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African Union Engages Gambian Stakeholders ahead of the Presidential Election



The African Union (AU) Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye, paid a three-day working visit to the Republic of The Gambia from the 22nd to the 24th of November 2021, ahead of the 4th of December 2021 presidential election. During the visit, he met with the President of the Republic, the Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission and paid a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In his engagement with H.E. President Adama Barrow, Commissioner Bankole commended the government and the people of The Gambia for the prevailing peace and calm during the ongoing election campaign period. He reiterated the African Union's commitment to supporting a peaceful, credible, and transparent presidential election. Similarly, Commissioner Bankole Adeoye underlined the strategic value of The Gambia's progress towards consolidating democratic gains and expressed that, "The Chairperson of the AU Commission will continue to support the democratic transition in The Gambia, in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States".

On his part, H.E. President Adama Barrow, welcomed the AU Election Observation Mission and underscored the Gambia's appreciation for AU's support to the electoral process. He assured the Commissioner and his delegation of his government's commitment to peaceful, credible and transparent elections as well as its dedication to national reconciliation. In conclusion, he stated that, "the Gambian people will decide, and their decision will be respected".

Commissioner Bankole also held consultations with the Chairman of the Gambian Independent Electoral Commission, Mr Alieu Momar Njai, who briefed on the level of preparedness to ensure credible, free, and fair presidential elections.

He also paid a courtesy call on the overseeing Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. James Peter Gomez, Minister of Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters, who he equally assured of the AU's support to the electoral process in The Gambia.

It would be recalled that the AU has deployed the African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM) comprising nine long term observers and 60 short term observers in The Gambia. The AUEOM is led by President Kgalema Motlanthe, former President of the Republic of South Africa.

It must be noted that as part of its support to The Gambia, the AU has disbursed over half a million U.S. dollars to assist with the training of polling staff, training of domestic observers, provision of COVID-19 materials and logistical support.

For further information, please contact:

Mr Paschal Chem-Langhee, Communication Officer | Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department | African Union Commission
Tel: +251 929 487 749 | **E-mail:** Chem-LangheeP@africa-union.org | Banjul, The Gambia

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | **E-mail:** DIC@africa-union.org
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