



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

**2026 STATE OF THE
NATION ADDRESS**

DELIVERED BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY,
MR. ADAMA BARROW**

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

**AT THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
BANJUL
ON 26TH MARCH 2026**

**STATE OF THE NATION
ADDRESS
DELIVERED BY HIS
EXCELLENCY, MR. ADAMA
BARROW, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE
GAMBIA AT THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY, BANJUL ON
26TH MARCH 2026**

CONTENTS

1. THE ECONOMY.....	4
2. TRADE, INDUSTRY AND JOB CREATION	7
3. INFRASTRUCTURE	9
4. LAND ADMINISTRATION AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE.....	12
5. ENERGY	14
6. COMMUNICATION DIGITAL ECONOMY.....	17
7. AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND WATER... RESOURCES	20
8. HUMAN CAPITAL: EDUCATION AND HEALTH	23
9. HEALTH	26
10. YOUTH, WOMEN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION.....	27
11. GOVERNANCE, JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM.....	30
12. DEFENCE, SECURITY AND NATIONAL STABILITY	35
13. TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE	36
15. CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT	38
16. CONCLUDING REMARKS	40

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly,
Your Excellency, the Vice President,
My Lordship, the Chief Justice and Superior Judges,
Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic and
Consular Corps,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. In accordance with Section 77(1) of the Constitution, it is my singular honour and delight to deliver the 2026 State of the Nation Address before this Honourable Assembly.
2. Recognising that this is the final State of the Nation Address for this five-year Presidential term, the address comes at a defining moment in our national journey.
3. It has come at a time when Gambians are reflecting on the progress made this far and, currently, preparing to make important decisions on the future of our country.

4. Since 2017, our nation has travelled a demanding but determined path, from democratic renewal, through economic recovery, to institutional rebuilding and national stabilisation. The task before my administration was not only to govern, but also to restore trust, rebuild systems, and lay foundations that would endure for generations to come.
5. Over the years, our policies and programmes have consistently been guided by strong planning frameworks and informed roadmaps to design and steer national development initiatives and accountability mechanisms.
6. In the short term, the Recovery Focused National Development Plan - **YIRIWA** (2023-2027) will continue to drive the consolidation of our gains and acceleration of the ongoing socio-economic transformation process across all development sectors in the country.
7. Briefly, this address provides a concise account of my administration's major achievements, critical challenges, and strategic gains to protect and build upon, as we move forward.

These issues are thematised, beginning with the state of our economy.

1. THE ECONOMY

8. Mr. Speaker, in this volatile global environment, marked by uncertainties, inflationary pressures, and geopolitical shocks, the Gambian economy continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience.
9. Supported largely by construction, agriculture, tourism, trade, telecommunications, and other services, real GDP growth was estimated at five-point-nine per cent (5.9%) in 2025, compared to five-point-seven (5.7%) in 2024.
10. Correspondingly, inflation declined from ten-point-two per cent (10.2%) in December 2024 to about six-point-six percent (6.6%) by December 2025, reflecting tight monetary policy and improved domestic supply conditions.

11. The 2026 Budget projects total revenue and grants of fifty billion, three hundred million Dalasis (GMD50.3 billion), with thirty-two billion, two hundred million (GMD32.2 billion) mobilised from domestic sources. Public debt, projected at sixty-eight-point-eight percent (68.8%) of GDP in 2026, has been stabilised and placed on a sustainable downward path.
12. As of December 2025, the national debt-to-GDP ratio declined to seventy-one-point-eight percent (71.8%) from seventy-three-point-six percent (73.6%) in 2024.
13. Positively, too, boosted by substantial remittances, grants, and tourism receipts, the Gambian Dalasi remains broadly stable against major trading currencies. In appreciation of this, I recognise the significant contributions of our compatriots in the diaspora, who continue to provide critical support to household incomes and overall economic stability. In 2025, such remittances amounted to eight hundred and seventy-two million US dollars (US\$872 million), representing thirty-four percent (34%) of GDP.

