

# *State House* **NEWSLETTER**

10<sup>TH</sup> EDITION, JANUARY - JULY, 2022



## **President Barrow's 2nd Term: A Focus on Intensifying Reform Agenda**

*"Give Back to Society As Much As You Have Received"* - President Barrow to UTG Students

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

2021 was perhaps one of the busiest periods for the Office of the President's Media and Communications Unit (MCU). As the country prepared for the December 2021 Presidential Elections, the team also engaged in rigorous media and publicity activities, documenting and publicising the government's achievements under President Adama Barrow's leadership.

While acknowledging his candidature for a political party, we also did not lose sight of the fact that he was the incumbent President. The team had a responsibility to serve its purpose by highlighting the success stories of his government during the five years, despite it being a political season. The team was on his campaign trail to tease out policies and programmes in his public statements and re-echoed them through our various platforms.

Following President Barrow's landmark victory, the MCU was again part of the organising committee for the inauguration ceremony as the third President of the Republic of The Gambia. The ceremony witnessed the attendance of His counterparts from the ECOWAS region and members of the diplomatic and consular

corps. The MCU ensured that the inauguration was a success, consolidating efforts for the media coverage of the event, both locally and internationally.

The MCU worked closely with the President when he took a nationwide tour to campaign for the National Assembly Election on 9th April 2021. The MCU created a critical role during this process as the elections gave the President and his party a majority in the National Assembly.

The MCU also participated in organising major events such as the Swearing-in of new Cabinet Ministers, ensuring that the media was up to date on the events and activities of the President.

In this regard, I congratulate the entire team for working relentlessly to ensure that the Presidency's communications and outreach to all Gambians and citizens of The Gambia are as effective as possible. I want to express my gratitude to the whole OP staff, on behalf of the MCU, especially senior management, for making this publication possible.

**Amie Bojang-Sissoho**

Director of Press and Public Relations

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# OVERVIEW

The 10th edition of the State House Newsletter illustrates the strides taken by His Excellency the President in his quest to build on the gains of his first term in office. The Newsletter is headlined by the announcement of a new diverse and inclusive Cabinet on 10th May 2022. His declaration of the Cabinet makeup marked the beginning of a new dawn, prioritising effectiveness and efficiency in the public service and adopting strict measures against corruption and other bad governance practices.

The Newsletter also highlights the President's engagements at the State House during the first half of the year. These include activities geared towards consolidating our democratic gains, fostering our relationship with the international community, and steering socio-economic and socio-cultural development.

The remarkable performance of our national team, the Scorpions at their maiden participation in the AFCON soccer showpiece, the commissioning of the new Basse market, and

the increase in the number of embassies and international representatives in The Gambia were all laudable courses supported by the Presidency.

The Newsletter further highlights President Barrow's participation at the 16th African Union Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. It also highlights the significant gains of public institutions, including the University of The Gambia, the Judiciary, and the National Assembly.

Under the diplomatic specterum, the Newsletter also highlights the diplomatic engagements of the President as he welcomed Fourteen (14) Ambassadors to The Gambia. The Gambia, under His Excellency President Barrow's administration, has made significant strides in strengthening its bilateral ties with our allies.

On top of the captivating narrative of stories, the Newsletter presents telling images that enhance the reader's understanding and experience.

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# GOVERNANCE

## Infrastructure, Agriculture, and Energy as Gateways to Economic Independence



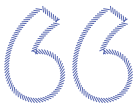
*Security Forces Performing the Guard of Honor at the 57 Independence Celebrations*

***“My vision for The Gambia is a nation with top-class infrastructure, sufficient energy for national coverage, and a technology-supported society that matches the digital world, all of which propel growth, economic development, and social cohesion through an adequately equipped human resource base.”*** H.E. Adama Barrow

In his address at the celebrations of The Gambia’s 57th independence Anniversary, His Excellency President Adama Barrow emphasised the importance of Economic Independence as he challenged government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) to tap into the potentials in the Energy, Agriculture, and Technology sectors to transform the country’s economy.

Following his reelection for a 2nd term in office, President Barrow said his new term in office is an opportunity for his government to develop value-driven policies and programmes that will positively impact the socio-economic lives and livelihood of all Gambians.





*“The next five years provide opportunities to pursue such noble goals with more passion and vigour. We now have the chance to be proactive and be better organised to utilise our resources more efficiently and usefully. The world is moving fast, and we must keep moving equally fast.”*



*President Barrow, First Lady Join Senior Government Officials at 57 Independence*

## **President Barrow Declares Zero Tolerance for Corruption and Poor Service Delivery, as He Swears in New Cabinet**

President Adama Barrow, on 10th May 2022, presided over the swearing-in ceremony of the new Cabinet Ministers, charging them with achieving the development needs of the people. He said his Government would implement the anti-corruption laws to the fullest, urging public servants to be apolitical and serve all Gambians equally.

The President, conscious that the new Cabinet is assuming office at a time when people are making an unprecedented demand for accountability from public officials, puts emphasis on serving the interest of the citizens. He said even as his administration registered some remarkable progress in his first term in office, much more needs to be done. The President lamented the country’s slow transformation since independence, emphasising the importance of public officials and citizens working together to improve the living standard of all people.



*“This state of affairs has to change. Competence, timely delivery of service, and output must prevail over everything else in all Government institutions”.*  
**President Barrow**

The Vice President, H.E Badara Joof, also challenged his counterparts to come up with swift measures to address the rising cost of living and security problems. Vice President Joof stated business could not go on, as usual, noting that their appointment as cabinet members is to solve issues and serve the interest of all Gambians.



*President Barrow with New Cabinet Ministers, May 2022*

## **“Give Back to Society As Much As You Have Received”- President Barrow to UTG Students**

President Adama Barrow, speaking at The University of the Gambia’s 14th Convocation Ceremony on 5th March 2022, urged graduating students to consider their new status as graduates and to give back as much as they have gotten to society.

The President presided over the ceremony as the Chancellor of the University and delivered a passionate and inspiring speech to the latest batch of graduates from the country’s highest citadel of learning.

Highlighting the significance of the occasion, President Barrow described it as a turning point for the graduates and their families, friends, and the nation as a whole. He applauded them while stating the UTG’s impressive contribution to the development of The Gambia.

The theme of this year's convocation ceremony is **“National Unity, Patriotism and Nation Building.”** President Barrow alluded to the findings of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission as enough evidence that indicates that there is an urgent need for Gambians to engage in deep self-examination and commit to uniting the nation and building on our diversity and strengths for the welfare of all citizens.

President Barrow highlighted the importance of education in the course for national unity and reconciliation, saying that **“education must be at the centre of efforts to moderate behaviour, change attitudes and contribute positively to national development and peaceful coexistence”**.



*“As ambassadors of the UTG, remember that success and failure in life can be influenced by five critical factors, namely: hard work, sincerity, commitment, discipline, and honesty. Similarly, peace, hope, and courage sustain us as human beings, especially in times of difficulty.”*

## UTG 14th Convocation in Pictures



## Legal Year 2022 - A Renewed Commitment to the Independence of the Judiciary



*President Barrow pose for photos with Members of the Legal Fraternity*

The opening of the legal year is an important occasion that sets the tone and reaffirms the government's commitment to strengthening the judicial system. As is customary, this year's occasion was presided over by His Excellency President Barrow on February 6th, 2022.

During his keynote address, President Barrow reiterated his government's continuous support for the country's Judiciary, stating that this is done in the spirit of sustaining the healthy and stable democracy the country has built

over the past 5 years. President Barrow noted that this progress is anchored on the government's recognition that the Judiciary must remain resolute, independent, and strong enough to facilitate good governance and the rule of law.

