration, forms part of the foreign policy goals of the Barrow administration. In February 2019, President Barrow embarked on an official state visit to his Mauritanian counterpart, His Excellency Mohammed Ould Abdel Aziz. The visit availed President Barrow the chance to explore beyond the presidential hospitality accorded him and see firsthand infrastructural development in providing water resources across the borders of Mauritania and Senegal,

as well as modern techniques in livestock rearing aquaculture. The visit resulted in the signing of an MOU in building a partnership between the two countries.

Similarly, On 1st August 2019, the Gambian leader honoured an invitation to witness the inauguration of the new president of Mauritania, Mohamed Ould Ghazouani. His election gave birth to the first transfer of power from one democratic government to another since the country gained independence in 1960.

The outgoing President played a crucial role during the political impasse in The Gambia and was active in engaging the former president to peacefully leave power.

## PRESIDENT BARROW GRACES NIGERIA DEMOCRACY DAY



African integration could become a reality only when its leaders show real political commitment. President Barrow has argued on many occasions that The Gambia and Senegal could be the real model of African integration. This was amply demonstrated when both Barrow and Sall decided to fly out together to Nigeria in the presidential jet of Senegal to attend the Democracy Day of Nigeria.

That was a very significant public manifestation of how much desire the two leaders have to work as brothers and support each other. Upon landing in Abuja, the Nigerians were at hand to warmly receive them in turns in line with full presidential protocol.



It was also an opportunity to celebrate the re-election of President Buhari for his second term in office.



## 55TH ECOWAS SUMMIT IN NIGERIA

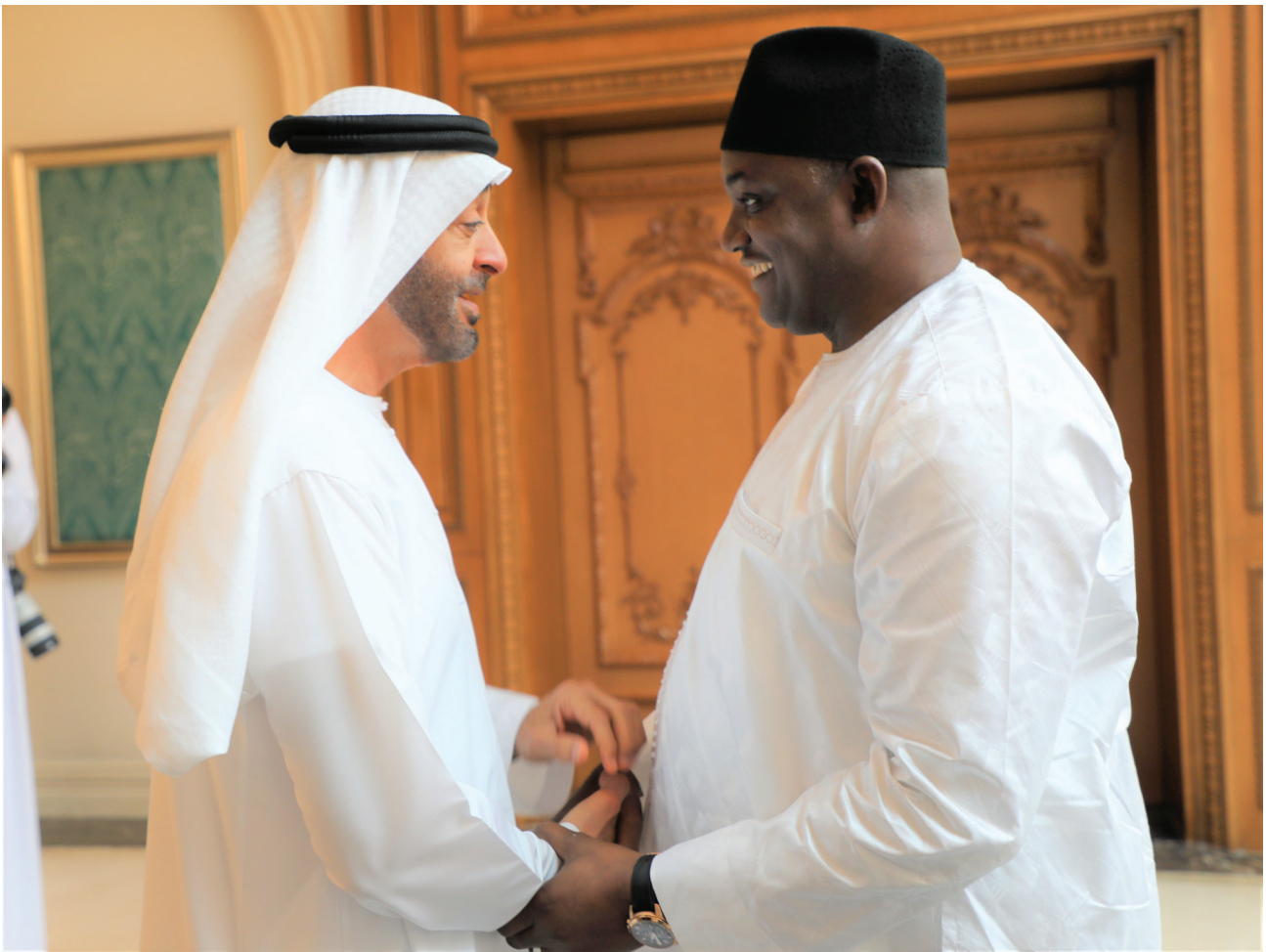
In late June 2019, President Barrow used the 55th ECOWAS Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, to update his colleagues from the subregion on the progress of the ongoing reform agenda of his government, such as institutional strengthening, rule of law, and good governance. Security sector reform, transitional justice mechanisms, and electoral reform are key elements of the programme.

## AU SUMMIT IN NIGER

The Gambia renewed its commitment to African integration through trade and cooperation at the 15th Extra-ordinary Session of the African Union in Niger. It signed the AfCFTA and called for its swift implementation by removing the obstacles and challenges between borders. In a closed-door session at the AU Summit in Niger, The Gambian leader urged his colleagues and the AU Commission to put in place the right mechanism for implementation of their commitments.



## ABU DHABI, UAE OFFICIAL VISIT



▲ *Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan welcomes President Barrow at the Presidential Palace*

The desired to build a fully viable nation calls for real commitment, experience sharing, and learning. One of the countries that committed to support the country's development programme during the donors' conference in Brussels 2018 was Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Visiting the UAE in July gave the president renewed inspiration to reassert his government's commitment to building the right institutions that are sustainable. In Abu Dhabi, several agreements were signed to foster bilateral relations and open business between the two countries.