14. The Government remains firmly committed to reforming and restructuring our State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to improve performance, strengthen governance, and reduce contingent liabilities.
15. We have demonstrated strong commitment to reform by establishing the State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) Commission, as part of a broader agenda to restructure and transform SOEs. This initiative aims to enhance performance, strengthen governance frameworks, and mitigate contingent liabilities.
16. The aggregate financial position of SOEs underwent a remarkable transformation in 2025. The sector achieved a historic consolidated net profit of D2.5 billion, a stark reversal from the D2.6 billion loss recorded in 2024. This represents an improvement of D5.1 billion or 196% year on year turnaround in financial health.

The evidence shows that stronger oversight measures, performance contracts, and closer monitoring of key performance indicators are beginning to deliver results.

17. Notably, for the first time, five State-Owned Enterprises are expected to pay dividends to Government, marking a significant turnaround in the financial performance of the sector.
18. Evidently, therefore, these outcomes are the result of prudent economic management and difficult, but necessary, policy choices made in the national interest. This further demonstrates that the ongoing reforms are beginning to yield tangible results.

2. TRADE, INDUSTRY AND JOB CREATION

19. Mr. Speaker, to transform our economic structure, we are investing in industrial parks, urban agricultural hubs, and Special Economic Zones, thus moving The Gambia away from raw exports towards value addition, manufacturing, and exports.

20. In 2025, we strengthened trade governance, competition, and regional integration to support inclusive economic growth. Reforms are in progress on the Essential Commodities Act 2015 for improved stock and prices monitoring, while preserving a liberal market system.
21. Mr. Speaker, my government will soon introduce a Bill to address both Competition and Consumer protection under one legislation, with plans to repeal the Competition Act 2007 and the Consumer Protection Act 2014.
22. On regional integration, The Gambia secured key ECOWAS positions for the 2026-2030 mandate. These include the positions of Director General of Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) and a Judge at the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice.
23. At the national level, in 2025, The Gambia Import and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA) facilitated the attraction and awarding of Special Investment Certificates and Export Processing Zone License to sixteen (16) businesses.

With a total planned investment of two hundred and four million US dollars (US\$204 million), this is expected to create job opportunities.

24. Irregular migration continues to rob our nation of its youth. We are treating this issue with utmost urgency by creating opportunities for decent jobs, skills development, and legal labour pathways. Through strengthened Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems and bilateral labour agreements for safe, regular, and orderly migration, Gambians are now working legally in Europe and the Middle East.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE

25. Mr. Speaker, my administration continues to work tirelessly to close our infrastructure gaps. Since 2017, the Government has constructed over one thousand, two hundred kilometres (1,200 Km) of all-weather roads, significantly improving national connectivity.
26. In 2025, the eighty-four-kilometre (84-Km) Niimi–Hakalang Road was inaugurated, and the Kiang West, and Brufut–Madiana–Bainyaka roads have reached advanced stages.

Three of the OIC road has progressed satisfactorily, with completion of the Sukuta overpass expected this year.

27. By the end of 2026, my government will have added an additional three hundred and seventy-five kilometres (375Km) of paved roads to the overall network.
28. This expansion is being implemented through an Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) model, fully funded by the Government of The Gambia, at an estimated cost of about nine billion Dalasis (GMD9 billion).
29. Additionally, through innovative financing methods, the construction of about seven hundred kilometres (700Km) of new roads will commence soon. These new roads were strategically selected to complement the already existing network.
30. Furthermore, with funding from the World Bank-supported GIRAV Project, the Government will shortly lay the foundation stone for approximately two hundred kilometres (200Km) of roads in the rural parts of our Local Government Areas.

31. Statistically, upon completion of these projects, my government would register more than fifty percent (50%) of the four thousand kilometres (4000Km) total surveyed roads nationwide. I am fully committed to ensuring that all communities are connected with a reliable means of transportation.

32. On maritime transport, port operations have been modernised, significantly reducing cargo waiting time at the Port of Banjul from more than fourteen (14) days to less than a day; precisely, seventeen hours. Concurrently, preparatory works are progressing for the Sanyang Deep Seaport, ahead of the commencement of construction works this year.

33. Maritime services will be further strengthened with the recent delivery of an eco-friendly ferry. The new service arrangements will reduce waiting time and ease traffic flow from Banjul to Barra, thereby improving market access for farmers and traders in the North Bank Region, particularly women.

