

Tuesday 22 May: International Conference for The Gambia

The news

The International Conference for The Gambia takes place on 22 May in Brussels at the European Commission (Berlaymont).

The conference, jointly organised by the European Union and the Government of The Gambia, will focus on confirming support to The Gambia in its democratic transition, as well as raising additional financial support for the implementation of its National Development Plan. High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** and Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** will co-chair the conference together with the President of The Gambia, Adama **Barrow**. President **Barrow** will present the country's reform agenda to high-level attendees from the European Union Member States, the international community as well as international organisations.

In the margins of the conference, a **Business Forum** will take place on 23 May. The forum will bring together interested European, regional and Gambian business representatives for exchanges on sector specific strategies and projects during panel discussions on Energy & Infrastructure, Agricultural Value Chains, and Tourism.

EU support to The Gambia

– **Development assistance:** EU assistance for the period 2017-2020 currently amounts to a total of €225 million. With the establishment of a new government in 2016, development cooperation was immediately stepped up, and in early 2017 a €75 million aid package was released and further €150 million were subsequently allocated supporting governance through budget support, investment facilities for infrastructures and notably boosting job creation and youth empowerment for sustainable growth.

– **Political support:** The EU has provided strong political support to President **Barrow** ever since his election on 1 December 2016. [Commissioner Mimica visited The Gambia at a very early stage of the transition in February 2017](#) to open a new chapter in bilateral relations. An [EU Election Observation Mission for parliamentary elections in April 2017](#) contributed to foster trust in the democratic process. The EU pursues dialogue with the Gambian authorities on a broad range of subjects of mutual interest, including governance, human rights, security sector reform, transitional justice, trade, migration, agriculture, fisheries and environment. The EU is also supporting the West African standby force (ECOMIG) deployed to the country, which ensures security together with the Gambian security forces.

The background

After 22 years of authoritarian rule, former The Gambia President Yahya Jammeh lost presidential elections on 1 December 2016 to opposition candidate Adama Barrow. When President Jammeh refused to leave office during several weeks of political stalemate, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) showed strong political leadership to ensure that the election results were respected, paving the way for President Barrow take up power. The political situation has substantially improved since. However, his government has inherited a very difficult financial and economic situation. In order to meet the expectations of the population to see swift and tangible improvements in living conditions, and to consolidate the political progress achieved so far, the country needs strong international support.

The event

The International Conference for The Gambia takes place on 22 May in Brussels at the European Commission (Berlaymont).

In the margins of the conference, a Business Forum takes place on 23 May in Brussels at the European Commission (Charlemagne).

Media accreditation

Journalists must have valid media accreditation to attend any dedicated press events at the conference:

- Journalists **already accredited to the EU institutions** may attend with a valid yellow press badge (e.g. yellow badge from the European Commission, badge from the EU Council) and show the badge upon entering the Berlaymont on the day of the conference.
- Journalists **that are not accredited to the EU institutions** must register using this link: <http://thegambia.onetec.eu/reg2.html> before 18 May 2018, 12:00 by registering and providing details such as name, media you work for, a copy of a valid national press card and national ID card. Both the valid national press card and national ID card must be shown upon entering the Berlaymont on the day of the conference.