





Restoring Hope & Dignity to Gambians CITIZENS' ALLIANCE MANFESTO CONTRACT WITH THE GAMBIAN PEOPLE

MESSAGE FROM

PARTY CHAIRPERSON

2021 is a watershed year in the annals of Gambian political history. 2021 is when the national verdict by all Gambians must be passed on the feasibility of stable and corrupt free democratic governance that will usher in needed economic growth and social development. The Gambia has determined from the Janneh Commission that corruption and impunity are twin evils that have resulted in massive waste, while the majority continues to languish in poverty and deprivation. The on-going TRRC is testimony that no set of human beings are innately evil and while others are innately good. The Gambia has always held itself as Godfearing and warm people who could not hurt a fly. However, revelations from the TRRC show that Gambians could even be much worse a people than those whose stories we read or watch on TV. All that needed to be done was to present an occasion and platform for humanity's nature to manifest itself in us.

These twin evils: wasteful corruption and wanton disregard for life are the things that The Gambia shall say to, NEVER AGAIN. Never again shall The Gambia's resources be illicitly allocated to a privileged few, and never again shall the lives of Gambians and all human beings that choose to live in our dear country be treated as if they were worth nothing. Human life shall be at the center of what the Gambia is, going forward. The Gambian deserves to live in dignity and be able to make important life choices of how he/she wants to live. She/he must be able to choose where to live, how to live, and what things constitute to her/him the quality of life that she/he dreamt living while growing up. The government that The Gambian shall choose to evolve and sustain **this platform** that shall enable this dignity and this choice of livelihood has come. This is the **Citizens Alliance (CA**).

This manifesto constitutes the statement of instructions by the Gambian youth and people in the written word to a newly evolving government of realism and integrity (CA) and a commitment by CA in terms of what country is deserved by Gambians, and to which they have a right. This manifestation of youths is premised on the understanding that the youth have decided that going forward, they shall no more be bystanders to the wanton destruction of their country and the delay in the delivery of their desired country. The youths agree that while respecting and agreeing with the national mandate that the elderly are good and useful (Mag Bahna), they recognize that this does not mean that the youths do nothing while their country and future continue to be plunged into underdevelopment and irreversible poverty. The emergence of CA is a statement of conviction. The conviction that the youths of this country being the highest population constituency, and those that shall carry the burden of underdevelopment must be part of the creation of their dreams or continue to wallow in self-pity as a people for eternity. This is the essence of CA and for which this manifesto is laid before all Gambians and the world

CA commits to a peaceful Gambia, where all people of all faiths and ethnicities shall coexist as brethren. CA also commits to the politics of ideas, innovation, and creativity, and that what Gambians want is the professed wisdom backed by verifiable ideas and knowledge Instruments that shall transform this country into a developed and secure country. For these reasons, CA shall further commit to ensuring that political discourse and campaign shall be based on mutual human respect and the offer of better ideas while objectively critiquing alternative idea offerings. CA understands that other political parties are constituted by Gambians of dignity who deserve to be treated well and that in our co-existence with them in the political field, CA shall NOT dwell on personal character assassination, but the verification and critique of ideas, including the supply of supreme alternatives for the development of our dear country. We, therefore, enjoin the divine supreme guidance of our God/Allah for continuing to sustain CA in the right path, and so too our dear nation, The Gambia.



Dominic Mendy,

Interim Citizens' Alliance, National Chairperson

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

MESSAGE FROM

My fellow Gambians,

Three years ago, some concerned citizens were brought together by concerns that the hopes and expectations after voting out the dictator were crushed. The ousting of the dictator was a collective effort led by a coalition. It was also evident to the concerned citizens that the coalition was not active.

Citizens' Alliance was founded on the ideals of democracy, civil liberties, social cohesion, and social justice. Its vision is to offer an alternative but innovative political outlook anchored on strong internal party democracy and the promotion of a citizen-driven agenda that recognizes every Gambian's equal value, upholding their dignity, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, race, age, and ability.

We aim to build a modern Gambia by transforming the way politics is viewed and conducted. Our country has great potential. However, this potential has not been matched by the leadership needed to initiate the structural transformations needed to build a modern democratic state that is based on inclusive development.

If given the mandate to govern, CA will provide a firm but fair, decisive, and inspirational leadership needed to build a modern nation anchored on shared prosperity. We will create and build on our collective strengths and opportunities to prepare the country for the future. We will harness our local resources, both natural and human, with innovative ideas to improve citizens' lives. We will ensure that everyone is accorded the equal opportunity of fulfilling their full and true potentials and have a good start in life.

This Manifesto is a well-thought-out prescription informed by a surgical diagnosis of our complex problems. It serves as a development masterplan that will help achieve The Gambia's development aspirations and ensure future generations' welfare. Our Manifesto's details outline our commitments anchored on four pillars, which will be critical in navigating our country's reversal from underdevelopment and stagnation to the pinnacle of growth, progress, and prosperity. These Core Pillars are:

- Pillar One: Creating Economic Prosperity and Decent Jobs;
- Pillar Two: Empowering The Gambian Citizenry;
- Pillar Three: Promoting Good Governance and Transparency; and
- Pillar Four: Ensuring Peace, Security, & Stability.

As the Presidential Candidate of the Citizens' Alliance, I am thrilled to be part of the generation of young Gambians

passionate and hungry for change. I will provide the leadership that our country deserves. A leadership that can ensure our resources are harnessed to build a society based on social equity, compassion, and solidarity. I have dedicated my life to driving meaningful change in the Gambia and have developed a vision for how we can progress through my many years of working with the youth of this nation.

As President, I will work tirelessly to ensure that every citizen, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic background, age, and ability, will have access to quality education, quality and affordable healthcare, and clean water, uninterrupted electricity, and basic infrastructure. With your support, I believe we can truly make this new vision for the Gambia a reality. The Gambia, our homeland, will at long last fulfill its potential as a model in Africa and beyond.

Together, we can restore our dignity and experience individual and collective growth.

Vote CA for dignity & better life

Ismaila Ceesay

Citizens' Alliance Presidential Candidate



APPRECIATING the fact that The Gambia, at the dawn of Independence in 1965, was dubbed an improbable nation;

RECOGNIZING that the country had emerged as one of the most stable and democratic states in Africa, with a long track record for moderate gains made in consolidating a democratic culture, with a track record for the respect of human rights within a politically pluralistic society;

COGNIZANT of the fact that this reputation was shattered almost thirty years into our birth as a nation;

FURTHER COGNIZANT of the fact that the modest gains made over the period were systematically rolled back and destroyed between 1994 and 2016;

WE RECOGNIZE the fact that our historical legacy of rights abuses and the rule of tyranny will forever haunt our national psyche;

WE REGRET that innocent lives have been lost during this period of shame and brutality where impunity reigned supreme;

WE HONOR those that died in the course of defending freedom, human rights, and justice for our people;

WE **RESOLVE** to pursue justice, by righting the wrongs

meted out to our citizens, and bringing to justice perpetrators, wherever they may be and for as long as it takes, and pledge that never again shall this nation be subjected to the evils of tyranny, bad governance, impunity and lack of respect for human dignity;

WE APPRECIATE the sacrifices made by men, women, and the youth of this country in resisting tyrannical rule and dictatorship in the face of the brutality meted out in the course of this heroic selflessness;

AND WE SALUTE the astounding role played by the Gambian Diaspora in confronting a 22-year-old dictatorship and helping to bring about a newfound democratic era for this and future generations to live in freedom and peace;

WE FURTHER SALUTE the efforts made to continue to shine a light on this tiny country and expand its influence and relevance to the regional, continent, and international community;

WE PLEDGE to embrace the hard-fought freedom and endeavor to meet the heightened expectation of our people who yearn to live in freedom and dignity forever;

WE FURTHER PLEDGE to uphold the virtues of human rights, popular participation, right to work, and the right to freely articulate and promote the will of the citizenry that they are governed well;



WE RECOGNIZE the importance of a vibrant private sector as the engine of economic growth, supported by strong regulatory frameworks that protect consumers, creates opportunity, and serves as a check against corruption, state capture, and culture of rent-seeking;

WE ARE AWARE that the greatest challenge to our development aspirations is climate change, and that coastal erosion will affect our tourism, rising sea levels will sink our capital city, unchecked sand mining will deplete our coastline, illegal timber logging, land grabbing, and unregulated fishing will threaten our blue and green economies;

WE APPLAUD the far-reaching 1977 Banjul Declaration as one of the primary pronouncements made by the Gambia Government on protecting our Flora and Fauna in the face of the challenges of climate change;

WE PLEDGE to revisit the Banjul Declaration of 1977 and strengthen and implement the (revised) principles therein;

WE APPRECIATE that challenges remain and that unity of purpose and constant cooperation will be our guiding path to economic prosperity, political maturity, and social advancement;

WE RESOLVE to contribute to good governance, transparency, accountability, the culture of pluralism where

diverse views are encouraged in the practice of democracy by dialogue, in the quest to win support through these principles and battle of ideas that such a culture espouses; and

WE HOLD OURSELVES to these promises and further pledge to contribute to building a democratic country, at peace with itself and the world, where our people will live in dignity and harmony.