34. In line with the Government's liberal air transport policy, The Gambia and Senegal have agreed to domesticate air services between the two States. Both States have either waived or significantly reduced passenger charges on air tickets, which will greatly lower the cost of travel between the two countries.

35. In addition, my government is working on an Airport Modernisation Project that includes the construction of an ultramodern Passenger Terminal Building and other related airport infrastructure. Hopefully, this project will be implemented through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

4. LAND ADMINISTRATION AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

36. Mr. Speaker, the Government advanced key reforms to modernise land administration and strengthen local governance. A landmark National Land Policy (2026–2035) was recently approved and launched to improve tenure security, harmonise land administration, and promote digitisation.

37. An assessment has been conducted as well to evaluate the current structures to develop a Land Information System, which guide the establishment of a nationwide digital platform to secure and manage land records. One of its objectives is to enhance transparency in land administration and reduce land disputes.
38. These reforms, supported by an ongoing review of the Local Government Act, are laying the foundation for more transparent, efficient, and equitable land governance.
39. Recognising the important role of the Land Commission, the Ministry of Lands, Regional Government and Religious Affairs is working to revitalise it through the reinforcement of its oversight and dispute resolution roles. This is planned to enhance transparency, accountability, and justice in land administration.
40. The Ministry has also initiated a housing programme that targets Gambians and offers flexible instalment options to improve access to affordable housing.

At the moment, sample designs have been reviewed and sites identified for the first phase of the scheme.

41. The Department of Boundary Management, under the Ministry of Lands, has been established to strengthen and safeguard The Gambia's borders nationally and internationally. It is mandated to coordinate boundary administration and support effective land demarcation and documentation.
42. The Department is to collaborate with relevant institutions and neighbouring authorities to prevent and resolve boundary-related issues, protect territorial integrity and promote national security.

5. ENERGY

43. Mr. Speaker, my government has made decisive reforms and investments across the energy, petroleum, and mining sectors. I am thus pleased to report that we have achieved ninety percent (90%) national energy access and remain on course to attain universal access by the end of 2026.

44. To fast-track this objective, we have allocated three hundred and ninety-seven million Dalasis (GMD397 million) in the 2026 Budget to expand electricity services to the remaining unelectrified communities.
45. In addition, as part of the modernisation efforts of the national electricity network, my administration has completed and commissioned the country's first two hundred and twenty-five (225) KV transmission line, together with a state-of-the-art National Control Centre. These investments support our Universal Access Programme, which is projected to be achieved by end 2026, ahead of the global 2030 timeline.
46. Furthermore, I am proud to announce that, as part of our drive to achieve universal access to electricity, through the Sustainable Energy Services Company (SESCO-The Gambia), eleven (11) hospitals, eighty-one (81) clinics, and eight hundred and twenty-three (823) schools nationwide have been solarised.

47. While the significant gains in access are to be celebrated, we recognise the financial constraints many households face. In this regard, to stabilise tariffs, the Government allocated one billion Dalasis (GMD1 billion) in both the 2025 and 2026 budgets as subsidies to NAWEC.
48. Central to our long-term energy security is our objective to increase domestic generation capacity. In this connection, the Government has set in motion a plan to deliver a one-hundred-and-fifty-megawatt (150 MW) Solar Park in Soma that will cater for both domestic and export markets. So far, the first stage of the Solar Park is at an advanced stage, with the tender for a 50-megawatt (50 MW) plant completed.
49. The Gambia Petroleum sector continues to attract interest. Recently, the Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Mines granted licence to three companies to undertake exploration, development, and production activities in existing open blocks. This marks a significant milestone in reactivating upstream petroleum operations in The Gambia.

50. In the area of mining, my government is promoting offshore sand dredging to meet demand exceeding one million (1 million) cubic metres. We also issued licences for deep-sea mineral prospecting, hence positioning the sector to support infrastructure development and diversify national revenues.

6. COMMUNICATION DIGITAL ECONOMY

51. Mr. Speaker, in 2025, digital transformation acted as a key driver of growth, jobs, and efficient governance. Mobile subscriptions surpassed three million, four hundred thousand (3.4 million), ICT sector employment increased by nearly twenty percent (20%), and the sector's contribution to the economy exceeded three billion, nine hundred million Dalasis (GMD3.9 billion).
52. Our Digital Government Transformation efforts in 2026 will include the deployment of key services by The Gambia ICT Agency (GICTA). These include e-visa and e-Cabinet initiatives for more effective and efficient service delivery.

