

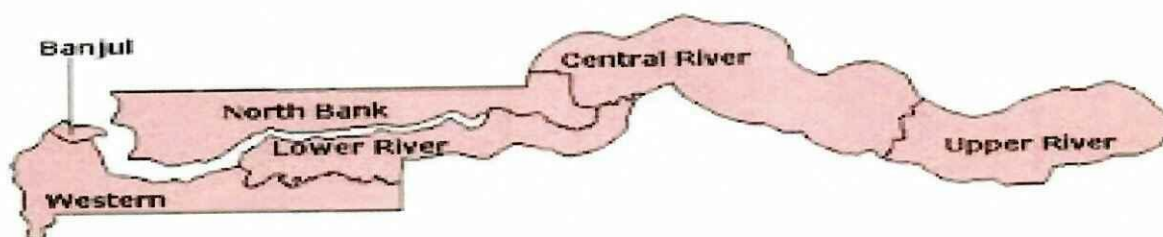
REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

National Assembly, New Assembly Building, Reverend Pye Lane
Banjul, The Gambia

No. 1 of 2015

OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF PARLIAMENT

HANSARD



**FIRST EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION (MEETING) IN THE 2015
LEGISLATIVE YEAR**

FRIDAY 29TH MAY, 2015

Office of the Clerk
National Assembly of The Gambia
Banjul
May, 2015

Tel: (220) 4228305; 4226643; 4201326. Fax: (220) 4225123
E-mail: assembly.clerk@yahoo.co.uk; clerk@assembly.gov.gm; www.assembly.gov.gm

**FIRST EXTRA ORDINARY
SESSION IN THE 2015
LEGISLATIVE YEAR**

Sitting of Friday, 29th May, 2015

Hon. Speaker (Mr. Abdoulie Bojang) in the Chair:

Prayers: Hon. Speaker leads in prayers

Clerk: Communication from the Chair

Hon. Speaker: May I first of all, welcome all Honourable Members, to the First Extra Ordinary Session of the National Assembly, in the 2015 Legislative year. I want to thank you all for the good turnout, despite the short notice.

Honourable Members, this Extra Ordinary Session is convened pursuant to the provisions of section 98 (1) (a) (i) of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia; which reads,

“... 98 (1) Subject to section 97, sittings of the National Assembly shall be at such times as the National Assembly shall appoint: provided that –

- (a) The Speaker shall summon a sitting of the National Assembly
- (i) When requested to do so by the President...”

Accordingly, the Proposal is that this august Assembly convene an Extra – Ordinary Session to discuss the Motions on the Table.

Those in favour, please say “*Aye*”, not in favour, say “*No!*” The “*Ayes*” have it.

I now have the pleasure to call on the Hon. Minister to move the two Motions together, to be seconded by the Hon. Majority Leader.

Clerk: Motions! Be it resolved that this august Assembly consider and adopt a resolution on the following:

- (1) **A Motion for the Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime Against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation; and,**
- (2) **A Motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism As a Crime against Humanity; as well as Genocide – to be moved by the Right Hon. Minister for Works, Transport, Construction, Infrastructure and National Assembly Matters.**

Hon. Balla Garba Jahumpa (Minister): Thank you Hon. Clerk. In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful, I bear witness that there is one God. We thank Him for Moses and the Old Testament; we

thank Him for Jesus and the New Testament, and, we also thank Him for Muhammed Bin Abdallah and the Holy Quran. May peace be onto these worthy servants of God?

Hon. Speaker Sir, I rise to move that "this august Assembly consider and adopt a Resolution" on the following motions:

- "Be it resolved that this august Assembly, consider and adopt a Resolution declaring Colonialism, as a Crime against Humanity, with no Statute of Limitation".
- "Be it resolved that this august Assembly consider and adopt a Resolution declaring Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity, as well as Genocide".

Hon. Speaker Sir, the Sovereign people of the Republic of The Gambia, under the progressive; under the productive, under the revolutionary and the Pan-Africanist leadership of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of The Gambia, Sheikh Prof. Dr. Alh. Yahya Abdul Aziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh, wishes to go down in history, and, join all the good people of conscience, to put the records straight for the good of mankind.

Hon. Speaker Sir, Hon. Members of this august National Assembly, by considering and adopting a Resolution on the aforesaid Motions, are not only putting vital historic records into correct perspectives, but also asserting once again our humanity, and independence as a free and Allah fearing people.

Dealing with the first motion - Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity, without Statute of Limitation, Hon. Speaker Sir, colonialism is not only a crime against humanity, but a crime against humanity with no statute of limitation. Thus, it is a worst crime that cannot be pardoned.

The culprits and perpetrators of colonialism have unleashed, untold stories and, hardship on the people and colonies they colonized. The cream, Hon. Speaker, of the intellectual human capital of the colonies was subjected to bondage, which turned Africa's first generation of leaders into 'Assimiladors' of the French Empire, and 'Goodies' or British boys in Anglophone Africa. The French colonial system Hon. Speaker of 'Assimilation' was to make the African think that, we didn't have a culture or a history and hence, we had to assimilate French culture Hon. Speaker. That is why some of us are

more French than the French. Equally so, the British colonial system of in-direct rule, Hon. Speaker, has made some of us so subservient, and, obedient to the former Empire and would go at any length, Hon. Speaker to be knighted as an OBE - meaning Officer of the British Empire, whilst in actual fact we continue to be obedient boys of the Empire.

Colonialism, Hon. Speaker, also gave birth to apartheid, corruption, bribery and white-colour crimes that were unknown until now in Africa. Colonialism did not only destroy the physical fabric of all African Nations, but, it also destroyed the political, social and spiritual fabric of our society. It eroded our self-esteem, and, our ability to emancipate our people from bondage was also destroyed.

With your kind permission, Hon. Speaker, I would wish to quote from Walter Rodney's book, "How Europe under Developed Africa", published in 1972. Walter Rodney on page 149 stated, "Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but, one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits, to the so called Mother country. From the African point of view that amounted to consistent expropriation of surplus produced by African labour out of the

African resources". It also meant Hon. Speaker that, the development of Europe was part of the same dialectical process which under developed Africa.

Hon. Speaker, for your information Walter Rodney was a Guyanese scholar, and activist, who was tragically killed in 1980, during the political turmoil in Guyana in the West Indies.

Hon. Speaker, the question follows also, what would have been Europe's level of development, had millions of them been put to work as slaves, outside of their homelands over a period of 400 years?

Hon. Speaker Sir, this is why when our President speaks his mind in good faith, as an Allah-fearing leader, many a time people think that what he is saying or doing, would not please the West. The overwhelming majority of our current generation of African leaders could not speak with conscience, because they want to please the colonial masters, against the popular will, and, aspirations of their own people. This, Hon. Speaker, is one of the greatest obstacle to Africa's development, and security. And the leadership we have in this country, in the person of President Jammeh, represents the generation of young African leaders that will stand up, and, defend the

interest of the African people and the African Continent.

Hon. Speaker, colonialism also represents, one of the most serious violations of national sovereignty of states. It is a breach of international law, and, also all colonial territories' serious crimes against humanity, were undoubtedly committed by colonial powers.

Hon. Speaker, foreign occupation creates an environment in which the occupied people are exposed to a wide range of systematic, and, gross violations of human rights, and freedom, including dispossession, displacement and denial of their rights to self-determination.

Hon. Speaker, with your kind permission, let me also refer to the experiences of the Gambian people, because The Gambia also did not escape the brutality and exploitation of colonialism. As you have debated here in this honourable Assembly, the book by His Excellency President Jammeh outlining the reasons or the million reasons why we left the Commonwealth.

Hon. Speaker, The Gambia under British colonialism, the evidence was not given by President Jammeh or a Gambian, but, by a former President of the United States of America, in the name of Franklin D. Roosevelt,

(FDR) and, Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke the honest truth, based on the objective conditions he found in The Gambia and travelling to Casablanca to meet with the then Ex-Prime Minister of Great Britain, Sir Winston Churchill in January of 1943, where FDR referred to The Gambia, as 'hell hole of yours' directed towards Sir Winston Churchill. And indeed Hon. Speaker, it was hell for the Gambian people under colonialism.