VISION

"The Citizens' Alliance vision is for The Gambia and its people to have a democratic republic with a vibrant, thriving economy that empowers the citizenry and guarantees the rights, wellbeing, and dignity of all. We are committed to providing effective leadership with the will to serve selflessly, and to address The Gambia's challenges, ensure inclusivity, equity, and prosperity for all."

MISSION

"To deliver The Gambia into the future, by propelling her and her diverse peoples to attain their fullest potential as a viable nationstate irrespective of its size and population, its historical past, and into a viable, stable, prosperous, peaceful, and progressive future."



Citizens' Alliance's commitment to creating opportunity, growth, and prosperity for The Gambian people rests on the following Core Pillars:

Pillar One

Creating Economic Prosperity and Decent Jobs;

Pillar Two

Empowering The Gambian Citizenry;

Pillar Three

Promoting Good Governance and Transparency; and

Pillar Four

Ensuring Peace, Security, & Stability.



PILLAR ONE

CREATING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

AND DECENT JOBS

The Gambia's growing debt makes it impossible for inclusive economic prosperity. Poverty and unemployment are our biggest challenges, particularly because they severely inhibit our youth population's opportunities to access decent jobs, quality skills training, international travel, education, and other general livelihood opportunities.

With rural poverty rates in excess of 78% and youth unemployment at 40%, significant changes are urgently needed to improve the Gambian people's quality of life and ensure that Gambians can live in dignity.

In 2018, the World Bank stated that The Gambia was Sub-Saharan Africa's 2nd largest recipient of remittances as a share of GDP (22%). While we enjoy remittances from family members abroad, such practices of generosity of spirit, and an expanded social safety net is unsustainable, as it cannot deliver mas economic prosperity.

The Gambia has always depended on foreign aid to finance development projects and even pay civil servants' salaries. Some argue that without natural resources, The Gambia will need aid, and yet, no country in this world has transitioned from poverty due to foreign aid. The Gambia will not be any different.

Our over-dependence on foreign aid has increased our indebtedness to the tune of 85% of our GDP. Meaning we are paying high servicing costs that could have been used

to pay for the development and social projects to restore our people's dignity. This same dependency has made us complacent and reluctant to seek out and capitalize on alternative sources of national income and, indeed, on our natural resources. **CA will institute measures to reduce and ultimately eliminate our foreign dependency over time.**

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & DECENT JOBS

Citizens' Alliance will harness local resources to revitalise the Gambian economy, creating opportunities built on innovative investments in agriculture, the environment, transportation, infrastructure, the arts, and tourism. We will use innovation, data, and research key drivers that will create 75,000 decent jobs across multiple sectors including infrastructure expansion and e-government.

Through a regulated free market and using public funds responsibly, CA will promote wealth creation and sustainable economic growth and defend social and economic equity through greater financial inclusion. CA will adopt an inclusive development approach where rural development is prioritized to ensure that our people are lifted out of poverty together.

Sustainable Growth

CA will establish clear, transparent priorities, make wellresearched and fair decisions, and build and further consolidate the international community's trust and support as we tackle the challenges of achieving rapid, inclusive, and sustained growth.

CA's approach to sustainable growth:

- Implement the stringent application of institutional reforms and control measures that ensure a lean government.
- Adopt a meritocratic approach to fresh ideas and innovation.
- Work with the National Assembly to establish and manage Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), establish a Diaspora Remittances "Fund" or "Bond," establish an infrastructure fund, and commit a significant proportion of domestic revenue of government to cater for more of the developmental needs of The Gambian People.
- Work with the instituted Anti-Corruption Commission to identify and recover financial abuses and implement measures against anyone found wanting.



- Create jobs for skilled workers, especially youth. This will be central to new private-sector opportunities or employment programs.
- Create an enabling environment for small businesses designed to promote competition, innovation, job creation, and sustainable growth.
- Partner with Gambian producers to develop the right policy mix to fully exploit trade and growth opportunities and galvanize those wanting to reorient towards fast-growing markets or re-export imports.



Improve Productivity and Commercialization of the Agriculture Sector

CA's approach to improving productivity and commercialization of the agricultural sector is:

- **Restructure the agriculture sector.** Work with National Assembly to put legal and regulatory frameworks that support the establishment of cooperatives, an agriculture bank, fair distribution of farmland ownership, encourage agriculture investments, and government supplements.
- Investment in farm and manufacturing infrastructure. Work with private and foreign investors to establish the required infrastructure (land, irrigation systems and water resources, farm equipment, manufacturing equipment, storage systems) for sustained growth in the agriculture sector and increased production and agroprocessing expansion.
- **Invest in Scientific Research.** Significantly increase the budgetary allocation to scientific research and information and create a framework for technology transfer to enhance agricultural productivity.

- To ensure food security, A CA led-government will:
- **Commit to Increasing the budget allocation** for the agriculture sector as recommended under the Maputo Declaration (Spending 10% of public expenditure to increase agricultural productivity).
- **Commit to offer minimum guarantee** to farmers in terms of crop and produce prices at the beginning of the crop season.
- **Create insurance schemes** to protect livestock and crop farmers from risks, including disasters and effects of climate change through public-private partnership.
- **Facilitate access to finance** for livestock and crop farmers by establishing agricultural and livestock sector financial institutions.
- Work within PPP frameworks to initiate and support value addition through the processing of livestock and agricultural products to maximise returns to farmers.



Improve Productivity and Commercialization of the Fisheries and Marine Sector

Gambia's fisheries sector is the most untapped in The Gambia. CA's government will increase production and per capita GDP to levels commensurate with the sector's potential. To achieve this goal, legal and regulatory frameworks, policies, and programs will be put in place to:

- Sustainably increasing the production of fisheries through clearing water weeds, clearing and maintaining straits, and reducing or banning contaminants' disposal would lead to increased productivity and improving product quality.
- Expand fishing in the river Gambia, the ocean, and extending to international waters;
- Encourage investments in marine (particularly fish) farming and the establishment of hatcheries.
- Reduce the pollution of water bodies and strictly applying fisheries and environmental laws and regulations to increase sustainable productivity.
- Protect water bodies from encroachment and other illegal activities.

- Establish an integrated marine management system.
- Establish and update databases to strengthen the planning and designing of development projects for assured success.
- Develop captured fisheries management systems and mechanisms; and
- Support traditional and modern sea, river, and fish farming by assisting with integrating modern technologies.

CA led Government will:

- **Restructure the marine and fisheries sector.** CA will work with the National Assembly to develop and strengthen the existing legal and regulatory framework and international arrangements that protect Gambia's aquatic environments and support sea and river communities and the other existing aquatic industries.
- Increase investment in marine and fisheries manufacturing infrastructure. CA would work with private and foreign investors to establish the required infrastructure for sustained growth in the agriculture sector. The significant funding required will come from PPP arrangements, Foreign Direct Investments.

Continuous expansion of ocean and river: CA will explore opportunities of our ocean and river economy that will lead to marine and aquatic biotechnology to produce new products; and explore river transport further to ease congestion of our roads.

Furthermore, CA will explore our oceans and riverways for the benefit of Gambia's Fishing Community as well as to integrate Gambian businesses into markets throughout the African Continent and, indeed, the world. The CA Government will empower Gambian fisheries and transportation companies to exploit these resources sustainably for Gambians' benefit. Under CA, Gambia's ocean and rivers will be yielding valuable resources. They will be free of piracy, illegal, unregulated, unreported fishing (IUU fishing), and other criminal activities, including illegal dumping of wastes.



Unlock the Growth and Job Creation Potential of Small Businesses

A CA Government will:

Prioritize entrepreneurship and, particularly, champion the advancement of the small, medium, and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs), acknowledging them as the proven catalyst for economic growth and job creation.

- Create an entrepreneurial infrastructure that will allow businesses, entrepreneurs, and the employees of these ventures to thrive.
- Work with the Gambian private sector to invest in innovative measures to revolutionise Gambian businesses and entrepreneurial practices.
- Ensure the Ministry of Trade is structured to work with small businesses, the private sector, Chambers of Commerce, and other stakeholders to facilitate access to markets for Gambian entrepreneurs.
- Review and modify policies to ensure they assist entrepreneurs from the start-up to sustainable growth.
- Support and strengthen entrepreneurial education, business incubator programs, Technical and

Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) institutions, and ensure strong national coaching and mentorship programs that guide entrepreneurs.