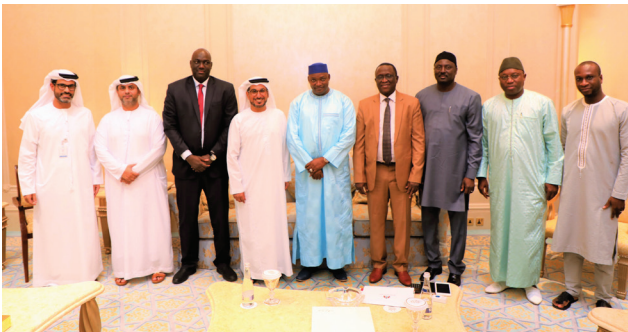


During the Official Visit, President Barrow met with the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan at the Presidential Palace and discussed several bilateral and development issues of mutual benefit to both countries.



President Barrow also held discussions with the Director General of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce, H.E Mohammed Helal Al Mheiri and his delegation. The President called on the organization to take advantage of the positive business environment that exists in The Gambia to invest in various sectors of the economy. He recognized the private sector as “movers and shakers of the economy” while taking pride in the natural geographical location of The Gambia for business with the rest of the world. He cited new opportunities for doing business in Africa such as the Continental Free Trade Area, which situates The Gambia in a strategic position for business in Africa.

The meeting with the Crown Prince was witnessed by the Gambia’s Ambassador to The United Arab Emirates, H.E. Fansu Bojang; The Gambia’s Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Finance, Dr. Mamadou Tangara and Mamburay Njie, respectively.



▲ *President Barrow and members of his delegation pose with the leadership of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce*

## ABU DHABI DEVELOPMENT FUND OFFICIALS MEET PRESIDENT

President Barrow called on the Abu Dhabi Development Fund to continue the strong collaboration with The Gambia as the country prepares to host the biggest Islamic gathering in 2022. He made the call during a courtesy with the organization in Abu Dhabi.

Abu Dhabi Development fund has also committed to supporting The Gambia in the areas of vision and eye care services in The Gambia, through the Sheikh Zayed Eye Care Hospital.

The trip also saw the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between The Gambia and the United Arab Emirates, which will provide a legal framework of protection for potential Gambian workers in the emirates. Other cooperation agreements signed involved strengthening the regulatory capacities of the respective countries to combat trafficking in persons as well as technical and human resource development.

Abu Dhabi also pledged to support The Gambia in its bid to host the 2022 OIC Summit.



# KEEPING THE PROMISE

## PRESIDENT BARROW LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN URR



*President Barrow cuts the ribbon assisted by the Chinese Ambassador to The Gambia, Speaker of the National Assembly, and First Lady Barrow*

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow in December 2018 laid the foundation stone for 50KM road and four bridges in the Upper River Region. The groundbreaking project, supported by the People's Republic of China, entailed construction of the Basse-Koina road, Basse - Wuli, and Fatoto-Passamas river crossings. It constituted the first major infrastructural development project of the Barrow administration, following months of institutional reforms and empowerment of the transitional justice mechanisms of the country.

This landmark development project would enhance easy and fast communications between URR North and South as well as the rest of the country. It forms part of the government's policy of rebooting regional economies and foster an all-inclusive development for all and sundry in The Gambia. The project, once completed, would have a positive ripple effect on the socio-economic welfare and wellbeing of the people of the region, by boosting trade and facilitating easy access to social and economic services.





▲ *President Barrow shows readiness as he smiles in a heavy-duty construction machine in URR*



▲ *Wuli Badala main road*

The URR Road and Bridge project is a grant from the friendly government of the People’s Republic of China in the tune of USD50 Million. While in the URR, President Barrow held a gathering in Foday Kunda to galvanize support for his development agenda, as well as preside over the laying of a foundation stone for a teacher-training college in Basse.



▲ *President Barrow lays foundation stone for a teacher training college in Basse*

# SITE VISITS

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER

In March, 2019, His Excellency President Barrow was led on a conducted tour of the ongoing construction work at the International Conference Center (ICC) in Bijilo. Supported by the Chinese Government, the \$50 million multipurpose center is being constructed in preparation for the hosting of one of the biggest global summits of the Islamic Ummah - the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit.

Touring the facilities, it was discovered that 75% of the work has already been done and the president was assured of the completion of work by September 2019. It was reported that 1300 of the workforce were Gambians.

The monitoring of safety and precautionary measures, and the level of cooperation between the Chinese and Gambian workers on site was appreciated by both sides. It was reported that the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure was providing the required technical support for the monitoring of the quality of work at the center.



▲ *President Barrow (right); Chinese Ambassador Ma Jianchun (middle), and others during the tour of facilities*

## ROADS & BRIDGES: WORK IN PROGRESS IN URR

At the Basse-Koina Road Construction Camp, the president was received by the Governor of Upper River Region, Fanta B.S. Manneh, and the Chinese construction team. The camp was provided with electricity, water, and internet to facilitate the work.

The Project Manager, Mustapha Manneh from National Roads Authority gave assurance that they would not compromise quality. Construction of such a major highway will not be without challenges, such as the demolition of properties affected by the construction to accommodate the 10 meters width required by the road. However, Mustapha said measures were taken to adequately compensate all those affected. The briefing was followed by site visits at the Chamoi bridge and the Basse crossing point, where the President saw the stage at which the work stood.





# ENHANCING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## PRESIDENT BARROW HANDS OVER 20 BUSES TO BOOST TRANSPORTATION



In a magnanimous move geared towards strengthening the transportation sector of the country, President Adama Barrow in June 2018 handed over a fleet of 20 new buses to the Minister of Transport, Works and Infrastructure.

*“While we build our relationships and garner support, we have the responsibility to maintain and sustain whatever assistance is provided.”*

The buses were donated to the country by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) through the Turkish Cooperation and coordination Agency (TIKA) - international development agency of the Turkish government.

President Barrow expressed appreciation and delight for what he described as “great support from the Government of Turkey”.

The President called on the beneficiaries to maintain and take good care of the buses.



According to the Turkish officials, the vehicles were fully refurbished and designed for public transportation. They also come along with all the spare parts and accompanying component parts that would ensure their durability in serving the Gambian public.

"I am convinced that these vehicles will contribute a lot to the solution of public transportation challenges in Banjul," said Mr. Ismail Sefa Yüceer, Turkish Ambassador.

"The government of the Republic of Turkey, at the highest level, via President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has been supportive of President Adama Barrow and his team".

Mr. Ismaila Hakki Turuc, Council Member and President of the Social Service Commission of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, who delivered the buses to The Gambia, said the gesture benefitted 30 other friendly countries around Africa.

"We are not just sharing the buses but also our experiences and know-how in managing metropolis of 60 million people living in peace. The Gambia is a great country with good people that is why our President has shown a keen interest in helping this country," Mr. Turuc said.

### **Turkish Airlines commences operations in The Gambia**

The Ambassador used the occasion to announce that the world-class Turkish Airlines would operate twice-a-week direct flights from Istanbul to Banjul effective 26 November 2018.

