

‘Torture has caused widespread fear among Gambians’: The NHRC Advocates for the Ratification of the OPCAT...



Group photo of participants

Inside This *Issue*

- ❖ Torture has caused widespread fear among Gambians: the NHRC calls for the ratification of the OPCAT 1
- ❖ NHRC Commissioners and Staff trained on Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting..... 3
- ❖ Aftermath of the oil spill in Mandinaring 5
- ❖ Law enforcement officers trained on human rights 8
- ❖ Accelerating action for women’s rights: NHRC’s commitments to IWD 10
- ❖ The NHRC is disappointed over National Assembly’s decision to deny Gambians in the diaspora the right to vote 13
- ❖ The NHRC held staff retreat 14
- ❖ The NHRC supports the nomination of Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambadou 16
- ❖ The NHRC and office of the IGP strengthen rule of law 18

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), with support from the British High Commission, in March 2025, convened a stakeholder’s meeting to advocate for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) and the establishment of National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) in The Gambia.

The Gambia enacted the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Act, 2023 which

domesticates the Convention Against Torture, ratified in September 2018. The Act provides a domestic framework for the prosecution of torture cases, and it recognizes the NHRC as one of the institutions that torture allegations can be reported to. However, The Gambia has neither signed nor ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

Speaking at the opening of the of the meeting

Cont’d on page 2

The NHRC Advocates for the Ratification of the OPCAT...

Cont'd from page 1

on behalf of the NHRC, Commissioner Njundu Drammeh underscored the significance of the event, and highlighted the country's recent engagement with the United Nations Human Rights Council during the 4th Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process where its human rights report was examined. He indicated that The Gambia received about 309 recommendations from Member States, with 16 States explicitly urging The Gambia to ratify the OPCAT. Commissioner Drammeh remarked that The Gambia Government, at the end of the constructive dialogue with the Member States, "noted" the recommendations relating to the ratification of the OPCAT and committed to indicate its position on them by July 25th, 2025.



Commissioner Njundu Drammeh

"The National Human Rights Commission thinks that it is absolutely necessary to direct our advocacy efforts to both the Government and the National Assembly, to ensure the Protocol's ratification." stated Commissioner Drammeh.

Delivering the Opening Statement on behalf of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Hussein Thomasi, the Solicitor General and Legal Secretary, praised the NHRC for its strides in promoting human rights and achieving 'A' status within a relatively short period of its existence. He stressed that the stakeholder engagement reflects a shared commitment to upholding human rights, strengthening accountability, and ensuring that The Gambia's justice system adheres to

international best practices in preventing torture and ill treatment of all persons.



Participants of the meeting



Mr. Hussein Thomasi

"Torture has caused widespread fear among Gambians, especially during the former regime. The Government remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that torture and other forms of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment have no place in our society," the Solicitor General remarked.

Participants were guided through various presentations on the OPCAT, its ratification or accession process and arising obligations. Discussions also covered the NHRC's monitoring visits to places of detention and examples of best practices in establishing National Preventive Mechanisms.

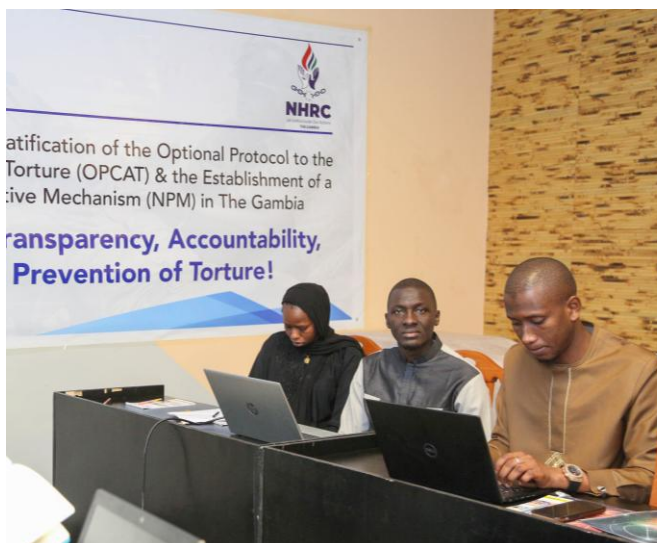
The advocacy meeting was part of the NHRC's broader efforts to encourage the State to accept the UPR recommendations relating to the

Cont'd on page 3

The NHRC Advocates for the Ratification of the OPCAT...

