



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA  
National Assembly, New Assembly Building, Reginald Pye Lane  
Banjul, The Gambia

**STATEMENT BY HON. SEEDY SK NJIE, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF  
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE GAMBIA AT THE INTER-  
PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) ASSEMBLY GENEVA,  
SWITZERLAND; 19-23 OCTOBER 2025**

**Theme:** *“Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting  
Humanitarian Actions in Times of Crisis”*

**Mr. President,**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We gather at a moment when the moral foundations of our world are being tested as never before; when conflicts displace millions, when natural disasters devastate entire communities, and when the sanctity of human life is too often traded for political or military gain. Yet, even amidst these trials, there remains an unyielding truth: that our humanity endures when we choose compassion over indifference, solidarity over silence, and action over despair.

It is in this conviction that The Gambia anchors its voice in this Assembly and reaffirms its commitment to upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian actions in times of crisis. For us, humanitarianism is not a rhetorical ideal; it is a lived national value, grounded in our Constitution, reflected in our laws, and demonstrated through our actions both at home and abroad.



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The Gambia's Constitution enshrines the inviolable dignity of every human being and the equality of all persons before the law. It forms the cornerstone of our legal and moral duty to protect life and uphold justice even in the most difficult circumstances. In translating this commitment into action, The Gambia has domesticated international conventions such as the Geneva Conventions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. These instruments are not dormant commitments, they are active frameworks shaping how our nation protects the vulnerable, governs in times of emergency, and engages internationally on matters of peace and humanitarian relief.

Our Parliament, through its Standing Committees on Defence & Security (which I have the honour of Chairing), and Human Rights & Constitutional Matters, plays a crucial role in ensuring that these principles are upheld in practice. Oversight mechanisms have been strengthened to hold our security institutions accountable to international humanitarian standards. In fact, training in human rights and humanitarian law is now an integral part of our national security curriculum. The establishment of an independent National Human Rights Commission further reinforces institutional accountability, giving citizens a voice and ensuring that violations are met with redress.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues,

The Gambia's commitment to humanitarian norms is not confined to legal instruments, it is demonstrated in concrete action and solidarity. As a matter of fact, when devastating floods struck The



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Gambia in 2022, a crisis that was described as the worst for the country in nearly half a century, our government mobilised swiftly, working with the World Food Programme, UNICEF, and national partners to deliver emergency food, water, and shelter to thousands of affected families. Similarly, when conflict in neighbouring Casamance forced civilians to seek refuge within our borders, Gambian communities opened their homes and hearts, offering shelter and compassion to the displaced. Through the National Disaster Management Agency, our government provided food assistance, cash transfers, and medical aid, ensuring that every life mattered, and every person found dignity in their hour of need.

Beyond our borders, The Gambia's voice has been firm and principled in defending humanitarian norms wherever they are violated. Nowhere has this commitment been more visible than in our consistent and unwavering support for the State of Palestine. We have spoken without fear or favour against the brutal occupation, collective punishment, and persistent aggression inflicted upon innocent civilians, including women, children, and the elderly, in Gaza and across Palestinian territories.

The Gambia stands shoulder to shoulder with the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle for freedom, dignity, and self-determination. We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the callous destruction of homes, hospitals, and humanitarian corridors by Israel, acts that constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law. The deliberate targeting of civilians, the obstruction of aid, and the use of starvation and siege as instruments of war are moral outrages that the conscience of humanity must collectively reject.



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Our country is aware of the ongoing diplomatic efforts by the United States and other partners to broker a peace deal between Israel and Palestine. The Gambia welcomes these efforts and recognises the urgency of achieving a just and lasting peace. However, we must equally reaffirm that the fundamental and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, especially their right to statehood, self-determination, and sovereignty, are not negotiable. True peace cannot be built on occupation, dispossession, or denial of justice; it must rest on equality, dignity, and mutual respect.

As a proud member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), The Gambia has been at the forefront of international advocacy for the Palestinian cause. We have consistently sponsored and supported resolutions calling for an immediate ceasefire, unhindered humanitarian access, and accountability for war crimes committed against the Palestinian people. Our government's commitment to global justice has been demonstrably affirmed at the International Court of Justice, where The Gambia took a historic stance in defence of the Rohingya people of Myanmar by initiating proceedings against acts of genocide.

That same moral conviction, that same pursuit of justice, underpins our solidarity with all peoples facing persecution, occupation, or systemic oppression, wherever they may be.

Distinguished delegates,

Our experience as a small nation has taught us that the measure of moral leadership is not in power or wealth, but in courage, the



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courage to speak truth in the face of injustice, to act when others hesitate, and to defend the sanctity of life even when it is unpopular to do so. Upholding humanitarian norms is not an act of charity; it is a test of our shared humanity and our collective integrity.

Therefore, The Gambia calls on this Assembly to strengthen the international architecture that safeguards humanitarian principles. We must ensure that humanitarian aid is never politicised, that international humanitarian law is enforced without discrimination, and that parliaments everywhere hold their governments accountable for upholding these sacred norms. Let us reaffirm that the protection of civilians in conflict, the dignity of refugees, and the impartiality of humanitarian actors are not negotiable, they are obligations under international law.

Mr. President,

The Gambia remains steadfast in its conviction that a just world is possible, a world where nations measure strength not by weapons, but by compassion; where leadership is defined not by dominance, but by empathy; and where every human being, regardless of race, faith, or nationality, can live in peace and dignity. I challenge this Assembly to rise beyond resolutions and rhetoric, and act as the conscience of humanity. For when we uphold humanitarian norms, we preserve not only the lives of others, but we truly preserve the moral soul of the world itself.

I thank you.