

# UN Human Rights Council 43: Universal Periodic Review on The Gambia

Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes The Gambia's engagement with the UPR and their determination to make progress on human rights.

We also welcome The Gambia's acceptance of all three of our recommendations. Namely, to protect the right to freedom of expression by repealing the Seditious Act and the Official Secrets Act; to set out publically, steps the Government will take to ensure women's full participation and leadership in public life; and to ensure effective implementation of anti-trafficking legislation, including timely and just prosecution of perpetrators of human trafficking.

We commend the progress made in the reform agenda including through the tabling of the Freedom of Information Bill, the Anti-Corruption Bill and the Criminal Code Review Bill before the National Assembly. We hope these processes will be effectively implemented once concluded.

We urge the government to respect freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, and to ensure the media is free to operate without interference or intimidation.

We encourage the Government to continue to support the Constitutional Review process and ensure the necessary electoral arrangements are made to hold a referendum on the draft constitution in a timely manner, in line with international best practice, so all individuals can freely exercise their rights.

Thank you.