53. For the first time, The Gambia has a Data Protection and Privacy Act (2025). It is enacted to regulate the processing of personal data and reinforce a secure and investor-friendly digital environment.
54. The SOE reform agenda is ongoing, with GAMTEL and GAMCEL identified as key institutions. A Build-Operate-Transfer Public Private Partnership for GAMTEL is expected to mobilise fifty million US dollars (US\$50 million). This will be used to modernise, upgrade, and expand the core backbone and last-mile infrastructure, enhance competitiveness, and maximise revenue growth.
55. In line with the rightsizing exercise of the staff, implementation of the Social Plan is well underway. Six hundred and forty-two (642) staff members have exited, after their full compensation payments. The remaining phases, three and four, are expected to be finalised by end March 2026.

56. In striving to modernise public broadcasting, Government has reached an advanced stage in finding a private partner for Digital Gambia Limited to facilitate our transmission from analogue to a digital system. Similarly, GRTS Radio signal has been put on satellite, thus achieving radio broadcast nationwide and beyond.
57. To popularise and inform the people about our development programmes and policies, my government has initiated a flagship programme called *Mansa Kunda*. Having successfully implemented twenty-five (25) episodes in 2025, we will continue with this programme and take it to the regions this year for wider participation.
58. In January of this year, my administration, through the Ministry of Information, successfully launched another flagship programme called “The Minister” to highlight Government programmes and policies in the local languages. This is part of the broader strategy to bring Government policies and programmes to the doorsteps of the people.

7. AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND WATER RESOURCES

59. Mr. Speaker, Agriculture remains another important sector, contributing over twenty-two percent (22%) to Gross Domestic Product and sustaining the livelihoods of most Gambian households.

60. To boost productivity and food security, the Government continues to implement the National Seeds Programme. Through it, over seven hundred and three million Dalasis (GMD703 million) have been allocated for seed and fertiliser subsidies and expansion of agricultural credit by an estimated twenty percent (20%). The Government also provided three hundred million Dalasis (GMD300 million) to recapitalise the National Food Security, Processing and Marketing Corporation.

61. Crop production recorded strong gains, with total cereal output rising from one hundred and twenty-four thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven (124,337) metric tonnes in 2024 to one hundred and thirty-one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-eight (131,798) metric tonnes in 2025.

62. This includes an eleven percent (11%) increase in millet, nine percent (9%) increase in rice production to fifty-seven thousand, two hundred and twenty-five (57,225) metric tonnes, and five percent (5%) increase in maize production.
63. Cash crop production also strengthened, with groundnut output increasing by sixteen percent (16%), from fifty-two thousand, six hundred and forty-two (52,642) metric tonnes in 2024 to sixtyone thousand and forty-three (61,043) metric tonnes in 2025. The yield prompted a governmentbacked two-billion-Dalasi (GMD2 billion) intervention to purchase up to fifty thousand (50,000) metric tonnes during the 2025/26 trade season.
64. Productivity and resilience were further reinforced through the procurement of one hundred and eighty-nine (189) tractors and twenty (20) rotavator boats, expanded irrigation, and strengthened livestock health systems. This support includes increased vaccination coverage and positioning the sector for sustained growth, food security, and rural income stability.

65. Mr. Speaker, my government equally made major reform achievements in water and fisheries management to strengthen sustainability, resilience, and livelihoods.
66. To improve access to clean drinking water in hard-to-reach areas, for instance, my government drilled one hundred and ten (110) solar-powered piped water systems across the country. Sixty-eight (68) of these projects have been completed to serve one hundred and forty-two (142) villages, benefiting about eighty-two thousand, eight hundred and ninety-six (82,896) people. The remaining forty-two (42) are due for completion by the end of the year. To further improve sanitation, over three hundred (300) household and public latrines were constructed in rural and riverside communities to prevent pollution of the water table.
67. To promote safe and sustainable water extraction from boreholes, particularly in the urban area, my government, in collaboration with partners, is working on the development of a Water Abstraction Licensing Regulation to establish legal, policy, and operational frameworks for climate-smart water abstraction governance.