President Barrow went on to call for Gambians to celebrate the heroes of the judicial system, who continue to work courageously to administer justice and enrich our law system. He added ***"Together, we have successfully laid solid foundations in the areas of good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law and women empowerment, which we now need to develop and extend."***



*Members of the Legal Fraternity*

## President Barrow Presides Over the Swearing-in of New High Court Judges

As part of fulfilling his promise of strengthening the country's judiciary and civil service, President Adama Barrow presided over the swearing-in ceremony of three High Court Judges, a Permanent Secretary, and a member of the Human Rights Commission, at the State House in Banjul on 13th April 2022.



*Left-Right - Justice Isatou Janneh Njie, Justice Sheriff B. Tabally, Justice Sidi K. Jobateh*

Justice Sheriff B. Tabally, Justice Sidi K. Jorbateh, and Justice Isatou Janneh Njie, took the oath of office and secrecy before Cabinet Ministers. Also sworn in were Halimatou Dibba as a member of the Human Rights Commission and Mariama Njie as Permanent Secretary assigned to the Office of the President.



*Left - President Barrow with Halimatou Dibba of the Human Rights Commission Right - President Barrow with PS Mariama Njie*

In his address to the newly sworn-in officials, President Barrow said the appointments are in fulfilment of his government's pledge to continue strengthening the country's judiciary and civil service respectively. He added that the appointment of the judges will contribute to the Gambianisation of the judiciary.

# DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

## The Gambia - Democratic Republic of Congo Seek New Frontiers in Bilateral Cooperation



*President Barrow and His Counterpart H.E Félix-Antoine TSHISEKEDI TSHILOMBO of the DRC*

Democratic Republic of Congo is host to thousands of Gambians and their families. A sitting Gambian president has never visited the country, but His Excellency, President Adama Barrow in March 2022 made history when he visited the Democratic Republic of Congo on a two-day official visit, as part of efforts to boost bilateral cooperation between the two countries. President Barrow was received warmly by his counterpart, H.E Félix-Antoine TSHISEKEDI TSHILOMBO, and went on to attend official events.



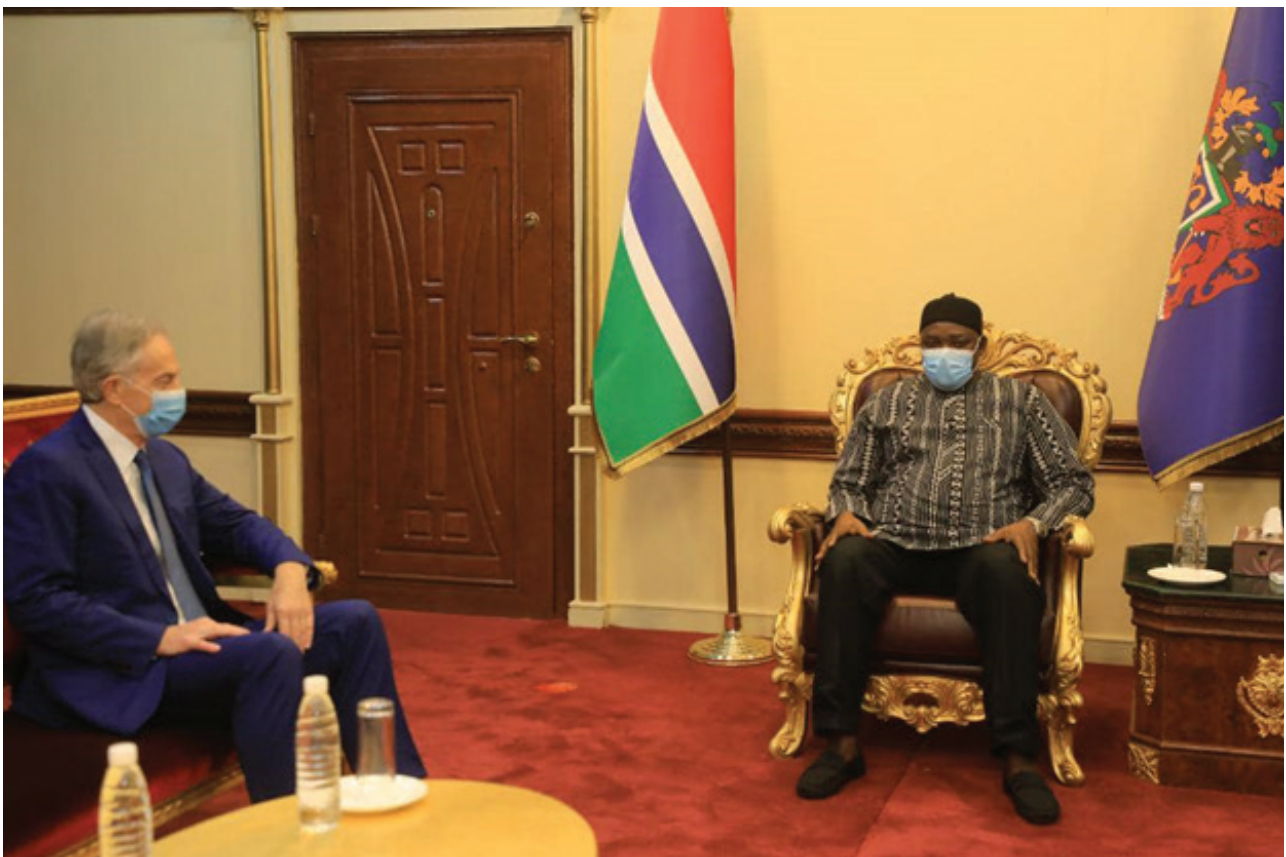
Following a closed-door discussion with his host, both leaders held a joint press briefing. They emphasised commitment to developing and consolidating bilateral ties. President Barrow stated that The Gambia seeks to enhance diplomatic and trade connections with the DRC, noting that The Gambia has a large presence in the DRC.

Given the Gambia's geographic location, the President indicated that the two countries could explore collaboration in aviation transport to make the country an air hub for both West and Central Africa.

## President Barrow Receives Former British Prime Minister

Since coming to office in 2017, the Office of the President and the Tony Blair Institute has built a strong bond to strengthen governance and enhance the performance of the Office of the President. Former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair frequented The Gambia and held regular consultations with President Barrow. Another such consultations was held on 5th February 2022 at the State House in Banjul. Mr Blair's mission was dual, to congratulate the President on his re-election and his administration's success in strengthening democracy in the country, and also on a monitoring visit to take stock of the work the Tony Blair Institute is doing in The Gambia.

Speaking to the media after he met with President Barrow, Mr Blair highlighted that President Barrow also talked about his government's interest in harnessing technological advancements to help propel the country's development, and plans to create decent jobs for young people to be more hopeful about their country and its future.



*President Barrow with Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair*

## Outgoing U.S. Ambassador Bid Farewell - New Ambassador Presents Letters of Credence



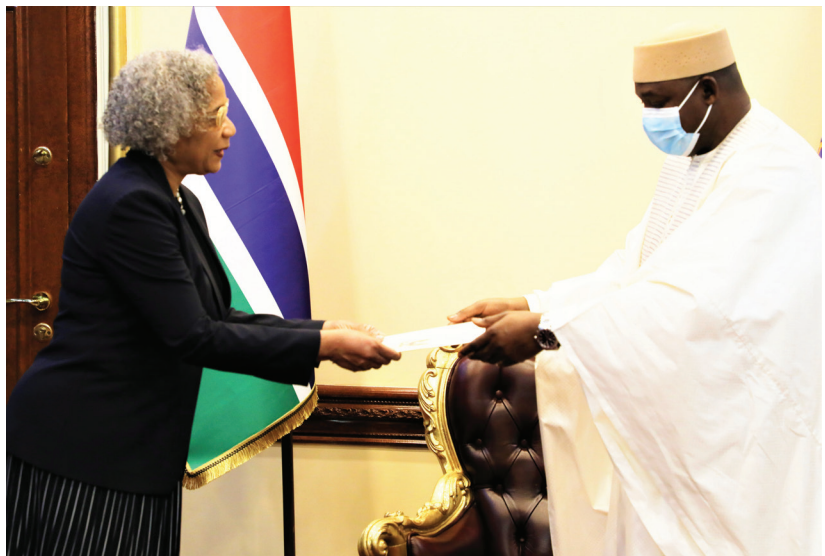
*President Barrow with Former U.S Ambassador to The Gambia, H.E Richard Carl Paschall*

The former and then outgoing US ambassador to The Gambia H.E Richard Carl Paschall on 8th, February 2022 bid farewell to President Barrow at the State House in Banjul, following the end of his three-year tour of duty in The Gambia.