▶ *Turkish Ambassador and the team at the event*





# ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

## OMVG OFFICIALS DISCUSS ELECTRICITY PLAN FOR 2019



The construction of the first OMVG hydro-electric power station, connecting communities from Jarra Soma, Lower River Region to Brikama, West Coast Region, is poised to deliver a significant impact on the economic progress of member countries. The project lies at the heart of the industrialization of the member countries as electricity is key to development. Energy is also part of the flagship programmes of The Gambia's development blueprint (NDP 2018-2021).

The OMVG organization receives financial support from member countries towards its effective functioning.

Under the first phase of the electricity project, 70MW of energy would be distributed in The Gambia through two substations in Jarra Soma and Brikama.

## LAUNCHING THE OMVG ELECTRICITY PROJECT IN JARRA SOMA



\$700 million hydro-electric power project launched in Soma is expected to more-than-double the current generation capacity of electricity in the country and increase electricity access to many Gambian communities.

His Excellency, President Adama Barrow in his capacity as the current chair, explained the expectation from the OMVG project is to "address the national energy supply deficit", and the Soma sub-station, when completed, is expected to increase the current 40% access to electricity by 20%.

"It will also increase the country's current generation capacity from 102 to 250 Mega Watts and reduce electricity losses within the country."

The sub-regional project, which has four member-states comprising Guinea, Senegal, Guinea Bissau, and The Gambia, will generate and supply 24MW of electricity to all communities within 20 miles radius of its two sub-stations in Soma and Brikama townships.

This is to provide the support necessary for the realization of political and economic integration and strengthening regional solidarity in the sub-region.

Senegambia Bridge on Monday 21st January 2019 at the Bamba Tenda - Yelli Tenda crossing at Farafenni, North Bank Region.



The bridge, which is part of the Trans-Gambian Road Corridor, is a vital economic and strategic link connecting north and south banks of the River Gambia as well as The Gambia, Senegal and other countries in the sub-region.

The bridge is one of the biggest in the sub-region with a length of 1.9 kilometers and over five-storeys high. It is designed to be a tolled-bridge that would accommodate the passage of most vessels, while longer-mast boats can easily fold their masts to pass through the bridge. Fifty-seven percent of workers are Gambians, eighteen percent expatriates, and twenty percent other ECOWAS citizens.

## SENEGAMBIA BRIDGE INAUGURATION

President of the Republic of The Gambia, His Excellency Adama Barrow, alongside His Excellency Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal were joined by thousands of people to witness the inauguration of the





# DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE SERVICES

## PRESIDENT BARROW COMMISSIONS NEW AMBULANCES FOR 14 COMMUNITIES



In September 2018, a fleet of new ambulances was commissioned to make health care service delivery more timely and accessible. Fourteen (14) rural community health facilities would benefit from the vehicles.

The health and well-being of the population remain on top of the government's priorities. Transportation forms a very important part of health care service delivery, particularly in the case of referrals, outreach, monitoring, and other related services. The fleet replaced nine others that were in use for more than nine years.

The timeliness of the commissioning of the ambulances couldn't be any better given that rural dwellers expressed a dire need for such health care facilities during the President's nationwide tour in 2018.

The number of primary health care villages has significantly increased from 492 to 810 in 2008, and the availability of reliable and well-maintained vehicles for trekking and supervision of service delivery is pivotal in the drive to attain universal health coverage. The ambulances will facilitate effective evacuation, training, and communication in order to save the lives of women and children.



H.E. Barrow gives remarks at the commissioning of ambulances

*“I challenge Riders for Health to continue to maintain the ambulances effectively. These ambulances will contribute immensely to the effective referral services to the Gambian community,”* the President said.



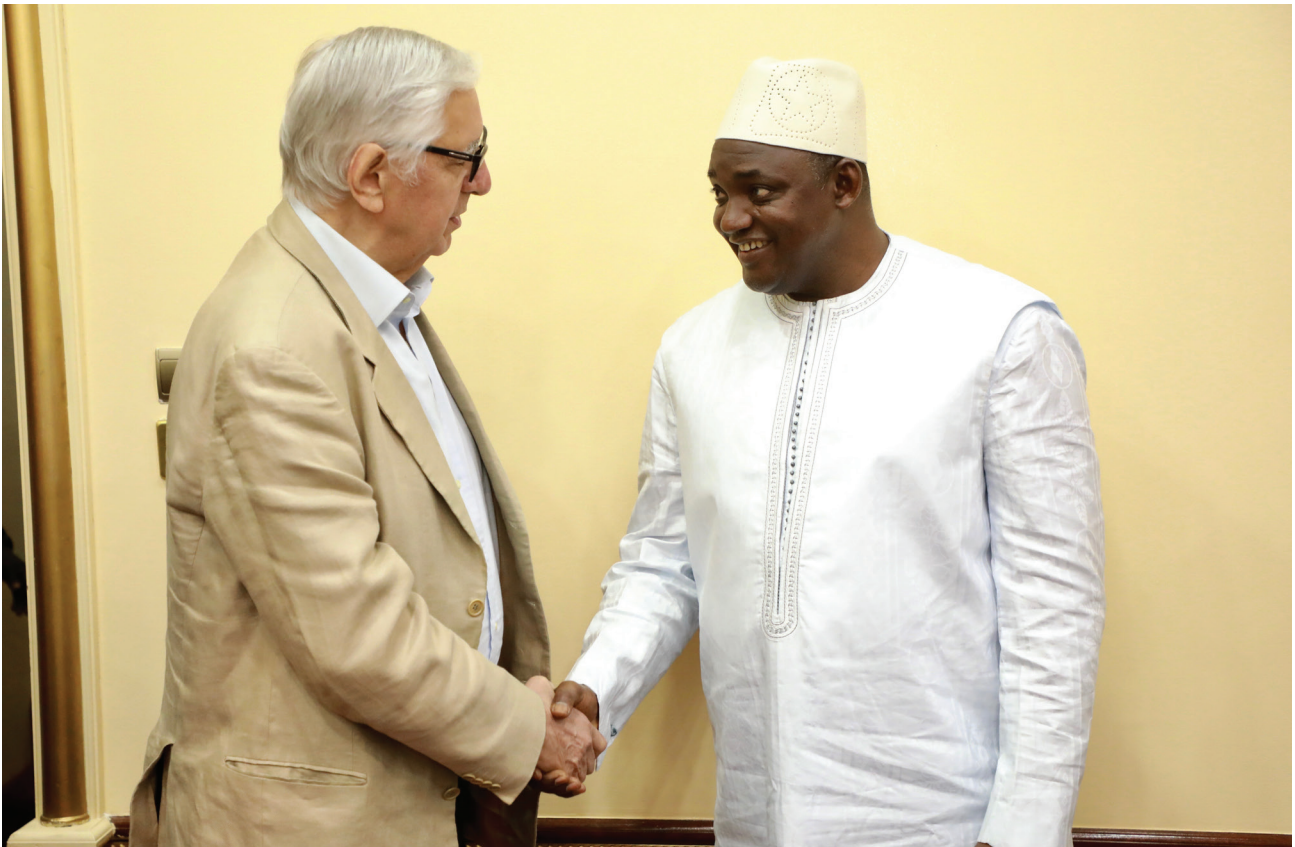
The Ministry of Health and Riders for Health has a long-standing partnership in providing transportation services for health care provision. This public-private partnership in the health sector has become a model for other African countries, including Kenya, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe. The model also attracts students of economics from reputable universities across the world in their study into effective public-private-partnership.