68. On fisheries, the legal framework was comprehensively reviewed to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing as well as to strengthen nationwide surveillance missions. This has led to more arrests and prosecutions.
69. These efforts contributed to total fisheries revenue of over two hundred and thirty-four million Dalasis (GMD234 million) in the first quarter of 2026.

8. HUMAN CAPITAL: EDUCATION AND HEALTH

70. Mr. Speaker, my government continues to prioritise human capital development, with the 2026 Budget allocating, at least, ten billion, five hundred million Dalasis (GMD10.5 billion) to it. This represents seventeen-point-seven percent (17.7%) of total expenditure to education and health.
71. To continually raise performance levels, significant investments have been made to improve the quality of learning. Part of this is the completion of three hundred and thirty-six (336) teachers' quarters across forty-seven (47) schools,

delivery of science and technical equipment valued at over two million US dollars (US\$2 million) to twenty-nine (29) schools, and the distribution of more than one million, four hundred thousand (1.4) textbooks nationwide.

72. To universalise access to education, in collaboration with our partners, we implemented programmes to bring seven-four thousand (74,000) marginalised children back into the formal education system from 2023 to 2025.
73. Recognising that strong foundational skills are essential for lifelong learning, my government has intensified its focus on early-grade education.
74. With support from the World Bank, the Government has embarked on the development and implementation of structured pedagogy and foundational learning programmes.
75. Digital learning was introduced to one hundred and twenty-two (122) schools in 2025. These schools are now equipped with smart televisions, laptops, projectors, and other IT equipment to prepare our students for a better future.

76. The use of seven (7) national languages was piloted in sixty-three (63) schools to reinforce equity, quality, and resilience across the education system.
77. In relation to tertiary education and skills development, my administration has invested more than seven billion, six hundred million Dalasis (GMD7.6 billion) in the University of The Gambia (UTG). Most of its faculties have now moved to the Faraba Banta mega-campus. This complements the USET Campus inaugurated last June in Brikama.
78. On access to tertiary education, the Students' Revolving Loan Scheme, the National Research and Innovation Fund, and the Tertiary and Higher Education Trust Fund have been established. The objective is to ensure that tuition does not limit anyone's potential and to expand opportunities for research and innovation.

9. HEALTH

79. Mr. Speaker, this year, my administration has allocated three billion, one hundred thousand million Dalasis (GMD 3.1 billion) to the health sector to support ongoing expansion of primary health care, upgrading of facilities, and service delivery improvement.

80. In 2025, major infrastructure investments progressed at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital, Kanifing General Hospital, and selected regional health centres. Meanwhile, the National Food and Drug Testing Laboratory and the Farato Emergency Treatment Centre are in their final phases of completion.

81. As part of efforts to strengthen frontline service delivery, we have secured fifty- two (52) fully equipped ambulances, six (6) supervisory vehicles, sixty-one (61) motorcycles, one hundred and fifty-seven (157) bicycles, and twenty (20) tricycles to support immunisation, outreach programmes, and emergency referrals. In addition, we will soon establish an ambulance command centre for national emergency medical response.

82. At the same time, expanded postgraduate training for health professionals is strengthening the national health workforce and contributing to a more resilient, people-centred health system. Quite notably, for the first time, dentists and pharmacists are being trained in the country, with the inaugural cohort expected to graduate this year.

10. YOUTH, WOMEN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

83. Mr. Speaker, my government recognises gender equality and women and youth empowerment as critical enablers for national development.
84. In 2025, drawing on the Women Enterprise Fund, over twelve million Dalasis (GMD12 million) was disbursed to one hundred and twelve (112) women groups. This benefited over ten thousand (10,000) women. An additional one thousand, seven hundred and two (1,702) adolescent girls and young women were supported through financial literacy initiatives. Furthermore, they will receive a total grant of one hundred and seventeen million, two hundred thousand Dalasis (GMD117.2 million) after their graduation this year.

85. By utilising the Social Protection Fund, Government is supporting five thousand, four hundred (5,400) beneficiaries of the Family Strengthening Programme. They include people with disability, the elderly, orphans, and widows. These vulnerable people receive a monthly cash transfer of one thousand Dalasis (GMD1000).
86. To support low-income households for improved nutrition and food security, my government, through the NAFA-RISE Project, continues to support over twenty-nine thousand (29,000) vulnerable households. This support includes a monthly cash transfer of one thousand, five hundred Dalasis (GMD1500) to vulnerable households.
87. Mr. Speaker, tapping into the Support to Victims of Gender-Based Violence Fund, in December 2025, the Government assisted seventy-five (75) survivors. A total of forty thousand Dalasis (GMD40,000) was given to each survivor.