Cont'd from page 2

ratification of OPCAT, enhance stakeholder awareness about the importance of NPMs, and learn best practices regarding the structure, operation, and challenges of NPMs across Africa.



operation, and challenges of NPMs across Africa.



Participants of the meeting



Mr. Mansour Jobe, NHRC Director of Legal and Investigation

NHRC Commissioners and Staff Trained on Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting

Story on page 4



The National Human Rights Commission, with support from the British High Commission, conducted a capacity building training on human rights monitoring for its Commissioners and Staff.

The training was aimed at providing both theoretical knowledge and practical methodologies in human rights monitoring, including the identification of violations, evidence collection, interviewing, reporting and advocacy.

At the brief opening of the training, the Chairperson of NHRC, Mr. Emmanuel Daniel Joof, highlighted the need for regular capacity strengthening of staff so that they are able to effectively and efficiently carry out their functions and be abreast with new approaches and best practices in human rights monitoring and protection.



NHRC Chairperson

“It is important to have such training from time to time to strengthen our human rights monitoring and reporting. Human rights monitoring is deeply intertwined with human rights reporting”, remarked the Chairperson.



NHRC team and community members in Sanyang

Sessions were facilitated by distinguished experts who provided in depth knowledge and practical insights into essential methodologies and techniques used in monitoring human rights. Presentations were also made on Human Rights Principles; Roles and Responsibilities of National Human Rights Institutions in Human Rights Monitoring; Interviewing Techniques and Ethical Considerations; Human Rights Reporting and Advocacy.

An important component of the training workshop was a human rights monitoring field trip that the participants, divided into two teams, undertook to Mandinaring and Sanyang Villages which are facing significant environmental and socio-economic challenges that are having profound impacts on their residents.



NHRC team and community members in Mandinaring

Mandinaring Village was the site of a serious oil spill in 2022 due to a burst sealine at a petroleum storage terminal while Sanyang Village grapples with environmental degradation and pollution caused mainly by industrial sand mining and fishmeal processing plant.

The simulation exercise provided the participants with the opportunity to ‘practicalise’ the knowledge and skills they acquired in the workshop. They were also able to assess real-life human rights concerns, interact with affected community members, and engage relevant authorities to explore potential remedies to the challenges the two communities face.

Aftermath of the Oil Spill in Mandinaring Village



NHRC team and staff of GNPC

A delegation from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), including Commissioners and Staff, visited Mandinaring Village in West Coast Region to assess the aftermath of a serious oil spill that occurred in May 2022. They engaged with the affected community and relevant authorities to evaluate the response efforts and any remedial action taken since the incident.



(L-R: Mr. Emmanuel D. Joof, NHRC Chairperson and Commissioner Njundu Drammeh

Despite nearly three years since the spill, villagers remembered the oil spill as if it happened yesterday. They expressed deep frustration about the lack of substantial measures to alleviate their situation.

According to the villagers, the oil deposit contaminated the mangroves where oysters

breed, significantly reducing oyster yields and threatening the livelihoods of the women who relied on this trade. Similarly, vegetable growers struggled with oil contaminated soil, which hampered their productivity and income.



Community members in Mandinaring

Fatou Manneh, a vegetable grower said: **“As women, we used to struggle to get viable seeds for our garden. We would also go to the bush to collect logs to fence our gardens to prevent stray animals from destroying our plants. While contending with our struggle, the oil spill came to exacerbate our situation. It adversely affected our gardens and rice fields and threatened our livelihoods in unimaginable ways.”**

Cont'd on page 6

Aftermath of the Oil Spill in Mandinaring Village

Cont'd from page 5



Fatou Manneh

Mrs. Manneh further explained how the decline in her harvest not only caused her serious financial hardship but also directly affected her ability to pay for her children's education. Additionally, she expressed concern over an apparent rise in tuberculosis (TB) cases within the community, suspecting, although not yet confirmed, a possible link to the spill and the growing number of oil companies operating in the area.

