

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/ Ext 2558

Website: www.au.int

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release

AU expresses grave concern over State of Emergency, insists President Yahya Jammeh must hand-over power to President-elect Adama Barrow

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 18 January 2017: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma has expressed grave concern over the State of Emergency declared by President Yahya Jammeh of the Islamic Republic of The Gambia and the extension of the life of the National Assembly, and insists that he must hand-over power in conformity with the country's 1997 Constitution.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission said the people of The Gambia went to the polls and voted a new leader. Therefore, Africa must ensure that the will of the people is respected and protected. The AU is working very closely with ECOWAS Leaders and the United Nations.

The Chairperson, reaffirmed the decision of the 647th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council held on 13 January 2017, which reiterated the AU's zero tolerance policy with regards to *coup d'état* and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa. The Chairperson calls upon the outgoing President, Yahya Jammeh, to peacefully transfer power on the expiration of his tenure on 19 January 2017, when he ceases to be recognized as the legitimate President of the country, to President-elect Adama Barrow.

The Constitution of The Gambia allows for the winner of the elections to be sworn-in following the proclamation of the results, while election-related disputes should be settled by the relevant judicial institutions within the framework of the Constitution.

The Chairperson of the Commission notes that failure of President Yahya Jammeh to hand-over to President-elect Adama Barrow, on 19 January 2017, would be considered as an Unconstitutional Change of Government, according to Article 23 (4) of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.