88. To prevent delays in administering justice on Gender Based Violence, a specialised court has been built to be inaugurated in the second quarter of 2026. The Gambia is the sixth (6th) country in Africa to establish a court of this nature.
89. Similarly, following a needs assessment exercise, four million Dalasis (GMD4 million) was disbursed to eleven (11) organisations of people with disability. Connected to this, to strengthen social work in the country, a Bachelor of Arts Degree Course is now offered at the UTG to train social workers.
90. In the area of Child protection, a National Children’s Policy was formulated in 2025 to cover emerging child protection issues. In addition, a National Child Protection Strategy and Action Plan have been revised and adopted.
91. Alongside these activities is the establishment of a Child Rights Centre at the UTG. The Centre will offer BSc courses in Children’s Rights and Welfare, as well as conduct research on issues related to children.

92. Likewise, a Child Rights Monitoring Unit has been established at the National Human Rights Commission. The Commission will work closely with the Government and NGOs to monitor matters of children's welfare and rights in The Gambia.
93. Mr. Speaker, youth development remains another priority for my government. Key interventions include youth agricultural training under The Gambia Songhai Initiative, entrepreneurship training under the National Enterprise Development Initiative (NEDI), and dedicated university programmes under the National Youth Service Graduate Programme.

11. GOVERNANCE, JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM

94. Mr. Speaker, institutional reform remains one of the most outstanding achievements of this Government. Consequently, we continue to strengthen the rule of law, accountability, and access to justice through far-reaching Justice Sector reforms.

95. Landmark legislation, such as the Election Act 2025, the Criminal Offences Act 2025, and the Criminal Procedure Act 2025, have modernised our legal framework. They have replaced outdated colonial-era laws, with rights-based, contemporary standards aligned with international human rights obligations.
96. These reforms now enhance electoral integrity, safeguard freedom of expression, strengthen protection against corruption and sexual and gender-based violence. Together these legislations have reinforced due process across the criminal justice system.
97. Mr. Speaker, significant progress has also been recorded in advancing transitional justice, reparation, and accountability. The Government has fully implemented sixty (60) recommendations of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC), with implementation of one hundred and forty-three (143) ongoing.

98. The Reparations Commission became fully operational with seven (7) Commissioners sworn in. Government allocated twenty million Dalasis (GMD20 million) to the Reparations Fund in 2025, with an additional allocation confirmed for 2026.
99. Concurrently, the legal and institutional frameworks for prosecuting serious human rights violations have been strengthened through the Special Prosecutor's Office architecture, the establishment of a Special Criminal Division of the High Court, and ongoing collaboration with regional partners to ensure that impunity for grave crimes is decisively addressed.
100. Access to justice and integrity in the public service has been enhanced further through the expansion of legal aid services nationwide, the rollout of a digital case management system across justice institutions, and the modernisation of key registries. Among them is the Company Registry and intellectual property systems.

101. In December 2025, the National Assembly confirmed the Commissioners of the AntiCorruption Commission, positioning the country to intensify the fight against corruption and promote ethical governance.
102. These reforms, together with the ongoing development of a Justice Sector Strategic Policy for 2026-2030, underscore my government's commitment to a justice system that is independent, transparent, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all Gambians.
103. To improve public service delivery, we are preparing to launch the MyGoV platform, which is currently at an advanced stage for deployment. The platform will serve as the one-stop shop for high-volume priority services. These incorporate birth certification, national identification cards, passports, driver's licences, and business registration.
104. The eventual integration of the platform with Gamswitch, under the Central Bank, will enable the acceptance of Visa and Mastercard payments on the platform, in addition to other supported local digital wallets.