Mba Kaddy Colley, another vegetable grower, highlighted that their main village garden, known as 'Mansa Garden', which supports over 200 women, suffered extensive damage. She also raised concerns about the contamination of the well water in the garden, which is also used for drinking.

Mr. Jammeh Ceesay, Chairperson of the Village Development Committee (VDC), shared his frustration regarding the lack of communication and engagement from the Gambia National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC).



Jammeh Ceesay

"After the oil spill, we wrote to GNPC management to arrange a meeting, but to no

avail. We had only one meeting with the current management. Since then, we haven't had any engagement with the company. The only serious engagement they had with the community was when they needed land to build the oil terminal, and that was before the oil spill", remarked Jammeh Ceesay.



The villagers highlighted serious challenges they continue to face after the spill.

"The villagers were restricted from accessing their farmlands and areas leading to the river. To ameliorate this situation for the fishermen, we requested GNPC to make special identification cards for the fishermen which they have to pay for at a cost of D200 (about US\$3)", stated Mr. Mbemba Touray, the Ward Councillor.



Mbemba Touray

Despite the presence of oil companies in the village, the VDC members present at the meeting said the community does not receive royalties from them. 'We have discussed this matter at the VDC level, but we are yet to succeed in our demand for royalties from the companies'.

Cont'd on page 7

Aftermath of the Oil Spill in Mandinaring Village

Cont'd from page 6

Mustapha Ceesay, a fisherman, lamented the loss of his livelihood.

“My fishing nets were all destroyed. Just imagine, as a fisherman I now beg other fishermen for fish. When you take a loan to buy a fishing net, in the end you will not be able to pay it back”, he stated.

The NHRC team met with GNPC’s General Manager, Mr. Yorro Jallow, at the Gam Petroleum Oil Terminal in Mandinaring Village. Jallow stated that the oil spill had been exaggerated, describing it as a minor incident.

“A drop of oil in the sea spreads widely. That was what people saw and thought it was a lot of oil. It was just 70 metric tons of spillage. It is very rare for an oil spill to affect the sea,” stated the General Manager.

Jallow explained that the spill was caused by a burst sealine, likely due to a miscalculation of its lifespan. Following the incident, the company conducted a general review of the pipelines and replaced the

entire sealine at a high cost. He also assured that security measures, supported by The Gambia National Army and other security units, are in place to prevent future occurrences.

Regarding support to the community in fulfilment of its Corporate Social Responsibility, Jallow stated that GNPC had contributed to the renovation of the village mosque upon request from the Mosque Committee. Apart from this monetary contribution, the Company has not provided any direct support to the community.

“The situation in Mandinaring Village highlights a serious human rights and environmental concern. The NHRC will continue to assess real life human rights concerns, engage with affected community members, and advocate for meaningful remedies,” stated Emmanuel Daniel Joof, NHRC Chairperson.

The Commission urges relevant authorities and corporate entities to take responsibility and ensure the well-being of the people impacted by industrial activities.



A fleet of oil tankers in Mandinaring

Law Enforcement Officers Trained on Human Rights, Humanitarian Law and Handling of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Cases



Group photo of participants

As part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the security sector in The Gambia, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), with support from the British High Commission, organized a capacity-building training in February 2025 for thirty law enforcement officers from various security agencies. The training enhanced their understanding of human rights, international humanitarian law, and strategies for handling Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) cases and integrating gender and human rights considerations into their daily operations.

In his welcome remarks, Mr. Emmanuel Daniel Joof, Chairperson of the NHRC, underscored the significance of the training in the context of The Gambia's ongoing democratic transition. He highlighted the crucial role security personnel play in upholding the rule of law, respecting and protecting human right and ensuring public order and human security.

"We need to make sure our law enforcement officers are informed about human rights to

ensure there is public trust in our society. This is what we are all working on to rectify, considering their conduct during the previous regime. A democratic society thrives when its security forces uphold the principles of human rights and the rule of law," Mr. Joof remarked.