- Ensure a conducive environment for business and investment readiness for domestic or international investment opportunities for Gambian entrepreneurs.
- Facilitate an integrated ecosystem for knowledge transfer, share lessons learned, and collaborate between the various stakeholders to share experiences and leverage other organizations' capabilities.
- Implement venture capital incentives as well as research and development (R&D) tax incentives.
- Introduce an innovative seed funding program for businesses.
- Support and ensure the growth and continuity of the Gambian Angel Investment Network.

Improve the Economic Status of Women

CA will centralise the role of women in the economic development of The Gambia. No longer will women's economic development be side-lined or mentioned in passing but will be embedded as a pillar in every sector. All CA policies will have gender parity inbuilt, with full consideration of the roles and needs, specific to Gambian women of all walks of life.

CA will establish a Women in Leadership Development Program and set inclusion quotas for key leadership positions in government and private sectors. CA will promote child-friendly work environments.

Redesign and Rebrand Tourism

The Gambia has the potential to attract sedate tourist all year round and leverage uninterrupted flow of income to strengthen our economy. To achieve this, a CA Government will redesign and rebrand tourism to include rural, domestic, regional, and international tourists. Specifically, CA will:

- Tap into the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibition (MICE) market to include a diverse tourism product.
- Attract investment for the development of parks, zoos, and other zoological tourist attractions.
- Extend the leisure tourism to increase visibility and investment in family-friendly vacation spots, bird watching packages, and other sedate tourism

jewels suited to our existing tourist (and national) demographic.

- Invest in infrastructure and transportation to make historical places easier to visit and pleasant to stay at.
- Organize and support annual festivals, creative or cultural events, and local exhibits to attract tourists year-round.
- Support long-standing Gambian events to enhance their appeal globally and promote "Brand Gambia" more effectively.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is critical for The Gambia's ongoing economic and social development. Systems that stabilise physical infrastructure ensure that our basic needs are met. With a holistic view of our infrastructure gaps in relation to the development of new, more effective ecosystems and the maintenance of our existing infrastructure, CA actions will include:

- Establish a team of experts to forecast infrastructural requirements and to recommend essential projects.
- Consider innovative solutions for closing the funding

gap, such as value capture and civic crowdfunding, attracting foreign direct investments. For example, approach a giant corporation Amazon, recommending that they build a western African hub in the Gambia – highlighting the draw of a good living wage that is relatively cheap labor for the investor while providing optimal mobility and access to the rest of western African countries by land/air/ sea. Amazon warehouse would bring approximately 3,000 jobs and increase warehouses' development (and other industrial structures), roads, visibility, and other infrastructural development projects.

- Improve the flow of local private sector and foreign investment financing.
- Introduce legal and regulatory frameworks to mitigate political and currency-related risks.
- Enact effective whistle-blowing legislation to challenge the unethical, destructive behavior that currently decimates infrastructural projects in the developing world
- Align The Gambia's integrated infrastructure masterplan with the annual budget and its processes.
- Establish centers of excellence equipped to coordinate public sector expertise through the

procurement process -- allowing public sector organizations of any sort to draw on specialist skills when negotiating public-private partnership (PPP) contracts.

- Introduce guarantee schemes for significant infrastructure projects in order to encourage significant private sector involvement in infrastructure projects.
- Establish facilitators of knowledge transfer between the public and private sectors through thought leadership and roundtable events.

CA's priority in infrastructure will be to identify "quick wins" that would benefit from receiving urgent attention over the first 100 days. As indicated above, a team will be put together, comprising public and private sector experts in relevant fields, to develop an integrated infrastructure masterplan. Given the anticipated role of the private sector in infrastructure development and maintenance, CA will work to determine the best financing options for the prioritized list of projects.

Energy Strategy

The lack of reliable power, variable voltage, and the exorbitantly high energy cost are detrimental to the

expected economic growth rates we envisage. Therefore, CA will embark on transforming the sector by:

- Increasing access to affordable energy services; providing an enabling environment for the provision of electricity services, and enhancing the security of supply.
- Ensuring an adequate, reliable, cost-effective, and affordable electricity supply meets or exceeds development needs while protecting and conserving the environment and observing climate change effects.
- Eliminating the possibility and continuity of inefficient monopoly by empowering and encouraging fair competition in the production of green, alternative, and fossil-fueled power for the nation, if it serves the population in the long term.
- Encouraging Public-Private Partnerships to enhance the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity and focus on reducing, then eliminating system grid losses, commercial losses, and ensuring the grid's vigour in the long and short term.
- Increasing competition in production, distribution, and sale and encouraging PPPs to achieve financial sustainability through cost-based tariff regulation.

- Systematic decommissioning and replacement of old and inefficient equipment (Introduction of energy mix based models using least-cost options and sustainability models for best effect).
- Introducing modern management strategies to enhance efficiency and transparency and administrative and data management (balancing value, effective customer service, and sustainability.
- Building and maintaining robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms based on Data (Thus, improving performance evaluation for both staff and the institution as a whole).
- Developing human resources through recruitment and robust training.
- Addressing high commercial electricity tariffs in order to make goods and service competitive both locally and internationally.
- Reducing the cost of solar and other renewable power, developing and strengthening Gambia's capacity to sustainably generate alternatives to fossil fuels in order to dismantle our currently high dependency as well as the detrimental impact usage has on global climate change and the local environment (as well as its impact on agriculture, fishing, tourism, and other interrelated industries).

- Educating the Gambia's population on the benefits of mitigating climate change and personal cost through thrifty and mindful use of power.
- Developing strategic fuel reserve policies and creating beneficial bilateral trade agreements with oil-exporting companies to normalise lower cost, stable oil imports.
- Establishing a National Centre of Excellence with a focus on renewable energy.
- Develop a sustainable and systematic approach to increase access to electricity for rural populations.

Road Infrastructure & Access

Adequate road infrastructure is central to The Gambia's economic growth. Road infrastructure is at the core of good governance and public safety and welfare. Any improvement in the Gambia's road infrastructure will translate to a positive impact on Gambia's GDP.

A CA led Government will:

- Develop an integrated electronic master list of the road network.
- Ensure adequate and efficient maintenance of the

existing road network by establishing a workable annual national road maintenance plan for all roads and budgeting adequately.

- Revamp and appropriately-size the National Roads Authority (NRA) and its governance for effective management of road network.
- Improve linkages to various modes of transport and to enhance intermodal transportation
- Develop a robust funding profile for the roads network to include funding from multiple and transparent sources (private sector, multilateral agencies, and structured public-private partnerships).
- Institutionalize a framework and adoption of PPP for road construction, maintenance, and management.

Transportation

Our current transport infrastructure is not aligned with the country's aspirations – it is antiquated, inefficient, and at a significant deficit. This must change as The Gambia's transport infrastructure will be a lynchpin critical facilitator throughout multiple sectors of The Gambian economy.

Road Transportation

Rapid urbanization and continuous rural to urban migration are overstretching the Gambia's transport systems. These trends have culminated in the Greater Banjul Area, hosting around 50% of the entire population. CA will implement badly needed reforms in Gambia's transport sector to instigate an effective mass transit system and develop public transport planning, operation, and regulations.

A CA led Government will:

- Develop and implement an effective urban town planning policy.
- Increase investment in additional public transportation routes and initiate discussions regarding an urgent review of alternative transport options to reduce traffic congestion.

Air Transportation

The Gambia has all the makings of a regional hub for air travel to Europe and the Americas. Mindful of this potential, CA Government shall invest in the air transport sector to ensure users' safety, security, and comfort and create a self-sustaining sector conducive to socio-economic growth as well as in step with international best practices.



Marine Transportation

CA will reinstitute The Gambia as a regional port hub with a serious focus and prioritization of investment in Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) infrastructure, connecting to river Gambia to the port network, building human capacity, as well as automating all maritime operations to maximize output and prevent leakages. CA will revisit the continuing viability of the port of Banjul and explore the possibilities of a new port in a location that will optimize effectiveness and competitiveness.

Water & Sanitation

According to UNICEF, Gambia has abundant water resources - 90% of the population had some access to water in 2018, yet only 34 % of households use safely managed drinking water services. A CA government will:

- Develop an integrated plan for water and sanitation infrastructure development and management.
- Improve coordination, investment planning, and implementation measures to enable annual reviews of all water and sanitation systems.
- Build and enhance private sector capacity, to ensure greater private sector participation in the

development, repair, and maintenance of water and sanitation supply facilities.