Let me give you a few of the reasons. At the material time, Hon. Speaker, the wages of a Gambian worker was one shilling and nine pence about 50 cents a month, undoubtedly a slave wage. Gambian workers were also given a ration of half cup of rice a day, Hon. Speaker. What was the life expectancy at the material period? It was 26 years Hon. Speaker. According to Franklin D. Roosevelt, these people meaning these Gambians were treated worse than life stock, their cattle lived longer than the Gambian people themselves.

Furthermore Hon. Speaker, to illustrate, the colonial budget for The Gambia; in 1925, only 3,500 pounds was allocated to education, hence no wonder, by 1940, not even 1 percent of the Gambian population was receiving any form of education.

In the area of health, under colonialism, The Gambia was allocated 24,712 pounds for medical services, it is also no wonder Hon. Speaker, that Franklin D. Roosevelt described Bathurst, now Banjul, 'as a disease infested post with no suitable accommodation' and a disgrace to the colonial Empire he concluded.

Hon. Speaker, it is also documented that, the British themselves suffered from this disease, because in 1825, they brought 199 soldiers in this country - in the city of Bathurst then, and, because of the diseases 160 of them died. To this day, that part of Bathurst - now Banjul is called Half Die.

To continue Sir, Slave Trade and Slavery constitute crimes against humanity, and, were based on economic exploitation, doctrines of racial supremacy and racial hatred. Slavery Hon. Speaker, subjected Africans and African descendants, including Gambians, and other indigenous peoples of Africa, to the most dehumanization, horrific, exploitation and brutality that has ever occurred in human kind.

Hon. Speaker, once again kindly allow me to quote from Dr. Eric Williams in his book 'Slavery and Capitalism' that was published in 1962, where it is quoted, '... there was so much misery, unending

misery on board the slave ships; that many died, 1 in 7 were dead before they even reached the voyage, and some of them were even thrown overboard. Hon. Speaker for your information, Dr. Eric Williams was the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1961 until his death in 1981. He also founded the People's National Movement and led Trinidad to Independence in 1961.

Hon. Speaker let me also quote the Ex-President of Guinea Conakry Sekou Touray, when he said, in 1962, and I quote, "...the relationship between the destitution of the peoples of Africa, and the length and nature of the exploitation they had to endure is evident. Africa remains marked by the crimes of the slave trader. Up to now her potentials are restricted by under population". This quotation is also from Walter Rodney's book 'How Europe under developed Africa on page 95'. What Sekou Touray was referring to, is that the slave traders targeted the well able bodied men and women preferably in their 20s to be taken as slaves.

Hon. Speaker Sir, affirming United Nations Resolution 1514 (XV) which solemnly proclaims the need to promptly and unconditionally put an end to colonialism and slavery in all its forms and manifestations; the

sovereign people of the Republic of
The Gambia hereby resolved that:

1. The Secretary General of the United Nations take all necessary measures, and, ensure that the relevant UN Agencies responsible to end colonialism and slavery in all its forms and manifestations; come up with concrete proposals to assess and document the impact of colonialism as worse crimes against humanity.
2. That the United Nations mechanisms must be able to determine the culprits and victims of colonialism and slavery.
3. That the United Nations examine and assess the prospects of reparation payments from the perpetrators of colonialism, and, slavery during colonialism to the victims of this worst crime of humanity.
4. That an international tribunal be established to document the true and full destruction of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade, Slavery during Colonialism and Colonialism as crimes against humanity, with no Statute of

Limitation.
Speaker,

Finally Hon.

5. I call on all those peoples and nations that are engaged in, and, practicing any form of colonialism and slavery to halt these heinous crimes immediately.

With that Hon. Speaker, I beg to Move.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you very much Hon. Minister, any Seconder. The Member for Serrekunda East and Majority Leader!

Hon. Fabakary T. Jatta (Serrekunda East/Majority Leader): Thank you Hon. Speaker. I rise to second the Motion that, this Honourable Assembly do consider and adopt a resolution on:

(1) A Motion for the Declaration of Colonialism as a crime against humanity with no statute of limitation and;

(2) A Motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

Hon. Speaker, these two Motions are intertwined. We first of all ask ourselves, what the motions demand. Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity, and,

Slavery also as a Crime against Humanity and Genocide. Beginning with colonialism, it is then that we would be able to, define in our own ways what colonialism was and what it entailed.

Colonialism, Hon. Speaker, can be defined as the establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition and expansion of a colony in one territory, by a political power from another territory. It is a set of unequal relationship between the colonial power and the colony, and often between the colonist and the indigenous population. Colonialism can be defined under two types:

1. The settler colonialism, which involves large scale immigration, often motivated by religious, political or economic reasons; and;
2. Exploitation colonialism - which also involves fewer colonists, and focuses on access to resources for export typically, to the metropolis of Europe.

This type of colonialism Hon. Speaker, include trading posts as well as larger colonies, where colonists would constitute much of the political and economic administration, but, would rely on

indigenous resources for labour and material.

The impact of colonialism are immense and pervasive. Its effects which are both immediate and protracted include the spread of diseases, un-equal social relations, exploitation and enslavement etc. It spurred the spread of colonist languages, literature and cultural institutions, while endangering or even obliterating, those of the native people.

Hon. Speaker, as far back as the 15th century, Europe couldn't sail further into the Atlantic Ocean. When Portugal and Spain (two European countries) started to go out to Africa, they had two ambitions - at the time it was meant to look for alternative labour, alternative resources for Europe. Towards the end of colonialism, if you remember the history of Africa in particular, Africa was composed of kingdoms and empires ruled by African peoples, and trade was ascetic, especially in the city state of Timbuktu, Gao etc. But we vividly recall in 1844, when the Western powers met in Berlin, and, called for the partition of Africa into the various countries, we now call The Gambia, Senegal etc.

Hon. Speaker, these boundaries divided families - not only tribes but even families. Interestingly they are

the boundaries we still crave for, up to today. That is why the founding fathers of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), our leaders who fought for Political independence -genuine leaders believed that the only way out for Africa is a unified Africa, with one people and one voice.

Hon. Speaker, there are people who argue that Africa cannot continue to blame colonialism for her problems. Yes, but the impact of colonialism is so pervasive Hon. Speaker, is so entrenched, 3, 4, 500 years under subjugation, the very social fabric of Africa was gone, even our psychological and mental alertness changed. We have completely been indoctrinated the western way.

Colonialism itself represented the most brutal exploitation of human and natural resources of the colonial people. Hon. Speaker, the indigenous people in the colonies were deprived of their most basic human rights, and, any demand for the respect of their rights was met with brutal force, resulting to the destruction of lives and properties.

Hon. Speaker, moving now to the issue of slave trade; following colonialism, and, with the desire for Europe to expand its industries, and also to be able to get the relevant resources it embarked on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. We had the

Trans-Saharan Slave Trade, we had the East African Slave Trade, the Indian Ocean Slave Trade, and we even had the Red Sea Trade. Let's remember that during this period nobody from the Western world talked about democracy and good governance, fundamental rights and liberties, it was only when they were able to oil their machines, and, build their economies, and had industries 'well placed' that they advocated for a type of democracy, for a type of governance that was subjected to lot of criticisms.

Hon. Speaker, slave trade is the most heinous crime perpetrated on Africans by the West, ship owners even considered slaves as cargo to be transported to the Americas quickly and cheaply. And when these slaves were bought, they were kept in warehouses awaiting shipment. They are then sold as labour in coffee, tobacco, cocoa, sugar and cotton plantations in the South and the North Americas, gold and silver mines, rice fields, construction industries; they even go to cut timber for the boats that are used to ferry them as slaves from Africa to the West, and they also served as domestic slaves.