*“60% of all pregnant women and under-5yrs children attending antenatal and infant welfare services are seen at the outreach clinics.”*

Source: MOH



## NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EAR AID AND HEARING CARE



In December 2018, a delegation of ear and hearing care specialists from the United States met President Barrow to brief him about their plans to build a dedicated ear care facility in The Gambia. This will be the first of its kind.

The delegation from the US was led by the Chief Executive Officer of Star Key Foundation, Dr. William Franklin Austin, and comprised of specialist doctors from Senegal, Zambia, and The Gambia. Dr. Isatou Touray, the then Minister of Health and Social Welfare accompanied them to the State House to brief the president on the partnership between Star Key Foundation and the ministry.



The Gambia is constrained in ear care, and according to Dr. Touray, “that is why we engaged the Star Key Foundation so that we can be able to develop such a unit in line with the national health strategic plan”.

# SUPPORTING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

## GAMBIA YOUTH CONNEKT SUMMIT



In a spectacular demonstration of commitment to the cause of young people in The Gambia, His Excellency President Adama Barrow presided over the inauguration of the first-ever Youth Connekt Summit of the country. Being one of the biggest convergence of young people that the country has ever seen, the president used the opportunity to whip up the case that youth matters lie at the front and center of the highly acclaimed development blueprint of his administration – the National Development Plan 2018-2021.

At the summit held at Jaama Hall, where more than 300 youths nationwide gathered, the president reiterated that his government is the biggest partner of young people in the country. He, therefore, used the platform to bring into the perspective the tireless efforts being undertaken under the realms of the NDP to recalibrate youth issues in the country.

President Barrow pointed out that the budgetary allocation for the ministry of youths and satellite institutions has increased dramatically over the years. He also revealed that work is in progress, through the National Youth Council, for the formulation of a youth policy, which would be aligned with the NDP for efficiency and effectiveness. The inclusion of young people in the ongoing transitional justice mechanisms such as the Truth Reconciliation and Reparation Commission, Constitutional Review Commission, among others, according to the president, illustrates that it is not business as usual.

“My government insists on the inclusion of the youth in our development and reform processes, and their participation in the TRRC and CRC attests to this”, the president stressed.



## PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AHMADI ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

A group of international Ahmadi engineers and architects told President Adama Barrow in August 2018 that they are working on plans to engineer the transfer of knowledge and technical and vocation skills acquisition for youths in The Gambia.

The plan was to build an international center of excellence for vocational and technical training to be called Masul International Technical College, in order to consolidate gains made in the area of health care and education.

The transfer of requisite skills and knowledge would empower young people into meaningful self-reliant ventures.

The government creates the enabling environment for all to excel especially young people.

## AGRIBUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTHS

In the continuing search for opportunities to equip Gambians youths with life skills to become productive citizens, President Barrow held a detailed PowerPoint presentation with the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Songhai Regional Center - Benin, Professor Father Godfrey Nzamujo. The project is a successful Africa-wide agro-industrial, organic, and self-sufficient farming model that builds the technical and entrepreneurial capacity of young people.

The State House was brought up to speed with the activities at the Chamen-based Songhai Center in The Gambia.

*“Failure in school does not mean failure in life. Not all can be employed in offices. Hence such ventures go in line with government development objective of providing a corps of highly trained and skilled youthful population,”* said President

## PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES GAMBIAN MUSIC STAR, ST BRIKAMA BOYO



His Excellency President Barrow received in audience popular rap artist Sanna Singhateh, widely known by his stage name ST Brikama Boyo. The meeting followed ST's spectacular album launching that saw the single biggest gathering of Gambian music lovers in the history of the country.

The discussion took place at the State House. The Brikama-born artist used the occasion as an opportunity to share his vision for Gambian music as well as solicit the support of the president in that drive.

President Barrow advised the leading Gambian rapper to remain focus, responsible and committed to always break new grounds in music. He expressed his government's commitment to put in place the right policies to protect and promote the Gambian music industry.



# TOURISM

## PROMOTING PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN TOURISM

### PRESIDENT BARROW CALLS FOR MORE GAMBIAN INVESTMENT IN TOURISM



His Excellency, President Adama Barrow highlighted his government's policy to encourage more Gambian involvement in the tourism sector in a bid to ensure more benefit for ordinary Gambians. Gambian investment in the industry would be in line with the government's plans to limit capital flight and foster a strong linkage between tourism and other domestic sectors of the Gambian economy, such as agriculture, businesses, arts, culture, among others.

The President made the disclosure during an unannounced visit to four Gambian-owned hotels in the Tourism Development Area to inspect the state of work and preparations. The hotels visited are Metzzy Residence Hotel, Pamala, African Princess, and Calabash Residence. He was received by the Minister of Tourism and Culture, Hon. Hamat NK Bah, and the Environment Minister, Lamin Dibba and officials from The Gambia Tourism Board. The tourism season already started with several flights from the UK, Europe, and Russia.

Tourism makes 20 percent contribution to our GDP. It is a great source of foreign exchange for our economy and creates thousands of jobs for the youth. Some Gambian hotel professionals from abroad have returned home to work in the hotel industry.

The government's policy is to support and promote Gambian ownership in the industry to develop the needed skills. The Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute are also undergoing reforms of structures, curriculum, and services to train build professional standards in the industry.

The tour culminated into a beach cleaning exercise aimed at raising awareness and encouraging more cleanliness on the country's pristine beaches in the protection of marine resources in our ecosystem.





# SOCIETY AND POLITICS

## 2018 NATIONWIDE TOUR SPECIAL REPORT

### GAMBIA POISED FOR A DIGITAL REVOLUTION



*President Barrow addressing people at during the tour*

The communications and digital policy of the government is aimed at connecting The Gambia to the world's digital economy.

At a meeting in Brikama, West Coast Region, the President of the Republic outlined the same vision; announcing that the government would roll out a new street lighting project that would light up the streets, and at the same time, deliver easy internet connectivity for Gambians. The lights would be fitted with a 24-hour CCTV surveillance camera and wireless internet hotspot for the use of the public.