105. We have also made significant progress in modernising public service management through the ongoing development of a comprehensive Human Resource Management Information System .
106. Once completed, this system will integrate personnel records, the payroll, performance management, and pension administration into a single digital platform. Its objectives embrace improving efficiency, accountability, evidence-based planning, and decision-making across government.
107. The Government has equally introduced a comprehensive Performance Management Framework to promote accountability and results. The framework links planning, budgeting, and performance assessment to make sure that public institutions and officials are held accountable.

12. DEFENCE, SECURITY AND NATIONAL STABILITY

108. Mr. Speaker, peace and stability remain the foundation upon which development depends. We have made significant progress in the Security Sector Reform process, strengthening internal security, public safety, and democratic oversight.
109. As a result of these sustained efforts, The Gambia is now ranked the safest country in West Africa and fourth safest in Africa, according to *Business Insider Africa*. This achievement reflects the growing confidence in our national institutions and the unwavering commitment of our security services to safeguarding the country and its people.
110. Law enforcement performance is improving, as indicated by the arrests of various dangerous criminals last year. They include outlaws linked to armed robbery, murder, and other high-profile cases. This suggests growing efficiency within the security services and a rising crime detection trend in the country.

111. In the same manner, border control was strengthened through the rollout of the Migration Information and Data Analysis System and the integrated immigration systems.
112. A major milestone last year was the enactment of the National Security Council Act 2025, which completed The Gambia's national security architecture to enhance strategic oversight, accountability, and inter-agency cooperation.
113. Moving on, drug enforcement efforts recorded significant successes. Over one thousand, one hundred and seventy (1,170) drug-related cases were handled and the conviction rate increased by about ninety-eight percent (98%), alongside progress on the establishment of a regional treatment and rehabilitation centre.

13. TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

114. Mr. Speaker, in 2025, the tourism sector recorded two hundred and thirty-three thousand, one hundred and thirteen (233,113) tourist arrivals, representing a three percent (3%) increase over 2024.

115. In the same way, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises were strengthened, with over one hundred and twenty (120) enterprises supported. Fifty percent (50%) of them secured buyer supplier linkages. While investments in coastal protection and new training programmes positioned the sector for resilient growth, one million, four hundred thousand US dollars (US\$1.4 million) in matching grants was approved for businesses as well.
116. The Government successfully secured a UNESCO funding of one hundred thousand US dollars (US\$100,000) for our Cultural Heritage Preservation Project. So far, ninety intangible cultural elements have been documented, and major upgrades of Fort Bullen and the Mungo Park Memorial have been undertaken.
117. Relatedly, The Gambia has earned UNESCO's recognition of the Historic Georgetown in the Central River Region.

14. DIPLOMACY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

118. Mr. Speaker, in 2025, my government strengthened its international standing and strategic partnerships. The Gambia continues to play leading roles in the international community as Chair of the OIC.
119. Key milestones registered include the first EU Gambia Partnership Meeting under the Samoa Agreement and participation in the EU-AU Summit.
120. I take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation to all our bilateral and multilateral partners whose technical, financial, and policy support continues to complement the Government's efforts and strengthen our national response to development challenges.

15. CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

121. Climate change and land governance are defining challenges of our time; however, we delivered measurable progress in climate resilience and environmental protection.

A five-year six-point-nine (6.9) Million-Euro Gambia Resilience Project was launched last year to restore and sustainably manage over one hundred thousand (100,000) hectares of mangroves across five protected areas. This is directly benefiting one hundred and eighty (180) communities and advancing The Gambia's national climate commitments.

122. My administration also developed the first National Disaster Risk Mitigation Plan (20262033), provided lean-season assistance to over one thousand, one hundred (1,100) households, and provided housing support for families affected by the 2022 floods.
123. An early warning legal and regulatory framework was strengthened through the enactment of the National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Act 2025.
124. With similar resolve, decisive enforcement against environmental degradation led to the interception and prosecution of persons linked to thirty (30) trucks of illegally harvested timber.

Simultaneously, expanded community forestry support has broadened and strengthened conservation outcomes and livelihoods.

16. CONCLUDING REMARKS

125. Honourable Speaker, Honourable National Assembly Members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, as required by the Constitution, my address provides an account of the current state of affairs of the nation.
126. It focuses on the overall administration of our country, zeroing in on major policies, programmes, legislation, achievements, challenges, and future direction.
127. As we reflect on the progress made by my administration and the challenges ahead, my message to all Gambians is that we recommit ourselves to a more resilient and progressive Gambia, based on the principles of **YIRIWA**.