He thanked President Barrow, the Government, and the people of The Gambia for the fruitful relations they have built with the United States during his term in The Gambia, expressing hope that his successor will further strengthen the ties.

Following the departure of H.E Richard Carl, President Barrow received the Letters of Credence of the New US ambassador to The Gambia, Her Excellency Sharon L. Cromer

Speaking at the occasion, President Barrow stated that the relations between The Gambia and the US have greatly improved since he took office in 2017. He applauded the support and partnership the US has been providing to The Gambia considering the many challenges the country faces.



*President Barrow receiving the letters of Credence from the New U.S Ambassador Sharon L. Cromer.*

President Barrow re-echoed the need for continued cooperation between the two countries in the fields of capacity building and job creation to help curb the tide of irregular migration. He highlighted the positive impact of The Gambia's readmission into the US Millennium Challenge Corporation programme.



## President Barrow Pledges Government's Support to Partner with Libya



*President Barrow Welcoming the Libyan Ambassador Munsef Mohammed.*

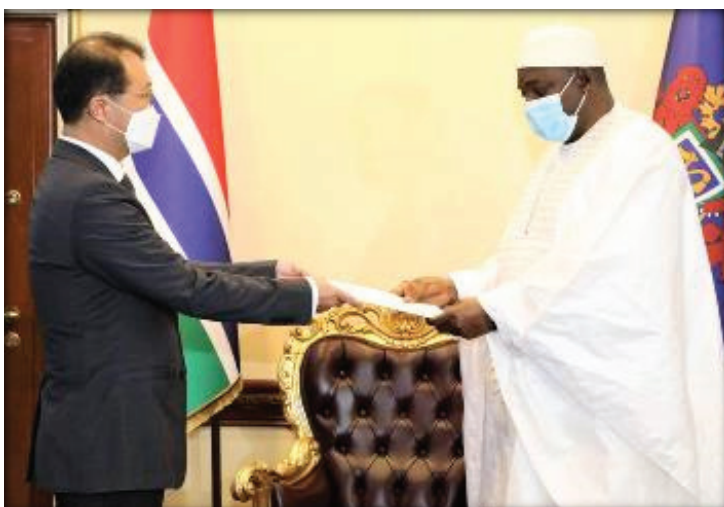
President Adama Barrow on April 21st received the letters of credence of H.E. Munsef Mohammed Haweel Naseeb, as ambassador-designate of the State of Libya to the Republic of The Gambia.

President Barrow welcomed Ambassador Naseeb assuring him of his government's support and cooperation during his tenure. Speaking on areas of cooperation, President Barrow tasked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to work with Ambassador Naseeb to address the condition of Gambians in Libya.

Ambassador Naseeb also extended a congratulatory message from the Libyan Leader to President Barrow on his reelection and pledged to cooperate on strengthening the ties between the two Governments and their people.

The Gambia and Libya have longstanding diplomatic and bilateral relations spanning many years. The two countries have cooperated on many fronts for the economic and socio-cultural benefit of their people.

President Barrow also received the letter of credence of the Ambassador-designate from the Republic of Korea to The Gambia, His Excellency Kim Ji-Joon.



*President Barrow receiving the letters of Credence from Ambassador Ji-Joon*

President Barrow welcomed Ambassador Ji-Joon to The Gambia acknowledging the long-standing bilateral and multilateral relations between the two countries. He also thanked the Republic of Korea for its support to The Gambia, particularly in the areas of education and the country's transitional Justice Programme through the United Nations.

President Barrow urged the Ambassador to explore the expansion of the relationship between the Agriculture and trade sectors to help towards food security and job creation opportunities for Gambians.

Ambassador Ji-Joon also expressed his country's readiness to work with The Gambia to further develop the country's agriculture sector. He said Korea and The Gambia have a lot in common and their relationship will be of mutual benefit.

## Gambia - China Seek to Strengthen Relations

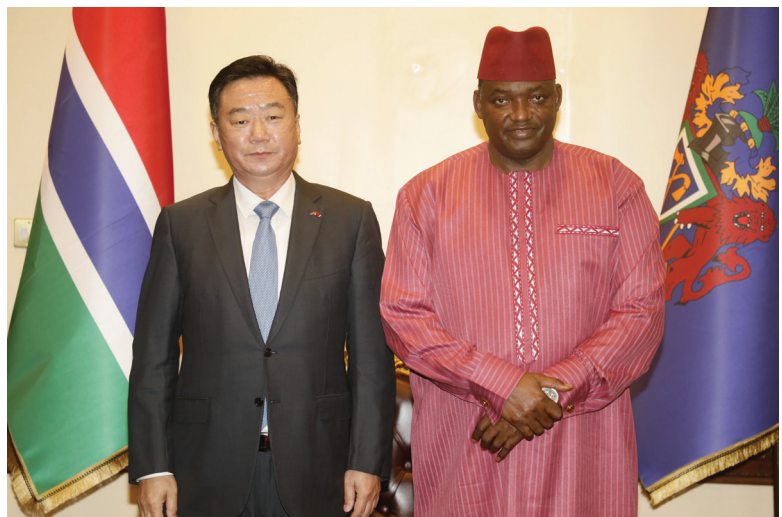


H.E. Ma Jianchun, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to The Gambia on March 10th paid a courtesy visit to His Excellency President Adama Barrow, with the two leaders committing to strengthen the countries' bilateral relations.

Speaking after meeting President Barrow, Ambassador Jianchun said he extended Chinese President Xi Jinping's best wishes to President Barrow for a successful second term in office. He said

China is looking toward building on the successes of its relationship with The Gambia in the last five years.

Ambassador Jianchun highlighted the many development projects and cooperation agreements between The Gambia and China. These include those in areas of agriculture, health, and infrastructural development. Ambassador Jianchun also noted the cooperation agreement signed between the two countries last year, which is expected to provide over a billion dalasi worth of development projects for The Gambia. He also discussed how The Gambia and China can collaborate in the process of rebuilding their economic recovery strategies following the Covid-19 pandemic.



## President Barrow Confers National Award on Former Chinese Ambassador

A few weeks after his meeting with the President, On June 2nd, Ambassador Ma Jianchun returned to the statehouse to bid farewell to the President. In recognition of his exemplary service to The Gambia, President Barrow conferred an honorary award of the Grand Officer of the Order of The Republic of The Gambia to the then outgoing Chinese Ambassador to The Gambia, H.E. Ma Jianchun, Ambassador Ma was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to The Gambia in 2018. In his four year tenure, Ambassador Ma oversaw the growth of relations between The Gambia and China. During this period The Gambia and China collaborated on several fronts including health, infrastructure and agriculture. He also played a pivotal role in building the people to people relations between the two countries.

In his acceptance speech, Ambassador Ma said the award signifies the strength and importance of the relations between the two countries. He said the award will serve as encouragement for him and his embassy staff to build on the relations between The Gambia and China.