Hon. Speaker, slavery had hardened as a racial caste; slaves and their offsprings were legally the property of their owners; and children born to

slave mothers were themselves slaves. The people were considered merchandise or units of labour, and, were sold at markets with other goods and services, because they (human beings) were seen as merchandise. Key amongst – of course – the slave traders were the Portuguese, the British, the French, Spanish, the Dutch and the Americans.

Hon. Speaker, although the Atlantic slave trade was the largest, it was not the only slave trade from Africa. Elikia M'Bokolo wrote in *Le Monde diplomatique* quote, "... the African continent was bled of its human resources via all possible routes. Across the Sahara through the Red Sea from the Indian Ocean ports across the Atlantic..." He said four million enslaved people exported via the Red Sea, another four million through the Swahili ports of the Indian Ocean, perhaps as many as nine million along the Trans-Saharan Caravan Route, and eleven to twenty million across the Atlantic Ocean.

Hon. Speaker, if you look at the statistics on slavery, from 1750 to 1999 you would undoubtedly be able to see the impact of slavery on Africa. It has de-populated the continent, and has taken away the most able bodied people from the African continent. Those who were to come out to be

our scientists were all taken across the Atlantic.

In 1750 Hon. Speaker, let's look at this statistics quickly, Africa had a population of one hundred and six million, 13.4% of the world population. In 1800, from 106 million it moved to 107 million, reducing by 10.9% the world population - remember it is from 13.4 to 10.9. In 1850, Africa's population went up by only 4 million i.e. 111 million and constituted 8.8% of the world population. In 1900, Africa's population went up to 133 million constituting 8.1% of the population; in 1950, it went to 221 million 8.8%; and in 1999, just 49 years later, Africa's population went up to 767 million, almost 12.8% of the world population.

Correspondingly Hon Speaker, looking at the Americas and Europe - the population of Europe - in 1750 it was 163 million - 20.6% of the world population, in 1800 203 million - 20.8%; in 1850 276 million - 21.9% and in 1900 408 million - 24.7%. You can see their population was moving going up, while Africa was coming down. North America, in 1750, was just about 2 Million - 0.3% of the world population. In 1800, it went up to 7 million; 0.7% of the world population. In 1850 it went to 26 million - 2.1% of the world

population and in 1900 to 82 million - 5.0% of the world population; and in 1950 to 17.172 million - 6.8% of the world population.

Hon. Speaker, these statistics speak for themselves. It is even believed by Eric Williams that the invention of the steam engine by James Watt, was funded by the plantation owners from the Caribbean and from slave labour.

Hon. Speaker, with these available facts, and defining what we mean by genocide; we will not hesitate to adopt these Resolutions. Hon. Speaker, what is genocide and what is crime against humanity? What constitute genocide and what constitute crime against humanity.

Crime against humanity has been defined as anyone of the following acts, when committed as part of widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population with knowledge of the attack.

- Murder
- Extermination
- Enslavement
- Deportation or forceful transfer of population
- Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of International Law

Slavery and colonialism qualifies under all these - Murder, extermination, imprisonment, deprivation of physical liberty, deportation, forceful transfer of population all were done during that period.

Genocide on the other hand is defined as any of the following acts, committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, such as killing members of the group, causing seriously bodily harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part, impulsive measures, intended to prevent birth within the group, and forceful transferring children of the group to another group.

Hon. Speaker, from the above definition, it is clear that slavery, in all its forms, and colonialism in particular - the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, which involved the uprooting of millions of Africans from the African continent to the Americas was indeed a crime against humanity and genocide.

I therefore, without doubt, believe that, we are convinced that, these two most heinous crimes - colonialism on one side and slavery on the other universally are accepted

as crimes against humanity and slavery as genocide. In this circumstance we want to call on all countries, in the 21st century that go to practise slavery to stop it immediately. Slavery is not human, it does not befit the 21st century, and we are proud as a country to champion the cause of the people of Africa.

As the mover of the Motion said, we are proud to have a Pan-Africanist leader, the leader who come rain come storm would speak his mind, but doesn't harbour grievance for anybody. I therefore call on Hon. Members to quickly adopt these two important Resolutions, as presented by the mover. I thank you

Hon. Speaker: It has been moved and seconded that this Hon. Assembly considers and adopt a Resolution on:

(1) A motion for the Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation and

(2) A Motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

The floor is now open, any Hon. Member who wishes to take part in the debate may do so. I have a list here and I want to start with the Hon.

Deputy Speaker, others may show interest.

Hon. Fatou Mbye (Deputy Speaker): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the debate of these very important Motions. My intervention is going to be very short because much has been said by the mover and the seconder of the Motions.

However, Hon. Speaker, may I first of all commend the Hon. Minister of Transport, Works and Infrastructure responsible for National Assembly Matters, for tabling these very important Motions, which are indeed non-controversial and timely? In fact I am sure Hon. Members will agree with me that they are a little overdue.

Hon. Speaker, having said that I rise to support the Motions that, Be it resolved that this august Assembly consider and adopt resolutions on a Motion for the Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation, and, a Motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity; as well as Genocide.

Hon. Speaker, both Motions are inextricably linked and one is a subset of the other. Hon. Speaker,

colonialism values the core legal principles and values, and, it is indeed crime against humanity. I looked up at the so many definitions of crime against humanity, and, I choose a definition as described by the free encyclopaedia, which defines crimes against humanity, as certain act committed as part of a wide spread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population in times of peace or war, either part of a government policy or of a wide practice of atrocities tolerated or condoned by a government or a de-facto authority.

Hon. Speaker, this definition accept the fact that, nations have suffered under their colonial masters after hundreds and hundreds of years. And what were the benefits poverty, disease, hunger and a breakdown of our value systems. Hon. Speaker, as the Hon. Minister and the Hon. Majority Leader who have spoken before me said, The Gambia was no exception small as it is, it was not spared. After over four hundred years of British misrule we were left off worse than before colonization.

Hon. Speaker, colonialism can be described as a terrible crime against humanity; in fact there are reports showing devastating results of how the colonial masters bled their colonies. The instance of India,

China, South Africa to name a few. In the book entitled, "Colonialism Lumpenization Revolution Volume 1" - the author claimed that colonial rule was to blame for various problems that confront ex colonial societies today. He produced facts and statistics to justify his claim that colonial masters were indeed responsible for crimes against the innocent colonial world of humanity. They destroyed indigenous culture, consciously distorted the path of social formation, drained the colonies of merchant and commercial capital, and, forcibly captured all sources of revenue.

Hon. Speaker, as if that was not terribly enough, they played one religion against another, one race against another, one clan against another, one caste against another - we can go on and on.

Hon. Speaker, it is a step forward that the UN Declaration on Colonialism condemns colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, including illegal settlements, despite the fact that some of those who committed crimes against humanity are being prosecuted by International courts, so, I want us to underline the word some. So it's like double standards being played, and if we contextualize the meaning of colonialism and slavery we will

accept that the undesirable practices continue to manifest in so many ways. Massacres, de-humanization, military use of children, torture, rape, genocide and, other inhumane acts.

Hon. Speaker, let us look at what is happening in the International waters, with migrant boats been sunk and migrants being denied settlements in more peaceful and stable nations. If they are lucky enough to get to shore, they are confined in refugee camps like rats or cockroaches. What about Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem? Israel has no sovereign rights over these states, and is guilty of committing crime against humanity, but, Israel is yet to be held accountable for its actions. Hon. Speaker, what then do we understand by the term democracy, human rights and good governance?

Hon. Speaker, a declaration alone is not the solution. It is like giving with one hand and taking with the other. We therefore demand a more genuine approach to the crises with a view to coming up with a lasting solution. We are not satisfied with a declaration alone, something else must be done, and the effort must be concerted especially as Africans. I call upon all African leaders to speak with one voice, and stop dancing to

the tunes and calls of the Western masters.

Hon. Speaker, before I resume my seat, I take the opportunity to congratulate and commend the gracious invitation of His Excellency the President, to the Rohingya people to resettle in The Gambia, recognizing their rights to peace, liberty and a safe place of abode. This is what human rights, democracy and good governance is all about. I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity.

