

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY ADAMA
BARROW, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE GAMBIA AT THE LAYING OF THE
FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE
CONSTRUCTION OF 50KM URBAN ROADS
PROJECT IN THE WEST COAST REGION
AND KANIFING MUNICIPALITY,
HELD ON THE
27TH OCTOBER 2021
IN BRUFUT**

Your Excellency, the Vice President of the Republic of The Gambia,
Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly,
My Lord, The Chief Justice,
Honourable Cabinet Ministers
Honourable National Assembly Members,
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Senior Civil Servants and Heads of Government Agencies,
Service Chiefs, Regional and Local Government Officials
Members of the Press,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure and hope for a better Gambia for all of us that I join you this morning to lay the foundation stone for a fifty-kilometre Urban Roads Project in the West Coast Region and Kanifing Municipality.

This is a day we will all remember as another major milestone in the development process of the necessary infrastructure for the successful hosting of the OIC Summit in 2022.

The occasion doubly strengthens our hopes for a better and up-to-date highway and a sustainable road network to facilitate movement and economic activities within the Greater Banjul Area and the West Coast Region (WCR).

When completed, the project will vitally expand our urban road network to accommodate the increasing volume of road traffic, address the need for more effective road safety measures and set up an efficient drainage system within the Greater Banjul Area. It is obvious that the construction of good roads, where they are needed most, can boost commercial engagements and improve the image of urban settings.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, this Urban Roads Project has been well thought through. It has been designed to ease access to the densely populated communities of Kanifing and WCR.

There are towns and settlements, big and small, that have been isolated for decades due to poor accessibility, yet the situation continued to be ignored. Those isolated areas will be served by the proposed network of feeder roads that will link them to the highway.

Brufut, Ghanatown, Sukuta, Bundung, the Senegambia enclave and its neighbourhood, particularly stand to benefit from the project. In addition, the project is intended to de-congest such major roads as the Bertil Harding Highway and the Westfield-Brikama and Westfield-Sukuta Roads.

The development of these busy roads will solve the difficulties of schoolchildren, patients, business persons and the numerous commuters who struggle daily to board the few vehicles that ply these congested areas. Through such projects, access to schools, hospitals and other social amenities and services will be enhanced gradually throughout the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, the project we are launching today focuses on urban settlements where economic activities are concentrated and the population density is high. All those areas are marked by over-stretched social amenities. Aside from easing traffic flow, or facilitating transportation, the project will also contribute to poverty reduction, as outlined in the NDP.

The scope of works for this project consists of the construction of twenty (20) routes that add up to fifty kilometres (50 km), forty-five kilometres (45 km) of asphalt pavement, and five kilometres (5 km) of concrete pavement. It also has provision for the installation of solar powered street lights and the construction of shoulders, sidewalks, drains and parking areas.

For putting this project together, I register the appreciation of the Gambian nation as a whole to the Saudi Fund for Development for providing the estimated funding requirement of fifty million US Dollars (\$US 50 million). We thank them abundantly.

In the same way, I congratulate the winning bidders for the consultancy, that is, PACE and GAMECS and the two contractors, namely: SSTP-CSE-Al Fahd Company JV for Lot 1 and Pavifort-Gambisara-Huta JV for Lot 2.

Relatedly, I thank Honourable Bai Lamin Jobe, Minister of Transport, Works and Infrastructure and his team of experts of the Ministry and the National Roads Authority. They are the contract administrators and implementing agent.

By the same token, I congratulate the OIC Gambia Secretariat on the achievements made so far in connection with this Urban Roads Project and other infrastructure items lined up in relation to the OIC Summit. I wish all the teams timely and successful execution of their contracts and duties.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

The ultimate success of this project depends immensely on the commitment of and collaboration among the parties; that is, the contractors, the consultant, the work force and, to a larger extent, the beneficiaries. As such, I implore the communities and Councils to act as watchdogs for the successful implementation of the project.

Before proceeding to lay the foundation stone for the project, I must thank you all for your attendance and support. I pray that we live to come together again to inaugurate the new roads.

Thank you for your attention.
