NCCE PREPARES TO POPULARISE THE CONTENT OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION

ALHAGIE SERIGNE FYE

JUSTICE JALLOW

CRC IS ON TRACK TO DELIVER DRAFT CONSTITUTION

#CRC220
#PARTICIPATION
#INCLUSIVENESS
#TRANSPARENCY
#OWNERSHIP

CRC COMMISSIONERS HOLD RETREAT

UK HUMAN RIGHTS CHIEF VISITS CRC

PLUS: Vox Pop . NCCE . CRC RECEIVES LAW STUDENTS . EU LECTORAL FOLLOW-UP MISSION, ETC.
FOREWORD BY COMMISSIONER LAMIN CAMARA

This newsletter is the 5th edition of the CRC outlining the complex Constitutional process of drafting a new Constitution for The Gambia. As a member of the Commission, I must say that this is indeed a learning curve for me in several ways. When the Commission set out to work on its mandate, it took into consideration the timeline for the delivery of the end product, that is, a new draft Constitution to the Gambian people within the period granted.

The Commission immediately drew a very comprehensive work plan and a strategy document delineating the path to the drafting process of the new Constitution. However a major consideration the Commission had to contend with and extensively discuss, is the acceptability of the draft Constitution by the people. Thus, the need for a broad-based consultation with the public to hear their opinions about the key provisions of the Constitution.

It is the fervent believe of the Commission that in order to sell the draft Constitution to the people of the country, they should be able to identify themselves with the document, thus the need for the next phase of consultations.

In a nutshell, the citizenry should be able to claim ownership of it. Thus, the Commission adopted a very transparent and inclusive process during several months of public consultations, criss-crossing the length and breadth of the country listening to the contributions of the people.

One particular comment that’s etched on the landscape of my mind is a statement made in Kwinella, when someone said “we never thought there will ever be a day when we will be consulted on how we want to be governed. Usually, we are told that a particular act has been passed in Banjul and we either vote YES or NO on the law without knowing its content, but we are happy that we are being consulted today”.

This is indeed remarkable! This novel approach to constitution building was adopted because the Commission wants this document to stand the acid test of time. It must, as far as possible reflect the hopes, wishes, and aspirations of the people.

Gambians have yearned for a truly democratic Constitution providing the necessary checks and balances between the various arms of government. It is thus hoped that this new Constitution will speak to the intent of the people and beckon a new dawn in the development endeavor of the country and its people and those yet unborn.
WORD FROM THE CRC SECRETARY

Omar Ousman Jobe Secretary - CRC

The drafting of the new Constitution is on track and the Constitutional Review Commission is poised to deliver the document that embodies the ‘social contract’ that binds Gambians with their Government, before its term expires in December. In anticipation of the sharing of the draft Constitution, stakeholder groups are anxiously waiting to scrutinize the document from their perspective with a view to determining the extent to which their suggestions and recommendations have been taken on board. Tensions between public interest/the general good and vested interest are inevitable in constitutional design processes. Stakeholders beware that a complex national document of such importance cannot possibly reflect all the wishes and aspirations of every single Gambian. Constitution building is premised on and underpinned by context, reason, logic, evidence, democratic principles and desire. All have been leveraged to make enlightened choices aimed at delivering a progressive Constitution and it is the broad acceptance of the outcome document that is required beyond the forthcoming discussions, debates and review processes that will accord every Gambian yet another opportunity to re-engage with the Commission. Cherry picking a few provisions that may not appeal to a particular group against the general good will not be helpful in building a progressive country. The value-add that comes with a good review of the first draft will certainly make a difference in the final product.

It is worth reiterating that the CRC’s mandate is to review the 1997 Constitution, draft a new Constitution for the Republic of The Gambia and a report in relation to the draft Constitution. To that end, a considerable amount of time and energy have been invested in the project to review, consult, research, document, process, analyze and interpret data to determine public opinion in relation to key constitutional topics such as citizenship, fundamental rights and freedoms, presidential term limits, elections, public finance, local government, the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, etc. As can be expected, the design options are largely informed and shaped by contextual factors and to some extent, best practice and international conventions.

Whilst the Constitution is the overarching policy document (the Supreme law of the Land) that sets the tone, the standards, the framework and the good governance principles that determine how this country will be governed for years to come, the report on the other hand will document the rationale behind the provisions in the Constitution and why some of the things that were said could not have been constitutionalized. In the process of consulting Gambians, a lot of issues were raised, some of which are outside the remit of constitutionalism and others which are better addressed by statutes. During the consultation phase, some very important development issues have been flagged some of which are neither for statutes nor for the Constitution. Most of them have to do with livelihoods and how government should support communities to overcome the challenges they encounter. We want to reassure Gambians that such information is not lost and that the CRC will ensure that the information reaches the duty bearers through the appropriate channels.

This fifth edition of the CRC newsletter showcases the engagement the CRC has had with development partners including organizations with a human rights focus; the staff who are discharging their duties diligently, ranging from the support to the professional staff, to ensure that the work of the Commission is progressing smoothly. I take this opportunity to thank all staff for their due diligence and commitment to the work of the Secretariat.

Omar O. Jobe
Secretary
Dear Readers,

As always, it is our immense delight to bring to the spotlight the work and progress of the constitutional reviewing commission for the benefit of our readers and Gambians in all walks of life who have embraced the building of a new Constitution.

This 5th Edition of the CRC monthly Newsletter will take you to the deep end of the review process, unveiling what is perhaps the Commission’s most vital phase. It presents the multiple instruments devised by the CRC for direct outreach to reliably inform and elicit stakeholder feedback on the Commission’s engagements and activities in its drive to draft a new Constitution for The Gambia. At the CRC, that mandates means delivering a durable Constitution that embodies the wishes and aspirations of the Gambian people.

This Edition, like previous ones, chronicles the activities carried out by the Commission over the period. New articles and enlightening stories highlighting the CRC’s achievements during the period under review are captured to provide readers with a broad view of the CRCs journey thus far.

However, the beam of light in this Edition focuses mainly on efforts to entrench human rights, amplify peace and expand democratic awareness. It therefore brings to the fore stories on The National Council for Civic Education (NCCE), the UK Human Rights Chief’s visit to the CRC, the EU Electoral Follow-up Mission’s visit to the CRC, and the CRC Chairman’s address at the Africa Peace Conference.