### The Citation:

*From 2018 to date, Ambassador Ma Jianchun has diligently represented his country and worked tirelessly to serve the interest of the Gambian people.*

*During his tenure, Ambassador Ma saw the completion of many Chinese landmark projects in The Gambia. In January 2020, Ambassador Ma successfully handed over the Sir Dawda Jawara International Conference Centre to the Government of The Gambia.*

*In furtherance of the Chinese Government's implementation of the China Aid Project on the construction of Bridges and Roads in the Upper River Region (URR) of The Gambia, His Excellency Ambassador Ma also formally handed over the two URR Bridges and Road to the Government of The Gambia in December 2021, following the successful completion of the project.*

*Ambassador Ma also facilitated the donation of a batch of security inspection equipment for the Banjul International Airport in 2021.*

*The insignia was conferred on him in recognition of his selfless and invaluable dedication to service as well as his stellar commitment to further strengthening the bonds of friendship and fruitful cooperation and partnership that already exist between the people's Republic of China and the Republic of The Gambia.*

*Ambassador Ma was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to The Gambia in 2018. In his four year tenure, Ambassador Ma oversaw the growth of relations between The Gambia and China.*



## Commonwealth Secretary - General Pledges Full Support to The Gambia



*President Barrow with Honorable Patricia Scotland*

The Gambia rejoined the Commonwealth in February 2018 after the Commonwealth Secretariat confirmed their application had been approved unanimously by the Commonwealth Member States. The Gambia has since improved its relationship with the international community. Earlier this year, this relationship was further solidified when the Commonwealth Secretary-General Honorable Patricia Scotland Pledged the body's full support to The Gambia.

Hon. Scotland made the remarks following an audience with President Barrow in January. She was in Banjul as head of the Commonwealth delegation to President Barrow's second inauguration ceremony held on January 19th, 2022.

Honourable Scotland applauded the conduct of the December 2021 presidential election, which she referred to as free and fair. She commended President Barrow's inaugural speech for being inclusive of all Gambians. She also praised Gambia's reengagement with the Commonwealth as a positive move that will benefit the country and its people in many ways.

## President Barrow Reaffirms His Commitment to the Success of the Transitional Programme

President Adama Barrow, Friday, 10th June 2022, received the US Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Michael Gonzales at the State House in Banjul. The two held a long discussion about the Government's reform programme and development priorities.



President Barrow expressed commitment to support the transitional programmes for institutional and political reforms. The President assured Mr. Gonzales that while his Government stands to ensure the implementation of the TRRC, CRC, and the institutional programmes, he called on partners to provide the necessary support. The President reiterated that together with all stakeholders, they would ensure justice, peace, reparation, and reconciliation prevail in the country.

Gonzales pledged that The Gambia and the US would continue cooperating, highlighting developments between the two countries, particularly with the Millennium Challenge Corporation and USAID. He said his office would work with the US Embassy in Banjul to continue to support The Gambia's development agenda.

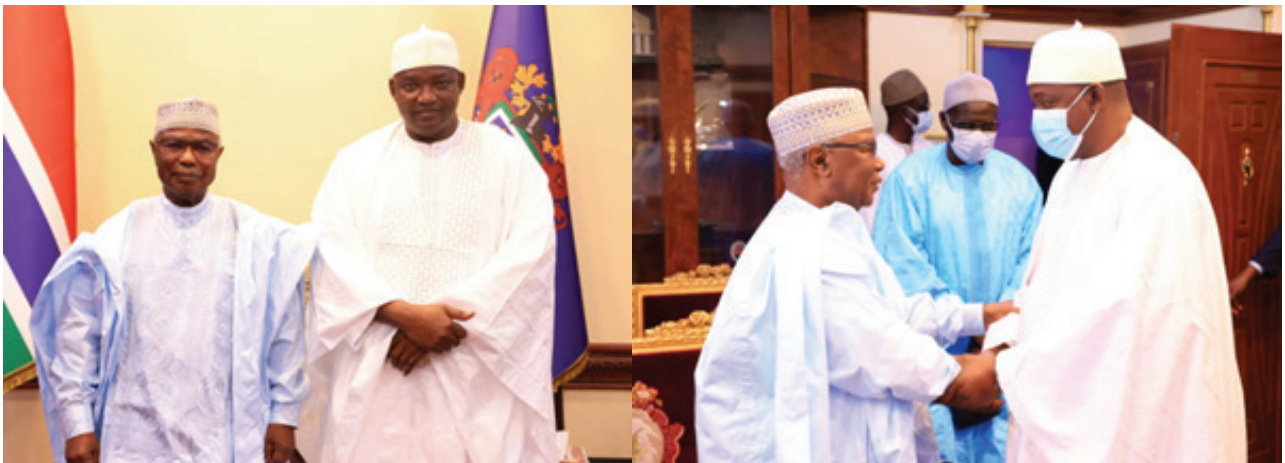
Gonzales was accompanied to the State House by the US Ambassador to Banjul, Sharon L. Cromer.



## Gambia on Track to Host OIC 2022 Summit - PRESIDENT BARROW

Officials of the OIC Secretariat in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have frequented The Gambia on monitoring the level of preparedness and progress of work to host the OIC Summit 2022. The latest of such a visits was by the OIC Secretary –General, Dr Hissein Brahim Taha in June 2022.

Receiving the OIC SG, His Excellency, President Adama Barrow, urged the members of the OIC States to support his country’s hosting of this important summit. Their support will further bring to light that it is not the size of the country that matters but its ability to host an Ummah that stands for strengthening Unity and Solidarity, and supporting the less fortunate amongst its Ummah. Though tiny, The Gambia has a big heart and commitment to host the 15th Heads of State and Government Islamic Summit on its soil but needs the required resources to translate its commitment to the actual hosting of the OIC Summit 2022.



In 2019, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation declared that The Gambia will host the OIC Summit 2022. The 3rd President of the Republic of The Gambia, H. E Adama Barrow, and his Government took pride in the announcement. Though a tiny country of fewer than two million people, 95% of the population is Muslim. Therefore, the Government is excited to host the Heads of State and Government of the 57 - member organisation. Without delay, an OIC Gambia Secretariat was set up to coordinate the local hosting team.

Since the announcement in 2019, The Gambia Government engaged in intensive advocacy, seeking support for a successful hosting of the second largest gathering of member organisations in the world. A \$50 million International conference centre has been constructed, the airport is now one of international standard and the construction of a VVIP lounge is at an advanced stage.

A series of training programmes are ongoing for the Protocol and Security and various local and sub-committees including the Media and Communications sub-committee are actively preparing.

Other sectors are equally working to ensure water and electricity, and internet services are in place for a historic event in the tiny West African state. Construction of twenty-two roads including a three-lane highway has begun. In the tourism development area on the coastal fringes of the Kombos there are rising buildings at an unprecedented rate.

The best news from the visiting Secretary-General of the OIC is that its member countries have committed to support The Gambia's hosting of the Conference, which would make it the second country to host it in the West Africa sub region.

## **Trade, Peace and Security are Top on Gambia's Bilateral Agenda**

The overall objective of The Gambia's foreign policy is to enhance peace and security, ensure the country's appropriate and dignified position in the International Community, and promote the interest of the country in an increasing globalised world. The Gambia recognises that the soft power of diplomacy will serve its national interest better in terms of building peace, stability, attracting investment for inclusive national development and prosperity.

Since assuming office in 2017, President Barrow has been resolute and steadfast in strengthening The Gambia's bilateral and multilateral relations with its partners. The Gambia has been friendly and building good partnerships and corporations for development with many countries.

Over the past five years, many countries have sent their country representatives (Ambassadors) to The Gambia – some for the first time.

