

# Monitoring Implementation of The Gambia's TRRC Recommendations

**EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE SECURITY OF PERSON  
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 3**

## An Overview

From July 1994 to December 2016, The Gambia saw a drastic decline of its democratic gains to unimaginable levels. On one hand, Sections of the 1997 Constitution were amended multiple times, and, on the other hand, the regime dismantled democratic institutions, violated and curtailed the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and civil liberties, constrained political opposition and stifled the media and dissenting voices.

In January 2017, the new Government passed a series of legislation and set up the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC), as well as a permanent National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The TRRC was set up to not only investigate the gross human rights violations of the Jammeh regime but to also make recommendations for strong institutions that respect and protect human rights to achieve the #NeverAgain slogan for a new Gambia.

The TRRC exposed Gambians to the horrors of twenty-two years of dictatorship systemic sexual abuse and rape, torture, and the whereabouts of some who disappeared and/or were killed. In May 2021, it ended its public hearings as per the TRRC Act 2017 and submitted its final report to the President on 25 November 2021. The Report is in sixteen volumes and it addressed the following thematic areas:

- Soldiers with a difference;
- November 11, 1994 attempted coup;
- The June 1995 murder of former Finance Minister Ousman Koro Ceesay;
- Killings and physical harm caused by the convoy of the President;
- The 1996 Denton Bridge incident involving security forces and members of the opposition United Democratic Party;
- Violations of press freedom, and the rights of journalists;
- Attacks on religious freedoms
- Gross human rights abuses committed by the former President's death squad known as the "Junglers".



**Justice,  
Reparation &  
Reconciliation  
Create a Better  
Society**

- 📍 National Secretariat,  
P. O. Box 2858,  
Kotu (opp. DSTV),  
The Gambia
- ☎ (220) 446 1713  
(220) 446 1717  
(220) 3353108
- ✉ contact@gm-nhrc.org
- 🌐 www.gm-nhrc.org
- 🐦 @NHRCGambia

**#NeverAgain is  
Meaningless  
Without Justice**



- 10 and 11 April 2000 student demonstrations during which security forces shot and killed over 14 school children and one Red Cross volunteer and wounded several others;
- Sexual and gender-based violence;
- The 2009 witch-hunting exercises;
- The Presidential Alternative HIV/AIDS Treatment Programme;
- The Killing of the West African Migrants;
- Enforced disappearance; and
- Institutional Hearings on National Intelligence Agency, Prisons and the Justice Sector Entities.



## Government Accepted more than 95 percent of the Recommendations

### #FromTruth2Justice

#### Restoring Democracy and Rule of Law

On 25th May 2022, the Government issued a White Paper highlighting its position on all 265 recommendations made by the TRRC. It indicated plans to design a strategy and an implementation plan in addition to acceptance of over 95 percent of the recommendations.

#### Highlights of the White paper include:

- The prosecution of adversely mentioned individuals including ex-President Jammeh, Sanna Sabally the former Vice Chairman of the APRC military Junta, former Chief of Defense Staff Babucar Jatta and former Vice President Iastou Njie Saidu for gross human rights violations and crimes from 1994-2016.
- The establishment of a Peace and Reconciliation Commission to foster peace post-TRRC.
- The setting up of a Reparations Commission as a successor institution to the TRRC which will have an independent mandate to consider current victims reparations and evaluate new victims not identified by the TRRC.
- The renaming of the Arch 22 in the capital city to Never Again Memorial Arch to honour the victims of former President Jammeh.
- The adoption of a victim-centered approach and victim participation in the implementation of the TRRC recommendations.
- The establishment of a Special Prosecution Unit at the Ministry of Justice to investigate and prosecute cases from the TRRC.
- Close collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to ensure review of the curriculum and regular training

**New Gambia**



**Accountability**

**&**

**Respect for  
Human Rights**

- 📍 National Secretariat,  
P. O. Box 2858,  
Kotu (opp. DSTV),  
The Gambia
- ☎ (220) 446 1713  
(220) 446 1717  
(220) 3353108
- ✉ contact@gm-nhrc.org
- 🌐 www.gm-nhrc.org
- 🐦 @NHRCGambia

# The Role of NHRC

## Restoring Democracy and Rule of Law

While the Government takes steps to implement the White Paper, NHRC is positioning itself as an independent institution and, as written in the report, **the natural body to monitor implementation of the TRRC recommendations to ensure that Never Again in the history of The Gambia will such human rights violations and abuses occur.**

To this effect, NHRC will establish a monitoring framework to systematically keep track of implementation, progress and lessons learned. It will also produce advisory notes, score cards and quarterly reports to document the process.

It is envisaged that the NHRC will play a pivotal role in archiving, and digitalization of documents, information and materials emanating from the TRRC to help in the preservation of the impartial historical record of human rights violation that the TRRC was mandated to establish.

Through the support of UNDP, The Gambia, the French Embassy in Senegal, and other development partners, NHRC will work closely with stakeholders, including victim-led organisations, CSOs and relevant state institutions, to popularize the Government White Paper and ensure that Gambians own and memorialise the TRRC. NHRC will also initiate efforts to effectively carry out its monitoring and advocacy role and to sustain #NeverAgain in The Gambia.

## Learning from the past The South Africa Truth Commission

From 4 July to 8 July 2022, the Chairperson of the NHRC led a delegation on an exchange visit to South Africa. The team comprised both staff of NHRC and CSO partners.

The exposed the delegation to the experience of actors engaged in supporting and monitoring the implementation of recommendations from the South African Truth Commission. The areas covered included strategies and lessons learned from monitoring the recommendations, memorialization, and archiving, as well as the challenges and best practices.

Key learning from this visit include:

An implementation plan and a clear roadmap is critical to the success of the process. This must be victim-centred and inclusive.

Establishment of a Special Prosecuting Unit should also include national capacity building to sustain the #NEVERAGAIN agenda.



**DO NO HARM**  
**Zero Blame for**  
**Victims!**

-  National Secretariat,  
P. O. Box 2858,  
Kotu (opp. DSTV),  
The Gambia
-  (220) 446 1713  
(220) 446 1717  
(220) 3353108
-  [contact@gm-nhrc.org](mailto:contact@gm-nhrc.org)
-  [www.gm-nhrc.org](http://www.gm-nhrc.org)
-  @NHRCGambia





The Attorney General and Honourable Minister of Justice handing over the TRRC Reports to the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission.

## The Role of NHRC

### Supporting National Engagement for an Inclusive Victim-Based Approach

In line with its advisory role to Government, NHRC from February 16th to 17th, 2022, organized a national stakeholder conference on the TRRC recommendations together with Civil Society Organisations, national institutions, victims groups and development partners. The theme for the conference was ***Beyond the Submission of the TRRC Report: What Next for Effective Implementation and Monitoring of the Recommendations?***

It presented opportunities to raise awareness and mobilise partnerships for the next phase of the TRRC. The national conference also ensured that no one is left behind. Thus, victims, women and other vulnerable groups, participated in the discussions, highlighting their roles, as well as expectations on the Government White Paper.



Participants at the Stakeholder Conference on the TRRC Recommendations held in February 2022.



**New Gambia**  
↓  
**Accountability**  
&  
**Respect for**  
**Human Rights**

- 📍 National Secretariat,  
P. O. Box 2858,  
Kotu (opp. DSTV),  
The Gambia
- ☎ (220) 446 1713  
(220) 446 1717  
(220) 3353108
- ✉ contact@gm-nhrc.org
- 🌐 www.gm-nhrc.org
- 🐦 @NHRCGambia