Be rest assured that you will be adequately informed about the Commission’s engagements, particularly its efforts to establish democratic and inclusive values in the new Gambian Constitution.

Opinions of Gambians have also been sought and featured in this edition. The exercise is intended to gauge the expectations of the citizenry as the CRC continues its complex journey of delivering a new draft Constitution for the Republic of The Gambia.

Esteemed Readers, we are always highly indebted to you and all stakeholder groups as well as our partners for the continued support and readership. It is our view that the process of coming up with a new draft Constitution should be a collective venture. To that end, the CRC values every input or contribution(s) made in the review process.

As the CRC edges closer to the climax of its mandate, more national and international stakeholders have expressed hope and confidence about a successful outcome. We have noted and continue to receive overwhelming recognition from people both at home and abroad taking cue from the participatory and inclusive nature of the review process. That trust gives the Commission increased confidence that Gambians are responding to its outreach activities and that puts the Commission in a better stead to deliver a people centered Constitution at the end of the process.

Finally, to keep you abreast with the CRC and how far we have come, I recommend that you take time to pore over the contents of the Newsletter with its updates and developments as they unfold at the Commission. Until we come your way in November with another novel edition, we want to thank and assure you of a very pleasant and enjoyable reading.

Once again, we thank you for your interest and support!
MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM

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CRC ON TRACK TO DELIVER A DRAFT CONSTITUTION

The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) today announced that it is on track to deliver a draft Constitution. “Consistent with its terms of reference. The CRC is well poised to deliver to Gambians at home and abroad a draft Constitution that will engender public debate and comments before finalisation”, said the Chairperson of the CRC, Justice Cherno Sulayman Jallow, QC.

He intimated that significant strides have been made in collating and analyzing the public opinions received during the CRC’s consultation processes. The public opinions were gathered through different processes to ensure that a broad spectrum of Gambians were reached in order to ensure a fair balance to guide the CRC in making informed decisions during the drafting process. These processes were the face-to-face dialogue with Gambians at home, the face-to-face dialogue with Gambians living abroad, focused group discussions, dialogue with select Senior Secondary Schools, the conduct of household surveys using specified enumeration areas, administration of online survey questionnaires, dialogue with stakeholders (both public and private), the CRC Issues Document and responses thereto, independent submissions to the CRC, and contributions made through social and the print media.

Justice Jallow indicated that the public consultation process has been a very challenging but fruitful one and he and his colleague Commissioners have learnt a lot in terms of the views and aspirations of Gambians and other stakeholders.

The CRC also wishes to assure the public that a lot of work has been going on behind the scene to ensure that The Gambia is counted among countries that have progressive Constitutions. Therefore, the CRC wishes to assure the public that it is doing its best to keep to its mandate and to deliver a draft Constitution for public consultation within the next few weeks.

It is the CRC’s expectation to publish the draft Constitution online and to make available a limited number of hard copies, and to thereafter embark on another round of face-to-face consultations with Gambians across the country to ensure that there is a good review process through active participation. The date and venues for the next round of consultations will be duly communicated to the public. The period for public consultations will be one month from the date of publication of the draft Constitution; the face-to-face dialogue within the country is envisaged to be for a two-week period. This will enable the CRC to complete its assignment as mandated under the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017.

The CRC is cognizant of the high expectations of Gambians concerning the drafting of this new national document of monumental importance. While the draft Constitution is not expected to touch upon or address every public opinion that has been canvassed, the CRC hopes that by publishing the draft Constitution the general public will have a good opportunity to review the draft and make constructive contributions in its finalization. Therefore, the CRC remains committed to its mandate and will continue to ensure that the constitutional review process continues to be guided by the principles of Transparency, Participation, Inclusiveness, Representation, and National Ownership.

The five technical committees established to assist the CRC with expert inputs have all submitted their
reports to the Commission. International consultants with good track records in the review and drafting of Constitutions in Africa, were also received recently by the CRC as part of its strategy to consult widely and harness best practices within and outside of The Gambia, in order to deliver a document that reflects international best practices consistent with the values and aspirations of Gambians. The Consultants will continue their assignments until such time as is necessary leading to the preparation of the final draft Constitution.

Work continues in earnest at the CRC Secretariat to assist the Commission in achieving its ultimate objective of drafting a sound Constitution which reflects the collective values, beliefs and aspirations of all Gambians, and a report in relation to the process of drafting the Constitution.

The CRC wishes to use this opportunity to thank and congratulate fellow Gambians and other stakeholders for their enthusiasm, support and positive contributions, and also to encourage them to continue to support the Commission as it journeys to the conclusion of its assignment. The Commission remains committed to its mandate and is therefore determined to deliver a draft Constitution that will reflect, as far as possible, the wishes and aspirations of the Gambian people, which take into account and embody, to the extent considered feasible, international best practices.

UK HUMAN RIGHTS CHIEF VISITS CRC

On Friday October 18, 2019 the United Kingdom’s Ambassador for Human Rights and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Rita French accompanied by UK High Commissioner to The Gambia, Sharon Wandle visited the Constitutional Review Commission as part of the UK Human Rights Chief’s Banjul visit.

The delegation was received by CRC Commissioners, namely Amie Joof-Cole, Fatoumatta Jallow and Yankuba Manjang. The objective of the visit was to learn about the constitutional review process with special focus on the extent to which human rights issues will be incorporated into the new Constitution and how the UK Government could support the process of building an inclusive Constitution.

Welcoming the delegation on behalf of the CRC Chairperson, Commissioner Amie Joof-Cole said: ‘We are delighted to receive you Madam Ambassador and your team at the CRC.’

Commissioner Joof-Cole told the visiting delegation that human rights issues are at the core of the CRC review process, saying that the process has been a challenging, but ‘rewarding exercise’.

‘Human rights are important component of our work. And we want to build strong institutions and you cannot do that without incorporating human rights issues,’ she said, adding that the Commission since inception has been engaging Gambians from all walks of life in order to make the process as inclusive as possible.

For her part, the UK Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French expressed confidence in the CRC review process, stressing the need for human rights issues to be captured in the new draft Constitution.

‘It’s exciting to be here to learn about the wonderful work you are doing. I believe there is a lot of expectations from Gambians with regard to the building of a new Constitution,’ Ambassador French said, adding that their office is willing to support the process in the area of human rights.
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The British High Commissioner to The Gambia, Sharon Wandle also commended the CRC for the great work the Commission is doing. You have demonstrated due diligence in your work, and we want to commend you for that,’ She told the Commission.