Additionally, the President also announced the construction plans for a feeder road that would connect all coastal communities from Brufut to Sanyang as well as the Brufut Gamtel-Ghana Town highway.

The electro-digital blueprint was billed to help boost security and cut down crime rates by improving the surveillance capacity of our security services while providing affordable and easy internet access. Plans include the installation of additional street lights fitted with energy-saving bulbs.



*Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure, Ebrima Sillah*



*Meeting people at the grassroots*

The President made these revelations in reaction to a woman councilor who appealed for the government to help bring back street lights in Brikama.

Guaranteeing that the country's digital revolution would take off, Honourable Ebrima Sillah announced that Gamtel has completed a nationwide survey and identified places where WiFi hotspots would be installed for use by the general public.

The pilot project, according to him, would include Brusubi Turntable, Westfield, Serekunda Market, Brikama, Gunjur, among other places. He added that all fishing boats in coastal communities in Kombo North and Greater Banjul would have WiFi navigation systems with weather forecast capabilities to ensure safety at sea.

In terms of rate collection, Minister Sillah explained that all taxes and rates collected on behalf of government, city and area councils would deliver cellphone confirmation to the payee. He said the technology would help prevent siphoning of tax monies and facilitate easier payment systems for citizens.

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Minister Sillah also explained that all compounds in The Gambia will be registered on a central digital platform. Village and district authorities would also be on the same platform to ensure proper monitoring and accounting, by automatically notifying the authorities of foreign strangers or guests that might be hosted in any compound, village, town or city in the country.

In the area of security, the government would install a 24-hour emergency hotline system that makes the nearest police station reachable by speed dial. The aim is to boost security and its dividend to national development fully reaped.

Other sectors that will be affected by the digitalization are health, tourism, and education.



## PRESIDENT BARROW ANNOUNCES 20,000 NEW FISHERIES JOBS

Works on fish processing factories and storage facilities that would create more than 20,000 jobs will begin in 2019, announced President Barrow at the rally in Brufut.

The fisheries plants would be built in the two leading fishing towns of Tanji and Brufut, in Kombo South and Kombo North, respectively.

Detailing out the government's plans for the fisheries sector, the Minister of Local Government and Lands explained that, out of the 20,000 jobs to be created, Brufut would benefit from a fish value chain project that has the potential of creating more than 15,000 jobs. He added that a similar one in Tanji would create 6,000 jobs for the youth of the country.

Minister Drammeh further explained that the plants for Tanji and Brufut are fishery value-chain projects that would span from fishermen, off-loaders, marketers, factory workers, cold store workers, among others. The National Assembly member for the area, Baba Galleh Jallow, requested the government to assist the youths with fishing trawlers to engage in fishing and entrepreneurship.



## PRESIDENT BARROW PLEDGES TO RESTORE HONOR TO THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT CHIEF

*“My government’s mission is to institute reforms in how this country is governed and lay the foundation for the future of democracy in this country. I am working hard to leave a legacy that would enable me to stay in this country after my presidency. I would not give any cause to institute another inquiry for my conduct while in office” - President Barrow.*



The respect and authority that local chiefs have traditionally enjoyed in the country have taken a serious downward spiral in the former regime. Using different tactics of public humiliation and shaming, the former regime reduced the sanctity of chieftaincy to political patrons and stooges hence becoming targets for social disdain.



Well, President Barrow is poised to change that now. The new approach adopted by his government in decentralizing state power has placed district authorities at the heart of local governance and administration.

Restoring the dignity, independence, and powers of the office of the district chiefs in The Gambia was the central theme of a courtesy call between the president and all the local chiefs at the State House in Banjul.

*"It was an important thing to be chief of a district in The Gambia. It was very honourable and royal. My government appreciates your roles and we do not wish to interfere with your traditional functions",* President Barrow said.

The president was quite unambiguous in espousing his vision that effective local government administration and devolution of state powers are integral to the ongoing reform processes. The ultimate goal of his government is to leave a legacy of strong democratic values and respect for the constitutional rights of all citizens, irrespective of political and ethnolinguistic differences.

While thanking the president for drastically subsidizing the cost of fertilizer, which they described as a big relief for farmers, the speakers appealed to the government for assistance in the area of mobility, remuneration, offices for their district tribunals, among others.





Minister of Local Government and Regional Administration, Honourable Musa Drammeh urged the chiefs to collaborate with government in delivering the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP). He acknowledged some of the challenges raised but was quick to add that the government was working to strengthen their work.



# STAYING CONNECTED TO THE GRASSROOTS

## CITIZENS' SUPPORT FOR THE NDP

THOUSANDS FROM WEST COAST TURN UP TO SHOW SUPPORT TO BARROW



The people of the West Coast Region came out in an unprecedented fashion to send an unequivocal message that they are fully behind President Barrow and his development agenda. Thousands of supporters thronged the Grand Tent at the State House in Banjul to express solidarity and send a simple clear message that “we are with you, Mr. President!”

Addressing the crowd, President Barrow assumed his rightful role as the country’s unifier-in-chief stressing that being the president of the republic he was responsible for the welfare and wellbeing of all and sundry, irrespective of ethnolinguistic, regional or political affiliations.

*“In the spirit of national reconciliation and social cohesion, and aware of the fact that I am everyone’s president, I wish to tell the people of Foni that they are part of my family”, the president said.*

*“I will never overlook you or anyone for development simply because you are not with me”.*



President Barrow expressed optimism for the future of the country, giving assurance that his government is on track to bring groundbreaking development projects that would significantly impact the lives of ordinary Gambians. He called for the people to rally behind his development agenda.

The President expressed delight at the massive turnout from the most influential geopolitical entity in the country. The delegates, who spoke on behalf of the region, assured the President of their unconditional support. They used the opportunity to highlight their development needs calling for the intervention of the government in various areas to expand electricity supply in various communities that are not connected, clean drinking water and feeder roads to ease communication.

## KOMBO EAST

More than two thousand people from Kombo East, West Coast Region on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019 stormed the State House to demonstrate unconditional support for the National Development Plan, and by extension, the Barrow government. Each of the thirty-three (33) villages in the farthest part of Kombo was represented in a grand style.

## YMCA

Sometime in March 2019, President Barrow once again reiterated that the empowerment and development of young people occupy special attention in the development blueprint of his government. The President highlighted this while receiving in audience a visiting delegation from Young Men Christian Association - YMCA - Finland at the State House. President Barrow thanked the YMCA Gambia for their support to The Gambia over the decades.

Officials from the YMCA-Gambia Chapter accompanied their Finnish counterparts to the presidency. During the closed-door discussions, the group informed the President of the approval of €400,000EUR by the Finnish government towards supporting young people in The Gambia.

