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**EFSCRJ Mourns the Death of Three GAF Recruits**

The Edward Francis Small Centre for Rights and Justice learns with deep grief of the deaths of three recruits from Intake 40, as announced by the Gambia Armed Forces (GAF) over the past week.

They are Recruit Tamsir Bah from Chamen who died on Friday 11 September 2026, and Recruit Darboe Sarja from Tubakuta and Recruit Koita Lamin from Kerr Nyangado, Jokadu, both of whom died on Saturday 12 September 2026. GAF announced that some recruits remained hospitalized at both Kanifing General Hospital and Ndemban Clinic.

We extend our deepest condolences to the Chief of Defence Staff, Lt. Gen. Ousman Gomez, the officers, men, and women of the Gambia Armed Forces, and, most importantly, the families and loved ones of the deceased.

EFSCRJ honours these fallen recruits whose aspiration was to serve their country through the Gambia Armed Forces and fulfil the sacred duty of defending the territorial integrity and security of The Gambia. It is deeply regrettable that they have been denied this opportunity and noble task.

Serving in the Gambia Armed Forces is among the highest forms of national service, requiring patriotism, courage, discipline, and sacrifice. EFSCRJ therefore honours these young compatriots for their determination to serve their nation and pays tribute to all Gambian soldiers who dedicate themselves to the defence of the Republic.

As we mourn, EFSCRJ has taken note of the GAF announcement of an investigation into the circumstances surrounding these deaths. We urge the Chief of Defence Staff to ensure that the investigation is transparent, impartial, and professionally conducted, with the full facts established.

The findings should be made public, except for information that genuinely and strictly concerns national security. The families and the Gambian public have a legitimate interest in knowing what happened to these young citizens who sought to serve their country.

We are particularly concerned that this appears to be the first reported incident of recruits dying during training exercises. The investigation must therefore not only establish the circumstances of these deaths but also identify any failures, risks, or lessons necessary to prevent recurrence.

EFSCRJ extends its heartfelt condolences once again to the bereaved families and the Gambia Armed Forces.

**May the souls of our departed compatriots rest in perfect peace.**