Commissioner Fatoumatta Jallow and Youth Commissioner Yankuba Manjang both spoke at the meeting and renewed the CRC commitment in delivering a new Constitution that will stand the test of time.

Other speakers at the meeting include, Mr. Sainey MK Marenah, Head of Communications and Raymond Sarr, Head of Human Resources and Administration.

COMMISSIONERS HOLD RETREAT

The Commissioners of the Constitutional Review Commission recently conducted a successful five-day retreat to review and analyze the evidence emanating from the various submissions been made by citizens, institutions and stakeholder groups during the concluded public consultations.

The retreat also availed them the opportunity to further examine the recommendations of the Technical Committees on Public Finance Management; Land, Environment and Natural Resources and Media, Public Education and Environment.

Meeting with UK Human Rights Officials

CRC Commissioners on Session

CRC Chairperson & Vice Chairperson
Officials from the European Union Electoral Follow-up Mission (EFM) to the Republic of The Gambia paid a visit to the Constitutional Review Commission to engage the Commission on the ongoing review work with particular focus on elections. The team were in the country to assess the progress made in the electoral reform and the status of implementation of EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) recommendations, since the delivery of the final report of the 2017 EU EOM to The Gambia.

The overall objective of The Gambia visit was to contribute to improving the electoral and democratic framework during the inter-election period by raising awareness and understanding of the EU EOM recommendations and technical issues related to their implementation. The EFM supports the consolidation of democracy, institution building and democratic elections in The Gambia in the context of the implementation of the 2017 EU EOM recommendations. They were received by Commissioner Amie Joof-Cole and the CRC Secretary, Mr. Omar Ousman Jobe, who explained to the visiting team the work and mandate of the CRC.

Commissioner Amie Joof-Cole, who represented the CRC Chairperson, Justice Cherno Sulayman Jallow explained that, ‘as part of the CRC work, we are looking at elections as a very important component of the review process. And we have also consulted officials from the Independent Electoral Commission and political parties with a view to involving them in the review process.’

For her part, Anne Marlborough, Legal Expert of
Continued from page 7

the EU Election Follow-up Mission to The Gambia said their mission to the CRC was to learn about the work of the Commission and efforts that the CRC is making in the area of elections and electoral reforms. The objective, she said is to generate additional impetus for – or contribute to ongoing debates on electoral reform; determine views on the 2017 EU EOM recommendations among the stakeholders; identify political, technical, financial obstacles to electoral reform; Propose actions to overcome the obstacles, including measures to develop support for and national ownership of the recommendations; assess any ongoing electoral reforms since the 2017 EOM or reforms which are under consideration (e.g. draft legislation) or which are planned, and the degree to which these reflect EOM recommendations and their alignment with international standards for democratic elections among others.

The EU team to the CRC include Else Boonstra, Political Officer; EU Delegation to The Gambia, Anne Marlborough, Legal Expert; and Mr. Thomas Boserup, Electoral Expert; EU Election Follow-up Mission to The Gambia.

Commissioner Amie Joof-Cole

EU Election delegation with CRC Staff
The Chairperson of the Constitutional Review Commission, Justice Cherno Sulayman Jallow was invited to deliver a statement at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at second Peace Conference in Africa held at the Kaiara Beach Hotel in The Gambia on October 19, 2019.

The keynote address of the peace conference was delivered by Mr. Karim Ahmad Khan QC, Assistant UN Secretary General.

Justice Jallow said the conference is the second of its kind in Africa – hosted this year by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at of The Gambia. He thanked Amir Trawally for his kindness and trust and also thanked Mr. Musa Kinteh whose persistence and determination gave him no room to spirit out of the day’s conference.

Jallow observed that: “the contributions of the Ahmadiyyat Muslim Jama’at in The Gambia – ranging from the fields of education and health to community development generally – is there for all to see. The Jama’at has been relentless in its efforts to translate into tangible results the words of the Holy Qur’an in advancing the course of national development and your kind and benevolent efforts are worthy to be emulated by all.”

He also implored the Ahmadiyya Jamaat to continue their benevolence to The Gambia and the international community. Whatever you do, you are helping to entrench peace and stability. And we pray that, Insha’Allah, someday soon we and our children and grandchildren and generations yet unborn can live in a world free of conflict, war and social injustice. The rewards for your kind efforts lie with Allah (SWT) and may He grant them in abundance.

According to Justice Jallow, ‘we live today in a troubled world, a world that has many scars,
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a world that needs serious soul-searching, a world that needs to understand its purpose, a world that is gradually and consistently losing not only its focus, but also turning its back away from Allah (SWT) and the teachings of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

He observed that we live in a world that is in competition with itself, and one wonders with regard to what, a world where profit is put before soul, self-respect, honesty, dignity and integrity and pitched against mankind, especially the most downtrodden in society.

Jallow advised that when we turn our backs against God, we turn against ourselves and the peace we need to live together in harmony as one human race. He said ISLAM is PEACE, adding that it is not hatred or war; it is not about ideology versus belief; it is not about taking or vilifying human life; it is not about arrogating sainthood to oneself and condemning others — that is the preserve of the Almighty High. ISLAM is about PEACE, and loving and protecting each other along the path charted for us by Allah (SWT), Justice Jallow indicated.

The CRC Chairman argued that social injustice is a cankerworm that eats into the heart of peace; it destabilizes peace.

He further argued that when, a person entrusted with a public office to perform duties for and on behalf of the people sees in that entrustment an opportunity to be dishonest, and to steal, compromise and cheat the public revenue or to, in any other way, make an unlawful profit out of that entrustment, that person does a great disservice to the people and turns his or her back against the teachings of Allah (SWT).

“As Chairperson of the Constitutional Review Commission, I have had the opportunity to visit practically every corner of this country and interact with people at all community levels. I was disenchanted to see the hopelessness, bitterness and anger in some of the faces I interacted with. I have seen their circumstances and heard their horror stories (the details of which are for another occasion). “They are despondent. When persons entrusted with public office and those in the private sector that deal with and spur them on, cheat the public revenue, they take development out of our communities; they reduce the life expectancy of our people. Monies properly and lawfully collected without any unlawful deals will go a long way in addressing developmental issues to the benefit of all and thus reduce boiling tension,” Justice Jallow stated.