• Promote greater sensitization for full community ownership of facilities and standardize technologies to facilitate spare parts' availability.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The Gambia has one of the strongest ICT sectors in the region but is ranked among the lowest in ICT utilization, e-commerce, and other online services. Data is needlessly expensive, and rural areas have very little access to basic ICT services. Moreover, service reliability remains poor throughout urban areas, capacity and ICT innovations are low, and we lack the appropriate products and services to push utilization.

A CA led government will:

- Effectively manage and use existing legislation or work with the National Assembly to create new legislation to ensure an enabling environment for growth and development of ICT and ICT solutions in The Gambia.
- Incentivize the private sector to invest in ICT and to build capacity and competition within the sector.



- Develop specialist institutions and technology hubs that will groom and encourage a large cohort of specialized Gambian IT professionals to support future innovations, especially among the youth.
- Work toward providing universal access to computing devices and connectivity for all schools and government institutions to improve computer literacy and proficiency for all
- Encourage the establishment of ICT training institutions in all the regions to promote more balanced growth and development of the sector.
- Promote tech entrepreneurship and incentivise businesses to develop innovative technology solutions in all sectors.

E-Commerce and Digital Financial Services

CA will work with the regulators and the private sector to:

• Institutionlize and increase access to digital payment instruments to accelerate e-commerce development and encourage the normalization of cross-border and international payment services. This is part of our plan to increase access to markets, especially for Gambian entrepreneurs and exporters.

• Support financial services providers in developing and expanding digital financial services to eliminate financial exclusion, particularly women.



E-Government

With our young population, small geographical area, and high mobile network coverage penetration, The Gambia has a unique opportunity to capitalise on ICT for economic growth, increased productivity, and enhanced service delivery. CA will:

- Fast-track and fully implement our e-governance project to ensure optimal usage of digital technologies for the significant benefit of all Gambians.
- Ensure full digitization of government payments (civil servant and pensioner salaries, payment for goods and services, and payment collection).



Women in ITC

CA recognises the significant gendered digital divide, particularly in Africa, and firmly believes that ICT cannot be effectively harnessed in the Gambia without a conscious and deliberate focus on gender balance within ICT. For this reason, CA will:

- Require adequate representation of women during the drafting phase of all ICT policies - ensuring gender parity throughout our ICT culture. This will require that all ICT policies drafted are gendersensitive and adequately consider and address issues that could impede women's participation.
- Invest in and promote ICT education and skills development that will specifically target women.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

A CA-led government will embark on civil service reforms to ensure institutional effectiveness and optimal efficiency for service delivery to Gambians by focusing on the following:

• Expenditure Management and Control: Expenditure Management and Control will ensure the Government collects resources from the economy appropriately and that it allocates these resources in a responsible, transparent, responsive, timely, and efficient manner at all times. To achieve this, a CA government shall legislate that a given proportion of domestic revenue (between 30% – 40%) shall be dedicated to development financing, while the rest shall be used for sustaining the operational cost of government.

- Human Resource Management: Trained civil servants will be appointed as professionals based on qualifications through an effectively run Personnel Management Office (PMO) and the Public Service Commission (PCS).
- Pay and Pension Reform: A CA-led government's major intent is to spearhead reforms of the entire pay and pension schemes within The Gambia. We believe that it is vital to ensure realistic living wages and pension benefits for all and intend to introduce the minimum wage (subject to review based on inflation) to ensure working Gambians have a dignified living.
- Gender Equity Management System: CA-led Government will implement gender equity policies using an effective gender equity management system.
- Service Delivery focusing on ICT, Systems & Processes: CA-led Government will make

information technology a critical catalyst for the strategic reform initiatives needed to position the Gambia for innovation and growth within the burgeoning global digital era.

- Ethical Governance: A CA-Led Government will install strict ethical standards as an integral part of a legal framework to ensure government employees adhere to the basic principles and standards they are expected to work within, including whistleblower protection.
- Diaspora Policy: As part of the civil service reform, a CA government will institute a Diaspora policy that will result in a framework that will facilitate the recruitment and repatriation of skilled and experienced foreign-based Gambians into the civil service under three pilot schemes – permanent, short-term, and remote schemes. To fully harness the diaspora potential, a CA Government shall also develop and launch a program of attracting Gambian entrepreneurs abroad to invest in strategic industries and sectors in The Gambia.
- Introduce a standardized reward system for public servants who exceed performance targets specified by annual performance plans.
- Encourage strict adherence to the Public Service Commission appointment regulations with reduced presidential power for political appointments.

- Protect and insulate state institutions from undue politicisation and/or nepotism.
- Decentralise the civil service by relocating administrative offices to different regions of the country.
- Establish a Civil Service College for teaching and training that meets international best practices.
- Review and assess whether the current Civil Service Code of Conduct is fit for purpose, and introduce amendments in line with international best practices suited to enforce a transparent and efficient culture of service, duty, ethics, professionalism, and discipline.
- Where possible and necessary, establish the Public Service Ethics and Efficiency Commission to enforce the Civil Service Code of Conduct.
- Conduct regular audit inspections and transparently sanction and eliminate improper or unlawful conduct or practices.
- Introduce a system-wide electronic monitoring mechanism for periodic staff conduct and performance audits.

PROCUREMENT REFORM

A CA led government will implement an effective procurement system that ensures transparency, accountability, and stakeholder participation. The public procurement reform proposed by CA will: ensure good governance; help translate public policies into the required tangible and visible results for citizens; deliver essential services; implement projects and programs effectively, and contribute to business growth and investment. This will lead to a substantial uptick in competitiveness and the promotion of economic development. CA will:

- Adopt superior procurement management systems.
- Regulate and harmonize public procurement processes.
- Promote economic development, including capacity building, by ensuring value for all government expenditure.
- Provide equitable, competitive, transparent, modern, and meritocratic bidding procedures for all participants in public procurement.
- Ensure the selection of only the most qualified provider of goods, works, and services to ensure the best results where public funds are spent.



- Seek out and seal wastage within the economy by effectively managing and reviewing government contracts and procurements.
- Consider international best practices before formulating the best fit for any procurement reform program implemented by the Government.
- Review and implement an effective procurement system to create optimal transparent and streamlined methods to buy goods and services.
- Establish procurement vehicles to reduce administrative acquisition costs and specialized procurement vehicles to ensure equitable awarding of contracts to rural businesses, women in businesses, start-ups, youths in business, and businesses owned by differently-abled persons.



Poverty, inequity, and exclusion continue to constrain economic and social development. Limited job opportunities at home are forcing most skilled and trained workers to seek employment overseas. According to the Gambia Bureau of Statistic (Gambia Labour Force Survey, 2018), more than two-thirds of those remaining earn a living from the informal sector, and 80% of Gambians do not have access to quality health care. The education system remains poor, with completion rates higher for boys than girls and quality deplorable. The lack of programs and policies for marginalized groups like women, children, senior citizens, and differently-abled persons has entrenched most of the population below the poverty level of living on less than \$1.25 a day. The rural to urban migration continues to grow rapidly due to insufficient economic opportunities and social amenities across the regions.

EMPOWERING THE GAMBIAN CITIZENRY

Citizens' Alliance believes that every Gambian's fundamental right to have access to services and protection regardless of sex, ability, geographical location, age, or financial standing. A CA led government will ensure the protection of young children and other marginalized groups. Specifically, CA's interventions will include healthcare, education and skills development, youth empowerment, gender equality, family welfare, and social care.


Healthcare

CA's healthcare philosophy is "care and concern for all." The basis of reform will be anchored on social care, not overlooking the fact that poverty and discrimination persist as powerful causes of ill health.

As a priority investment sector, the improvement of the Gambian healthcare system will include the following strategic goals:

- Infrastructure: Assess and synchronize current health sector plans and policies with CA's broader national development agenda. Infrastructure improvements encompass the built environment and supporting elements: equipment, transportation (ambulances), information technology (IT) systems and processes, sustainability initiatives, and staff.
- Health Coverage and Insurance Scheme: Establish a national health coverage and insurance scheme with subsidized programs for families based on income, age, and family size to ensure access to care for all.
- Women and Children: Under the health coverage scheme, increase the provision of safe maternity services that include antenatal care, safe delivery by skilled midwives, quality care for obstetric and

neonatal emergencies, post-natal care, and family planning that stresses the importance of healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies.