Participants from The Gambia Immigration Department

Speaking on behalf of the British High Commission, Mr. Martin Norman, Deputy Head of Mission in The Gambia, reaffirmed the UK's commitment to supporting human rights and

Cont'd on page 9

Law Enforcement Officers Trained on Human Rights...

Cont'd from page 8

democratic values in the country. He noted that the training aligns with recommendations from the TRRC to enhance professionalism within The Gambia's security sector.

Mr. Norman also highlighted the global and local prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, noting that statistics in The Gambia remain alarming.

“Law enforcement officers and the justice sector play a crucial role in the fight against SGBV. Recently, through the British support training team, we delivered training to personnel of the Gambia Police Force. We also supported the Gambia Judiciary in developing guidelines to curb SGBV,” he stated.



Speaking on behalf of the National Security Adviser, Mr. Landing Kinteh, the Chief of Staff at the Office of the National Security (ONS), described the training as a milestone achievement for the security sector in The Gambia, especially in improving relations between the security forces and the civil population.

“Building the capacity of the security sector means everything to the Office of the National Security. This is why the ONS has developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the security sector on SGBV,” Mr. Kinteh highlighted.

Following the opening ceremony, participants engaged in various insightful presentations covering critical topics such as: International Human Rights Law, Human Rights in Practice: Accountability Mechanisms for Human Rights Violations, Role of the Office of the National Security in Security Sector Reform: Opportunities and Challenges, International Humanitarian Law, Conflict Related Gender-based Violence, the Role of Law Enforcement Officers in Addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Investigating Human Rights Violations: Processes and Procedures.



Participants in session



A participant receiving his certificate from the Director of Legal and Investigation

Accelerating Action for Women's Rights: NHRC's commitments to International Women's Day



International Women's Day (IWD) is a time to honour and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of women in all areas of development, including education, health, employment, business, environment, agriculture, science and technology, governance, and media. It also serves as a crucial reminder to Governments, policy makers and leaders of the ongoing challenges that hinder women's full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and their enduring struggle for gender equality, equity, and justice.

The global theme for this year's celebration, 'Accelerate Action', underscores the urgency of taking immediate, bold, and decisive steps toward achieving

gender equality. The NHRC takes this opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women who continue to break through the glass ceiling and other systemic barriers, and challenge negative societal norms in male-dominated spaces. The Commission also recognises the resilience of rural women, whose tireless efforts sustain their families and communities despite immense socio-political challenges they continue to face.

As part of the IWD commemoration, NHRC Commissioners and staff share messages of solidarity and commitment to the advancement of women's rights.

MRS. JAINABA JOHM, VICE CHAIRPERSON OF NHRC ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



"As we celebrate International Women's Day today, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) proudly joins the world in celebrating the achievements of women across all spheres of life within The Gambia. With this year's

Cont'd on page 11

International Women's Day

Cont'd from page 10

theme in mind the NHRC believes that for there to be gender equality, women must be included in all spheres of decision-making. 'Equality is not a privilege, it's a right'. I take this opportunity on behalf of NHRC to pay special tribute to the resilience and strength of women in our society but more especially our rural women. They are the backbone of their families and communities. Their tireless efforts, frequently unrecognized, sustain economies, uphold traditions and nurture future generations.

The NHRC reaffirms its commitment to continuing its work towards gender equality in the Gambia.

Happy International Women's Day!"

COMMISSIONER HALIMATOU DIBBA



"As a country that has less than ten percent of its members of Cabinet and elected members of Parliament as women, The Gambia continues to lack behind in the achievement of its development goals due to the absence of women in these

key decision-making structures. The NHRC calls on the Government to take immediate actions to enhance women's representation and participation in key decision-making structures."

MS. MATILDA MENDY, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



"The NHRC is committed to the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls living in The Gambia. In this regard, we have undertaken a series of sensitization and advocacy campaigns to educate the public and change mindset on harmful practices that hamper the enjoyment of these fundamental rights."