NCCE PREPARES TO POPULARISE THE CONTENT OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION

In its strive to make its mandate resonate in every nook and cranny of The Gambia, the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) entered into a number of progressive partnerships with institutions, stakeholder groups, and members of the Arts industry. One of the key partners whose service was sought all throughout the review process was the National Council for Civic Education (NCCE).

In an exclusive interview, Alhagie Sering Fye (Chairperson of the NCCE) commended the CRC for recognising them as a worthy partner for raising awareness and educating the public on the significance of the constitutional review process.

Mr Fye remarked: “The CRC realises our potential and capabilities in terms of community mobilisation and community sensitisation, because it is our mandate to engage citizens to not only understand the Constitution,
but also to defend the Constitution from any form of abuse."

He said his Council has been working tremendously hard in the field trying to sensitise the people about their constitutional rights and responsibilities and how they are relevant to the drafting process.

Continuing, Chairman Fye said that his Council’s engagement in the pre-consultations actually helped to lighten the work for the CRC. He explained that the NCCE went across the country sensitising the public on the Commission’s ‘Issues Document’ and the ‘Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)’ to enable them fully participate during the public consultation that was to follow, and that actually paid dividend. He commended the CRC for making the review process very participatory, inclusive, and transparent which he said will ultimately make the people take absolute ownership of the new Constitution.

He further said his Council enjoyed the opportunity to educate the public on what the 1997 Constitution contains; what they like about the Constitution; and what they wouldn’t like to see in the new draft Constitution.

Asked how he rates the participation and consciousness of a critical mass of the population in relation to the review process, the NCCE boss said: “I can rate the consciousness of the people, especially the youth, women, and students very high.”

He argued that the review process is a one-time opportunity for Gambians. Mr. Fye expressed optimism that Gambians will take outright ownership of the outcome of the review process, simply because every Gambian was consulted and therefore the new Constitution will certainly mirror their wishes and aspirations. Responding to what is next for the NCCE as the CRC is winding down, Mr. Fye confidently said that ‘as the CRC is winding down, the NCCE is winding up.’

He stressed that a lot of efforts have been invested in the constitutional review process, so the new Constitution must not be left to gather dust. This, Chairman Fye, said requires monumental efforts to enlighten the populace about the content of the new Constitution once it is finalized. He then emphasised the importance of civic education, saying that it is a process of making people understand democracy, rule of law, good governance, fundamental rights and freedoms and other rights and the limitations accorded to them. “I am sure we are prepared to carry out the work of popularising the content of the new Constitution to the public, because we have had good engagements with the people during the consultation phase,” he stated.

He added that the enthusiasm in the review process must not be frustrated by any means possible.

The NCCE boss also indicated that there is a huge difference between the 1997 Constitution building process and this current one. He explained that the major distinction between the two is the level of public consultation and participation.

“The public was not properly educated on what was contained in the 1997 Constitution and what it meant for the people, before they said ‘YES or NO’. But this current one is very engaging and consultative to the extent that before people say ‘YES or NO’ to the Constitution, they would actually know on what basis they are consenting to it,” Mr. Fye stated.
The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) participated in the Founders’ Day celebration organised by the School of Journalism and Digital Media of the University of The Gambia on Wednesday, October 9th, 2019 at the UTG Kanifing Campus. The theme of the event was: ‘Perspective on a Blueprint for Media, Politics and Democracy in the New Gambia’. The day was observed with a march past, speeches and panel discussion with a view to marking the significance of the day felt by Gambians.

In her opening remark, the president of the Journalism Student’s Association, Fatoumatta Ceeseay said the establishment of the UTG School of Journalism has produced some of the finest journalists in both the print and electronic media with Bachelor’s Degree in Journalism.

She said: “The school provides competitive programme which engage students in both the theory and practical knowledge in the areas of broadcasting, print media and commentary, noting that Journalism is a noble profession and that it is information that drives the world.”

For his part, the dean of the School of Journalism and Digital Media, Mr Nana Grey-Johnson, said the formation of the school was conceived by the then vice chancellor of the UTG, Professor Muhammed M. O. Kah in 2009. That initiative led to the formation of the school in 2014.

He noted that the SJDM started with 14 pioneer students that were enrolled in 2014, noting that in
February, 2018 the school graduated 13 disciples with BA degrees in Journalism. ‘I am amazed with the potential of young ones in transmitting information to the public. There will be no journalism school, if we don’t acknowledge the students and the lecturers for their valuable contributions to the growth of the school,’ Grey Johnson disclosed. Joining the discussion on the theme religion, media and democracy in The Gambia, Mr. Yaya B. Baldeh, the CRC representative told the students of the UTG Journalism School that fundamentally the ‘media is simply an agent for the dissemination of information rather than a weapon for indoctrination’. He also registered the CRC’s willingness to participate in engagement forums of this nature, saying that the CRC “places high premium on citizen participation, transparency, inclusiveness and ownership so as to craft a robust Constitution for The Gambia.” Baldeh hailed the organisers of the forum, saying that such events are quite useful in widening the debate on important topics considering the relevance of journalism in society more so in the context of The Gambia of today. He also thanked the UTG for inviting the CRC to the event. Fatou Jeng, the vice president of the Media Council of The Gambia spoke about media laws and regulation. Imam Baba Leigh for his part, spoke on Religion, Media and Democracy and Halifa Sallah, the NAM for Serekunda spoke on the Perspective of a blueprint for Media, Politics and Democracy in the new Gambia.
countries including The Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Kenya. He also worked as WHO Representative and health Systems Advisor which include diplomatic representation, technical and managerial support to countries in various African states.

Dr George has also supported African countries to build partnerships with Global Health initiatives such as Global fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations) and coordinated assistance in humanitarian settings and Operations research.

Dr. George holds a Master’s degree in Public Health (MPH), from Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, USA Majoring in Health Policy and Management. He is also a Fellow of both West African College of Surgeons (FWACS) and the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh (FDS; RCS) Specializing in Oral/ Maxillo Facial Surgery/ Children’s and Preventive Dentistry. In 1972, he completed his Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS), at the University of Western Australia, Perth. Currently, Dr. George is the Chairman of Medical and Dental Council and Chairman HORIZONS TRUST (Gambia) and the Past President and founder member of Banjul Rotary Club as well as past president of the Gambia Medical and Dental Association.

He is happily married with 4 children.