- Mental Health: Destigmatize mental health-related ailments and expand Tanka Tanka Psychiatric Hospital services to all regions, including the provision of services to children, adolescents, and drug and alcohol abuse victims.
- The Workforce: Attract, retain, and develop worldclass talent. The delivery of quality healthcare hinges on ensuring our greatest asset - medical personnel are empowered, engaged, and well-equipped with competencies, tools, and opportunities.
- Dentistry and Eyecare: Under the health coverage scheme, CA will invest in expanding dentistry services and in providing fellowship programs for doctors, scientists, and clinicians dedicated to creating the highest health standards through prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of oral and ophthalmic conditions.
- Emergency Medical Services: Install a coordinated dispatch and call-center system in all regions for emergency medical care, involving both the public and private sectors.

- Prevention and Public Health: Under the Department of Public and Environmental Health, create a response unit mandated to be dedicated to the "science and art of preventing disease," including preparing and responding to current and future global pandemics like Covid-19.
- Research and Innovation: Streamline, fund and staff all research centered units including but not limited to: the Directorate for Health Research, the Medical Research Council, the Center for Innovations against Malaria - Public Health Research and Development Center, the National Malaria Control Program, and the National AIDS Secretariat, the International Trypanotolerance Centre, and the National Agricultural Research Institute.

Education & Skills Development

The Gambia's education system is in dire need of reformation to support our mandate to build a nation of highly skilled people to accommodate a growing economy. For far too long, our educational attainment levels have been at some of the lowest in the world, and our students have struggled to compete with their contemporaries across West Africa - judging from WASSCE results.

The priority of our education system should always be to adequately prepare students for the global job market.

Thus, it is essential to update teaching methods and curricula to reflect new realities. This will: enhance the quality of our education, increase Gambia's human capital, and produce globally competitive and highly capable students.

A CA administration will carry out an extensive assessment of the Gambian education system, labor market, and economic structure. The objective is to create an education system that is focused on acquiring knowledge and applicable skillsets. Once completed, the assessment will inform a phased reformation process. Reformation will consist of the following:

- Heavily invest in early childhood development.
- Establish an ICT-driven process that supports evidence-based decision making with respect to resource allocation, strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation of all educational policies and their implementation.
- Review and assess the curricula for primary, lower basic, and senior secondary schools and their relevance to the modern and global labour market, including 21st-century skills.
- Increase access to basic education for all, for both formal and non-formal education, using ICT as one

of the major tools for learning, teaching, searching and information sharing.

- Improve the quality of basic education and promote independent and lifelong learning, especially from primary to tertiary education.
- Contribute to the development of a workforce equipped with the ICT skills needed for employment and use in a knowledge-based economy.
- Ensure that Gambia has in place an ICT-driven process that supports evidence-based decision making with respect to resource allocation, strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation of the educational policy implementation.
- Collaborate with the private sector, provide free WiFi coverage for senior secondary and tertiary institutions nationwide dedicated to learning, administration and enhancing the capacity to do research.
- Introduce the history of the Gambia and African History at the primary school level to strengthen a sense of inclusive national identity, national pride that will ultimately lead to good governance, facilitate economic development and social cohesion.

- Strengthen the continuous professional development and management of teachers across all levels of education.
- Increase literacy and numeracy rates amongst the educationally disadvantaged learners, and create a favourable framework for functional adult literacy.
- Empower the University of the Gambia to conduct Masters' and Ph.D. programmes in subjects relevant to the labour market.
- Revamp and heavily invest in the Gambia College to ensure we produce the best teachers.
- Fund certification programs for all vocational, agricultural, and technical schools to fill labour gaps.
- Make higher and tertiary education free and initiate loan schems to help the brightest students through their education.
- Increase salaries of teachers and head teachers (for both conventional and non-conventional schools) and ensure that teachers who upgrade their qualifications and skills are promoted promptly and that their salary increases take immediate effect.

• Support and strengthen non-conventional educational centers to prepare their students for the global labour market.

Gender, Family Welfare, And Social Care

Citizens Alliance will invest in creating an equitable society that benefits every Gambian. An important feature of poverty in The Gambia is its gender inequality dimension. Women constitute the majority of the poor and extremely poor, exacerbated by their low socioeconomic status. Even though women constitute 45% of the economically active population, they occupy only 9.4% of the skilled labour force but are over-represented in the unskilled labour category (62%).

The Gambia has made several commitments to gender equality by acceding to and becoming a signatory to various regional and international treaties and conventions. For the most part, these documents are left on the shelf to gather dust. A CA government will ensure the operationalisation of the country's commitments to gender quality and will have gender mainstream as a top priority across all policies and programs.

CA has eight priority areas aimed at achieving equality for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups:

- Equal division of power and influence: establishing a Ministry for Gender and Equality, which will be responsible for policy development, implementation, and coordination across all government agencies, municipalities, grassroots organizations working on women and children's empowerment resource mobilization, including gender budgeting across all ministries.
- Sexual and gender-based violence: Establish special victims units to specialize in investigating and prosecuting sex and gender-based violence crimes while providing institutional support for women's rights organisations and organizations that combat sexual and gender-based violence.
- Female Reproductive Health: Ensure all health centers are properly funded and staffed with the appropriate number of trained midwives to ensure women in labour are properly cared for and that no health centre will need to turn away a woman in labour.
- Reintroduce sex education in schools. All students must be educated early about setting boundaries. Appropriate and good sex education is very important in increasing awareness about sexual and reproductive health, combating early marriage, and female genital mutilation.

- Exploitation, human trafficking, and modern-day slavery: Establish a special police unit to ensure cross-sectoral collaboration to clamp down on human trafficking, to investigate all relevant leads, and to ensure that those found responsible are prosecuted to the full extent of the Law.
- Land Rights: Establish a program under the newly created Ministry of Gender and Equality to support women in all land-related policies.
- Equality for Persons with Disabilities: Work against the social exclusion of persons with disabilities by ensuring that these citizens are given equal access to education, employment, and decent healthcare.
- Ensure all public services and public spaces, government offices, and private premises will be made inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Social Protection and support for vulnerable groups: Strengthened the gender legal framework by revisiting the various bills which are at various stages of completion, and:
 - Revise the Human Trafficking act of 2007 to ensure a Gender-Sensitive act.

- Grant educational scholarships to over 1000 girls per Region and train them in traditionally male-dominated occupations and professions.
- Establish shelter for abused women and children.
- Social welfare: Citizens' Alliance has various policies that ensure indirect economic support for families. The free education policy, universal healthcare, free maternity healthcare, and free basic healthcare services are just some. CA will ensure a housing policy that guarantees affordable housing for all.
- Financial support for financially vulnerable groups, especially families with providers who are persons with disabilities.
- Restore and strengthen the independence of the current administrator of the system, Social Security and Housing Finance Corporation and ensure proper, predictably, and accountable governance of the institution with no undue interference from the executive office of the president
- Reform of the regulatory environment for housing in the Gambia is long overdue. There is a need for significant focus and reforms in housing-specific

legislation and regulation and a comprehensive formulation of an urban development strategy, including a policy that will inform and guide the urbanisation process.

• Review and where necessary, revise existing policies and legislation, specifically the Social Security and Housing Finance Corporation Act of 1981; the State Lands Act of 1991; the Physical Planning and Development Control Act of 1991; the Land Acquisition and Compensation Act of 1991; the Survey Act of 1991; the Local Government Act of 2002\); the Rent Act of 2014; and the Mortgages Act of 1992.

Youth Empowerment & Curbing Irregular Migration

The strength of a nation can be measured by the hope it offers to its young - their energy will drive the nation. It is their hopes and aspirations that must define our goal as people. Therefore, Gambian youths are at the center of our development strategy and a key driver for sustainable development.

CA's national youth policy is designed to help mold our youth - harnessing their leadership skills, providing quality education, offering support to entrepreneurs, developing job skills, and creating opportunities through social inclusion, arts, and music. CA promises to create an enabling environment to build the capacity of our youth to take on more active roles in our country's future and its development.

In pursuant of this, CA will focus on the following key ten areas of youth empowerment:

- Education and Skills Development: Fund youthled programs across all sectors and educational institutions to match the labour market, skills demand, and skills formation.
 - Establish a legal and regulatory framework for apprenticeships in order to initiate a new National Apprenticeship Programme. The Programme will provide youths with valuable job skills while allowing employers to specifically train employees for their company/industry and allow the employer to become aware of the participants' skills, talent, and personalities before they are hired permanently.
 - Strengthen the National Youth Council to expand into every community and to encourage positive socialization. Youth clubs will emphasize discipline and social

responsibility and support a wide range of activities involving community projects, sports, culture, personal development, drug awareness, and responsible sexual behaviour.