As President Barrow begins his 2nd term in Office, the Gambia has had an increase in the number of Diplomats sent to represent their countries. The Month of June witnessed a flurry of these engagements for the President as he received Letters of Credence from 14 ambassadors to The Gambia from Across the World. The Ambassadors presented their letters of credence to President after each was accorded with the Guard of Honor by the State Guard officers at the Statehouse in Banjul.

The presentations were done in the order below.



*H.E. Lusi Dimingo Camara de Barros  
Ambassador of Guinea-Bissau*



*H.E. Enrique Ernesto Escorza Zamudio -  
Ambassador of United Mexican States*



*H.E. Tamas Endre Feher  
Ambassador of Hungary*



*H.E. Ben Bourgal  
Ambassador of the State of Israel*



*H.E. Karabaranga Jean-Pierie  
Ambassador of The Republic Rwanda*



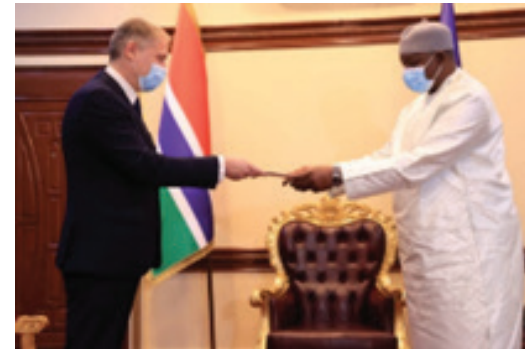
*Bangladesh*



*H.E. Marek Skolil  
Ambassador of Czech Republic*



*H.E. Elvis Toolout Shiweda  
Ambassador of Namibia*



*Greece*



*H.E. Saad A. Alnofai  
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi*



*H.E. Bongwiwe Qwabe  
Ambassador of South Africa*



*H.E. Andrea Semadeni  
Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation*



*H.E. Mohamed Hussein Abukar  
Ambassador of Federal Republic of  
Somalia*



*H.E. Izawa Osamu  
Ambassador of Japan*



President Barrow urged the ambassadors to make good of The Gambia's strategic location and peaceful and democratic disposition to expand trade and investment opportunities for the benefit of our countries. He also called on them to build on people-to-people relations and cooperation by the private sector in The Gambia and their respective countries.

On bilateral matters, the Gambian leader shared fraternal sentiments, invoking the need for closer cooperation between The Gambia and its partners, especially in Africa. Referring to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement, President Barrow called on the diplomats to explore the trade possibilities and investments in agriculture, education, and technology.

## **UK Human Rights Ambassador Hails Gambia's Successful Democratic Transition**

The Gambia has ratified several UN Human Rights Conventions in recent years, pledging to follow the standards outlined in these global human rights agreements. British Ambassador for Human Rights Rita French has commended the country's smooth transition to democratic governance since 2017, saying the country is a beacon of hope for democracy and human rights in the sub-region and around the world.

Ambassador French made the statement during a recent visit to the State House, to pay a courtesy visit to President Adama Barrow, to discuss the country's human rights situation since her last visit in August 2019. French lauded the commitment from the government which ensured the respect for the rights of the people and the promotion of democracy in The Gambia.

She also noted the vibrancy of civil society organisations and parliamentary democracy in the country as another example of the successes registered in the country.



*President Barrow with Ambassador French*

## CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES ON H.E PRESIDENT BARROW'S RE-ELECTION

The December 4th Presidential Elections saw His Excellency President Adama Barrow win a landslide victory for the 2nd term in office as the President of the Republic of The Gambia. Several Heads of state around the world sent the President congratulatory messages on his historic re-election.

Some of the earlier messages were received from H.E President Macky Sall of Senegal, H.E Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, HM King Muhamed VI of Morocco, H.E President Mohamed Bazoum of Niger.

Other messages came from His Excellency Miguel Diaz-Canel, President of the Republic of Cuba, who conveyed his country and people's continued willingness to expand the relation and friendship with the Gambia and its people. The Emir of Qatar H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani also congratulated President Barrow.

Additionally, H.E. Diaz-Canel Preeti Sinha, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, also conveyed a congratulatory message to President Barrow through the Gambia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Honourable Lang Yabou. Ms. Sinha praised the President and the Gambian people for the country's strong democratic credentials exhibited in a peaceful, free and fair manner the elections were conducted. She pledged her institution's full support and collaboration with the Gambia in its development goals.

There were leaders who took advantage of the social media, and they sent messages through their Twitter handles. Amongst them were H.E. Imran Khan of Pakistan and H.E. Evariste Ndayishimiye of Burundi. Many other Gambians and friends of The Gambia congratulated and shared best wishes with the President.

# REGIONAL INTEGRATION

## President Barrow Attends ECOWAS Extraordinary Summit

On 3rd February 2022, His Excellency President Adama Barrow join other ECOWAS Heads of State and Government for an Extraordinary Summit in Accra, Ghana to discuss the security threats in the sub-region amidst the Military Coup in Mali and the attempted coup in Guinea Bissau.



In his opening statement, the President of the Republic of Ghana and Chair of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, deliberated on the theme of the Summit and cited the February 2nd coup attempt in the Republic of Guinea Bissau as a matter of grave concern to the ECOWAS bloc. He added that the ECOWAS Authority reaffirmed its commitment to ***“upholding the principle of zero tolerance of ascension to power through unconstitutional means”***.



## ECOWAS Observer Mission Praises Peaceful Nature of The National Assembly Elections



*H.E Mohamed Ibn Chambas speaking to the Media after his Meeting with President Barrow*

The head of the ECOWAS Election Observer Mission to the April 9th National Assembly elections Hon. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, praised the conduct of the polls calling them **“peaceful and credible”**.

Dr. Chambas was at the State House to brief His Excellency, President Adama Barrow of his mission’s observation and findings during the elections. Dr. Chambas described The Gambia as a good example to the rest of the sub-region.

*“The Gambia should be proud of itself”, for maintaining a reputation as a peaceful people, a peaceful country who have delivered a peaceful and credible election”*. He noted.

ECOWAS deployed 40 election observers to all the seven regions in The Gambia to monitor the electoral process.

## Gambia-Chad Relations Heightens as President Barrow Receives Special Envoy



The Gambia-Chad bilateral Relationship has grown stronger in recent years. Consequently, President Adama Barrow recently welcomed the Chadian Minister of Infrastructure and Regional Administration as a special envoy of His Excellency Mahamat Idriss Déby, President of the Republic of Chad, at the State House in Banjul on April 1st, 2022. Mr. Geo was in Banjul to convey a special message of goodwill and friendship from President Deby to President Adama

Barrow. In recent years, The Gambia signed a Joint Communiqué for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of The Gambia, Chad, and other central African countries.

## President Barrow Bid Farewell to ECOMIG Gendarmerie

His Excellency President Adama Barrow bid farewell to the 2nd contingent of Senegalese Gendarmerie soldiers, who are returning to Senegal after serving in The Gambia for five years as part of The ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG) forces. The ceremony took place on May 16th, 2022, at the Statehouse in Banjul.

President Barrow presented them with certificates of Appreciation for their hard work, discipline, and dedication. He commended them and said the Gambia recognized their contribution to ensuring peace and stability in the Gambia at a time when it was needed the most.

On his behalf and of the Gambian people, President Barrow also extended his gratitude to His Excellency President Macky Sall and the people of the Republic of Senegal for their support in ensuring peace and security in The Gambia and the sub-region by extension.

As part of Gambia's broad transition agenda and to provide stability for the post-transition political environment, ECOMIG was launched in January 2017 to ensure the stability of the country during the democratic transition and to protect the country's fragile democracy at the time.

Composing of troops from Senegal, Nigeria, and Ghana, ECOMIG was primarily tasked with training and assisting the army and police in protecting the country from external threats and maintaining internal security.