I beg to resume my seat.

Hon. Bubacarr S. Fadera (Kiang Central): May I join my colleagues to thank the mover of the Motion - Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide. Hon. Speaker, slavery or the so called Slave Trade was one of the gravest crimes committed against the people of Africa. This inhumane trade was well planned and well organised, and in fact it was all pre-meditated by evil and greedy European traders to cause maximum sufferings, and long lasting damage to the people of Africa. Our culture, our economy and, above all our able bodied and healthy young men and women, for the economic interest of Europe and North America, were shipped away. In a nutshell Hon. Speaker, these racists, hypocrites

and enemies of humanity used simple methods - by using superior weapons and other criminal tactics - giving alcohol and tobacco to some of our greedy leaders, to subjugate our people, bundle them up and cramp them on board unhealthy cargo ships bound for America.

Hon. Speaker, this journey as one could imagine was brutal, inhuman and potentially catastrophic for the human cargo. People were thrown overboard to die in the high seas either, because the ships were considered to be over loaded or as a punishment for non-cooperation. Upon arrival on the shores of America, the plight of these victims becomes worst, as they are auctioned in the open market for the highest bidder to buy. And after being sold Hon. Speaker, these Africans automatically lose their human rights. They work without pay and are beaten repeatedly, in showing any sign of revolt. Women were raped, and were forcefully given contraceptives to prevent them from bearing children; while some of our strong built men were castrated Hon. Speaker, these alone constitute crime against humanity. Without any hesitation, I call on the perpetrators, to pay at net level the victims or Africans.

With these few remarks Hon. Speaker, I thank you so much for giving me the floor.

Applause!

Hon. Speaker: Thank you very much Hon. Member for Kiang Central; thank you very much for your contribution. I now give the floor to the Member for Niamina East.

Hon. Foday Jallow (Niamina East): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker for giving me the floor. I also rise to add my voice to these two important Motions.

Hon. Speaker, to me these Motions are long overdue. I really do not know what must hold us back not to make such a declaration since we had independence 50 years ago.

Hon. Speaker, I first of all want to start with colonialism; Hon. Speaker, colonialism as I know it is the worst kind of thing that ever happened in this world. As Africans, it uprooted our civilization, our culture, and technology, vulgarised us, played with our social thinking then made us slaves. Hon. Speaker, it is undisputable - the problem we are facing now in Africa, this back way runner is a product of colonialism. Why? Because, if the Whiteman was very fair to us, no African would leave here to go to Europe to look for

greener pastures. They took all our riches, all what the human being would need, to their continent and they left us empty handed. Now, they are saying illegal migration. We can recall when the Europeans were coming from Europe to colonise us, they did not obtain visas to come and rule us. In fact they were not accepted by our ancestors. Why are they now saying illegal migration?

Hon. Speaker, slavery based on the definition can also be equated to genocide, in-fact one of the most serious genocide that hit Africa. The Majority Leader said it here, over six million Africans were transported from Africa to America; half of them died at sea due to hunger and starvation. So, what new genocide are they talking about? Who first committed genocide?

Hon. Speaker, I therefore support these Motions condemning slavery and colonialism as crimes against humanity. Thank you very much.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Hon. Member for Niamina East. Member for Banjul South you have the floor!

Hon. Babucarr S. Nyang (Banjul South): Thank you Hon. Speaker for allowing me to lend support to these very important Motions.

Hon. Speaker, I cannot agree more with both the mover and the seconder

of these two important Motions.

Hon. Speaker, colonialism is a crime and neo-colonialism is also a crime.

Hon. Speaker, the mover of the Motion talked about assimilation.

Hon. Speaker, if you look at Africa today, for us to come together is a problem. Why? Because of the way we have been colonized. The French as the mover rightly said; to them the French culture, French values were priority, was inculcated in them they feel inferior. They feel being a French man is better than being an African.

And Hon. Speaker, that is still haunting Africa today be it at ECOWAS, be it at the AU. They vote and are still supporting French interest in Africa; and we who are trying to unify the continent of Africa, it is a crime. It is one of the remnants of colonialism that is really destroying Africa.

Hon. Speaker, we Africans, we have to remind the big powers across the Atlantic, that in 1823, President Monroe, knowing the evil of colonialism told the Europeans that the Western hemisphere was a no go area for European powers. That was the Monroe doctrine. So Hon. Speaker, if they can protect their interest knowing the evil of colonialism, then Hon. Speaker, it is right for Africans today, to denounce

colonialism and say no, to European imperialism.

Hon. Speaker, right after the Second World War, they talked about decolonization. It was agreed in San Francisco that European powers should give independence to all their colonies. But, Hon. Speaker, they said yes overtly, but covertly Hon. Speaker, they kept conniving, planning and plotting to see that Africa will still be under their control. Any genuine African, who wanted to safeguard the interest of the African people, was overthrown. Where was their democracy? Those were the choice of the people; they forget about their good governance. Hon. Speaker that was also a crime.

Hon. Speaker, the impact of colonialism - it produced a psychology of self-rejection, teach a native English and he despises his parents, according to one English historian. Hon. Speaker, this condition of the natives, sadly imposed by colonialism, was successful because of colonial educated system that was prevailing. And it succeeded in alienating us from our people.

Hon. Speaker, these two Motions are interconnected. Therefore, Hon. Speaker, I would like to quote a speech made by Frederick Douglas a

free slave turned activist, in Buffalo in 1850.

With your permission Hon. Speaker, "... to ensure good behaviour, the slaveholder relies on the whip, to induce proper humility he relies on the whip, to rebuke what he is pleased to term insolence, he relies on the whip, to supply the place of wages as an incentive to toil, he relies on the whip, to bind down the spirit of the slave, to imbrute and destroy his manhood he relies on the whip... The first work of slavery is to mar and deface those characteristics of its victims which distinguish men from things, and persons from properties... It reduces man to a mere machine. It cuts him off from his Maker, it hides from him the laws of God, and leaves him to grope his way from time to eternity in the dark... I well remember when my mistress first announced to my master that she has discovered that I could read. His face coloured at once with surprise and chagrin. He said that 'I was ruined and my value as a slave destroyed; that a slave should know nothing but obey his master; ... that having learnt how to read, I will soon want to know how to write; and that by-and-by I will be running away'. I think my audience will bear witness to the correctness of this philosophy, and to the literal fulfilment of this prophecy..." Hon. Speaker, slavery

is inhumane and is a crime against humanity. Hon. Speaker, these were the words of Frederick Douglas.

Hon. Speaker, I use this speech to also reinforce the truth that slavery is inhuman, and I urge my colleagues without hesitation, to ratify these very important Motions without any time wasted.

To conclude Hon. Speaker, I would also want my colleagues to understand that, if you want to understand the cause of European and American prosperity, study the policies of those who created it, not the advice of their forgetful successors. Our able leader, His Excellency Professor Alhaji Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh, the new Pan Africanist of our era, does not do as the West tells him, but does as the West do.

I thank you very much for giving me the floor.

Hon. Speaker: I thank you very Hon. Member for Banjul South. Colleagues can we manage our time?

Hon. Netty Baldeh (Tumanna): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker. Hon. Speaker I will manage my time I promise, because coming after the Hon. Minister, the Hon. Majority Leader and the Deputy Speaker, one has to manage one's time; one cannot say much.

Really Hon. Speaker, be it resolved that this august Assembly do consider adopting a resolution declaring

- a) Colonialism as a crime against humanity with no statute of limitation; and,
- b) Adopting a declaration on Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide; is not a contentious one.

What is contentious for me, is where it is coming from, and now that it is coming. In that I must salute His Excellency. This is an indication that Africans are willing to take up these issues now. Of course these were issues, these were precludes to colonialism, these were issues that were argued before countries became independent. But, it went down because the colonialists at the time, diluted the issues and made us believed that, *aah*, it is *ok*, after all there are no consequences.

