

**H.E. Adama Barrow-GMRG,  
President of the Republic of The Gambia and  
Commander-in-Chief  
Broadcast Address to the Nation on the Occasion  
of the Feast of Eid-ul-Fitr**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022**

Fellow Gambians and Residents of The Gambia,

All praise is due to Allah for allowing us to witness another *Eid-ul-Fitr*, or *Koriteh*, which marks the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

We are particularly thankful that Allah has granted us the health and ability to fulfil the religious obligation of fasting the entire month, as prescribed for all believers.

In as much as there is cause for happiness and celebration, it is worth remembering that there are many people, both at home and abroad, who are either in hospital, hungry or in devastating situations. They are not blessed enough to celebrate this important Muslim feast, thus we must feel for them and pray for their recovery.

As Islam teaches, the month of Ramadan comes with lessons and experience to strengthen our relationship with God, guide us in our daily lives, and enable us to improve on our inter-personal relationships with one another.

It is a month that reinforces faith and encourages charitable acts, such as helping the less privilege, showing empathy for those in pain, and acting generously towards family, friends, and neighbours.

I have noted, with deep appreciation, that there were lots of organisations and philanthropists who reached out generously to those in need. We thank them immensely.

This year, the month of Ramadan coincided with the outbreak or persistence of conflict in certain parts of the world. Like the pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, for example, continues to have a negative impact on the global economy.

It is urgent, therefore, that we cherish and preserve the peace and stability we now enjoy, and pray for peace and a better world order.

Despite the unfortunate situation we may find ourselves in, we must continue to be steadfast in faith, and engage in acts of kindness and forgiveness. In this regard, I express gratitude to our religious leaders and preachers for untiringly preaching peace and love, as well as promoting kindness and good neighbourliness.

It is a blessing that within the same period, we also witnessed other key religious and national events, such as Lent and Easter for the Christian community and the National Assembly elections.

We are grateful that these events have come to pass peacefully; but, we cannot afford to relent in doing all it takes to sustain the peace and stability in our country, and maintain cordial relations with our neighbours.

Fellow Gambians and Residents of The Gambia,

Peace is priceless. The recent conflict in the Casamance region of Senegal displaced many families and communities. This has impacted gravely on communities in parts of Foni, on Gambian territory; for example, schools have been disrupted, families separated, and property destroyed.

As good neighbours with the Republic of Senegal, I am constantly in touch with my brother, President Macky Sall, to ensure that peace prevails in the region. We are “one people” in two nations, and through dialogue, a peaceful resolution could be forged to end the long-standing conflict in the area.

As we celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, let us take time to forgive, reconcile and be merciful to one another. We need to exercise restraint and extend kind gestures to all, be they in politics or other walks of life, families or neighbours.

Fellow Gambians and Residents of The Gambia,

I am sadly aware of the price hikes, and the resulting challenges posed to families. In response, my government has taken steps to cut down on expenditure, and subsidise the price of fuel to ease the hardship arising from the ever-increasing price of fuel on the world market.

These are temporal Government measures, so I call on all Gambians to engage in more sustainable strategies, including intensifying agriculture for local consumption.

Out of necessity, we have to minimise our reliance on imported essential food commodities as much as we can. The surest way to achieve this is to get serious about farming.

Fellow Gambians,

There is also growing concern on the impact of the world economy on migration. Illegal migration, in particular, is more challenging today than it has ever been, and its consequences are regrettably serious.

With indifference, developed countries continue to close their borders to irregular migrants. Such unfortunate global developments reduce prospects of success in the developing world.

It is necessary, therefore, to accept that, although we cannot stop illegal migration completely, we must look inward for alternatives and opportunities to make life at home better.

Here, in The Gambia, COVID poses a serious threat to the tourism sector; for this reason, it is time we revisited our strategies and options to sustain livelihoods.

We are blessed with natural resources; for example, we have the land, the sea and a youthful population to exploit. This makes it feasible to tap the numerous opportunities that exist in agriculture, fisheries, and other enterprises to boost our economy. Instead of relying solely on external assistance, it is obligatory for us to take charge of our welfare, and fend for ourselves.

Fellow Gambians and Residents of The Gambia,

Many people travel to spend the Eid holiday with their families and loved ones. Recently, there has been a series of unfortunate and deadly accidents. As a result, I urge all drivers to drive safely and abide by the traffic rules. Equally, I advise the traffic police to be more vigilant.

Eid is a moment for celebration, but let us also use the occasion to reflect on how we can conduct ourselves better for the benefit of the nation.

Let us hold onto our values and good ethics to guide the younger generation, remembering that the better we conduct ourselves and embrace one another, the brighter our prospects of a happier and more fulfilling life.

I wish you all a very blessed and memorable Eid-ul-Fitr, and I pray that we witness many more in the years ahead.

Thank you for your attention.