Sharing his experience working with CRC as a Commissioner, Dr. George said:

“Working with the Commission has been an honour, a privilege and a humbling experience. I have learnt and gained so much working with an excellent group of professionals with varied competencies, talents and experiences. The public consultation have left me with lasting impressions about the linkages between national development; be it socio-economic, cultural or infrastructural and Constitution building, given the current prevailing circumstances. I believe that our contribution to this one is a lifetime experience and will be a beacon of hope to rebuild our lives and our country allowing justice to guide our actions so that we as a nation will continue to live in unity, freedom and peace each day.”

Dr Melville O. George is a seasoned Public Health / Development expert and specialist clinician with National and International experience. Nationally, he previously served as Director for Health Services, Assistant Director of Medical Services, Consultant and Head of Department of Dental/Oral Surgery (RVTH), and Senior Dental Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital (RVTH) in Banjul.

Internationally, he also worked with the World Health Organization (WHO) as Health Systems Adviser at the WHO Regional Office for Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe serving several countries in West, East, Southern and Central Africa.

Dr George also previously served as WHO Representative to Ghana, and Uganda and Coordinator in the Global Health Workforce Alliance Partnership at WHO/Geneva. He one-time worked as International and National Consultant for WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS and World Bank in several African
MEET THE COMMISSIONERS

JUSTICE CHERNO SULAYMAN JALLOW
CHAIRPERSON

HAWA K. SISAY-SABALLY
VICE CHAIRPERSON

COMMISSIONER
SALIMATTA TOURAY

COMMISSIONER
AMIE JOOF-COLE

COMMISSIONER
FATOUMATT JALLOW

COMMISSIONER
GAYE SOWE

COMMISSIONER
JANET R. SALLAH-NJIE

COMMISSIONER
LAMIN S. CAMARA

COMMISSIONER
YANKUBA DIBBA

COMMISSIONER
YANKUBA MANJANG

COMMISSIONER
DR. MELVILLE GEORGE
MEET THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

RAYMOND SARR
HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

SAM ALI ASHCROFT
HEAD OF FINANCE

OMAR OUSMAN JOBE
SECRETARY

SAINEY M.K. MARENTH
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

KARAFA MANNEH
HEAD OF PROGRAMMES
Introducing CRC Heads of Department

Mr. Sam Ali Ashcroft
Head of Finance

Mr. Sam Ali Ashcroft joined the Constitutional Review Commission with a wealth of experience in Finance and Administration. He worked for Gamtel for 15 years and during his tenure rose through the ranks to become the Finance Manager of the State-Owned Enterprise (SOP).

After leaving Gamtel, Mr. Ashcroft also worked for the Gambia Tourism Authority as Director of Finance and Administration. He also worked as the Finance and Administrative Manager for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on their sponsored Rural Finance Project in The Gambia.

Mr. Sam Ali Ashcroft, is a fellow member to the Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants, and a fellow member to the Chartered Institute of Corporate Treasurers. He has an MBA in Business Administration and MSc in Accounting and Management. He has his Professional Certificate in Financial Management and Budgeting from Harvard University, USA.

Sharing his Experience with the CRC Communications Team, Mr. Ascroft said: “As the Head of Finance of the CRC, I was confronted with a number of challenges linked to the setting up of an accounting system for such a reputable institution like the CRC, subvented by Government. The fact that senior management and Commissioners came from different backgrounds had a stimulating effect on the finance department under my purview. The interactions at Commission and senior management level makes my job quite interesting. Granted, the finance department is the smallest department within the CRC, but I dare say, the most important department in terms of leveraging funds for operations in a timely manner. I admire and continue to admire the hard work at the operational, tactical, and strategic levels of all the staff of the CRC with the common objective of delivering a progressive and unbiased Constitution for The Gambia, our homeland. I therefore, show my maximum appreciation to the entire staff and commissioners, especially to my most able immediate assistant- Sheikh Tijan Kuta (Finance Officer), assisted by Mr. Bai Cham. They have really reinforced their experience whiles working with the CRC, which will be an added value to their CVs.”

In conclusion, HOF Ashcroft strongly thanked The Gambia Government and the UNDP for facilitating the CRC financial commitments which is really making his CRC duties in the finance department a lot easier.
INRODUCING CRC HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

The Standard Newspaper (also in Banjul) as a Senior Reporter and editorial assistant. He is a household name in the Gambia’s media industry having covered some of the most important stories in the former and current government. These include the high-profile treason cases including the trial of former military chiefs in Banjul in 2009 to 2012, Ex-President Jammeh’s human rights records. Following his arrest and imprisonment by the former regime of Ex-President Yahya Jammeh in 2014, Marenah moved to Dakar, Senegal where he continued to practice Journalism - freelancing for various local and international media organisations including the BBC, Al-Jazeera, VOA, and ZDF TV in Germany among others.

Formerly, the Director of News and Production of Gambian online News Agency and Radio based in US, Diasporium News. Mr. Marenah also previously served as Associate News Editor for SMBC News Gambia covering West Africa. He is also a media fixer and commentator. He is the co-founder of the Banjul based Media Center for Research and Development; an institution specialised in research and development undertakings. As a journalist and communication expert, focused on supporting the Gambia’s transitional process, Mr Marenah continues to play a pivotal role in shaping a viable media and communications platform that employs necessary tools and action to increase civic participation and awareness of the needs of transitional governance to strengthen the current move towards democratization.

Mr. Marenah holds an Advance Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communications from Institute of Professional Administration and Management and Certificate in Conflict sensitive reporting from International Journalism Institute in Germany. Mr. Marenah has travelled extensively as a professional journalist in Europe, Africa and United States and attended several local and international media trainings. He became the First Gambian Journalist selected by the Washington based International Monetary Fund (IMF) to undertake a training on Financial Reporting. Mr. Marenah is an IMF Journalism Fellow (2018).

Sharing his experience with the CRC, Mr. Marenah said: ‘One of my best experience so far in my Journalism and Communications career is working with the Constitutional Review Commission as head of Media and Communication. The journey thus far has been interesting, insightful and above all challenging, but the support I received from my wonderful team of experts under my department has enabled me to overcome those obstacles. I recognise and appreciate that building a Constitution can be a really daunting task and this one is not an exception and being part of it gives me hope and inspiration to do more for my country. The CRC is the best thing to happen in my life.'