## President Barrow Attends 16th Extraordinary AU Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea

President Adama Barrow has reaffirmed his government's stance against the unconstitutional change of governments, saying it undermines peace and sustainable development.

President Barrow was speaking on Saturday, June 4, 2022, during the 16th African Union Extraordinary Summit on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Change of Government in Africa, held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. President Barrow said his government fully supports ECOWAS's position against coups and violent means of assuming power. He called for the quick return to constitutional order in all affected countries.

The President advocated for the need to strengthen democracy, peace, security, and development to counter the undesirable conditions leading to unconstitutional change of governments. He called on his fellow African leaders to renew their commitment to addressing development challenges and socio-economic inequality on the continent. Sharing The Gambia's experience, President Barrow said his government's policy of enlarged democratic inclusion has enabled diverse participation in the country's development and reconciliation process.



Speaking on the rise of terrorism and violent extremism, President Barrow called for the mobilisation of national, regional, and continental resources to disengage all groups that use violence to achieve their political ambitions. He called on the AU to deploy its resources within its governance and security structures to support member states. President Barrow said food insecurity and malnutrition continue to hamper the continent's development. He made the remarks in a statement delivered at the Pledging Conference, during the Humanitarian Summit in Equatorial Guinea. On behalf of The Gambia, he pledged \$100,000 towards the African Humanitarian Agency, an AU initiative to address humanitarian and other disasters on the continent.

The President welcomed the initiative to collectively “improving our humanitarian situation, which will continue to be potential channels to realising the ‘Africa We Want.’”

President Barrow called on his fellow African leaders to “work towards mitigating our humanitarian challenges” by closing “the gap between humanitarian needs, intervention programmes, and funding.” Also, at the AU 16th Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in Equatorial Guinea, President Adama Barrow reaffirmed his government's stance against the unconstitutional change of governments, saying it undermines peace and sustainable development.

On the sidelines of the Summit, The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea signed four bilateral agreements to establish diplomatic and trade links between the two countries, in a ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Malabo.

The agreements are:

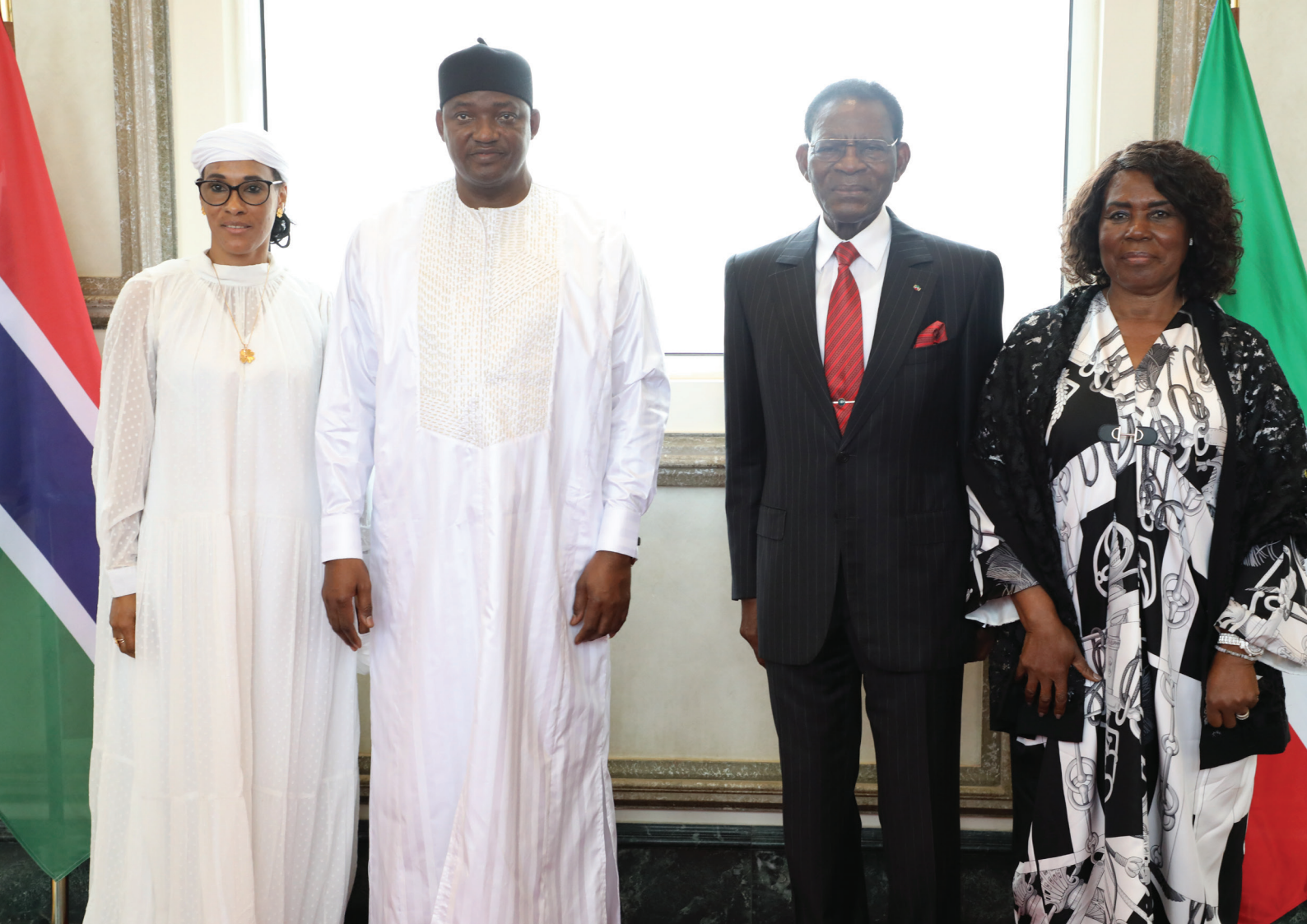
- **The Joint Communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations between The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea,**
- **Cooperation Framework Agreement between The Gambia and Equatorial Guinea,**
- **MOU on Diplomatic Consultations between the Foreign Ministries**
- **Agreement on Reciprocal Exemption of visas for holders of diplomatic and service passports.**

During the ceremony, President Adama Barrow and his counterpart H.E. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, affirmed the mutual benefits of establishing relations between the two countries would yield. President Barrow said the two countries could gain a lot when they work in partnership to exploit their natural resources for the benefit of their people. He said Equatorial Guinea has a lot of natural gas, and The Gambia could benefit from their expertise.



First Lady, Madam Fatoumata Bah Barrow, who accompanied the President was also engaged with her colleagues to complement the continental development effort.





# RELIGION & SOCIETY

## Methodist Church of The Gambia Leadership Pays Courtesy Call on President Barrow



*President Barrow with Senior members of the Gambia Methodist Church*

President Adama Barrow on March 10th received the leadership of the Methodist Church of The Gambia at the State House in Banjul, where they prayed for and called on Gambians to work for the development of the country.

The newly ordained Bishop of the Methodist Church of The Gambia, Bishop Bannie E.F. Manga, said the Church has always “sought to bring freedom to people through the power of the gospel.” Bishop Manga said their visit was to pray for President Barrow and thank him for his support to the Church.

Bishop Manga said they also want to strengthen the longstanding relationship between The Gambia Government and the Methodist Church that has existed for over 200 years. The Methodist Church has been involved in various fields of social and development work, such as agriculture, education, and health services throughout this period.

Bishop Hanna Caroline Faal-Heim called on Gambians to work for the development of the country for the benefit of “our children and young people, for the women, and all of us.” Bishop Faal-Heim said they prayed for President Barrow and for the existing peace in the country to prevail.

