



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

**National Assembly, New Assembly Building, Reverend Pye
Lane**

Banjul, The Gambia

STATEMENT

BY

**SEEDY SK NJIE, THE HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER
OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA AT THE 147TH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)
ASSEMBLY IN LUANDA, ANGOLA**

 Your Excellency, President of the IPU

As we converge in this Assembly, I express my profound gratitude to Allah, The Almighty, for our lives and for making it possible for us to interact once again, in the service of our dear Parliaments and its constituents.

Your Excellency,

This Assembly's theme lies at the heart of our collective aspirations for a better and just world. The theme, "Parliamentary Action for Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions" is therefore well-conceived. It is also consistent with how we, as parliamentarians, work in advancing Sustainable Development Goal 16 which defines comprehensibly the kind of society we all should live in. It talks about a world where peace prevails, justice is upheld, and institutions are strong and accountable. This goal is not just an ideal one; it is a practical roadmap for shaping our societies and nations.

However, Mr. President, today's topic came at a time when the world is witnessing one of its worst inhumane and barbaric massacre and human rights violation of our times in Palestine.

Thousands of innocent women, children and civilians are being killed by the hour, religious buildings, hospitals, schools and public places being destroyed as a result of the horrific, indiscriminate and barbaric airstrike bombardments in the Gaza Strip by Israel, in total disregard of international laws and all UN Resolutions. It must be forthrightly stated that not all Gaza residents are Hamas. The people of Palestine must be allowed to live in their land as a sovereign nation and people, and in line with the two-state solution approach. The United Nations, through the UN Security Council and other World bodies continue to engage in futile diplomacy and politics while Israel continues to murder thousands of Palestinians and destroying Gaza and Palestine.

The International community and us as representatives of the people are failing in our responsibilities. While we are busy engaging in empty rhetoric, thousands continue to endure suffering and being deprived of basic necessities like food, water, electricity, basic medicines and shelter. This is atrocious and inhumane. In Gaza, humanitarian aid is short; the world must stand resolute and take a decisive action to end the hypocrisy and politicizing of the United Nation Security

Council's veto power and act more responsibly to avert global catastrophe.

I call on all parties in this catastrophe to respect and act in accordance with international law and avoid further killings of civilians and all previous United Nations resolutions on Palestine and Israel.

I further call upon this general Assembly to act now and pass strong resolutions against Israel and ask Israel to immediately stop this Stone Age barbarism.

Mr. President,

In our roles as legislators, we have the unique privilege and responsibility of shaping laws, policies, and systems that underpin the fundamental principles of SDG 16. Therefore, we should be enacting legislation and formulate policies that promote peace, justice, and strong institutions. These laws can serve as a shield against conflicts and injustice, while also providing a solid foundation for building accountable and transparent institutions.

Although, oversight and accountability are the pillars of good governance through our parliamentary committees, it is also essential that we scrutinize the actions of the executive branch, ensuring that they align with the principles of SDG 16.

Also, as Parliamentarians, Budget allocation is another significant tool at our disposal. We can direct resources towards initiatives that support SDG 16, whether it's funding for law enforcement agencies, the judiciary, anti-corruption efforts, or institutions that promote good governance.

Mr. President, Distinguish Delegates,

At the national front, the Republic of the Gambia in its Constitution, guarantees for the complete separation and independence of institutions of the state. Since the change of government in 2017, His Excellency, the President, Mr. Adama Barrow, has worked towards the complete autonomy of the Parliament to strengthen both its financial and political independence to effectively carry out its core mandates.

Fortunately, enough, the Parliament has acted as a crucial partner in the implementation processes towards achieving targets of our National Development Plan.

Currently, the government is up to task, to ensure that the security sector reform is on course to consolidate our peace, stability, justice and democracy guaranteeing sustainable peace.

Mr. President,

Access to justice should be a universal right, and not a privilege. To this end, our government under the leadership of President Adama Barrow is committed through its “National Legal Aid Secretariat’ to ensuring that support to accessing legal services, as well as a fair, independent and efficient judicial system is guaranteed for all citizens irrespective of our political affiliations, socio-economic status, gender, race, tribe or religion. We are working to eliminate legal barriers and ensure that justice is accessible by all.

The fight against corruption, a scourge that impedes justice and strong institutions is a battle that we are collectively waging. The enactment and enforcement of an anti-corruption legislation that

would build us a society where everyone is held accountable for their actions is currently underway.

Mr. President,

The protection and promotion of human rights is a cornerstone of SDG 16. It is our responsibility to advocate for the rights of all individuals, including those who are marginalized and vulnerable – ‘No one should be left behind’.

In conclusion, as parliamentarians, we should be the architects of a society that upholds principle of democracy and good governance and strong institutions, let us work together, across borders, to ensure that our collective efforts bring us closer to the world we envision – a world where peace, justice, and strong institutions prevail for the betterment of all humanity.

I Thank you all.

Hon. Seedy SK Njie
Deputy Speaker & Head of The Gambian Delegation