Sainey MK Marenah is a prominent Gambian Journalist currently serving as the Head of Media and Communications at the Constitutional Review Commission of The Gambia, a body tasked with the responsibility of drafting of a new Constitution for The Gambia. Until his appointment, Mr. Marenah was the Social Media Strategist and Editor at the Gambia Radio and Television Services. He also serves as the Banjul Correspondent for the Voice of America Radio. Sainey is a human rights and developmental journalist who has carved for himself a strong niche particularly in new media environment in The Gambia’s media industry.

Mr. Marenah began his career as a junior reporter with The Point Newspaper in The Gambia in 2008 and rose through the ranks to become chief correspondent before moving to...
CRC STAFF
‘IN PERSPECTIVE’

The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) engages in the constitutional building process since its establishment. The process is guided by core values of participation, transparency, inclusiveness, and ownership aimed at deliver to the Gambian people a Constitution that reflects the collective value and aspiration of all.

The Secretariat staff is composed of youths, people with enormous experience from other places. They all exude great intellectual energy coupled with passion and determination to serve their country as part of the legacy project. For the past months, CRC staff have been working brilliantly well to ensure that history is made and a Constitution that Gambians will be proud of is delivered.

In the special edition of the CRC Newsletter ‘In Perspective’, we sound the opinions of the industrious, passionate and enthusiastic secretariat staff featured herein with regards to their experience working with the CRC.

According to her, the CRC has availed her the rare opportunity to work with people from diverse backgrounds with unique perspectives and orientations. She indicated that, “The CRC gave me the opportunity to travel the length and breadth of the country and visit many communities during the Public Consultations. This has widened my horizon and exposed me to understand the social realities of this country beyond imagination. I am confident that the experience and the practical knowledge I am gaining at the CRC would be a strong catalyst towards my career progression.”

Savage said as a lawyer, the Constitution is the most important legal instrument which she cannot do without. She anticipated that she would be well positioned not only to know the literature of the Constitution, but also appreciate the rationale behind every provision. As such, as a citizen and lawyer, she indicated she cannot think of any better way of contributing towards the consolidation of our new found democracy than being a staff at the CRC.

Mrs. Rose Savage said as a young lawyer, working at the CRC has been a life-changing experience for her both in terms of her professional career and personal development. “At the CRC, I have the opportunity not only to share my experience and knowledge in the constitutional crafting processes, but also learning from the vast experiences and knowledge of others,” she said.

Sheikh Tijan Kuta indicated that working at the CRC gave him an immense opportunity to work with young Gambians with great minds. He added that this has made him realize and believe that the Gambia have intellectuals, lawyers and technocrats who are internationally
Continued from page 19

recognised and capable enough to draft a Constitution that everybody will be proud of.

He said that working with the CRC also accorded him the opportunity to better know the geographical landscape and demography of the Gambia by participating in the in-country consultations.

“It earned me the experience, the knowledge and the understanding of the lives of rural inhabitants as well as the challenges they grapple with on a daily basis, he reflected. Mr. Kuta said: “As a Finance Officer, I cannot imagine working in a team as dedicated as the officers in the CRC finance department. Among the things, I like most is the tolerance they exhibit to ideas and the willingness of working as a team. This applies to all other departments at the CRC. This further enlightens and motivates me to remain humble.”

Ms. Mammy Sowe, a researcher at the CRC said serving as a researcher at the CRC has been a wonderful experience for her. He added that this accorded her the opportunity to broaden her knowledge and understanding of how Constitutions are drafted.

Some of my research work within the Commission focused on comparing and contrasting the 1965, 1970 and 1997 Constitutions of The Gambia. It also included a research on the manner of appointing the Chief Justice and prisoners’ rights," she said. She further underscored that the research work has given her the chance to inform the choices of the Commission on what should go into the draft Constitution for The Gambia.

Continuing, Ms. Sowe said her work at the CRC also helped her gather knowledge on the existing state of affairs of the current Gambian Constitution and the Constitutions of other states.

“I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to take part in this national endeavor. I believe I have learned a lot from my experience at the Commission and this will go a long way in helping me excel in my academic, professional and social life,” she concluded.

Ms. Yasaine Jobe said that she is deeply honored to be part of the CRC staff and it had greatly contributed to every aspect of her life. Continuing, she explained that the experience she has gained from working with colleagues will serve her throughout her career and thus has improved her social relationships. She added that the diversity and huge knowledge she gained from interactions with some of the CRC Commissioners and staff has been very beneficial to her, especially as a university student. She further indicated that team spirit, the team work and the zeal demonstrated by staff of the CRC to help one another has undoubtedly boost her experience and knowledge.

“The CRC has widened the scope of my knowledge and the ability to work in tense conditions and I am grateful to all the CRC staff for their support. The unity, teamwork, and professionalism have been key attributes I like most about the CRC,” she stated.
Mr. Sanneh lamented that working with the Gambia’s Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) is an opportunity that made him feel truly humbled to be serving The Gambia as part of its new dispensation’s transitional justice process. The CRC is one of the mechanisms through which Gambians both home and abroad want to ensure we usher in a new democratic nation that showcases the wishes and aspirations of its citizenry.

Expressing his view working with the CRC, Mr. Sanneh said, “It feels amazingly satisfying working in an environment that brings together a myriad of personalities from across different cultures, backgrounds and professions.”

"The height of the learning experience could be the opportunity given to me to serve as Secretary to the CRC’s Technical Committee on Public Finance Management added to the job that I was hired to serve here (at the CRC). With the CRC’s Public Finance Management Committee, I got to relate to a team of seasoned experts and resourceful individuals in the areas of Public Financial Management, Public Administration and Corporate Governance. This was a remarkable moment that I can only be thankful for as well as cherish for years to come,” he remarked.

Mr. Manneh said that he was employed by the CRC as Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, serving under the auspices of the Programme Department since the month of August 2019.

"Since I became part of the CRC, I had opportunity to meet and share experiences with new people, make new friends and establish different types of relationships with many staff. Indeed, I learned a lot about the CRC from different people I met and discussed with over the two month period. I have had the opportunity to attend two dialogues on SSR on behalf of the Head of Programme and I learned a lot more about the SSR from the forum. The CRC has thus become another learning curve for me,” he remarked.

He added that despite his short engagement with the Commission, he have built the impression that the CRC exercise is participatory and all inclusive. Mr. Manneh maintained that all staff diligently contribute their quotas in the process to ensure its success.