## GAMBIA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

The Chairman of the Gambia Christian Council, Most Rev. James Allen Yam Odico in January 2019 led a delegation of the Christian community in the country to the State House. They extended seasonal greetings as well as offered prayers for the president, and the country at large, on the occasions of the Holy Christmas and the New Year.

While assuring the president that they would continue to stand by his government in strengthening coexistence, religious freedom, and human rights, the Chair said the council was aware and would like to truly appreciate the efforts of the government to cater for the needs of the Christians community.

## AHMADIYYA MUSLIM JAMAAT

A delegation of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat on the 11th March 2019 paid a courtesy call on His Excellency, President Adama Barrow, at State House. The delegation was headed by the Emir of The Gambia Jamaat, Baba F. Trawalleh. They were accompanied by the Hon. Minister of Information and Communications Infrastructure, Mr. Ebrima Sillah.



Their visit to the State House came after Muslim TV Ahmadiyah International (MTA) - a global evangelical television station run by the Jamaat, handed over newly equipped TV studios to the Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS). Munir Uddin Shams, Managing Director of the MTA expressed delight at the high level of cooperation with GRTS.

## ABOUT A THOUSAND PEOPLE FROM URR SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH THE PRESIDENT

Over eight hundred (800) people drawn from all the seven (7) constituencies of the Upper River Region - about 400km away from the capital, visited the State House to stand in solidarity with the government's development agenda as well as discuss pertinent issues of interest in the region.

Reacting to the courtesy call, President Barrow said: *"Receiving influential and opinion leaders from across the region I hailed from was a beautiful and historical gathering"*.



## MEDINA SERIGNE MASS KAH

The Caliph General and other prominent members of the Mass Kah Brotherhood from the renowned Medina Serigne Mass Kah village in the North Bank Region visited the presidency to pay a courtesy call on the president; they also offered prayers for him, the First Family, and the country at large.

President Adama Barrow welcomed the visit and emphasized the need for peace and stability in the country.

The Imam Ratib of the city of Banjul, Cherno Alieu Mass Kah, also a native of Medina Mass Kah, re-echoed similar sentiments: "Our role as Islamic leaders is to be steadfast in praying for the country, its people and its leader. This is complementary to that of government in forging social cohesion, preaching peace and national unity".

## URR CONSTRUCTION SITE INSPECTION

A typical holiday is meant for workers to take time off from work and spend more time with friends and family. Well, there was nothing like a typical holiday for President Barrow when he retreated in Mankamang Kunda for the Easter Holiday in April 2019.



## SARE BOJO RALLY

A major political rally with supporters was staged at Sare Bojo village in Jimara District. The central theme of his message was the call for popular support for the development blueprint of his administration. Some supporters of the opposition Gambia Democratic Congress - GDC declared their political support to him.

Political tolerance and decency are the main thrust in the promotion of peace and stability in the country. Belonging to different political parties should not be perceived as enmity among citizens, as people could switch allegiance as the political terrain demands. It was in this context that The Gambian leader had a brief encounter with the leadership of the opposition APRC party, who were on a political tour in the region. It was a sign of recognition of President Barrow as a national leader, thus courteous to show their respect while in the region.

Despite being on break from official duties, President Barrow took the initiative to inspect ongoing roads and bridges construction works in the region. He visited both the road construction site along the Basse-Koina road as well as the Basse-Wuli ferry crossing point, where a bridge was being constructed. After the conducted tours, the president expressed satisfaction with the progress of work before proceeding to Julangel for Friday prayers.

The journey to Basse from Banjul took an unusual eight-hour-long, where a normal travel time for the same distance would be much less; the reason being that huge crowds lined the route and intercepted the presidential convoy en route to Basse.

Upon arrival, he was received by his mother and community elders from the area who prayed for the president and country.





## BRIKAMA POLITICAL RALLY

In June 2019, the President attended a weekend rally organised by the Barrow Fans Club Chapter in Brikama.

Huge crowds of people from West Coast Region attended, and speaker after speaker renewed their political support to him. Ministers present used the opportunity to advocate for government's policies and programmes ranging from security, agriculture, and information and communication.



# MEETING GAMBIANS ABROAD

## GAMBIANS IN MAURITANIA

Over 300 Gambian citizens paid a courtesy call on President Barrow at his lodge in the Presidential Villa in Nouakchott.

A Select team of speakers took turns to express delight at having the president in their midst while taking the opportunity to share some of the challenges they faced as a community in Mauritania.

The Gambian community, who were reported to be law-abiding, were urged to maintain the good conduct that would sell a positive image of The Gambia.

The president advised them to work hard and prepare for the rainy days by saving regularly while assuring them of his government's commitment to the welfare of Gambians living abroad.

## GAMBIANS IN ABU DHABI

On the sidelines of the Official Visit to the United Arab Emirates in July 2019, President Barrow met with the representatives of the Gambian Community in Abu Dhabi and discussed issues that would improve their welfare and wellbeing.

The president thanked the speakers for appreciating the good effort made by the government to open an embassy in the UAE. On Politics, President Barrow advised Gambians to follow the right procedure if they wish to run for political office. He vowed to respect the choice of Gambian voters during elections.





# DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## *Good Neighborliness: A Key Pillar for Regional Peace –* President Barrow tells International Forum for Peace

The peaceful coexistence and good neighborliness between countries is quite sacrosanct for securing regional peace and stability, as demonstrated by The Gambia and Senegal - something other African countries can learn from. This was the central premise of the keynote address delivered by President Barrow at the 5th International Forum on Peace and Security in Dakar, Senegal.

He added that Africa shall only attain sustained peace and stability when countries work with each other, and not against each other: *"In Africa, we have committed ourselves to silence the guns on the continent by 2020. Certainly, it is only by working together that we can achieve this difficult challenge."*

He called for increased funding in the area of resource provision, training, and operational capabilities of law enforcement agencies to be able to effectively address all security threats facing the region.

## NEW AMBASSADORS PRESENT LETTERS OF CREDENCE TO PRESIDENT BARROW

As a sign of global respect for The Gambia in recognition of the return to democracy and good governance, a record number of states the world over is coming forward

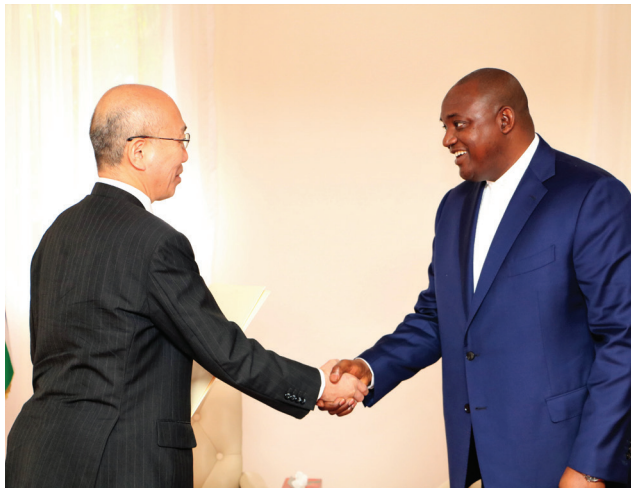
to foster diplomatic and economic ties with The Gambia. Consequently, in November 2018 to April 2019, the President received the diplomatic credentials of a new batch of ambassadors from different continents.