So, there are a breed of African leaders coming up, who are realizing that what we were told in the 1960s is not correct and they are taking it on. So, congratulations Your Excellency, we pray that there are many more of you. A young nation like The Gambia small as it is, it is able to say

this, bring it forward, say it so, what do we do as a National Assembly in support of that? I think the Deputy Speaker just said it, it is not enough just to make ... (*breakdown in recording*).

One of the reasons why Africa cannot unite up till today is language; everybody is stocked and bound to his own language. So, language is a problem, colonialism is a problem. Colonialism we are still reeling from the consequences of colonialism economically and culturally. Today, the European Union makes his policies, immigration policies and trade policies they are consequences of economic and colonial influences. You came to Africa, took everything Africa owned like my colleague from Niamina was saying, you took everything from Africa, take it to Europe, all the good things you take and then we want to go after our good things you say, no, you cannot come, sorry Sir. Who told you to take it bring it back. So, we have issues they have to answer for them, they have to pay for them.

They did not only take the young people, the strong people and the intelligent people, they took everything that was worth taking away at the time. That was how Europe industrialized at your expense. They developed at your

expense, they put all the places, all the economic and financial institutions in place at your expense. You did not take part you were just an onlooker when the World Bank was formed, nobody asked Africa. IMF, nobody asked Africa, but, it is our money so let's get it back.

Hon. Speaker, a declaration alone will not be enough, and I will encourage my colleagues in other Parliaments to bring these resolutions to those Parliaments, discuss them there as well.

Like I said I owe it to His Excellency to thank him, because I never expected that in my life time I will be able to stand up to these people. I am praying for him for a long life and wishing him happy birthday (belated as it is). That was a good Jola day but food was not enough. Thank you very much.

Hon. Abdoulie Saine (Banjul Central): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker, for allowing me to take part in this very important debate. Hon. Speaker, I rise to support from the bottom of my heart the Motions - Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation, and Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

Hon. Speaker, as a God fearing nation that has been blessed with a true and a God fearing son of Africa, who happens to be our leader, we thank him for coming up with these two very important Motions. It could have been a Private Member Bill coming from us the Hon. Members.

Having said that Hon. Speaker, colonialism is as dirty as assassination. Europe was so poor that they had no option but to explore Africa for survival. In their quest for better life they had no option but to resort to piracy. Hon. Speaker, in Africa they saw glory, human resource and new life. Despite the resistance of Africans, Europe averted to aggression. Hon. Speaker, Gambia as small as it is, was not spared. The testimony is there for all to see, the Fort Bullen, the James Island, we have heard about Kunta Kinteh from where? From here our beloved country.

So, Hon. Speaker, they used force over Africans capturing and subjecting them to be sold as slaves. We have been affected and directly infected. Up till today where I am standing, speaking Hon. Speaker, we have been infected by what? Corruption from them, coming here bringing alcohol, intoxicating our leaders, took the cream of Africa, the youthful, the powerful, the brains and

everything, took them abroad for their own benefit. That is why they are hundred years ahead of us now. When will we catch up with them; and what in turn did we have? Not even a thank you. We have not been compensated; instead they are still within Africa, doing what? Dividing us.

Hon. Speaker, when they came here we were well organized, we were educated, we were civilized, we had our kings, we had our roles, our traditions, norms and values - they stole everything. Even some of these words *mamajombo, kalero* we inherited from the Portuguese language. They took everything. However, one thing they could not take away with which we are moving today, is Allah's blessings - we are/were blessed.

Hon. Speaker, these are non-controversial Motions; and definitely everything has been said by the mover, the seconder, the Deputy Speaker and other speakers before me. I do not want to repeat, but I will urge all my colleagues, let's speedily adopt it. With these few remarks, I beg to move.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Member for Banjul Central, colleagues, I want to recognise the presence of a few of our colleagues in solidarity who came just after we started. Among

them is the Hon. Secretary General and Minister responsible for Presidential Affairs, as well as the Permanent Secretary for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, the Solicitor General and the representative of the Directorate of the National Treasury. You are most welcome and we are happy that you are here.

The Hon. Secretary General might not be staying throughout, as a member of the Executive and since it is an open debate, if he wants to be given the floor for a few minutes that can be granted.

Hon. Lamin Nyabally (Secretary General): Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Members here present. It is a pleasure to be with you this morning to witness a very important debate on very motions - Motions to Declare Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity and Declaring Slavery as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

Hon. Speaker, I would want to associate myself with the positions of all those who spoke this morning. I strongly believe that the Europeans as well as the Asians forcibly colonized our dear continent. They dehumanized us, they destroyed our social fabric, they destroyed our culture, they looted our economy,

and they imposed their will to the extent that, in our agriculture, they forced us to cultivate crops that will suit their economies. They forced us, they used force labour; we built Europe or significantly contributed to the building of Europe.

They also ensured that during the Berlin Conference, when there was scramble for Africa, they sat and divided the continent in ways and manner that suited them. They quarrelled even when they were demarcating Africa and these are all known facts. Going by the definitions given in this august Body, we realize that colonialism actually is a crime against humanity. When it comes to slavery, it is a heinous crime very heinous because you dehumanize the human being... They still call black people slaves - even today. So, it had a very terrible consequence on the black race - our dignity - we as a people.

I think research has indicated that some five million Africans died as a result of slave trade and slavery that qualifies genocide. Some 27million slaves were also shipped to the so called new world. When there was a holocaust, there was a lot of support to recognise holocaust. The repatriation for Israel being talked about - why should there be double standards? Why would those who are

responsible not recognize and compensate Africa for the loss of not only human lives, but, our dignity? Like has been said, let us pray that we have many more leaders like His Excellency the President of the Republic, Sheikh Prof. Alhaji Dr. Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh. He has foresight, he would never forget, he is fighting for the dignity of the black man wherever he may be.

It is my humble opinion and hope that, this particular initiative - the idea, which is very genuine would be embraced by fellow Africans and they shall join The Gambia in fighting for what should be considered as a legitimate right to compensation.

With those few remarks, Hon. Speaker, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity; I want to thank sincerely - I have heard some very encouraging words in this respectful Assembly. Thank you very much.

Hon. Speaker: Hon. Secretary General I want to thank you profoundly for taking time to be with us here, and sharing a parallel view with the National Assembly regarding the welfare of Africans from time immemorial to date.

Thank you very much.

May I now give the floor to the Member for Jeshwang?

Hon. Haddy Nyang Jagne (Jeshwang): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker, for giving me the floor. Hon. Speaker, I rise in support of the motions for the Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation and a motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

Hon. Speaker, I want to commend the Minister for the lucid presentation, the Secretary General and other members who spoke before me - the Hon. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Majority Leader among others.

Hon. Speaker, we thank Allah (Subhana Wa ta Ala) for the kind of leader he has given us - His Excellency, Sheikh Prof. Alh. Dr. Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh. For Hon. Speaker, up to now I think colonialism reigns in this world; for there are many people, many leaders that still cannot speak with one voice. They are cowered into silence on such topics which should not be. Hon. Speaker, colonialism and slavery during colonialism are the most heinous crimes perpetrated against the human race.

Colonialism and slavery during colonialism, negatively impact on human rights such as the right to life, the right to participation, whereby one cannot even be part of everyday decisions that affect one's life. The right to health whereby you are forced to live in deplorable conditions. The right to dignity whereby our self-esteem reduced to nothing. We were seen not as human beings but as things, reduced to a level such that, they treated us more like animals than human beings. Hon. Speaker, the right to education whereby we have been reduced to such a level that, we were not educated, we were not given quality education, we were segregated, and now divided amongst ourselves making some believe that they are more superior than the rest, dividing us so as to rule us.

Hon. Speaker, the right to integrity - our territorial integrity was attacked, the very fabric of our social development was attacked. Hon. Speaker, these were actions that interfered with fundamental freedoms, entitlements and human dignity, these Hon. Speaker, really is what colonialism and slavery have done to the African people.