- Appoint, on all public sector boards, a minimum of one young person within the youth age bracket to serve as a director. CA will ensure that our future leaders participate in the decisions that will shape the future they will inherit.
- Social Inclusion: Establish a Youth Enterprises Fund (YEF) to provide funding and business development services for businesses owned by young entrepreneurs, especially start-ups. The fund will ensure the participation of young entrepreneurs in bidding for Government-funded contracts.
- Employment and Entrepreneurship: Offer tax incentives to young entrepreneurs to encourage an increase in start-ups; and introduce tax credits and other related incentives for companies that hire young graduates from tertiary institutions.
- ICT and Innovation: Establish ICT knowledge hubs in every region to promote equal access to online services and increase ICT literacy among youth.

- Transform agriculture and agri-business: Invest in emerging livestock and agricultural technologies; and most importantly, review land tenure and use systems to provide adequate security and access to land so that youth are encouraged to invest in land improvements, development, and productivity, minimize conflicts and to encourage lease arrangements for private and corporate investment for irrigation development.
- Arts, Music, Culture, and Creativity: Support the development of creativity among young people by investing in art, music, culture, and the creative industry.
 - Build recreational parks across the country.
 - Build a national performing arts school and theatre.
 - Elevate and invest in aspiring and current creative talent.
 - Introduce or support existing international festivals and other events in order to showcase Gambian talent.
- Participation in decision-making: Establish an Ombudsman for Children in Gambia whose main duty is to promote the rights and interests of children and young people as outlined in the United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and develop mechanisms for dialogue with youth and youth participation on national policies and programs.

- Entrench Patriotism and Volunteerism: Launch a year of "service" across the country from the age of 18 in various sectors. Giving the youth the opportunity to give back to their country while learning and improving skillsets.
- Health and Well-being: Establish a National Sexual Health Education Board and expand access to integrated sexual and reproductive health information and services to men and women within all 120 wards nationwide.
- Environment and Sustainable Development: Promote the creation of green cities and green villages; invest in eco-friendly programs focusing on the conversion of waste to wealth initiatives; and mobilize the youth to develop redundant areas and turn them into leisure parks for income generation.
- Sports Development and Promotion: Create a new stand-alone Ministry for Sports and Recreation.
 - Develop and design an innovative National Sports Strategy to outline our

vision for sports development with an emphasis on new sports administration, female sports, sports for persons with disabilities, and development and remuneration of sportspersons.

- Invest in a new state-of-the-art stadium for football, track, field, cricket, volleyball, tennis, basketball, etc.
- Establish a National Sports College to promote sports education, sports medicine, etc.
- Establish sports recreational facilities in communities and build eco-friendly and family-friendly sporting facilities on the beaches.
- Promote and invest in sports research, strategy, and development, as well as professional development for coaches, trainers, sports psychologists, physiotherapists.



High corruption levels severely restrict the efficiency of businesses operating in The Gambia. In 2018, the Gambia ranked 93rd globally, with a Corruption Index of 37 out of 100 total points. The Janneh Commission unveiled how former President Jammeh and his accomplices systematically looted state funds that should have been used to provide basic services to the citizens. Extensive bribery within the public administration discourages foreign investment and makes foreign investors vulnerable to extortion and manipulation from public officials. Corruption plagues the procurement processes, tax and customs administration, and other major services. Furthermore, the limited capacity of our public institutions hinders the effective implementation and enforcement of vital public policies.

GOVERNANCE & TRANSPARENCY

Gains from economic prosperity and citizen's empowerment policies laid out by CA can only occur if effective governance and a framework for transparency and accountability are put in place to significantly reduce –at least to globally accepted levels - unemployment, poverty, infrastructural deficits, and other challenges that are holding The Gambia back. A framework for good governance and transparency must be put in place to institutionalize stronger public systems and processes, establish cost-effective human factor techniques, address political and bureaucratic corruption, and establish effective foreign policy with The Gambia's diplomatic partners.

Build Stronger Public Institutions & Systems

A Citizens Alliance led government will operate within the laws of the Gambia to:

- Carry out the necessary institutional reforms as a matter of top priority.
- Establish new and /or strengthen our existing institutions to meet the development aspirations of the people.
- Build on the findings of the civil service reform.
- Review and assess the current ministerial portfolios to right-size them as per the people's governance and needs.
- Review, fund, and fully implement The Gambia E-Government project.
- Expedite the SSR process by working with stakeholders to implement the validated national documents such as the National Security Policy, the National security Strategy and the Security Sector Reform Strategy.

- Immediately unveil a clear strategy and a way forward towards a new constitutional order and a new legal framework for the 2021 elections.
- Ratify all legal instruments relating to human rights.

Accountability & Anticorruption

A CA Government will commit to:

- Establishing a National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS), focusing on three pillars:
 - Supporting and creating an ethical and accountable state, business, and civil society sectors in which those in positions of power and authority act with integrity;
 - Supporting and empowering citizens who respect the rule of law and are encouraged to hold those in power to account; and
 - Demonstrating zero tolerance for corruption in any sphere of activity.
- Make tender systems more credible by encouraging transparency, efficiency, and inclusivity.

- Strengthen the oversight role of the National Assembly and other oversight public institutions.
- Introduce into law the Financial Data Transparency Act to support public access to government finances at all levels of revenue and expenditures.
- Ensure that all government loans, grants, contracts, awards, and other opportunities are displayed with reasonable notice with public visibility in mind and that they can be accessible and searchable on digital platforms for the public to monitor and scrutinize the procedures.
- Ensure all State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) and Ministry's spending are linked and traceable to specific projects or programs.
- Set government-wide standards for financial data reporting so citizens can accurately view consistent, reliable, and accessible data.
- Improve the quality of data extracted from government financial applications and vigorously push through a review that creates a fairer emoluments system and removes the distortions between officeholders and other public sector employees.

- Halt Government interference of SOEs via Executive Directives.
- Initiate a quarterly presidential interactive session with the citizens.
- Publish annual details of all the procurement awards for government projects.
- Review with a view to reform and empower existing oversight agencies such as Parliament and the National Audit Office. Fully operationalise the Anti-Corruption Commission (and other such regulatory bodies) to investigate and prosecute corruption and other related mal-administrative activities and inactions emanating from the Civil Service.
- Take robust steps to ensure adequate funding and engage well-qualified and experienced personnel of proven integrity for the running of these institutions.
- Empower and equip the Special Prosecutor's office, the Anti-corruption Commission, and other related agencies to do their work independently without fear, favour, or political interference.
- Take appropriate measures to restore public confidence in public institutions' integrity and restore the dignity of public officials.

• Conduct lifestyle audits of public officials and generally prohibit public servants from doing business with the State.

Effective Foreign Policy & Diplomatic Relations

Gambia's foreign policy will continue to be driven by our commitment to credible and sustainable international peace and rule-based order, security, human rights, and economic development. CA appreciates that this is one of the necessary prerequisites for promoting and protecting our enlightened national interests and aspirations as outlined in our domestic policies and express actions of the State. Under a CA Government, The Gambia's foreign policy shall be guided by the relentless pursuit of our national interest. The primary focus of pursuing national interest under a CA government is to guarantee the Gambian citizenry's welfare and well-being. Without reservation, a CA government will foster external relations with nations of the world with the overall objective of promoting and protecting the national interest of our country and people, both within the country and abroad.

A CA government shall equally pursue good diplomatic relations with all peace-loving nations across the globe, anchored by mutual respect for every nation's sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity. As a party that believes in diversity, our foreign policy objectives shall be driven by the principle of mutual respect at both national and global levels, irrespective of differences in pursuing national interests.

A CA government will pursue the following foreign policies and diplomatic relations:

With Senegal:

- Promote deeper integration through common policies in sectors with mutual interest.
- Promote cross-border cooperation in infrastructure, tourism, and manufacturing.
- Establish a center for Senegambian studies at the University of The Gambia (UTG) and the University of Sheikh Anta Diop.
- Introduce student exchanges between the two countries.
- Review and assess Gambia's interest and gains in the various existing bilateral collaborations, including the Presidential Council, to balance our countries' mutual gains with a view to restructuring if necessary.

With International Organizations:

Ensure experienced and qualified Gambians with high moral character are fully supported to acquire

the required endorsements for seeking high offices in reputable international organisations.

- Renew our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and the AU's Agenda 2063 by fully domesticating and aligning our development goals across all sectors with these global imperatives
- Continue to play an active and lead role in ECOWAS and work in concert with other member states to consolidate the gains of the Community and to achieve its defined goals.
- Increase collaboration within the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and other international organisations to fight existing and emerging threats to global peace, security, and sustainable development, including climate change and global warming, international terrorism, cybercrime, piracy, money laundering, narcotics trade, human trafficking, and pandemics.
- As a member of international organisations at sub-regional, continental, and global levels, a CA government shall be committed to respecting the principles that guide those organisations' existence, especially in the realisation of their objectives.
- A robust commitment to implementing provisions of international treaties that The Gambia signs

and ratifies is strong on our foreign policy agenda, especially those relating to the protection, promotion, and fulfillment of the rights of children, women, older people, and persons living with a disability.

