

**STATEMENT BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA,  
MR. ADAMA BARROW,  
AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE CLINICAL WASTE  
TREATMENT CENTRE  
HELD IN FARATO  
ON TUESDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022.**

Honourable Minister of Health,  
Cabinet Ministers present,  
Secretary General and Head of Civil Service,  
Chief of Staff,  
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,  
Chairman, National Assembly Select Committee for Health and other National Assembly  
Members present,  
The World Bank Managing Director and World Bank Regional and Country Team Members  
present,  
Heads of UN Agencies,  
Senior Government Officials and Service Chiefs,  
Governor, West Coast Region,  
District Chiefs,  
Alkalolu,  
The Alkalo, Imam and Community of Farato,  
Media Representatives,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be with you on this historic occasion to inaugurate The Gambia's first Clinical Waste Treatment Centre.

This is a spectacular event, noting that it comprises the commissioning of the ECOSTERYL 250 waste treatment plant in Farato and the ECOSTERYL 75 plant at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital. The project is one of several important projects funded by the World Bank within the health sector.

Today's programme marks a prominent milestone in the health care delivery system of our beloved country, and it highlights the fruitful relationship between my government and the World Bank.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Medical waste is harmful material produced by hospitals, health centres, clinics, laboratories, and other health facilities and must be properly treated and discarded to avoid contamination.

As health experts know very well, burning medical waste releases harmful substances that can cause health problems. Dumping it in open dumpsites, as people do, may result in the contamination of waterbodies.

The introduction of modern waste treatment methods is, therefore, one of the most important strategies for infection prevention and control. This is made possible by using steam sterilisation and microwave technology, both of which are safe and environmentally friendly.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Waste management is a big challenge for most countries, and it is a bigger challenge when it gets to managing medical waste. Poor infrastructure and insufficient waste management capacity make matters worse for many countries.

Against this background and my government's resolve to transform the health sector by modernising the sector's infrastructure, providing standard equipment, and building human capacity, it is essential to have a solution to the worrying issue of medical waste. This would contribute significantly to reducing infection among health workers and the community at large.

Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ECOSTERYL waste treatment plants we are commissioning today are equipped with some of the most modern items of waste treatment equipment in the world, hence we can all feel proud of this achievement.

Because using commercial trucks to transport medical waste equally poses a lot of risk to the public, I am happy to state that we will commission, alongside the plants, three modern refrigerated waste trucks to transport medical waste from all health facilities, public and private, to the waste treatment centre for processing.

To ensure that no part of the country is left out, we have already inaugurated huge incinerators in each of the seven health regions of the country. All these are in line with our National Development Plan.

Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, we gathered here to lay the foundation stone of a hundred and four-bed National Emergency Treatment Centre, which is another World Bank-funded project with counterpart funding from Government.

The construction works of that project are progressing with satisfaction as the first phase of an all-inclusive modern Teaching Hospital to accommodate one thousand, five hundred (1500) beds.

We thank the World Bank most sincerely for its invaluable support to the Health Sector, as evidenced by The Gambia Essential Health Services Strengthening Project and the Covid-19 intervention support, to cite additional examples.

All these demonstrate the Bank's confidence in my government's development agenda and efforts towards achieving acceptable quality of life for all Gambian citizens in an atmosphere of transparency, accountability, and efficiency. It is a partnership we cherish and will continue to nurture.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

To express our deep appreciation, I thank all the members of the World Bank team, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, and all those who contributed to the success of this project.

With this brief statement, I formally declare the new modern Clinical Waste Treatment Centre officially inaugurated.