Hon. Speaker, racism and racial discrimination, and the related intolerance of man against his fellow

man, constitute the negation of the goals and principles of the United Nation's Charter. Hon. Speaker, the Vienna Declaration and Programs of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in June, 1993, also called for the rapid and total elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination. Hon. Speaker, all these and the Declaration on Human Rights Article 13, also attests to the equality of man.

So, Hon. Speaker, Africa should speak with one voice, like our leader we should seek redress. If the holocaust has been recognized why should slavery not be recognized and compensated for? Why should Africans not come together and seek redress? Because Hon. Speaker, we are still divided. Whenever we are in meetings we think more of our linguistic differences - those coming from Francophone countries will have their meetings before coming. Those from Anglophone, those from Portuguese speaking, so we are still divided which makes integration a far-fetched thing. Hon. Speaker, I think it is high time as Africans we stand up and do away with neo-colonialism, and also speak vehemently against colonialism.

Hon. Speaker, with these few remarks, I beg to resume my seat. Thank you very much.

Hon. Capt. Lamin Saine

(Nominated): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker, I stand to support the Motions for the declaration that these two terrible phenomena be considered as crimes against humanity, especially slavery during colonialism as genocide. It is very good that, God the Almighty always endow this world with visionary leaders, and The Gambia is very lucky to have one. I really commend him (the President) for coming out at this moment to really unmask these hypocrites who really conspired; I mean the European political regimes that conspired to really dehumanize Africans.

Hon. Speaker, these hypocrites that call themselves champions of human rights, who attempted to really deny us at the epoch of our humanness; which is inherent to all of us for being human. They adopted two attitudes - animalistic dehumanization and the mechanical one. When it came to dealing individually between Europeans, the other one with the Africans, the African was intellectually inferior. For the whole continent of Africa we were not human beings; there was that aggression to attack and disintegrate.

This Conference which was referred to, when they sat down for the partition of Africa in 1880, why did

they do that? Because Africans (then) were not people they were objects - objectization of an individual; a whole nation. They targeted our very culture, our economy and deprived us of all powers that existed before. We had structures what has become of those structures? If they really disintegrated Africa, divided us into colonies, linguistic groups and all these things, where do we stand? We do not stand as a people. And the treatment of slaves. First you take them out of their continent, exposed them to such climates, you throw some overboard as has been mentioned by the National Assembly Member for Kiang. Many other atrocities that were committed, and yet, they turn around and talk about the Rwandan genocide, the Armenians at the hands of Turkey, Saddam Hussein against some courts. What did they do? Something worse than that. Even Guantanamo Bay and all these, if you look at the treatment that is being meted out to these terror suspects.

So, I really commend His Excellency the President, the Hon. Minister and all those who really stand to support these Motions. And as the Hon. Deputy Speaker said, we should not stop at making a declaration we should go further. Hon. Netty Baldeh said it will be taken to the other

Parliament, I say it should be taken to the African Union (AU) level to make it a condition. Because for Turkey, for their entry into the European Union, it was a condition for them to recognize the genocide that they purported was committed against the Armenians.

So, let it be a condition for any dealings - economic and other things between Africa and the Europeans, who are still after our resources, let it be a condition for them to recognize that, these two phenomena constitute genocide and crimes against humanity and then remedies must be made. If anybody has read the holocaust covenant, this was recognized to the Jews. After the Second World War they said the Germans really deprived the Jews of a lot of things - wealth here and there and there was inheritance that was supposed to be returned to Israel and it was being done. These same Germans, sorry to come to that point, during the Second World War close to its end, there was a fort that was handled by their elite forces. So what you call ... the Africans that were forcefully taken as soldiers, were the ones who attacked and destroyed those people. Before them other European tried and failed. So the commander in charge of that unit, when he knew that it was the Africans almost dislodging them he

asked them - to commit suicide; because for them Africans could not have the honour of dislodging them as good German soldiers.

During the liberation of France, when the allied troops landed in German through interaction there were 400 natives mixed breed children black Africans, who were born and they were termed as black bastards and they were all massacred at the end of the war, because for them Africans were/are not fit to make children with German women.

Look at this attitude so the very genesis of genocide and aggression is the attitude, and it is still here. So, something must be done and they must pay for it by way of compensation. It must be a condition for dealing with them at all levels. Hon. Speaker, with these few remarks I thank you very much.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Hon. Alh. Lamin Saine. Can I now give the floor to the Member for upper Nuimi?

Hon. Cherno Omar Jallow (Upper Nuimi): Thank you Hon. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to take part in this very important debate. I think much has been said, people did define here what human right is, what colonialism is, what slavery is and what genocide is. No need to go back

to those. I believe there is no single country in Africa that did not feel the negative impact of colonialism and slavery. It is just that the feeling may be different, but, every African country felt the pinch of colonialism and slavery. What are we supposed to do now?

Hon. Netty Baldeh and the Hon. Deputy Speaker did elaborate on issues here, but Hon. Speaker, one man cannot fight a dozen all by himself. This is what we should see and as Africans, we are still being manipulated; because if we are given the chance to seat and realize what has happened and come together, we will make an impact to fight against this. This is why they are not allowing us that time instead we are always in problems. African countries are always in problems, an African fighting another African, an African negating Africa these are their manipulations. Because, they do not want us to reflect back and come together and fight this cause. And unless and until we are able to emancipate ourselves from that mental illness, it is going to be very difficult to fight the cause.

However, thanks be to Allah for giving us a leader, who said come rain come shine, he will lead the way. Therefore, what is needed is the support. How are we going to get the

support? The Hon. Member for Tumanna has opened the door let us start with ourselves. Sometimes what happen is, these people use our own very people to negate, to subjugate you or even try to eliminate you. They use your very own people - this is the consciousness that Africans should come up with and understand. When we are in peace and stability, they would not be in peace and stability. Why? Because they know we are wealthier than them, so they would not allow us to be in peace. Because, when we are they are in trouble. So, it is high time as Africans we come together and give support to people like His Excellency the President.

Where is Gamal Abdul Nasser? When he stood firmly, they eliminated him, where is Ahmed Shekou Touray? He is gone. Where is Amilcar Cabral? They eliminated him. Where is Thomas Sankara? All these things should awaken Africans. How are we going to be awakened is what the Hon. Member for Tumanna said. Let us spread the gospel. Let us talk to each other, let us try and convince each other that Allah created us for a purpose. We should worship Allah alone, and in slavery we know you worship your master. What he says, is what you do. And if we do not worship Allah '*Wallahi*' we would worship something else.

And if we worship something else besides Allah, we shall perish.

Let us remember '*Kulunafsin Bimakasabat Rahinatu*' meaning whatever one does that is what you are going to be paid for. Let us realize that we are also leaders and as a leader there is something that is expected between us and the people we lead. This is why sometimes I tell people let us take cue from His Excellency. He knows that a day would come when he would be asked, how were you leading your people? Were you telling them the truth? As Africans, Hon. Speaker, I would want us to come together. As the Member for Tumanna said, let us start from our own very Assembly and then we move forward.

With these few remarks, I thank you for giving me the opportunity Hon. Speaker.

Hon. Babou Gaye Sonko (Nominated): Thank you very much Hon. Speaker for giving me the opportunity to take part in this very important debate before this National Assembly.

Hon. Speaker, these two Motions I believe as an African, in the history of the Assembly are some of the important motions. Hon. Speaker, to declare slavery as a crime against humanity, colonization as a crime

against humanity and genocide to me are a bit overdue. We all know if you go through history, slavery started far back in 1441, when a Portuguese explorer called Anthoneo Gonzales kidnapped 10 West Africans, and sent them to Lisbon to be sold as slaves. From 1441 Hon. Speaker, to 1833 when it was declared abolished, the British never adhered to it until 1895. This period was a very difficult period for a selfless and helpless Africa.