MS. CHRISTINE BOISY



"Our work goes beyond the four corners of our offices and Greater Banjul Area. Our presence in rural communities is very important. The NHRC realized that despite the legal frameworks that promote and protect women's rights, many

rural women still struggle with limited access, control, and ownership over land due to traditional practices and societal norms."

MS. BINTOU JAITEH, LEGAL OFFICER



"Sexual and gender-based violence is a violation of human rights that denies the human dignity of the individual. It is a major consequence of gender inequality. Women, persons with disabilities and children are the most affected. It is therefore important that we explore an intersectional approach to addressing sexual and gender-based violence."

MR. ABDOU MANNEH, SEN. INVESTIGATION OFFICER



"Our investigation into cases of gender-based violence and discrimination remain a priority. We will continue to hold perpetrators accountable

Cont'd on page 12

International Women's Day

Cont'd from page 11

and advocate for policies to uphold women's dignity and equality."

MS. MARIA SAINÉ, LEGAL OFFICER



"Too many promises have been made, yet progress remains very low. Laws that protect women exist, but enforcement is very weak. Gender-based violence persists, and inequalities continue. We cannot afford to wait. The Government must strengthen enforcement, close legal gaps, and hold perpetrators accountable. Together, let's push for real and lasting impact. Women's rights cannot wait."

MS. KINEH SANYANG, DRIVER



"Driving in most communities is a male dominated profession. As a female driver at the National Human Rights

Commission, I drive with confidence. Skills and services have no gender."

MS. MARIANNE GEORGE, SENIOR LEGAL OFFICER



"In The Gambia, women continue to lose their lives in pregnancy related problems. According to the DHS, there has been improvements in maternal mortality. However, one woman dying in childbirth is one woman too many. We owe all women the right to safe childbirth and holistic care."

MR. BASIRU BAH, SENIOR LEGAL OFFICER - RESEARCH



"Business related human rights violations continue to affect women, especially in fishing communities. Consequently, it is crucial that as a country, we take action to ensure that the principles of protect, respect and remedy underpin business conduct. To realize this, there is need to accelerate the

development of a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in order to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in the business sector."

ISATOU JAGNE KOLLEY, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE



"Even though The Gambia has made some progress in its efforts to improve women's economic empowerment, particularly in the area of access to finance, accelerated action is required. A sustained approach to the provision of basic financial literacy and management training will ensure women are equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively utilize funds, meet loan payment obligations, save more, and grow their businesses."

The NHRC remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting the rights of women and girls in The Gambia. While strides have been made, much work remains to be done. On this International Women's Day, we call upon all stakeholders – governments, civil society, and communities to accelerate action. Women's rights cannot wait!

The NHRC is disappointed over the National Assembly's decision to deny Gambians in the diaspora the right to vote.



The National Human Rights Commission has expressed deep disappointment over the National Assembly's decision to deny Gambians in the diaspora their fundamental right to vote, in the press release below.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) expresses its concern over the recent voting in the National Assembly on the Election Bill 2021, held on Tuesday, 4th March 2025, which effectively denies Gambians in the diaspora the fundamental right to vote. The right of Gambian diasporans to participate in elections and public affairs have been a subject of national discussion since 2017. Both the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Government of The Gambia have on numerous occasions, assured the public that measures would be taken to facilitate diaspora voting ahead of the 2026 Presidential Elections. However, the recent vote at the National Assembly rejecting Clause 14 of the Elections Bill 2021 has reversed these commitments, effectively disenfranchising a significant segment of Gambian society who continues to make invaluable contributions to the country's socio-economic development manifested in remittance inflows approximately representing 31.5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024.

The NHRC has consistently advocated for the inclusion of diaspora voting rights in The Gambia's electoral process. In May 2021, during a meeting with the National Assembly Joint Committee on Regional Government, Lands, IEC,

Ombudsman and Human Rights and Constitutional Matters regarding the then Elections Bill 2020, the NHRC strongly and unequivocally advocated for the granting of the right to vote to Gambians in the diaspora.

