

Draft Franco-Gambian Joint Communiqué  
15 March 2017

At the invitation of the President of the French Republic, Mr François Hollande, the President of the Republic of the Gambia, Mr Adama Barrow, made an official visit to France on 14 and 15 March.

In addition to his meeting with President Hollande, President Barrow met with the President of the National Assembly, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Defence, and the Economy and Finance, with a view to strengthening our diplomatic, security and economic development ties. He also met with French companies at the French Business Confederation, MEDEF International.

During their meeting, President Hollande congratulated President Barrow on his recent election and commended his determination to ensure that the Gambian people's choice was respected and that power was handed over peacefully. This democratic change of government is a strong positive signal for the Gambia, the entire region and the continent. President Hollande welcomed the announcement of reforms, particularly in the area of justice, human rights and security and the launch of a justice and reconciliation initiative. He welcomed President Barrow's decision to revoke the decision to withdraw the Gambia from the International Criminal Court.

The two Presidents decided to reinforce ties between the two countries to strengthen democracy and the rule of law in the Gambia. A seminar on transitional justice will be held in the *Alliance Franco-Gambienne* in Banjul to show, through African and foreign examples, the importance of justice and reconciliation processes.

They discussed in depth the possibilities for enhancing bilateral cooperation. France and the Gambia have agreed to develop their cooperation in training Gambian security forces.

To meet the Gambia's economic challenges, France, within the framework of the European Union and United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions, supports the mobilization of donors to support the economic and financial programme of the new Gambian authorities. French companies that met with President Barrow at MEDEF International were encouraged to seek opportunities in the Gambian market so as to provide their capital and their expertise to further the country's development. French public agencies, particularly the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), expressed their desire to support projects in the Gambia.

The two Heads of State met to promote Francophonie and develop the teaching of the French language, particularly in Gambian schools.

France commends the decision of the Gambian authorities to turn the Consulate-General of the Gambia in France into a full-fledged embassy.

President Barrow expressed his deep gratitude to President Hollande for his warm and friendly welcome and for France's support and assistance in Gambia's reform and development process.