Hon. Speaker, it is on record that over 11.23 million West Africans were transported to America as slaves. This is why if you go to Brazil, which has a population of over 200 million, history has it that the biggest African community are residing in Brazil, the Caribbean and in the US. Hon. Speaker, in the 17th century when the slave trade was in high gear, history recorded that in The Gambia, every year some 5 thousand to 6 thousand Gambians were transported to the West and by extension to the Americas that is the period called the Triangular Slave Trade or the Atlantic Slave Trade.

Looking at the number of years in a century, if 5 to 6 thousand people are transported from our small Gambia, to be sold as slaves in Europe or America that is one of the worst crimes against humanity. Hon.

Speaker, our then colonial masters the British, got involved in slave trade in 1562. From that time to the abolition they took centre stage – they looted all our resources and left our beloved Gambia to be one of the poorest in term of resources. They used Gambia to build their states; and in return, instead of coming back to The Gambia to remedy the damages; they will stand there and say human rights and democracy. Let us remember a crime is never old.

Hon. Speaker, colonialism and slavery are the most severe crimes against humanity, and the two biggest sins committed by white people on the progress and way of life of African people. If you are looking for sin in the world, the worst sin committed by the white people against Africa is slavery. Hon. Speaker, in support of the two Motions, permit me to note how disastrous and unforgiving these two serious crimes are. Africa is known to be the cradle of civilization. It had well developed structures and institution for centuries. All of these were destroyed by the coming of the white man. In fact, our problems, conflicts and crisis are as a result of us adopting and working with systems that have no culture and traditional connection to us as Africans, in short, it is caused by colonialism.

Our social structures and processes were all destroyed leaving us to be dependent ideologically and economically. In addition, our process of state formation was distorted by colonialism Hon. Speaker. Slavery and colonialism forcefully depilated the human resource base of our continent as our best and brightest were shipped to other parts of the world mainly Europe and America. Hon. Speaker, we should not stop at declaring it as crimes against humanity we should go beyond that. Let the entire Africa cry foul to the West and to the Americans so that those responsible for this evil act can be brought to book, because a crime is never old.

Remember the African continent was one of the best continent in term of human resources, natural resources but they took the cream of our continent to build the West and America and we will never pardon them. We want the UN, AU to come to the aid of Africans and make sure those responsible are brought to book.

Hon. Speaker, it is high time for African leaders to emulate the true son of Africa, to emulate the real Pan Africanist, His Excellency Sheikh Professor Alhaji Dr. Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh.

One has to have self-confidence. To be a puppet to the West will deter the development of Africa but to have self-belief, self-confidence and be a true African, is the only best way forward for the African continent.

On that note Hon. Speaker, I beg to resume my seat.

Hon. Speaker: Thank you Nominated Member Hon. Babou Gaye Sonko. I thank all Hon. Members for the valuable contributions.

I now want to call upon the Hon. Minister and the mover of the motion to wind up the debate.

Hon. Balla Garba Jahumpa (Minister): Thank you Sir. Hon. Speaker, from the various contributions on both Motions, I undoubtedly feel that, we are already ... member for Serrekunda East and Majority Leader, we wish to thank him Hon. Speaker, firstly for seconding both Motions. The Hon. Majority Leader, Hon. Speaker, further highlighted that both motions are indeed inter-related. Because Hon. Speaker, colonialism gave rise to the Atlantic Slave Trade, while the Atlantic Slave Trade and its attendant greed for resources and territory reinforced colonialism, giving rise to the attendant slavery and bondage of

the inhabitants of colonies during colonialism.

Similarly, therefore Hon. Speaker, slavery during colonialism was wide spread and well documented. And this one can refer Hon. Speaker, to the latest case that was brought against the British government by former members of the Mau Mau Movement in Kenya that fought tooth and nail against British colonialism in that country.

The Hon. Majority Leader, Hon. Speaker, further defined colonialism as the establishment of exploitation by colonial powers against the indigenous population. He also highlighted that colonialism – you have various types - large scale immigration, exploitative colonialism which gave them access to our resources on an exploitative basis.

The Hon. Majority Leader, also referred to Portuguese and Spanish colonialism. And in this case Hon. Speaker, I would want this august Body, and, indeed the Gambian people to also note that in the early 16th century, when the Portuguese conquered North Africa they were able to secure horses, woollen goods and beads which they further shipped to West Africa. One of the most important article they had was the horse. And right here in the

Senegambia River, Hon. Speaker; the Portuguese were trading one horse for fifteen captives; as if one horse was more important than fifteen Senegambian lives. This — Hon. Speaker, you can find in the book 'How Europe Under-developed Africa by Walter Rodney' on page 110.

Hon. Speaker, the Majority Leader further made reference to the Berlin Conference as highlighted also by Hon. Saine, where the European powers sat down, Africans were not there and divided the African continent as if they were cutting a piece of cake. The Hon. Majority Leader, also referred to the forefathers of African unity and this is very important. We had liberation fighters, we had on the African continent leaders that fought tooth and nail against colonialism, contrary to what bourgeois Western historians would tell us. There was resistance against colonialism, there was resistance against slavery and hence, one would remember Kwame Nkrumahs of Ghana, when he said, '... The independence of Ghana would be meaningless unless' Hon. Speaker, 'it is totally linked to the independence of the African continent'.

We can also remember Hon. Speaker, people like Patrice Lumumba who

also fought against what they used to call Belgium Congo, because the Congo then belonged to the King of Belgium. We also know of people like Amilcar Cabral PAIGC for the independence and liberation, not only of Cape Verde, but also of Guinea Bissau.

Furthermore, Hon. Speaker, we also know of people like Steven Biko of South Africa, black consciousness — black consciousness Hon. Speaker, not in the racist sense, but, in the sense of us as Africans believing in ourselves and emancipating ourselves from mental slavery.

Hon. Speaker, furthermore, the Majority Leader equally condemned slavery and colonialism in all its forms. As he rightly said, 'where were the champions of the so called human rights, when this brutality and exploitation was going on against my people, against your people against our people? Where were the human rights defenders when our people were being hanged Hon. Speaker, in Atlanta Georgia? Where were the so called human rights defenders Hon. Speaker, when our people were being hanged in Alabama and Mississippi?

Hon. Speaker, the Hon. Majority Leader rightly also referred to the Africans that were taken to South America to work on the cocoa plantations, the sugar plantations in

Brazil, the sugar plantations in Cuba, the gold mines in Venezuela, Brazil and Columbia. Slavery as the Hon. Majority Leader pointed out considered Africans as commodities to be bought and sold. Therefore Hon. Speaker, as vanguards of the July 22nd Revolution we condemn not only British colonialism, we equally condemn French colonialism, Dutch colonialism, Spanish colonialism, American colonialism and any form of colonialism and exploitation.

Applause!

And when we condemn the systems Hon. Speaker, we also want to make it very clear that we are not condemning the people, but we are condemning a system that brutalized and exploited our people. As the Majority Leader also highlighted, able bodied men and women, young Africans who could have been our engineers, doctors, and teachers were all taken away from the African continent. Hence it was a genocide which involved torture, exploitation, suffering and kidnapping. Hon. Speaker, the Majority Leader also called on all countries to immediately stop any form of slavery.

We also heard from the Deputy Speaker, who supported both motions on colonialism and slavery as timely and overdue motions. Overdue Hon Speaker, kindly allow

me to refer to our Holy Book of scripture, the Glorious Quran which teaches us in Surat Tawba chapter 9 verse 51, 'that nothing happens to us except as ordained by Allah to us.' Therefore Hon. Speaker, it is now that Allah has ordained that these motions are brought before this honourable Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Speaker, also defined colonialism and slavery as crimes against humanity. She also referred to poverty, disease and the breakdown of our families. And also said colonialism was a terrible crime against humanity because it involved torture, it involved rape and genocide. She also referred to, and very importantly the treatment that the so called migrants are receiving in European shores; and also the hypocrisy - that if you watch how Israel, the Zionist regime is brutalizing the Palestinians people whilst the world including the Islamic Ummah is silent or being hypocritical about the whole situation.