"Most of the CRC’s work is complete and light is being seen at the end of the tunnel. There is still no room for complacency. We should continue to work even harder to finish the remaining work. At this point, I think all staff need to be congratulated, from Chairman to cleaner, for coming this far with the CRC process,” he concluded.
For Pa Malick Saidy working with the CRC as one of the Regional Co-ordinators of the Lower River Region (LRR) has enriched and emboldened his fervent belief in public consultation processes. He explained that: “As a would-be Lawyer, I have also learnt the various processes that are involved in designing a Constitution that will stand the test of time. Also, the CRC as an institution has enabled me to interact with all facets of the social, political and religious groupings within my region.”

Mr. Saidy revealed that he is quite passionate about his service with the CRC, adding that it has widened his perception and critical analysis of issues devoid of any subjectivity.

He added that, “My experience and memory of the CRC is that, the institution is like a family and all staff are allowed to explore their potentials. This can only be attributed to good leadership. Finally, working with the CRC is being part of history for generations to come.”

Foday Kebbeh, Data Entry Clerk

said that he has a splendid experience working with the CRC as a data entry clerk.

Mr. Kebbeh said part of his work as a data entry clerk, was to enter the CRC nationwide household and face-to-face surveys to qualitatively solicit the opinions of Gambia.

“I have a great experience working with the CRC as it gives me the golden opportunity to contribute my quota towards nation building after a difficult past for The Gambia,” Foday noted.

He also expressed delight over the interpersonal relationship and hospitality accorded to him at the CRC.

“I have worked in different institutions, but the interpersonal relationship and hospitality in the CRC is most outstanding. All the staff and Commissioners embraced me with open arms,” Mr. Kebbeh concluded.

Baibrahim Cham - Finance Officer

Mr. Cham said he feels elated to work with the CRC describing the process of writing a new Constitution as ‘historic’.

He stated: “In my field of specialisation, one would work through laid down principles and it is a pleasure realising that it doesn’t matter what the background your workmates are, rules are rules, and people have to understand these points.”

“As stated by one historian, the CRC will be well noted in the annals of The Gambia. Thus, it is really great to have the opportunity to serve and to contribute towards building a new Constitution. He passionately recollects.

He also expressed appreciation about the cordiality accorded to him at the CRC.
As many people aspire for a ‘progressive Constitution’ that will serve for the longest time possible; the Constitutional Review Commission in the past months had been assiduously engaged in consulting Gambians living in the country and outside to get their views.

It is gratifying to note that citizens are not ignoring their civic duties and responsibilities and have been regularly engaging the Commission to inquire about the content of the new Constitution.

In this special edition, we sampled the views of various Gambians regarding their expectations about the new Constitution as the Commission prepares to release its first draft.

The interviewed personalities below drawn from several sections of the society individually expressed what their expectations are from the mandate of the Constitutional Review Commission.

Isatou Jallow, a Women and Children’s Rights Activist said she is expecting a new Constitution that will serve the nation and promote the newly found democracy.

Ms. Jallow opined that: “The new Constitution should also ensure that the Executive has no room to amend the Constitution anytime they wish to serve their own narrow interests.”

Ms. Jallow’s expectations are that the new Constitution will make provisions for access to information and anti-corruption. These she said, are very crucial to be contained in the new Constitution.

She argued that democracy, accountability, transparency and good governance should be promoted in the country to serve the interest of the Gambian populace.

Muhammed Ceesay, a Youth Activist and student said as the CRC endeavours to produce a new Constitution for the country, he expects the Commission to produce a Constitution that is relevant...

“I am expecting a Constitution that will represent the needs and aspirations of the Gambian people. Also, a Constitution that will promote freedom and liberty of the people,” Ceesay concluded.
Omar A.F. Kujabi, a businessman said he expects the new Constitution to clearly spell out fundamental rights and establish common trust for a progressive society.

Saidina Abubacarr Jarjou, an Administration and Finance Officer at Open Dreams Electrical and Consultancy Company suggested that the new Constitution should condemn all sorts of extremism and religious intolerance, hence none of the religions in The Gambia should entertain such acts. Instead there should be promotion directed towards the preaching of love, unity and morality in society.

Mr. Salihu Darboe, who works at the UTG said he expects the new Constitution to provide a presidential term limit of ten years. He argued that the president should have the required capacity and wherewithal to advance the interest of the country in the international political scene.

Adama Jarju, a footballer, indicated that the new Constitution should be a reflection of the needs and aspirations of all Gambia without any discrimination. “The CRC review process was inclusive. Gambians both at home and abroad were really engaged in the review process. Therefore, I expect the new Constitution to truly reflect the needs and aspirations expressed by Gambians in these processes,” he concluded.

Malick M Jarju - Entrepreneur
‘I look forward to a constitution that will makes it mandatory for asset declaration by public officials and banning of public officials accepting gifts, two term limit of five years, second round voting if any candidate does not get 51%, right to information and abolishing the public order act.’
In the contemporary business world, the success of institutions or organizations is to a large extent determined by the intimacy between the support staff and other members of the establishment. Being wary of this fact, the CRC recognizes and of course, places high premium on the support staff by focusing on their wellbeing with a view to promoting productivity at the workplace. Simply put, the ancillary and the support form an integral part in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Commission’s daily work activities. They offer different services to the Commission. The drivers play a fundamental role in terms of facilitating the mobility of Commissioners and staff. The cleaners too ensure that the offices are tidy at all times and the precincts of the Secretariat. And the Security guards ensure that the Secretariat and the properties of the Commission are secure both day and night.

Be that as it may, we wish to give prominence to our dedicated and hardworking ancillary staff in this special incredible men and women of competence and substance in their domains:

The cleaners includes Awa Ceesay, Awa Njie, Fatou Jallow and Mam Fatou Sanyang.

And our Drivers are Ansuman Ndure, Chief Driver, Alfusaine Baldeh and Ousman Senghore both senior drivers.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS [FAQs]

HOW WAS THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMISSION ESTABLISHED?
The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) is established by an Act of the National Assembly of The Gambia known as The Constitutional Review Commission Act 2017. The CRC was formally established as a body in June, 2018. The Members of the CRC were appointed with effect from 1st June, 2018; the Members were sworn into office by the President on 4th June, 2018.

HOW LONG DOES THE CRC HAVE TO COMPLETE ITS WORK?
The CRC is required to complete its work within a period of eighteen (18) months. Where the need arises, the President may extend the term of the CRC to a period not exceeding six (6) months, upon the recommendation of the Chairperson of the CRC.