# SOCIETY & POLITICS

## President Barrow's 2nd Term Swearing-In Ceremony

His Excellency President Adama Barrow was officially sworn in for a 2nd term as the President of the Republic of the Gambia on 19th January 2022, following a historic landslide victory in the December 2021 Presidential Elections.

The Inauguration, which was held at the Independence Stadium in Bakau, was graced by his counterparts from the ECOWAS Region; Their Excellencies, President Macky Sall of Senegal, President Nana Akufo Addo of Ghana, President Julius Maada Bio of Sierra Leone, President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President José Maria Neves, President of Cape Verde, President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, President Umaro Sissoco Embaló of Guinea Bissau, President Alassane Ouattara of Ivory Coast, President George Manneh Weah of Liberia, President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe Eyadema of the Republic of Togo, as well as President Patrice Guillaume Athanase Talon of Benin.



Members of the diplomatic and councilor corps, national and international corporations, as well as local and international media all attended the historic event. As his convoy reached the Independence stadium gates, a jubilant audience greeted President Barrow. He inspected the guard of honor upon his arrival before taking the prescribed oaths to start his second term as President of the Republic.



In his inaugural statement, President Barrow thanked the visiting Heads of State for honouring his invitation and gracing the historic occasion. He noted their presence is a testament to the good bilateral relationships that exist between The Gambia, sister states from ECOWAS, and other countries on the continent.

President Barrow highlighted the massive 90 percent voter participation for the 4th December 2021 Presidential Election as a signal of the ongoing commitment to our beloved country's democratization process.

On the resounding acknowledgment and certification of the credibility of the elections by local and international observers, President Barrow highlighted that The Gambia was committed to setting exemplary standards when it comes to elections and democratisation.

President Barrow went on to give a brief overview of his government's accomplishments during his first term, despite inheriting a financially strained governance system and dealing with the unexpected Covid19 pandemic.

In the new Gambia, the President stated that the country will adopt a new development model and new operational frameworks, with the development priorities set against suitable timelines for implementation. These, he noted, will be built on solid resource mobilisation techniques that are focused on results. President Barrow also stated that his government's next strategy will focus on infrastructure, energy, and technology and that these sectors should be used as methods to achieve our development goals rather than as ends in themselves.

President Barrow illustrated the infrastructural development, including newly constructed bridges, totaling 2.3 kilometers in various parts of the country. These include the famous Senegambia Bridge and the new ones in the Upper River Region.

In addition, the President reaffirmed his commitment to providing a people-centered and inclusive energy development, noting key actions that offered access to previously unserved and underprivileged communities around the country. With these efforts and the potential of the Soma substation, he noted, the country is on track to achieve universal power access in the next five years.

President Barrow also mentioned the progress made in other sectors like Agriculture, Education, and Health, and reaffirmed his government's commitment to improving on the gains registered.

On the implementation of his blueprint for the first term, President Barrow informed the audience that ***“by December 2021, sixty percent (60%) of the 2018-2021 National Development Plan (NDP) activities were either successfully conducted or on track for completion. Out of the pledges made in Brussels, 41.9 percent have been disbursed so far”***.

Similarly, following the expiration of Vision 2020, President Barrow announced that work on a new long-term development strategy, Vision 2050, is underway. The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, Agenda 2063, and the country's long-term climate change vision and strategy will all be incorporated into the new Vision.

***“Our future plans include the formulation of a Green Recovery Focused NDP, 2023-2027 to succeed the 2018-2021 NDP”***



## President Barrow Calls on Political Opponents to Consolidate Efforts to Develop the Country



His Excellency President Adama Barrow delivered a speech congratulating the successful conduct of the National Assembly Elections on April 9th. Gambians went to the polls on this day to elect representatives from their constituencies, who will represent their interests, wishes, and needs in the country's legislative body.

In his statement, President Barrow congratulated all the elected candidates and challenged them to put party politics aside and work together to improve the lives and livelihood of the Gambian population, who have entrusted them with this task by voting for them. The President also commended all Gambians who came out to vote as a demonstration of their political rights.

The president also cited the participation of diverse political parties as a testament to the current democratic dispensation in The Gambia. "The election of diverse political party representatives and independent candidates from different backgrounds is an indication of a vibrant democracy.

Yet again, Gambians have fulfilled a vital constitutional mandate in an amicable manner, thus demonstrating that our democracy is thriving".

"It is significant that, as a country, the Legislature works independently; however, it has to be in partnership with the Executive and the Judiciary to ensure that, together, we serve and fulfill the development aspirations of our citizens, within a just environment," President Barrow said.

The National Assembly Elections saw 237 registered and nominated candidates contest for the 53 seats in Parliament. President Barrow's new National People's Party won 18 of the 53 seats making it the majority leading party in Parliament. Out of 962,157 registered voters, 492,754 voted in the April 9th Elections.

## President Barrow Inaugurate New State-of-Art Market in Basse

President Adama Barrow commissioned the new Basse Market at a ceremony held on the 26th of February 2022. The Basse market encourages regional trade and serves to develop socioeconomic activity for the people of URR and its environs, among other things. The reconstruction of the Market came, following an inferno that almost consumed the entire market.

During his keynote address, President Adama Barrow expressed profound delight in the completion of works on what he described as an important edifice, emphasising the socioeconomic significance of the market for the people of URR and its surroundings. The President recalled the enormous loss of goods and assets, especially for women who mostly depend on the market for livelihood. The President noted that this dire situation triggered his government's swift and adequate response.

*'From the ashes of the old market, now stands this magnificent community facility, which every Gambian should be proud of, not to mention the residents of Basse'.* The President said, adding that the inaugural ceremony is, therefore, a cause for thanksgiving and a great joy for all of us.

President Barrow informed the audience that the new market was fully funded by Government and constructed for one hundred and twelve million Dalasis (D112 million) over sixteen (16) months. The new complex comprises two hundred and forty-six (246) vendor shops, two (2) mini-markets, and four (4) sheds with a capacity to house seventy (70) women, vegetable sellers.

The new market project, according to President Barrow, is following his government's aim to develop a country where the greatest standards of good governance are upheld, individuals have access to essential services, and the private sector thrives.



# TRADE AND INVESTMENT



*President Barrow poses for a Photo with the Officials from the IMF*

In a meeting with officials of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the State House in Banjul on 8th April 2022, President Adama Barrow appealed for debt cancellation to support The Gambia's socio-economic development endeavors. The President thanked the IMF for its support to The Gambia over the years and reaffirmed his government's commitment to upholding this fruitful partnership going forward.

The IMF team was in the country for its periodic Credit Facility review held every six months. Mr. Ivohasina Fizara Razafimahefa, IMF Chief of Mission, said The Gambia has made significant progress in meeting the objectives it set out in 2021 despite the challenges posed by the COVID – 19 pandemic. Their discussion centred on new policy measures to tackle new economic problems as a result of the Russia-Ukraine War.



## H.E. Barrow Briefed on Standard Chartered Bank's Exit Plan

Standard Chartered Bank officials on 21st April 2022 briefed President Adama Barrow about the Bank's divestiture plans in The Gambia, assuring him that it will be orderly and of no adverse effect on its staff and customers.

Speaking on behalf of the Bank's representatives Lamin Manjang, CEO of Standard Chartered Bank West Africa Cluster, assured the President that none of their staff will lose their job and their benefits will continue unhindered. Manjang said once the bank's ownership is eventually transferred it is hoped that the new owners will absorb the existing staff and continue business as usual.

Standard Chartered Bank in mid-April announced plans to divest from seven countries including The Gambia – five in Africa and two in the Middle East. The process is expected to take between a year or two when potential investors are expected to step in and take over its assets and operations.

Manjang was accompanied by Alpha Barry, Chairman of Standard Chartered Bank Gambia and Chuks Ugha, Chief Executive Officer, and Dayo Aderugbo, Head of Corporate Affairs, West Africa.