Diaspora:

- Imediately carry out a population censors of the Diaspoara to provide data of Gambians living abroad.
- Create a policy to strategically engage the Diaspora to explore, identify, and implement programmes and initiatives that will pave the way for a strong and vibrant Diaspora participation in development and nation-building.
- Push for the legal framework to ensure diaspora votes and allocate at least one seat in parliament.
- Recognize the Diaspora as the 8th region and find a means to cultivate them in designing policies and programmes.
- Create an enabling environment for the Diaspora to re-invest their knowledge and capital back home.
- Introduce special programmes in the educational, technological, and agricultural sectors where the Diaspora will play important roles through

knowledge transfer.

• Introduce Diaspora land ownership programme aimed to encourage investment and facilitate reliable and predictable voluntary diaspora return.

Diplomats and Diplomatic Missions (Inward facing)

Our Missions and Diplomats are our first point of call outside the country, which is why a CA government will pursue a more proactive foreign policy to:

- Formulate an economic blueprint to serve as a policy guide to diplomats and all staff of the Foreign Service on clear deliverables under Gambia's economic agenda.
- Espouse a new approach in foreign relations that builds capacity to redress our economic, political, and security challenges and that which is sensitive to the existing economic, political, and security tests at the global and regional levels.
- Establish a diplomatic training institute to provide both beginners and existing diplomats with ongoing capacity building skills.
- Review and reposition the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to meet foreign policy challenges in the 21st century and pursue a developmental foreign policy agenda.



- Conduct an asset inventory of all diplomatic properties to pursue an aggressive asset improvement and maintenance programme.
- Reappraise the geographical representation and economic significance of our diplomatic and consular missions and establish new missions strategic to our national development, especially in the areas of trade and investment, tourism, and educational opportunities.
- Foster harmonious relations in the realisation of national development aspirations in line with respecting and preserving our country's sovereignty and people.
- Jealously safeguard and protect our natural resources to end the exploitation of our people and resources.
- Utilize the strength of our young people as a country to harness the development aspirations of our people.
- Vigorously pursue campaigns against human trafficking
- Promote and encourage learning at least a second language as a precondition for foreign posting.

- Set up a professional foreign service cadre where competent and experienced youths incorporate can enter the system.
- Develop a new organizational structure and management system that would be harmonious to the Ministry's budget allocation, giving different departments more freedom in how they deliver programs or services to ensure financial control, increased efficiency, easy identification and setting of targets, and continued monitoring of performance.
- Depoliticize deployment to and recalling from the Foreign Service by developing vibrant Foreign Service Regulations that would emphasize strict adherence to the terms and conditions related to the deployment, redeployment, and recalling of staff in the Foreign Service.
- Rationalize the operation of our diplomatic missions by adopting a smart mission policy that would guarantee diplomatic missions are run efficiently and prevent redundancy and wastage.



In the last 22 years, Gambians were victims of dictatorship under former President Yaya Jammeh. His government's tenure was characterized by arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, harassment, mass incarceration, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings. These gross human rights abuses were mostly meted out on political opponents, journalists, and human rights defenders, but anyone with dissenting views was frequently victimized. During Jammeh's tenure, the government's legislative and judiciary branches were further undermined by his interference, increasingly repressive legislation, and a cadre of mercenary judges' strategic appointments.

PEACE, SECURITY & STABILITY

A CA government will ensure the well-being, peace, and security of all Gambians both in their homes and on the streets. Under a CA government, people will be able to go about their business confident that their lives and properties are safeguarded.

A Citizens' Alliance-led government will leverage the work done by the Constitutional Review Commission, Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations Commission, Security Sector Reform, and other transitional justice mechanisms adopted by the National Transitional Justice Strategy to reinforce trends leading to a more peaceful and stable Gambia. Specifically, we will leverage all positive changes in the peace and stability of The Gambia by institutionalizing legal and judicial reforms, human rights and justice, and reconciliation and healing.

Transitional Justice: Promoting Human Rights & Justice

In the last 22 years of the APRC government, Gambians went through a dictatorship under former President Yaya Jammeh. His tenure was characterized by arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, harassment, mass incarceration, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings. These gross human rights abuses were mostly meted out on political opponents, journalists, and human rights defenders, including anyone with dissenting views.

A Citizens' Alliance-led government will:

- Leverage the work done by the Constitutional Review and TRRC to reinforce trends leading to a more peaceful and stable Gambia.
- Specifically, leverage all positive changes in maintaining peace and stability of the country by institutionalizing legal and judicial reforms, human rights and justice, and reconciliation and healing.
- Support and empower the National Human

Rights Commission (NHRC) to complement the government's effort to create awareness about human rights abuses.

- Re-train service personnel on how to behave under a democratic and rules-based order system.
- Promote and resource Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms.
- Religiously uphold the independence of the judiciary and not seek to influence court judgments and decisions.
- Review and revamp the entire justice delivery system to expedite the speedy conclusion of court trials.

Security

A CA led government will:

- Prioritize personal safety and the security of our people. Therefore, we will rebuild the bonds of trust between police and the communities they serve.
- Ensure the well-being, peace, and security of all Gambians both in their homes and on the streets.

• Apply proactive measures to ensure prevention by providing requisite training to equip and establish an independent and responsive civilian force against the new threat of terrorism and cybercrime and would.

Policing and Crime Prevention

A CA government will:

- Review the 1959 Police Act to restructure or establish a new act that meets the needs of a sovereign, independent, and the progressive Gambia.
- Ensure that the police have greater independence and protection from political interference.
- Review and restructure the police recruitment process to ensure that officers possess adequate qualifications and competence.
- Review the salaries of all security officers and increase accordingly.
- Conduct a human resource audit to promote and enhance service delivery.
- Promote the philosophy of community policing for a more proactive and systematic solution to the root causes of crime and criminal behaviour.

- Invest in modern communication and policing equipment.
- Increase women's representation in the police to promote a more balanced police force, more effectively combat violence against women in our communities and improve the relationship between the police force and the communities they serve.
- Better equip and enhance Gender and Child Welfare units at the police stations to better serve its purpose.
- Establish an independent Police Complaints Commission to provide an avenue for investigating allegations of misconduct against police officers and promote public confidence.

Immigration

Border security is vital in securing a nation and protecting our people and territories against serious crimes, including drug and arms smuggling, terrorism, and human trafficking.

A CA government will:

 Provide Border Patrol Units with modern surveillance equipment to adequately monitor and control traffic of people and goods flowing in and out of our borders.

- Inject adequate resources into the Immigration Service to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively and efficiently.
- Promote and strengthen the use of ICT for effective operations of the Immigration Service.
- Support and promote the welfare of immigration workers.

Prison Services

- A CA government will leverage on the findings of the TRRC to overhaul our prisons and institute prison system reforms that will be fit for purpose, correctional and provide a pathway for reintegration into society while addressing the many challenges highlighted during the hearings. Some of the measures and programmes will introduce will include:
 - Modernise prisons to facilitate the rehabilitation of convicted felons.
 - Training and development of prison staff to effectively run and manage

a modern and standard prison and deliver the necessary correctional and rehabilitative programmes for change.

- Set up a Special Remand/Sentence Review Committee to review cases of persons on remand to resolve delays in court processes.
- Establish community service duties for those convicted of non-custodial sentences.
- Introduce an integrated programme through well-equipped technical and vocational departments in all major prisons to ease the integration of former convicts into society and communities and prevent reoffending instances.
- Review drug control laws and encouraging measures to address minor drug-related offenses that do not include imprisonment but rather promote rehabilitation.

Fire and Rescue Services

The current Fire and Rescue Services of The Gambia are not fit for purpose and continue to exhibit further terminal deterioration in its constant failure to provide fire and rescue services that save lives and protect property. A CA government will invest in transforming the services of the Fire and Rescue Department into a modern, well-equipped, and functional entity that serves our communities and regains the public's trust. To this end, a CA government will:

- Equip the fire department with modern fire engines, equipment, and tools such as rescue equipment, firefighting vests, boots, and hydraulic platforms for high-rise buildings.
- Improve train firefighters more thoroughly to better deliver preventative, recure, and firefighting services to the public.
- Support and promote the welfare of officers of the GFRS.

National Disaster Management Agency

A CA government will not be oblivious to the important institutions like the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), as such, we will review and restructure a wellstanding disaster management agency by rebranding the current agency to a more visible and accessible agency for all our disaster needs.

