



The National Human Rights Commission

December 14th, 2022

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PRESS STATEMENT ON THE SHOOTING OF 4 GAMBIANS BY SENEGALESE FORCES

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is disturbed and deeply concerned by the alleged unlawful shooting of four youth along the Gambia-Cassamance border by Senegalese soldiers or their drones which has led to the death of three young people and the serious wounding of one who is battling for his life at Ndemban Clinic. According to media reports this unfortunate incident took place on Friday 9th December 2022.

There are also allegations, albeit sometimes conflicting, that Senegalese forces along the Gambia-Cassamance border continue to conduct abusive and systemic operations against innocent, unarmed and defenceless Gambians living in Foni, in particular Gambians living in the border villages. Incidents of abductions were also reported in similar circumstances in the area recently.

The Commission is deeply concerned about these unfortunate reports circulating on social media and therefore calls on the Government to shed light on the alleged incidents, verify where the alleged shootings took place, the circumstances surrounding same and what steps it is taking to ensure lives and property in these border villages are protected. The Commission would also encourage the Government to explore diplomatic measures through the laid down rules of engagement under agreed protocols and international law to seek justice for the deceased.

The Ministries of Defence and Interior are urged to issue public statements to assure citizens and the people living in The Gambia, particularly those in Foni and the border villages, of their safety and wellbeing at all times. It is the obligation of the State to protect and guarantee the lives of its citizens and other people within its jurisdiction, the sanctity of which is enshrined in the 1997 Constitution and other regional and international human rights instruments the Gambia is party to such as the [1951 Refugee Convention](#), as amended by the [1967 Protocol](#),

1969 OAU Refugee Convention and the 1998 UN Guiding Principles on the specific needs of internally displaced persons worldwide. .

The Commission urges the Government to conduct thorough investigation into these allegations and inform the public accordingly about its findings and measures it intends to take to avert such incidents. We further urge the Government to also investigate the death of Yankuba Badjie of Gifanga village, which is alleged to have been caused, under similar circumstances, by Senegalese soldiers on 20 November 2022.

As a State organ with the mandate to protect human rights, monitor and investigate human rights violations in The Gambia, the NHRC is making efforts to investigate the alleged incident, and those that have taken place in the recent past, and advise the Government accordingly. Meanwhile, NHRC encourages The Gambia Government to safeguard the territorial integrity of the country, protect the citizens and residents of the Gambia and review the rules of engagement of foreign military forces/operations in the Gambia and around the Western Region borders.

Emmanuel Daniel Joof
Chairperson, NHRC