It is worth recalling that on 27th January 2021, The Gambia's Supreme Court ruled in favor of five Gambians who challenged the IEC and the Government of The Gambia over their exclusion from the electoral process. The Court reaffirmed their political rights, stating that the systematic and continued disenfranchisement of Gambians living abroad is illegal and violates their fundamental rights. The Court explicitly affirmed that, pursuant to Section 39 of the Constitution, every Gambian, including those residing outside the country, are entitled to be registered and to vote in elections, including those for the Presidency, National Assembly, local government offices, traditional rulers, and referenda.

Despite potential constitutional and logistical challenges, as highlighted by the Honorable Minister of Justice during the National Assembly debate, many Gambians strongly believe that the IEC and the Government have had ample time to address these issues. Several countries in the sub-region, including Senegal, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger, have successfully enfranchised their diasporan communities. The NHRC is of the strong conviction that The Gambia also can, with commitment and willingness, also enfranchise its citizens in the diaspora.

The NHRC calls on the Government of The Gambia and the IEC to take immediate and concrete steps to fulfill their commitment to enfranchising Gambians in the diaspora. As a fundamental democratic right, every eligible citizen, irrespective of their geographical location, should have the right and the opportunity to vote and be voted for. This right is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which The Gambia is a State Party.

The NHRC Held Staff Retreat to Enhance Organizational Growth and Team Synergy



NHRC staff at the 2025 staff retreat

Commissioners and Staff of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) held at the Bakadaji Hotel a four-day retreat from February 10th to 13th, 2025. The retreat fostered a supportive workplace culture, enhanced team cohesion, ensured the review and refinement of work processes and the Annual Work Plan and Budget, and strengthened leadership and organisational development.

Opening the retreat, NHRC Chairperson Mr. Emmanuel Daniel Joof emphasized its significance as a platform for team bonding, strategic reflection, and institutional growth. He lauded the

dedication of Commissioners and staff in advancing the Commission's work over the past six years despite challenges.

Chairperson Joof highlighted the importance of teamwork, open communication, and adherence to policies as pillars of a collaborative work environment. He welcomed new staff and underscored the need for professionalism, mutual respect, establishment of effective conflict resolution mechanisms and realignment of all actions with the Commission's core values.

"Teamwork is essential to fulfilling NHRC's vision and

mission. Fostering a culture of progressive communication and conflict resolution is crucial for institutional growth," he stated.



Mr. Emmanuel D. Joof

Vice Chairperson Mrs. Jainaba Johm highlighted the informal nature of the retreat, encouraging interaction among members to strengthen internal relationships.

Cont'd on page 14

The NHRC Held Staff Retreat...

Cont'd from page 10

Commissioner Imam Baba Leigh urged staff to see the retreat as an opportunity to express themselves freely. He encouraged staff to maintain a workplace harmony and progressive work environment.

Commissioner Njundu Drammeh stressed the importance of maintaining a unified position when representing NHRC externally, particularly on sensitive human rights matters. He emphasized that consistency and strategic messaging are key to preserving the integrity and impact of the Commission's work.



The retreat featured various presentations designed to enhance staff capacities. Among the topics covered included the functions of Internal Audit Unit, effective leadership and team building. Discussions were also held on the NHRC's Policy on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, and amendments which were approved by the Commission on the NHRC Condition of Service and Financial Manual. These sessions provided valuable insights into best practices for governance and operational efficiency.



The NHRC's 2025 Annual Work Plan was also reviewed and finalized at the Retreat. A proposal for the formation of a Staff Welfare Association was also introduced and endorsed, reflecting the Commission's commitment to employee well-being and professional development.

Delivering the Closing Statement, Commissioner Halimatou Dibba commended the Director of Human Resources for the successful planning of the retreat. She acknowledged the dedication and commitment of all staff in advancing the work of the NHRC, both nationally and internationally.

Reflecting on the past year's challenges, Commissioner Dibba praised the team's perseverance and professionalism. She encouraged staff to apply the insights gained from the retreat in their daily work, ensuring the continued success and effectiveness of the Commission's initiatives.

The NHRC retreat not only reinforced the organisation's commitment to excellence, but also fostered a renewed sense of unity and purpose among members. With a clearer strategic direction and a strengthened team dynamic, the Commission is poised to continue its vital work in promoting and protecting human rights.



