

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

168 PLAZA
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KOTU, THE GAMBIA

Statement by the Minister of Interior of the Republic of the Gambia

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At the

76th Session of the Executive Committee (EXCOM)

Your Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the President, Government, and people of The Gambia, my delegation thanks the outgoing chair of the Executive Committee H.E Mr. Marcelo Vazquez Bermudez for excellently steering the affairs of Committee over the past year, and congratulate the new chair for his/her election as chair of the 76th session. Please allow me to express sincere appreciation to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr FILIPPO GRANDI and his team for their commitment, dedication and leadership in driving the global refugee agenda during these difficult times.

The Government of The Gambia reaffirms its political will and strong commitment to the implementation of the **1951 Refugee Convention (and 1967 Protocol), the 1954 Statelessness Convention**, as well as the **1969 OAU Convention**. These international obligations have been domesticated through the **Refugee Act of 2008**, which creates the legal and institutional framework for protection for refugees, asylum seekers and other persons of concerned to the UNHCR.

To ensure an efficient refugee management regime, the government of The Gambia continues to develop the institutional capacity of the Gambia Immigration Department and the Gambia Commission for Refugees.

As of September 2025, a total of **4099** peoples have been granted refugee status in the Gambia, while **504** Asylum applications are under review, from **21** countries. Although modest in scale relative to global refugee dataset, this number represents the commitment of The Gambia to contribute its quota to protection of vulnerable persons.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

Given the Gambia's strategic geographical location in Africa, it is imperative to foster cooperation with neighbouring countries and international partners and to improve our border management in line with standard protection norms. We have implemented early warning systems, and strengthened our maritime coordination and rescue capacities to mitigate risks to migrants and asylum seekers using The Gambia as a transit route.

The Gambia places particular importance to the welfare and integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Our Social Inclusion system allows for refugee children to be enrolled in schools, benefiting from the same curricula and standards as Gambian children. In a similar vein, access to health care is guaranteed via the national health referral system, ensuring essential services on equal basis with our citizens.

The Gambia also recognises that protection is not limited to refugees; but must include stateless persons and or those at risk of being stateless. Accordingly, we provide civil registration documentation to identify and protect individuals at risk of statelessness.

To ensure that persons of concerns are effectively identified and protected, my Ministry through the Gambia Commission for Refugees has been providing necessary identification documents for refugees and asylum seekers to enable them access vital social services. We also facilitate voluntary and safe repatriations in consultation with UNHCR where safe conditions prevail in countries of origin.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates:

Kindly allow me to acknowledge the support of the UNHRC Multi-Country Office (MCO) in Dakar, though whose collaboration The Gambia conducted an assessment aimed at identifying person at risk of being stateless. At the end of the exercise, a total of over 900 individuals including men, women and Childrent were identified to be at being risk of being

stateless. The Gambia Government is committed to regularising the status of those identified to become Gambians in the coming months.

Excellencies and Distinguished delegates

Finally, the Republic of The Gambia calls for greater international cooperation, solidarity and shared responsibility in refugee matters. The Government of the Gambia stands ready to continue working closely with our bilateral and multilateral partners as well as the civil society to guarantee protection and dignity for all persons of concern. In this regard, The Gambia is committed to strengthen our standing in the UNHCR in the coming years.

Thank you.