*President Barrow Welcoming Standard Chartered Bank Management Team*

# NDP SUCCESSOR PLAN

The Gambia Government has begun the process of drafting the successor plan to the NDP 2018-2021. The formulation process entails the creation of a Recovery Focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP) for the medium term and a Green-focused Long-Term Development Vision for the long term.

Earlier in the year, on March 18th, 2022, President Adama Barrow received a report from a 14-member Eminent Persons Group established by the Ministry of Finance on the country's development initiatives and planning frameworks, at the State House in Banjul.

A committee of authorities, including former senior public workers and international specialists, compiled the report. The presentation of an Advisory Paper on an Institutional Framework for the Coordination of Planning and Implementation of Development Plans in The Gambia was headed by the group's chairman, Mr. Alieu Ngum.

Reacting to the presentation, President Barrow thanked the group for their contributions to the formulation of a successor programme to the National Development Plan 2018 -2021.

The group was launched in December 2021 to guide the government on how to modify and coordinate its existing institutions in order to implement the Green Recovery Focused Development Plan (GRF-NDP) and a Long Term Development Vision (LTDV).

In keeping with President Barrow's call for a people-centered and inclusive socio-economic reform process, the drafting of these two essential texts will use a whole-of-society approach. A detailed ward consultations effort was performed jointly by the government and the UNDP as part of the formulation process. Following that, regional and national consultations were held. The consultations will assist in the preparation of these two documents and, more significantly, provide more informed intervention prioritization.

To strategically follow through the implementation processes, the Sector Working Groups (SWGs) for the Formulation of the Green Recovery-focused NDP 2023-2027) and a Long-term Development Vision 2050, was launched on 24th June 2022, at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Center- DKJICC.

It brought together representatives of all the MDAs to provide technical inputs, coordinating implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the the plans. The review also focused on the roles and responsibilities, the institutional arrangements, logistical arrangements, timelines and key deliverable for the process.

# YOUTH AND SPORTS

## President Barrow Hosts Farewell Dinner for Scorpions

President Adama Barrow hosted the gallant National Scorpions to an epic farewell dinner on 6th January 2022 at the State House gardens. The dinner also provided the platform for stakeholders to pledge their support to the scorpion's historic maiden participation in the continent's top showpiece.

Sending off the National squad to compete in the African Cup of Nations (AFCON) tournament, the President hailed the experience as ***“a moment of enthusiasm and pride.”***

The President urged the team to remain united and raised The Gambia flag to new heights.

To cap off an eventful and successful night, His Excellency the President joyfully gave the national flag to the captain of the Scorpions, Pa Modou Jagne.



## Scorpions Return to Banjul After a Historic Performance at AFCON

The Scorpions made history by reaching the quarter-finals in their first appearance at AFCON 2021. The squad returned to Banjul after their outstanding performance and was greeted by senior government officials and enthusiastic fans at the Banjul International Airport.

President Barrow welcomed the Scorpions when they returned to the State House in Banjul, praising them for their historic performance and dedication throughout the competition. The President acknowledged his delight with the Scorpions' performance and emphasised his Government's commitment to sports development, particularly football.



# OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

## FaBB Foundation Signs MOU with Albalsam International

The Fatoumata Bah-Barrow Foundation (FaBB) has signed an MOU with Albalsam International, a non-governmental nonprofit organisation registered in Geneva, to cooperate for medical care with a non-profit organisation engaged in voluntary humanitarian action in the Republic of The Gambia.

The purpose is to formalize and enhance the existing cooperation to support humanitarian, particularly in medical surgery and other health care specialties.

The signing ceremony took place in Geneva, Switzerland, and was graced by the Saudi Arabia African Ambassadors and permanent representatives to the United Nations, from more than fifteen (15) countries.



*Her Excellency at the Signing of MOU in Geneva*

## First Lady Madam Fatou Bah-Barrow Meets WTO Executive

The First Lady Madam Fatoumata Barrow during a trip to Geneva, was hosted by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Executive Director Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, who congratulated her on the important work she does in Gambian communities to champion the education and health of girls and women, and also on signing an MOU with the Geneva-based Health Care Foundation Albansam International. Their discussion centered on collaboration to assess quality healthcare, vulnerable women, skills for youth and women, employment, and entrepreneurship in the Gambia.



*Her Excellency at the WTO headquarters in Geneva*

The First Lady also had an audience with UNAIDS Executive Director, Ms. Winnie Byanyima. Their meeting highlighted mutual areas of interest to collaborate with her Excellence's Foundation - FABB – to support women living with HIV/AIDS to access quality healthcare, and employability for women living with HIV/AIDS.





*Her Excellency at the UNAIDS headquarters in Geneva*

## **First Lady Supports New Year Babies**

In an annual event to promote maternal and child health in the country, the First lady, Madam Fatoumata Bah Barrow, celebrated the birth of the First, Second, and Third Babies born on the 1st of January 2022 at ten different health facilities nationwide.

The event was graced by the Honorable Minister of Health, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, board of trustees of the FaBB foundation, Family, Friends, Partners, and Donors.



*Baby of the Year 2022 Presentations*

## First Lady Presents Stationery to Underprivileged Students

In her social engagements, First Lady Madam Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow, supports and compliments the government's priority. In Education, she collaborates with Merck foundation in partnership with the Educating Linda Program and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, and She presented educational packages worth six hundred thousand Dalasi (D600,000) to twenty female students from various schools.

The initiative supports top students from underprivileged families, who are struggling with basic educational needs, girls in particular. The items include school uniforms, school bags, other school material including complimentary Textbooks, deodorants, and fifteen thousand Dalasis (D15,000) cash for school lunch and transportation.



*Presentation of Scholarship Package at State House*



## Commemoration of International Women’s Day

Her Excellency the First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow on 8th March 2022 joins the rest of the world to commemorate International Women’s Day. With the theme: **“Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow”**.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Welfare and was attended by representatives from The UN bodies in The Gambia, Women Security Heads, Government officials, Women’s Groups, and partners.

Hon. Minister Fatou Kinteh under the Women’s Development Fund distributed cheques amounting to 2.6 Million Dalasis to Banjul women’s Groups.



*Women’s Day Celebrations 2022*

In commemoration of the International Women’s Day celebration, the First Lady, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare also presented sanitary materials, food items, and basic commodities to Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital, Mile 2 Central Prisons, Bundung Maternal Health, and Child Health Hospital, as well as the Sukuta and Brikama Health Centers.



*Presentation of Food And Sanitary Materials To Various Institutions*

## First Lady Supports Christian Council During the Month of Lent

The Gambia has had an extensive record of religious tolerance amongst members of Society. Therefore it came as no surprise when Her Excellency First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow delivered food supplies to the Christian Council for the Christian community in observance of the holy month of Lent. She stated Lent is a time of fasting, sharing, and caring as she presented the items, and she promised to continue to help the Christian community.

The Chairman of the Council, Reverend Bishop Edico, praised and thanked First Lady Bah-Barrow for remembering the Christian community during the holy month of Lent.





*Presentation Of Food Items To The Christian Council At State House*

## **First Lady Attends Dubai 2022 Expo**

Her Excellency First Lady Fatoumata Bah-Barrow led a delegation of senior government officials to the Dubai 2022 Expo from 27th to the 3rd of April 2022. The First Lady was invited as a guest of honor in her role in women empowerment in The Gambia. The Dubai Expo 2022 is an initiative for women to share best practices and empower women all around the world. Her Excellency was accompanied by Hon. Fatou Kinteh Minister of Gender Children and Social Welfare, Permanent Secretary Office of the First Lady Mrs Halimatou Tambadou Jawara, and other senior government officials.



*Delegations At The 2022 Dubai Expo*

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