



OFFICIAL MEDIA ADVISORY ON THE RELEASE OF THE WHITE PAPER TO THE TRRC REPORT

UNDER EMBARGO TILL THE CONCLUSION OF STATEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL & MINISTER OF JUSTICE

KEY STATISTICS ON WHITEPAPER

1. The Whitepaper is 173 pages long and contains 600 paragraphs. It is structured in chapters according to the 17 thematic areas with each chapter setting out a summary of the findings of the commission, then governments position on each of the recommendations made by the commission.
2. In addition to the 17 thematic areas there are separate chapters on Reparations, Reconciliation, the National Human Rights Commission and Amnesty.
3. The Whitepaper analysed all 265 recommendations made by the TRRC and gave government's position as well as its plan for implementation.
4. Out of 265 recommendations made by the TRRC and considered by the Government only all but two have been are set for implementation in one shape or form. With the exception of the two rejected recommendations, where the Government does not necessarily agree on the proposed recommendation it sets out an alternative mode if implementation to meet the overall objective of the recommendation.
5. Cover graphics for the Whitepaper are attached in the email.

KEY GOVERNMENT POSITIONS IN THE WHITEPAPER

1. The Government accepted ALL the recommendations by the TRRC with regards to Prosecution, notable the prosecution of ex-President Yahya Jammeh, for a myriad of crimes committed between 1994 and 2017.
2. The Government accepted the recommendations for the prosecution of ex-vice president Dr. Isatou Njie Saidy for her role in the April 10 and 11 student killings. Government further accepted the recommendation to deny her amnesty.
3. The Government rejects the recommendation of the Commission as pertains to Sanna Sabally and notes that although he might have made full disclosure and showed remorse, Sanna is one of the individuals that bears the highest responsibility for gross human rights abuses and violations in the early days of the Jammeh regime, particularly the extrajudicial killing of many soldiers on November 11th 1994.
4. The other recommendations for Amnesty besides were accepted by the Government subject to them providing witness testimony in the prosecution of individuals recommended for prosecution.
5. The Government will set up a decentralised Peace and Reconciliation Commission with the mandate of promoting peace, reconciliations and fostering social cohesion.
6. The Government will rename Arch 22 to NEVER AGAIN MEMORIAL ARCH in memory of victims of Jammeh and will renovate it and erect a wall with the names of Jammeh Victims.
7. Government will create a successor body to the TRRC with the mandate of administering reparations. The body will be independent from government and will have the authority to evaluate and identify new victims not identified by the TRRC.
8. The Government shall take steps to memorialise April 10th and 11th each year to mark the sad events that transpired on those two days in the year 2000 and ensure that it never happens again.

KEY QUOTES FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL'S STATEMENT

“An implementation rate of over 99.2% of all recommendations is unprecedented in the history of Truth Commissions and I am convinced that we now have a clear road map towards reconciliation, justice, reparations and ensuring non-reoccurrence.”

“We must however admit that the some of the conditions that made it possible for these atrocities to be committed still exist. This truth-seeking process will therefore be futile if we do not put in place long overdue comprehensive legislative and institutional reforms. The implementation of the TRRC's recommendations is therefore anchored on broad based reforms which are at the centre of the Whitepaper.”

“The Government lays a special emphasis on the TRRC's recommendations on SGBV and recognises that SGBV was and continues to be widely prevalent in The Gambia. The Government further notes that many acts that constitute SGBV are not seen as a violation due to the patriarchal nature of the society which accepts discrimination against women and girls and shames male victims of SGBV into silence.”

“Of particular concern to the Government is the alarming number of enforced disappearances that occurred under the direction of former President Jammeh and the continuous suffering of families who up until this day are unaware of the whereabouts of their loved ones or their remains. The Government is committed to working with key partners in finding the bodies of victims of enforced disappearances and bringing closure to their families.”

“There is no doubt that the country has gone through a very traumatic experience and is in dire need of individual and collective healing as well as reconciliation, not just with the perpetrators of these human rights violations but with our past as a nation.

reconciliation must be balanced with the need to ensure accountability and that perpetrators who bear the greatest responsibility for human rights abuses are made to face justice and answer for their crimes.”

“The Government shall continue to work towards mobilising additional financial resources for this process, including but not limited to the proceeds of the sale of forfeited assets belonging to ex-president Jammeh.”

“We are gathered today full of hope for a better tomorrow. Today however is also a sombre reminder of the traumatic events that occurred between 1994 and 2017. We must therefore not forget the many victims of these violations especially those who lost their lives.”

*“I am pleased to announce his Excellency the President’s decision to rename the July 22nd Arch to **NEVER AGAIN MEMORIAL ARCH** in honour of all the victims of gross human rights abuses and violations under the regime of former president Yahya Jammeh. The Government plans to renovate the Arch and erect a plaque with the names of the victims of the Jammeh regime. It is our hope that this memorial may be repurposed as a fitting reminder that Never Again shall we allow such heinous abuses and violations in our beloved country.”*

“The implementation must therefore be transparent and inclusive with clear timelines and measurable outcomes. Rest assured that the government is fully committed to the implementation as outlined in the Whitepaper. We have been given a unique opportunity to change the trajectory of our dear nation and posterity will judge us by our actions.”

“... we note that certain individuals who have been adversely mentioned by the Commission continue to serve in various areas of the public and security services. The Government shall take steps for their immediate suspension from service while we

work on a lawful means to effect their dismissal, termination or compulsory retirement as each case may require.”