

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNOWAS welcomes the launch of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission of The Gambia (TRRC)**

**Dakar, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018-** The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, welcomes the launch on 15th October 2018 of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission of The Gambia (TRRC).

The Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission of The Gambia (TRRC) which was established through a consultative process, will play an important role in addressing the difficult period of The Gambia history, reconciling and moving into a peaceful future.

“Today’s launch builds a platform for this country to replace a culture of impunity with a culture of accountability which is vital in any democratic process. A milestone has been reached in the history of The Gambia,” said Ibn Chambas during the launch ceremony in Banjul.

The Commission is expected to create the enabling environment for all Gambians, regardless of their political, religious and ethnic affiliations to tell their story relating to the period during which they were subjected to gross human rights violations. It is a mechanism that should promote healing, social cohesion and tolerance which ultimately will enhance peace and stability in this country.

“The Commission must ensure that the truth be known; that the truth be complete; and that the truth be officially proclaimed and publicly exposed,” declared the Special Representative, urging the Government of The Gambia, in line with its consultative approach and commitment towards national reconciliation, to ensure that the independence of appointed Commissioners and staff assigned to the Commission is not compromised.

“I am sure that the Commission’s influence and work will also contribute to political tolerance and constructive engagement between the main political actors involved in the process of building the foundations of New Gambia,” M. Ibn Chambas concluded.

The United Nations within the framework of the sustaining peace agenda will continue to avail assistance to The Gambia with a view to supporting nationally led efforts that would entrench democratic values, improve governance, especially of the security sector and enhance transitional justice and human rights.

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