128. Mr. Speaker, my government recognises that, despite the progress made in 2025, challenges linger on. We are aware, for example, of the continuous cost-of-living pressures on many households, hence the heavy investment in agriculture to boost our food self-sufficiency drive through local production.
129. We continue to provide support to ease the challenges associated with smallholder farming and the subsistence nature of our agriculture. Our input support, through subsidies, is to ensure that farmers spend less and earn much more from their produce. The price of groundnuts last year exemplifies this. In the medium to long term, we will continue investing in mechanisation to improve overall agricultural productivity.
130. In addition to persistent climate risks, addressing irregular migration and youth employment urgently requires sustained attention.

My government will continue to work with partners to address these pressing challenges through skills development and Private-sector-led investment.

131. Healthcare access and quality improved tremendously over the last decade, but we will continue striving for greater achievements and better health outcomes.
132. Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members of the National Assembly, Fellow Gambians, looking back, The Gambia today is more stable, more connected, and better governed than it was a decade ago: functional institutions have been established, relevant systems strengthened, and solid foundations laid for more significant outcomes.
133. The task ahead is to consolidate these gains, maintain a vibrant and diversified economy, protect democratic stability, and continue building a resilient and inclusive nation.
134. As we reflect on our journey together, let us reaffirm our commitment to justice and good governance. Our courts, institutions, and leaders in all spheres of work must continue to serve with integrity and ensure that every Gambian feels seen, heard, and respected. This is not a perfect path, but it is the path of progress.

It is a path that demands patience, accountability, dialogue and the courage to correct ourselves when we falter.

135. We extend a hand of friendship to all friendly nations, near and far, and we do so conscious that our voice carries the weight of our people's dignity.
136. Mr. Speaker, my government will continue to build roads, schools, hospitals, and energy systems that connect our communities and power our future. These foundations are not merely concrete and steel. They are lifeline opportunities, symbolising the promise that every child born in The Gambia can dream beyond limits.
137. My administration will continue its drive for digital transformation in all sectors of the economy, especially to inform government service delivery and enhance tax collection and accountability.
138. The on-going reforms in the telecommunication sector will continue with a view to improving efficiency, affordability, quality of service to consumers, and returns on investment.

139. Mr. Speaker, my government reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the principles of gender equality, and we recognise the vital importance of empowering our women and youth. We will continue creating opportunities for girls and women and insist on treating them with dignity.

140. As an obligation, we are determined to mainstream gender equality and recognise women in our governance structures and systems. By upholding these values, we will build a stronger, fairer, and more united nation where every citizen can contribute to, and benefit from, our collective progress.

141. Likewise, we recognise the vital role of our development partners, whose support has been instrumental in advancing our national priorities. Their solidarity reminds us that The Gambia is not alone in its pursuit of growth and stability. With their partnership, we are better equipped to transform challenges into opportunities and to ensure that no Gambian is left behind.

142. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Gambians, as we approach the 2026 Presidential Election, I call on all political parties, candidates, and supporters to conduct their campaigns in a spirit of peace, tolerance, and mutual respect. Elections are a cornerstone of our democracy, and they must strengthen rather than divide us.
143. Together with the Independent Electoral Commission and all relevant institutions, my government remains fully committed to ensuring that the upcoming election is conducted in a peaceful, transparent, credible, and orderly manner.
144. I urge every Gambian to uphold the values of unity, dialogue, and national cohesion so that the outcome of the election reflects the will of the people and further consolidates our democratic gains.
145. Mr. Speaker, I also call on all Gambians to join my government in building The Gambia we aspire. We may not have The Gambia of our dreams yet, but we are shaping it with every effort, every sacrifice, and every act of service.

Together, we are writing a story of resilience and hope, a story that says to the world: The Gambia is rising, and although the journey is long, our resolve is unshakable.

146. To conclude, I sincerely thank my Cabinet members, the Judiciary, the Legislature, our Public Servants, the Private Sector, Civil Society Organisations, and the Security and Intelligence Services, as well as all Gambians and friends of The Gambia for our successes.
147. I pray that we continue to work closely in harmony and strive for sustained peace, stability, security, progress, and inclusive development.

I thank you all for your attention.

