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PUBLIC STATEMENT

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EFSCRJ Writes to State House on the Non-Implementation of National Assembly Resolutions on the Gambia Tourism Board (GTBoard) Staff Petition

Today, June 27 we have submitted to the Office of the President our position paper on the non-implementation of the resolutions by the National Assembly on its inquiry into the GTBoard staff petition. The petition was submitted by five senior staff members of GTBoard to the Public Petitions Committee of the National Assembly in July 2020 which was accepted. The concerned staff raised serious allegations of corruption, mismanagement, and abuse of office at the GTBoard.

Following a public inquiry involving open sittings, the Public Petitions Committee finally concluded and presented its report to the National Assembly in September 2024 which was adopted. The Committee uncovered issues related to:

- Eco-lodges contracts awarded to Lerr Group.
- Staff employment matters relating to unjust terminations, and unfair salary cuts.
- Land allocation in Tourism Development Areas (TDA) involving irregularities and unjustified waivers.
- Governance challenges and interference by the Minister of Tourism.
- GTBoard's head office construction involving contract mismanagement.

In its report, the Public Petitions Committee gave a set of clear recommendations directed at various institutions including the National Assembly, the Inspector General of Police, the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, GTBoard, and the Auditor General to fulfil. The resolutions provided specific timelines for implementation between December 2024 and February 2025.

It is nine months today since the adoption of the resolutions yet there is no evidence of implementation or enforcement. Neither the Public Petitions Committee nor any of the institutions have provided any update to Gambians indicating the status of implementation.

In light of the foregoing and in the interest of transparency and accountability, EFSCRJ has developed position paper and submitted to the Office of the President and the concerned institutions. We are demanding these institutions to fulfil their obligations in upholding the law to ensure there is accountability for the gross acts of corruption unearthed by the parliamentary inquiry.

The failure to enforce these recommendations tantamount to encouraging the disregard of the law, abuse of office and corruption with impunity which pose a clear and present danger to national development, peace, and stability. We therefore urge the President to ensure that concerned institutions fulfil their obligations as per the Report of the Public Petitions Committee.

2025 – The Year of Transparency and Accountability