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**Press Statement**

**7th July 2025**

**NHRC Urges National Assembly to Uphold the National Interest in Deliberations and Voting on the Draft Constitution 2024**

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) notes that today, 7th July 2025, the Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Justice will formally table the Draft Constitution 2024 before the National Assembly for its Second Reading.

This occasion marks a significant milestone in our country's democratic transition and presents an opportunity for our lawmakers to demonstrate leadership and a commitment to the national interest. In this regard, the NHRC respectfully urges Honourable Members of the National Assembly to approach their deliberations with the utmost sense of duty, objectivity, and responsibility to the people they represent. The task before the Assembly is not only legal but deeply moral ensuring that the supreme law of the land truly reflects the will, aspirations, and best interests of all Gambians.

In November 2024, the NHRC convened a National Stakeholders' Conference on the Draft Constitution 2024 under the theme "*Advancing National Consensus on the Draft Constitution 2024.*" The two-day convergence, held at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Centre, brought together over 100 participants representing government institutions, political parties, civil society, faith-based organisations, the media, academia, and other key sectors of society. The views, concerns, and recommendations expressed during the deliberations were consolidated in a Communiqué that highlighted the urgent need for a "people-centric" constitution, which was subsequently shared with the National Assembly and relevant stakeholders.

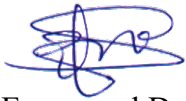
Among the key concerns raised were the need for broader public consultation in the constitutional review process, the removal of several progressive provisions from the 2020 Draft Constitution, and the importance of ensuring strong safeguards for institutional independence, checks and balances, and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. The Communiqué further encouraged the National Assembly to critically examine the content of the Draft Constitution at the Committee Stage and to solicit the views of the wider public and expert bodies as part of the review process.

The NHRC therefore respectfully calls on Honourable Members to:

- I. Be guided by the national interest and the aspirations of the Gambian people in their deliberations and eventual vote;
- II. Ensure that the Draft Constitution undergoes detailed scrutiny at the Committee Stage, in line with best democratic practices;
- III. Take into account the recommendations made by stakeholders during the November 2024 National Conference, as outlined in the Communiqué; and

- IV. Work towards the adoption of a constitution that embodies democratic values, promotes human rights and the rule of law, and lays the foundation for good governance and inclusive development.

The Commission reaffirms its commitment to supporting a transparent, participatory, and inclusive constitutional reform process. We commend all stakeholders who have constructively contributed to the national conversation thus far and express our confidence in the ability of the National Assembly to deliver a constitution that will command broad-based public trust and legitimacy.



Emmanuel Daniel Joof

#### **CHAIRPERSON**

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**Communique on the Draft Constitution 2024** – <https://www.gm-nhrc.org/download-file/0b4cc41e-b64f-11ef-98c6-02a8a26af761>

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