The NHRC supports the Nomination of Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambadou as Judge at the International Court of Justice



Abubacarr M. Tambadou

The NHRC endorses the Government's nomination of Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambadou for election as a Judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for the 2027-2036 term, in the statement below.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of The Gambia proudly lends its voice and full support to the nomination of Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambadou by the Republic of The Gambia for election as Judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for the term 2027-2036. Mr. Tambadou's distinguished career in law, justice, and human rights advocacy makes him an exceptional candidate whose expertise and integrity will greatly contribute to the work of the ICJ in upholding international justice and the rule of law.

Mr. Tambadou's legal career spans over two decades, with extensive experience in both national and international legal systems.

He holds an LLB from the University of Warwick and an LLM in International Human Rights Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in the United Kingdom in 1999, he has since served as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of The Gambia. His professional trajectory has been marked by a profound dedication to justice, human rights, and accountability.

As Attorney General and Minister of Justice of The Gambia from 2017 to 2020, Mr. Tambadou demonstrated remarkable leadership in steering The Gambia through its post-authoritarian transitional justice process. His instrumental role in the establishment of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC), the Janneh Commission, and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

exemplifies his commitment to justice, transparency, and human rights protection. Under his leadership, The Gambia took critical steps to address past human rights violations, ensuring accountability and promoting the rule of law.

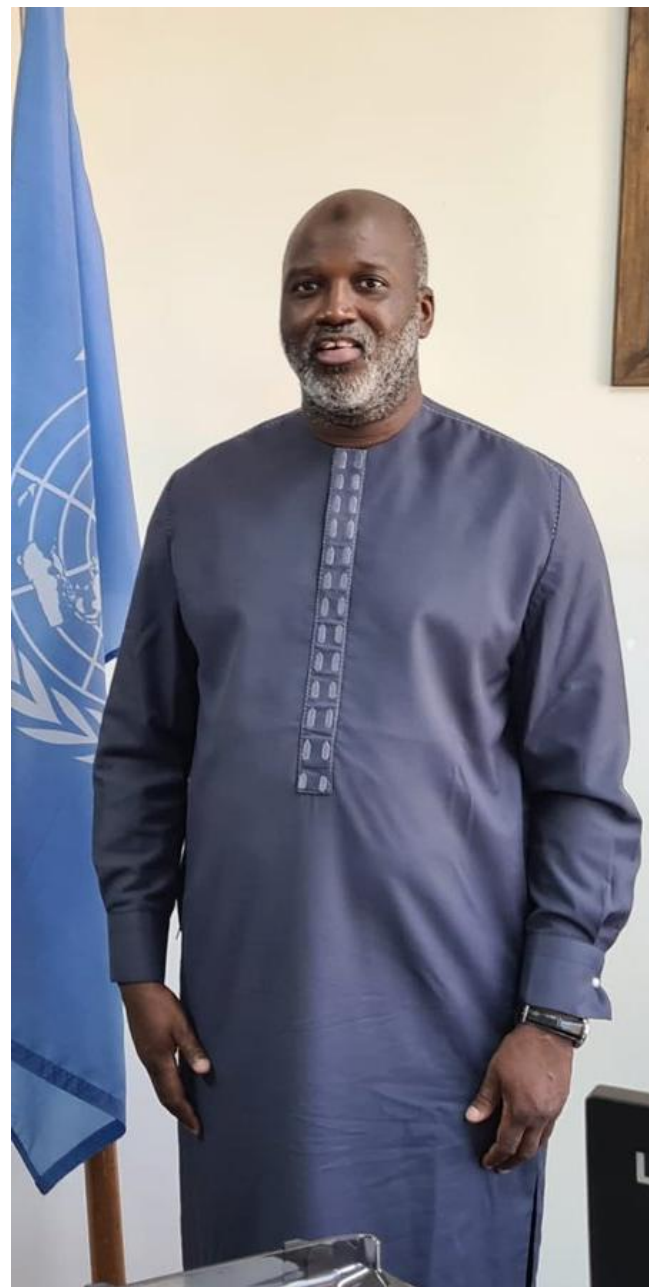
At the international level, Mr. Tambaou has significantly influenced the global human rights and justice landscape. He is widely recognized for his pivotal role in holding Myanmar accountable for genocide against the Rohingya people. As Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee on Accountability for Human Rights Violations Against the Rohingya in 2019, he successfully convinced the Government of The Gambia to file a lawsuit at the ICJ in 2019 against Myanmar under the 1948 Genocide Convention. This historic case brought global attention to the plight of the Rohingya and reaffirmed the role of international justice in addressing gross human rights violations.