The Diplomats were honored with red carpet reception and Military Quarter Guard. Since his coming to office two years ago, ending The Gambia's global isolation has been at the heart of President Barrow's foreign policy objectives. States all over the globe have responded positively, establishing political and economic ties with the country.

### **Presentation of Letters of Credence by Diplomats, August 2018 –April 2019**

- 1. Republic of Japan*
- 2. Republic of Qatar*
- 3. Republic of Sierra Leone*
- 4. Peoples Republic of China*
- 5. Republic of Cuba*
- 6. Republic of India*
- 7. Representative of the SG of the UN*
- 8. United States of America*
- 9. Republic of Burkina Faso*

## PRESIDENT BARROW RECEIVES NEW JAPANESE AMBASSADOR



### **Name: His Excellency Tatsuo Arai**

President Barrow highlighted the need for more capacity building and knowledge transfer between Japan and The Gambia, especially in the framework of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). “The Gambia needs more of Japanese investments, as returns on investment here are greatly assured, whilst more jobs can be created for our youths. This is a win-win situation,” he told the envoy.

Ambassador Tatsuo spoke of the “excellent cooperation” between Japan and the Republic of The Gambia, saying Japan admires the efforts of The Gambia in implementing democratic elections and maintaining stability. “Our government is ready to support the sustainable development of The Gambia in various ways,” he said, announcing that Japan is now ready to sign a food aid agreement to the tune of \$2Million.

## HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE



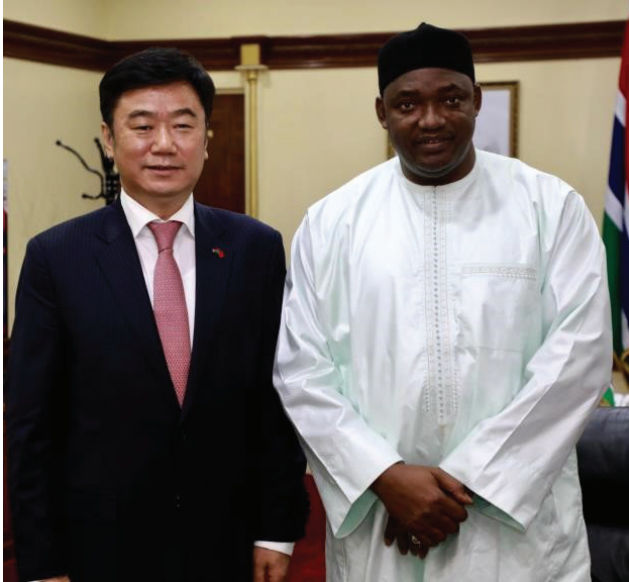
### **Name: Her Excellency Lucretia Marian Shereef**

High Commissioner Shereef is a career educationist with over thirty years’ experience. She expressed joy for being designated to The Gambia in a diplomatic capacity, stating that her focus would be on strengthening educational ties between the two countries, among other areas of interests.

President Barrow thanked her Country for mediatory role it played during The Gambia’s political impasse. According to him, he and President Maada Bio are considered to be part of the new crop of democratic leaders in the sub-region.



## AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



### **Name: His Excellency Ma Jianchun**

The new Chinese ambassador in Banjul comes from a commercial background and has up to 15 years' experience as a commercial diplomat in Africa and the Middle East. Ambassador Ma Jianchun promised to work with the government of The Gambia in consolidating bilateral ties in the framework of the development blueprint that emanated out of the 2018 Forum for Africa-China Cooperation Summit in Beijing. Close collaboration is expected to enhance economic growth, modernization of agriculture amongst others in The Gambia.

*“I am so pleased with the relations of our two countries, and my government and I will give all the support we can to China”* - President Barrow.

## REPUBLIC OF CUBA



### **Name: His Excellency Ruben Garcia Abalenda**

During the closed-door session, the President thanked the leader and people of Cuba for standing by The Gambia in its most difficult times. Cuba provides support to the health sector by deploying doctors to The Gambia and training Gambian doctors in Cuba. On his part, Ambassador Abalenda thanked The Gambia for standing in solidarity with the Cuban people over the years.

## HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA



### **Name: His Excellency Rajeev Kumar**

Following the presentation of credentials by His Excellency Rajeev Kumar, the new Indian High Commissioner, President Adama Barrow expressed appreciation for the support India gives to The Gambia, especially in the areas of education, agriculture, and infrastructure. He thanked the country for the construction of the national assembly building in Banjul.

Urging India to open a diplomatic mission in The Gambia to foster closer ties, the president highlighted that India is currently the biggest exporter of cashew nuts from The Gambia.

High Commissioner Rajeev Kumar said The Gambia's strategic location makes it a more preferred gateway for many West African traders.

The relationship could also provide an opportunity to enhance youth engagement in the field of technology.

## REPUBLIC OF QATAR



### **Name: His Excellency Faisal Fahad Abdallah al-Mane**

After inspecting the Quarter Guard mounted in his honour by the Presidential Guard, the Ambassador met the president to present the official letter of assignment. A closed-door meeting followed during which the President expressed gratitude to the State of Qatar for immensely supporting the development efforts of the country, despite a difficult relationship with the previous regime.

While urging the Ambassador to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, who had so much goodwill for The Gambia, the President expressed best wishes and assurance of the highest consideration during his tour of duty.

For his part, Ambassador Faisal extended greetings from the Emir of the State of Qatar, and promised to strengthen the strong ties between the two countries.



## *Senegal-Gambia Relations Takes New Heights – New Senegambian Ambassador*



The new Ambassador and Executive Secretary of the Senegalo-Gambia Permanent Secretariat in Banjul, Ambassador Fode Seck has said that their Excellences, Presidents, Adama Barrow, and Macky Sall, of The Gambia and Senegal, respectively, are very committed to taking the relations between the two countries to higher heights. The two Presidents wish to give the Secretariat a new lease of life that commensurates with the new dispensation in The Gambia.

The Senegalo-Gambia Secretariat started as an interstate committee during the First Republic that worked hard to produce the short-lived Senegambia Confederation in 1981.

Border demarcation, bilateral cooperation, and intelligence exchanges between the security services of the two countries are some of the key areas of cooperation between The Gambia and Senegal.

A roadmap to tour both the northern and southern borders has been developed to sensitize the people on the frontier of the need to maintain peace and stability.