As a government, CA will:

- Modernise the operations of NDMA and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to switch focus from response to prevention policies and operations.
- Establish programmes continually generate an adequate supply of volunteers and front-line responders who will be specially trained and equipped with skills and the tools needed to address emergencies.

Territorial Defense and Regional Security

The primary duty of any government is to protect and defend its citizens. A strong, viable, and sustainable defense and security policy must be strategic, and evidence led. A CA government will order a complete strategic defense and security sector reform when it comes into the office to assess the emerging threats facing our country, including hybrid and cyber warfare.

We will create a highly conducive atmosphere for The Gambia Armed Forces personnel to perform their assigned roles and responsibilities with professional excellence.

We will:

- Aggressively resource, train, and equip The Gambia Armed Forces to respond to wide-ranging security challenges.
- Depoliticise The Gambia Armed Forces and restore discipline, encourage loyalty to the State, and establish mechanisms for transparency and meritocracy as the basis for all promotions.
- Streamline peace-keeping operations in accordance with UN mandatory requirements and transparent personnel selection.

Promoting Diversity and National Coherence.

CA aims to lead a united, democratic country that harnesses and respects diversity. We appreciate that we are stronger in our diversity as one nation. We have a proud history of championing the cause for gender equality, the rights of people with disabilities. We will work to unite all Gambians to overcome the past divisions and build a country in which all belong and feel at home. A CA Government will:

• Introduce laws to combat hate crimes against people based on their race, gender, religion, disability, or albinism.

- Include the needs of people with disabilities in all government programmes.
- Celebrate all cultures during national holidays.
- Fast track the promotion and implementation of indigenous language programmes, including finalising language legislation in provinces for inclusion in the school curriculum.
- Promote the study of Gambian history in schools to revive our pride in our nation, better appreciate our differences, better understand our context, and be united in our efforts to build a better Gambia for all.
- Mainstream gender equality and people with disabilities' needs into all facets of planning, budgeting, monitoring, and accounting, including performance indicators and targets in government programmes.

Strengthen Civil Society Organizations

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are integral national instruments for strengthening democracy and good governance. As watchdogs and often vocal observers, they promote transparency and accountability of the Government and all other stakeholders such as businesses, political parties, and individuals. In this regard, CSOs are key instruments that can protect human rights, ensure efficient delivery of quality and affordable public services, ensure ethical business practices that guarantee value for money, protect the environment, combat corruption, and abuse power.

CSOs are major voices for inclusion, participation, and representation of marginalized individuals and communities such as persons with disabilities, women, youth, children, and ethnic minorities. For that matter, CSOs serve as a restraint and check on Governments. Therefore, they are viewed as a non-governmental oversight that helps or directs Governments to tread on the right path to ensure good governance, renewed public trust, and builds public confidence in the State in the interest of national security and sustained peace.

A CA Government will:

- Establish continuous open dialogue and consult with civil society.
- Make enabling environments for free, open, and capable CSOs.
- Partner with donors to harmonise procedures for providing support to CSOs.
- Partner with CSOs on capacity building and financing mechanisms and other support to ensure smooth operations of CSOs.

Strengthen the Media

Transforming GRTS into an independent Public Broadcaster

GRTS must be transformed into a public broadcaster that is independent and impartial, as it is funded by the public peruse to deliver a public service. It must be moved away from the Minister of Information Communications and Technology and by extension away from Executive manipulation and control, and into the hands of an oversight body like the National Assembly.

CA will introduce New legislation to establish the public broadcaster as an independent corporation, not owned by the state, and governed by a board established and acting in line with the following principles:

- Appointment procedures should be open, transparent, and free from political interference and allow the public to nominate board members of their choice.
- The board should be representative of the diversity of the country's population, including gender, ethnicity, and faith, and should have the necessary skills and competencies.
- The new broadcasting legislation should include a

guarantee of editorial independence for the public broadcaster.

Independent Media Regulatory and Public Utility Agency

CA will encourage media organisations and civil society to initiate a process of reviewing broadcasting laws and regulations to make sure that they comply with standards set by the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

A CA government will:

- Review, align with best practices and the implementation of the Right to Information Act 2019.
- Establish and empower the National Media Commission to exercise its oversight responsibility devoid of political interference.
- Regularly engage with labour unions and civil society organisations to promote the principles of decent and transparent work.
- Work with CSOs to deliver transparent, accountable, and responsive governance.

- Create an enabling environment for CSOs to operate freely and independently in the spirit of partnership.
- Encourage Ministries, Department, and Agencies to regularly hold consultations with CSOs for feedback on government programmes and policies.
- Promote programmes that advance media freedom and diversity, focusing on community media and alternative media.
- Provide government subsidies to community radios.
- Open the space to allow effective advocacy by CSOs, by creating laws to guarantee fundamental rights, such as the:
 - Right to freedom of assembly
 - Right to association
 - Right to movement
 - Protection of whistle-blowers
 - o freedom of information
 - o anti-corruption laws

- right to freedom of expression and the media
- Introduce rules that are akin to establish international best practices for all political parties to follow while providing funding to support all political parties in carrying out parliamentary business, including policy research.

Land and the Environment.

Land and environmental issues have become key areas of concern with security implicatioms. The current government has neglected these two critical issues and have failed to design a clear strategy to tackle potential problems to be caused by the current rate of environmental degradation and pocktes of land related conflicts across the country.

Environment

Economic growth and social wellbeing can only be guaranteed if we protect our environment. Currently, we face a looming environmental catastrophe due to the irresponsible and unsustainable exploitation of our resources and the attendant destruction and erosion of our rich natural heritage and bio-diversity. The Citizens' Alliance's agenda for the environment is in line with the party's broader objective of harnessing Gambia's resources to support the sustainable acceleration of the Gambia's economic development and structural transformation.

- Tackle industrial pollution, through ensuring the industries release non-toxic emissions and implementing stricter guidelines and imposing heavier punishment for polluters.
- Protect our fish stocks by taxing and registering foreign owned fishing trawlers through more effective policing of our water bodies.
- Scale-up the investment in clean energy sources such as geothermal, wind and solar.
- Enforce statutory mechanisms for the disposal of human and industrial wastes
- Enforce statutory mechanisms to eliminate harmful emissions, including those from factories and motor vehicles.

Forestry.

We Will:

• Take measures, both legal, political and social, to protect our remaining forests cover, reduce the rate of deforestation and forest degradation

- Embark on an ambitious programme of tree planting and reforestation by incentivising and commercializing tree planting to increase our remaining forests cover by encouraging the participation of the private sector, civil society, local communities and individuals.
- Identify and improve protected area designations, such as the Bao Bolon Wetland Reserve and other National Parks and local nature reserves.
- Replenish the monkey park and transform it into a botanic garden.
- Fund and equip the Forestry Department with improved staffing, enhanced staff training, provision of technology, transportation and communication to facilitate patrolling and enforcement activities in critical forests areas.

Land

Land ownership and use is fundamental to realising the opportunities for delivering the healthy and dynamic environments, economies and communities. A CA Government will work to end the land crisis and initiate land reforms that will ensure land is owned and used in ways that are fair, responsible and productive. We will work towards modernising the pattern of land ownership in the Gambia to safeguard the public interest and improve the accountability of land use decision making with consideration of the welfare of future generations.

We will:

- We will work with and empower the Land Commission and initiate comprehensive land reforms.
- Review the land administration system and develop a comprehensive policy to make land acquisition simple and transparent, less cumbersome, investorfriendly and affordable to the average Gambian.
- Initiate community mediation efforts and community engagement in decisions relating to land and establish clear guidelines on how landowners, land managers and communities can work together to solve/avoid conflicts.
- Embark on a comprehensive land demarcation exercise.
- Investigate all claims of land grabbing and provide restitution where appropriate.
- Impose a community development tax on all land sale.

- Develop a Land for Wealth policy for the youth and vulnerable groups to make land cheap and accessible for their economic and wealth creation activities.
- Invest in the acquisition of land in various parts of the country to support youth entrepreneurship in agriculture.
- Computerize and digitize the land registry and management system.
- Establish a new institution to authorise and regulate estate agents.

CONCLUSION

Our manifesto is our contract with the Gambian People. The commitments contained in this document were well thought-out, debated, and could be fundable. A CA Government will lead the charge in implementing all items in this manifesto. However, we will need the participation and support of all citizens, civil servants, private sector, CSOs, developmental partners, local governments, and communities. Together, we will restore dignity to the Gambian people and move the Gambia forward.



A PARTY OWNED BY CITIZENS

CITIZENS' ALLIANCE CONTRACT WITH THE GAMBIAN PEOPLE



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