WHAT QUALIFIED THE MEMBERS TO BE APPOINTED TO THE CRC?
The qualifications for the appointment of the CRC Members are set out in the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017. The Members are persons of high professional and moral integrity, with qualification and experience in varied fields that are considered relevant to aid the constitutional review process. All members have a voting right.

WHAT IS THE WORK/MANDATE OF THE CRC?
The main functions of the CRC are to review and analyze the current Constitution, draft a new Constitution for the Republic of The Gambia and prepare a report in relation to the draft Constitution. The report will outline the processes engaged in reviewing and drafting a new Constitution and provide the rationale for the provisions contained in the new Constitution.

HOW DOES THE CRC INTEND TO CARRY OUT ITS WORK/MANDATE?
The CRC will carry out its assignment in accordance with the requirements and guidelines provided in the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017. It will also engage such other processes, as are not inconsistent with the provisions of the Act, as it considers appropriate. In this context, therefore, the CRC will hold focused and thematic discussions with different stakeholders, consult widely with the general public and conduct civic education on the constitution making process.

WHAT FORM WOULD THESE DISCUSSIONS AND CONSULTATIONS TAKE?
The CRC will adopt different approaches during the constitutional review process. It will invite various stakeholders to submit contributions/suggestions to be considered in the constitution reform process. It will also hold direct face-to-face dialogue with Gambians and other persons who have an interest in the constitution making process of The Gambia. In addition, the CRC will establish its own Website and create a platform through which persons may submit Contributions/suggestions on constitutional reform.

HOW INCLUSIVE IS THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PROCESS GOING TO BE?
The constitutional review process will be an inclusive one designed to ensure that every Gambian and any other person who can bring value to the constitution-making process has the opportunity to do so. The CRC Act obliges the CRC to afford the people of The Gambia the opportunity to freely express their opinions and make suggestions on matters they feel should be considered in the Constitution. The CRC will therefore go round the country to receive views from Gambians and will visit every constituency in all the Administrative Regions to afford all Gambians the opportunity to give their input in developing a new Constitution for The Gambia.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS [FAQs]

IS THERE A SPECIFIC BODY THAT DEALS WITH THE DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS CONCERNING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CRC? Yes. The Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017 creates the position of Secretary who heads the CRC Secretariat. The Secretary is responsible for the administration of the CRC Secretariat and for arranging and facilitating the business of the CRC and its technical committees. Support staff are appointed to assist the work of the CRC.

WHERE IS THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CRC LOCATED? The Secretariat of the CRC is located at the FUTURELEC building along Bertil Harding Highway. The offices of the Secretariat can be reached through the phone, email, postal address, and website.

HOW IS THE CRC FUNDED? The CRC receives its funds in two ways: firstly, through funds appropriated or set aside by the National Assembly, and secondly, through funds provided by donor Agencies approved by the Minister of Justice.

WOULD THE ACCOUNTS OF THE CRC BE SUBJECT TO ANY FORM OF AUDITING? Yes. The CRC is a self-accounting body under the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017. It is supposed to manage its own funds which are subject to auditing by the Auditor General. The report of the Auditor General on such auditing is required to be submitted to the National Assembly.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CRC COMPLETES ITS ASSIGNMENT? Upon completion of its work, the CRC will submit a draft new Constitution to the President, together with a Report on the whole review process, including explanation regarding the rationale for the provisions of the Constitution.

WILL THE PUBLIC SEE THE DRAFT NEW CONSTITUTION AND THE REPORT WHEN THEY ARE SUBMITTED TO THE PRESIDENT? Yes. The CRC is mandated under the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017 to publish the draft new Constitution and the accompanying Report. After submitting the draft Constitution to the President, the CRC is also required to publish the draft Constitution and the Report in The Gazette, and in any other manner the Commission considers fit.

WILL THIS INCLUSIVE PROCESS EXTEND TO GAMBIANS IN THE DIASPORA? Yes. Gambians in the diaspora will also be consulted. It is envisaged that the CRC will undertake visits to select countries outside The Gambia with known sizeable concentration of Gambians. In addition, Gambians in the diaspora, whether collectively or individually, will be free to submit contributions/suggestions to the CRC as part of the constitution-making process.

WHAT ARE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE CRC? In carrying out its work, the CRC is required by the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017 to have regard to national values and ethos and to safeguard and promote the following:

i. The existence of The Gambia as a sovereign independent State;
ii. The Gambia’s Republican system of governance, including democratic values and respect for and promotion of the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms;
iii. The separation of powers;
iv. National unity, cohesion and peace;
v. The importance of ensuring periodic democratic elections based on universal adult suffrage, including the introduction of term limits for serving in the office of the President; and
vi. The Gambia’s continued existence as a secular State.
ABOUT THE CRC

The Commission
The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) is established by an Act of the National Assembly in June, 2018. The Commission’s main functions are to review and analyze the current Constitution, draft a new Constitution for the Republic of The Gambia and prepare a report in relation to the new Constitution. The Commission’s report will outline the processes engaged in reviewing and drafting the new Constitution and provide the rationale for the provisions contained in the new Constitution.

The Members of the CRC were appointed on the 1st June, 2018 and they were sworn into office by the President on the 4th June, 2018.

The Commissioners
The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) comprises 11 Members made up of a Chairperson designated by the Chief Justice, Vice Chairperson nominated by the Minister of Justice and 9 other Members nominated by the President. All of them were appointed by the President.

Our Mandate
The main functions of the CRC are to review and analyze the current Constitution, draft a new Constitution for the Republic of The Gambia and prepare a report in relation to the new Constitution. The report will outline the processes engaged in reviewing and drafting the new Constitution and provide the rationale for the provisions contained in the new Constitution.

Our Core Values
The CRC is an independent body. Pursuant to the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017, the CRC, in carrying out its work, is not subject to the direction or control of any person or authority. As an institution, it is guided by the following core values:

- Inclusiveness
- Independence
- Integrity
- Participation

Our Guiding Principles
In carrying out its work, the CRC is required by the Constitutional Review Commission Act, 2017, to have regard to national values and ethos and safeguard and promote the following:

- The existence of The Gambia as a sovereign independent State;
- The Gambia’s Republican systems of governance, including democratic values and respect for and promotion of the rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms;
- The separation of powers;
- National unity, cohesion and peace;
- The importance of ensuring periodic democratic elections based on universal adult suffrage, including the introduction of term limits for serving in the office of President; and
- The Gambia’s continued existence as a secular State.

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