Prior to his appointment Ambassador Seck was the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations. He is a widely respected, consummate diplomat, served as a long-time ambassador and diplomatic counselor to the Prime Minister of Senegal from 2002.



# DIPLOMATIC FAREWELLS

## US Ambassador: “Excellent” Relations with The Gambia Increases Tenfold

The outgoing United States Ambassador to The Gambia, Her Excellency Patricia Alsup described as “excellent” the relationship between The Gambia and the United States. According to her, the ties between the two allies have improved tenfold since the advent of the Barrow government.

The American diplomat said the Gambia-US cooperation is strongest than at any period in the past few decades, adding that the two countries have a solid partnership that has been strengthened since the Barrow administration took over.

“We have a number of US agencies that are working here; assistance to The Gambia has multiplied tenfold since this administration commenced,” Ambassador Alsup told State House press corps.

She disclosed that The Gambia stands to benefit greatly from US development assistance through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) programme, which supports developing countries to reduce poverty and promote economic growth.

While expressing admiration for the leadership style of the President, Ambassador Alsup expressed optimism about the trajectory of the ties between the two countries.

“I think he (President Adama Barrow) appreciates the work that the US is doing to

try to support The Gambia. I think that he will continue to make sure that the relationship between the US and The Gambia continues to be a strong one, and in fact gets even stronger,” she said, lauding a lot of things done during her tenure as top US diplomat.

Ambassador Alsup further noted that the transition has registered a lot of progress citing that the high level of freedom in the country as well as the impressive human rights records of the current administration. She also highlighted the \$1.7 Billion pledge for the NDP blueprint as a clear testimony that the international community is impressed with the progress being made by the Government in the development of The Gambia.

Ambassador Alsup, ended her two-year diplomatic duties in the country, in September 2018.





## OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

During a two-day official visit to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in February 2019, His Excellency Adama Barrow and his host President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz presided over the signing ceremony of cooperation agreements between the two countries.

The MOUs will promote bilateral cooperations and investment in the area of maritime investment and fishing. Furthermore, the protocol agreement would require the two countries to regularly consult on global issues in the spirit of consolidating African integration and common positions.

The objectives of the Fishing agreement are to promote trade, boost investment, and encourage the exchange of technical knowhow and best practices in maritime and fisheries sectors of both countries.

## CHINESE AMBASSADOR LAUDS ‘SATISFACTORY RELATIONS’, AS HE BIDS FAREWELL TO PRESIDENT BARROW

The outgoing Chinese Ambassador to The Gambia, His Excellency, Zhang Jiming described the cordial relations between The Gambia and the Peoples Republic of China as ‘satisfactory’, as he ended his diplomatic tour of duty in The Gambia.

During his two years of duty, the bilateral relations achieved progress in different fields. The Gambia supports the One-China principle and enjoys a respectable relation on the basis of mutual respect, benefit, and equality.

Ambassador Jiming is the first Chinese diplomat to serve in The Gambia since the resumption of bilateral ties under the Barrow government.



## SIERRA LEONEAN AMBASSADOR EXTOLS “EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP” AS HE BIDS FARWELL TO PRESIDENT BARROW

H.E. Sulayman Daramy bid farewell to President Barrow as his diplomatic duties in the country ended. The strong bilateral ties between The Gambia and Sierra Leone have been excellent since independence.

Ambassador Daramy, who served as a diplomatic envoy in Banjul for four years extolled the peace in The Gambia:

*“It can only improve. It’s what we have all been wishing for. It is a gradual process in terms of the changes that are coming now, but it is moving in the right direction. We will continue to pray that it gets better and better.”* - H.E. Sulayman Daramy



- ▶ *The outgoing High Commissioner of Sierra Leone in The Gambia, H.E. Sulayman Daramy bids farewell to President Barrow*
- ▶ *H.C. Daramy bids farewell to President Barrow*





## PRESIDENT BARROW SENDS SPECIAL DELEGATION TO KOFI ANNAN FUNERAL



Following the untimely demise of former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan in Switzerland in August last year, President Barrow sent a special high ranking government delegation to Accra, to attend his funeral. The Minister of Information and Communication Infrastructure, Ebrima Sillah, headed the team, and the other members included Special Adviser to the President, Henry Gomez; former Vice President, Aja Fatoumatta Jallow Tambajang; Crispin Grey-Johnson and Mori Kebba Janneh, former UN employees; and Ms. Alice Colley, a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The body of the deceased was laid to rest on 13th September 2018.

# OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY



- ▶ The First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow presided over the launching of the Catch-up Meningitis A vaccine and immunization campaign, which was held at the Governor's Residence in Brikama, West Coast Region. The Meningitis A campaign seeks to increase the levels of national immunity among people under twenty-nine years of age, who are the most vulnerable groups of society.
- ▶ Her Excellency, First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow has been selected by the AU Commission as the Regional Chair for West Africa to lead the continent-wide efforts of ensuring a pollution-free Africa.
- ▶ Her Excellency, First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow on Wednesday 30th January 2019, presided over the launching of Nsaa Keno: Nutrition and Protection for Children on the Move project at Jarra Soma, Lower River Region.

The project seeks to strengthen regional and local government structures, provide an opportunity for all people to understand the rights of children, and the need for their protection. Additionally, it is designed to provide adequate nutrition to maximize the potential of children in the country.

The selection of the First Lady took place during the High Level Working Session on Banning Plastics in Africa, which was held on the sidelines of the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit currently underway in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The African Union is concerned with the increasing pollution especially in the major cities of Africa, hence the campaign to see a pollution-free Africa. The world is swamped by harmful plastic wastes; an estimated 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the oceans, according to official reports. If the present trend continues, by 2050 our oceans will have more plastics than fish.



# PUBLIC NOTICE

## TRANSFER OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

In line with the ongoing civil service reform and in the spirit of decongesting the Office of the President and mainstream government agencies under the right ministries, President Barrow directed the transfer of the portfolio of Religious Affairs from the Office of the President to the Ministry of Lands and Regional Affairs, with effect from the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## NO OIL OR GAS IN FIRST OFFSHORE DRILLING

In the first FAR and Petronas offshore exploration in The Gambia, the prospect of finding oil and gas was unsuccessful, according a statement from the Ministry of Energy. The oil and gas explorers drilled the wireline logging at Samo-1 up to the total depth of 3240 meters. The offshore drilling was done from the 22<sup>nd</sup> October to the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## PUBLIC EXCUSED FROM ATTENDING PRESIDENTIAL AIRPORT CEREMONIES

President Barrow expressed gratitude to all those who took the personal initiative to accompany him to and from the airport. Henceforth, seeing off and receiving the President at the Banjul International Airport shall be limited only to the following officials:

1. Speaker of the National Assembly
2. The Chief Justice
3. Cabinet Members
4. The Chief of Defense Staff and other Service Chiefs
5. The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps







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