In his current role as Registrar of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT), Mr. Tambaou is the highest authority in the Registry, overseeing legal, administrative, policy, and diplomatic matters of the institution. His extensive experience as an international prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) between 2003 and 2017 further underscores his deep expertise in international criminal law. His contributions to landmark cases at the ICTR, including the prosecution of key figures responsible for the 1994 Rwandan genocide, have played a crucial role in shaping international jurisprudence on genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

Mr. Tambaou's lifelong commitment to justice, accountability, and human rights is evident in his outstanding work at both national and international levels. His tireless efforts to strengthen the rule of law and ensure justice for victims of grave human rights violations have earned him global recognition, including being named among Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in 2020 and a Nobel Peace Prize nomination in 2021.

The NHRC firmly believes that Mr. Tambaou's exceptional legal acumen, deep commitment to justice, and extensive experience in international law make him an exemplary candidate for the ICJ. His presence on the bench will not only enhance the Court's ability to address critical issues of international law but also reinforce The Gambia's legacy as a champion of human rights and justice on the global stage.

Accordingly, the NHRC strongly endorses the nomination of Mr. Abubacarr M. Tambaou and urges all member states to support his candidacy for election as Judge at the International Court of Justice for the term 2027-2036.



The NHRC and Office of the IGP to Strengthen Rule of Law, Promote Public Order and Safety



(L-R: IGP Touray and NHRC Chairperson)

In March 2025, the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Mr. Emmanuel Daniel Joof, paid a courtesy visit to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mr. Seedy Muctar Touray, at the Police Headquarters in Banjul.

During their discussion, Mr. Joof expressed appreciation for the continued cooperation between the NHRC and the Gambia Police Force. He reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to supporting the Police, particularly in capacity building. He also highlighted the NHRC's recent development of training modules on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, which are designed to be integrated into the Police and security personnel training programmes. He also noted the series of

training sessions that the NHRC has conducted for Police Officers to enhance their understanding of human rights principles.



Mr. Emmanuel Daniel Joof, NHRC Chairperson

The Chairperson further elaborated on the NHRC's mandate, emphasizing its role in promoting and protecting human rights and its advisory function to all institutions on human rights-related matters.

Mr. Joof underscored the importance of stronger collaboration, particularly in ensuring regular and timely feedback on complaints submitted to the NHRC against the Police Officers.

"It is crucial for the Police to provide prompt responses when the NHRC requests information following complaints or investigations and effectively implement the recommendations issued by the Commission", Joof emphasized

On his part, the IGP acknowledged the need for greater cooperation between the two institutions and assured the NHRC Chairperson of his commitment to enhanced engagement. To facilitate this, he designated a Liaison Officer to work directly with the NHRC's Directorate of Legal and Investigation.

"The two institutions will continue to work together in furtherance of the rule of law and

the maintenance of public order and safety," stated the IGP.

Reiterating the shared goal of upholding the rule of law, both parties agreed to strengthen their collaboration in promoting respect for human rights and due process.



**Mr. Seedy Muctar Touray,
Inspector General of Police (IGP)**



One of NHRC capacity building training for members of the Gambia Police Force

To file a complaint to the NHRC:

- 1 Visit NHRC Secretariat in Kotu, opposite DS Tv
- 2 Call the Commission on: 3353108 or 5200272
- 3 Visit NHRC Website: <https://www.gm-nhrc.org>
- 4 Send email to: complaints@gm-nhrc.org
- 5 Call our regional offices: Farafenni – 3373550
Basse – 3373551

