



EFSCRJ Calls for Independent Investigation into Allegations of Torture, Abuse of Power and Inhumane Prison Conditions

The Edward Francis Small Centre for Rights and Justice is deeply concerned by the disturbing accounts of alleged torture, manipulation and abuse of power revealed by Ousainou Bojang and his sister, Amie Bojang, during their prime-time interview with Fatou Touray of Kerr Fatou Media on Thursday, June 25.

In his account, Ousainou narrated how he became entangled in a web of manipulation and false allegations by Mama Jabbie, who later emerged as a key prosecution witness in his trial. It is public knowledge that Mama Jabbie was paid one million dalasi by President Adama Barrow as compensation after identifying the alleged shooter of the PIU officers.

However, the evidence presented during the trial, corroborated by other publicly available accounts and now Ousainou's own testimony regarding his interactions with Mama Jabbie, strongly indicates that her allegations against him were false. Yet her testimony played a central role in Ousainou's arrest, prolonged detention, and prosecution before he was ultimately acquitted by Justice Jaiteh.

Despite this outcome, Mama Jabbie continues to enjoy the one-million-dalasi payment while facing no accountability whatsoever for the false allegations that contributed to the wrongful arrest, detention, and prosecution of Ousainou Bojang.

EFSCRJ is equally alarmed by Ousainou's allegations that he was subjected to torture and other forms of abuse by police officers during his interrogation and detention. These allegations are extremely grave and cannot be ignored by the authorities. Torture is prohibited under both Gambian law and international human rights law. Any allegation of torture demands an immediate, independent, and impartial investigation.

We therefore call on the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to urgently undertake an independent investigation into these allegations. Ousainou has identified several officers whom he alleges subjected him to physical, mental, and verbal abuse while in custody. These officers, together with the specific allegations made against them, must be thoroughly investigated, and where evidence establishes criminal or disciplinary responsibility, appropriate action must follow.

We are equally disturbed by the prison conditions described by both Ousainou and Amie Bojang. Their accounts point to deplorable detention conditions that raise serious concerns about the treatment of prisoners in the Gambia. These allegations also require urgent investigation, particularly given that the Government has spent billions of dalasi over the past ten years on security sector reform. It is utterly disturbing and wholly unacceptable that prison conditions of this nature should still exist after a decade of reforms.

In 2016, the Barrow-led Coalition promised Gambians a system change. Following his inauguration in 2017, President Barrow launched an ambitious transitional justice program under the banner of "*Never Again.*" That program, which received overwhelming support from Gambians and the international community, sought to deliver comprehensive



constitutional, legal and institutional reforms to guarantee the rule of law, respect for human rights and accountable governance.

It is therefore profoundly disheartening that allegations of torture, abuse of power and inhumane prison conditions should continue to emerge in the Gambia. If these allegations are established through an independent investigation, they would not only represent a gross betrayal of the promises made by this Government, but would also expose persistent abuse of office, disregard for the rule of law and continuing impunity within state institutions.

A failed transitional justice process poses a direct threat to national security because it permits the recurrence of abuse and impunity, thereby undermining public confidence in state institutions, weakening the rule of law, and threatening the peace and stability of the country. EFSCRJ will formally engage the relevant authorities to demand prompt, independent, and transparent investigations into these serious allegations.

Finally, we reiterate our longstanding call for adequate compensation to Ousainou Bojang and Amie Bojang for their wrongful arrest, prolonged detention, and the immense physical, psychological, and emotional suffering they endured for more than two years. Justice requires not only acquittal but also accountability, redress, and institutional reform to ensure that no Gambian ever suffers such injustice again.

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