Hon. Speaker, she also thanked His Excellency the President for inviting the Rohingya Muslims that are out there in the sea. Hon. Speaker, some 3000 of them and no one is willing to go and rescue them, simply because they are Muslims. Hon. Speaker, we join the Deputy Speaker, in also

congratulating His Excellency for taking that humanitarian move.

Hon. Speaker, we also heard from the Member for Kiang Central who also supported both motions on colonialism and slavery and against Africans, which he said indeed, was planned by European traders for the economic interest of North America and Europe. That they took away young Africans. He said and I think he is right, that it was through warfare and deception that our people were taken away from the African continent. And even worse, he said, upon arrival to their destinations. And this Hon. Speaker, I would highlight, the treatment they received upon arrival was so bad, that at one point Marcus Garvey of Jamaica bought a ship called the Black Star Liner to repatriate Africans back to the African continent because of their sufferings in the so called destination.

We also heard Hon. Speaker, from the Member for Niamina East. He said the motions were well over due. That colonialism is the worst system that has ever happened in this world and he accordingly condemned the practice. He also referred to how we in Africa welcomed the Europeans, and now in reverse, he referred to what the Europeans are doing to our people as migrants.

The Hon. Member for Banjul South also supported both motions on slavery and colonialism, and indeed he referred to colonialism and neo-colonialism. Meaning that colonialism did not end from there because, Hon. Speaker, some of them thought that the defeat of colonialism ended once you gained independence or you fly a National flag. No, that is not independence the economic independence should also be tied to political independence. The Hon. Member for Banjul South also referred to assimilation of the French policy of colonialism '*Assimilation*' were you would want to be more French than the French. Even when I speak to you in Wolof you start saying '*alor dank!*'

Hon. Speaker Sir, the Hon. Nominated Member Babou Gaye Sonko referred to a very important point, that as Africans let us start believing in ourselves, let us start believing in our abilities, let us start having confidence in our own educational institutions, and let us start having confidence in our engineers and our scientists.

Again Hon. Speaker, colonialism was not only about economic exploitation, but also the destruction of the African mind, and hence there is need as I said to decolonize the African mind with a view of

emancipating ourselves from mental slavery as Bob Marley would have it.

Hon. Speaker, the Member for Tumanna also supported both motions and called for the National Assembly not only to declare, but to push further both Motions to the Pan African Parliament, the ECOWAS Parliament and other parliaments, not only for further debate, but, for concrete actions. He also referred to the colonial division amongst us as Africans and how Africa indeed developed Europe.

The Hon. Member for Banjul Central also like the others supported both Motions. And indeed he thanked His Excellency the President for bringing such an issue before this Hon. Assembly. He equally condemned colonialism and the exploitation of the African continent.

The Hon. Member for Banjul Central also referred to the resistance against colonialism and slavery, because Western bourgeois - historians would want us to believe that we took this brutality in peace or lying down. Indeed there were revolts within the continent against slavery, there were revolts outside of the continent Hon. Speaker, and that is how in fact Haiti came into being. It was the first Black country outside of the African continent to resist against slavery.

We also thank the Hon. Secretary General, and the Minister responsible for Presidential Affairs, not only for his presence, but also for the valuable contributions, and associated himself with all those who condemned this form of brutality against our people.

The Hon. Member for Jeshwang also equally supported both Motions. She referred to the visionary and dynamic leadership of His Excellency, the President of this great nation called the Republic of The Gambia. She referred very importantly to issues like the right to education, the right to health also as human rights. She spoke about racism, and I also want to add Hon. Speaker that racism was not born out of slavery, racism was a consequence of slavery. She also called Hon. Speaker, for African unity.

The Nominated Member Hon. Lamin Saine, was also very grateful to Allah for blessing us with the kind of leadership in this country, in the person of His Excellency, President Yahya Abdul Aziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh. The Hon. Member also referred to, (and I indeed support him) the hypocrisy of the so called human right defenders. Where were they when all these brutalities were going on? He also referred to the Berlin Conference of 1884, were Africans were not present when the

Europeans were dividing the continent. He referred to the treatment of the slaves before, in between and even when they arrived, and indeed — called for — the compensation of the African.

The Hon. Member for Upper Nuimi equally also defined colonialism, defined slavery and genocide, and stated that Africans should not allow themselves to be manipulated. He called on Africans not to fight Africans. We have seen the unfortunate incident Hon. Speaker that was going on in South Africa, where South African blacks were beating up, dehumanizing fellow Africans from Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Nigeria - countries that contributed towards the fight against apartheid. This I think Hon. Speaker, is a bad reflection not only on the African National Congress (ANC) but also, on the African continent.

Hon. Speaker, the issue of black consciousness, referring to Steven Biko - in believing in ourselves as black people and as Africans was also highlighted. Hon. Speaker, we are not black because we are cursed, we are black Hon. Speaker, because we were the first light out of darkness. We are not black Hon. Speaker, because we are cursed, we are black because Hon. Speaker, archaeological and DNA evidence

have proven that Homo sapiens or humanity came from the African continent.

Hon. Speaker, — the — Nominated Member and youth mobilizer Hon. Babou Gaye Sonko, said these are among some of the most important motions that have ever being brought before this Assembly, and indeed he is very correct. He said the motions were well over due and referred to Africans in Brazil, the Caribbean and in America. I agree Hon. Speaker, if you go to Brazil or you go to Cuba there is a place called Santiago de Cuba you would think you are somewhere in Bundung, Serrekunda. 99% of those people are darker than me and you. Hon. Speaker, we also had the opportunity to travel with His Excellency the President on a State Visit to Venezuela, if you go to a place called Barlow Vento that is where the cocoa plantations were, you will also see Africans as if they were even from Nigeria because when they beat their drums you know they have brought this from the African continent.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Babou Gaye indeed referred to the ongoing reactionary Gambians in the diaspora that are criticizing our nation, and he also finally referred to both motions as a destruction of the African continent by the white man.

Hon. Speaker, I wish to also thank you, the Hon. Clerk and the whole National Assembly for the valuable contributions; and by extension Hon. Speaker, as vanguards of the July 22nd Revolution, kindly allow me to extend our appreciation and admiration to His Excellency the President, for being so brave as a young African leader to bring such motions not only in this august Body, but calling for it to be referred to the highest international body in this universe and that is the United Nations.

And if you will kindly allow me Hon. Speaker, I also wish to quote from the Bible because as Muslims we also believe in the Book, as Muslims we also believe in Jesus Christ – Essa. As Muslims Hon. Speaker, we also believe in the resurrection, and hence Hon. Speaker, the Bible teaches us that God gave Moses to the Jews to deliver them from the bondage of Pharaoh. God also gave Daniel to the children of Babylon for them to repent and believe in the oneness of God.

We also Hon. Speaker, as vanguards of the July 22nd Revolution, also believe that for the advancement of this nation, for the progress of this nation, for the development of this nation, Allah also gave to the Gambian people and to the Gambian

nation His Excellency Sheikh Prof. Dr. Alh. Yahya Abdul Aziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh, Jilanka.

I beg to move Hon. Speaker.

Applause!

Hon. Speaker: Thank you very much Hon. Minister. Be it resolved that this Hon. Assembly adopts a resolution on:

1. A Motion for the Declaration of Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity with no Statute of Limitation.
2. A Motion for the Declaration of Slavery during Colonialism as a Crime against Humanity as well as Genocide.

Those in favour please say, “*Aye*”, those not in favour says “*No*”! The “*Ayes*” have it.

Felicitations

Hon. Members, before I adjourn this House sine die, on behalf of both sides of the House, may I thank you all for the interventions you have made this morning, for your sense of national duty and attendance despite the short notice given.

May I also on your behalf thank the Hon. Minister for Transport, Construction, Infrastructure and National Assembly Matters, for

tabling these very important Motions
before this august Assembly?

Hon. Minister or Action Man, may I
on behalf of both sides of the
National Assembly thank you
profoundly for ably representing the
Hon. Attorney General and Minister
of Justice. Thank you very much.

Adjournment

*This House stands Adjourned Sine
Die.*