



Statement by Adama Dieng, United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on recent inflammatory rhetoric by President Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia, targeting the Mandinka ethnic group

(New York, 7 June 2016) The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, condemned the inflammatory speech by President Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia at a political rally in Tallindin on 6 June, in which he reportedly threatened to eliminate the Mandinka ethnic group, allegedly referred to the Mandinka as "enemies, traitors and thugs" and threatened to kill them "one by one" wherever they could be found.

The Special Adviser stated that such public incitement, dehumanisation and threats against the Mandinka, the Special Adviser stated, "are the nature of a national leader who is irresponsible and reckless. They can contribute to dividing populations, fuel suspicion and serve to incite violence against communities, based solely on their identity".

The Special Adviser was particularly appalled by the violent rhetoric as his "has shown that hate speech that incites violence can be a warning sign and a powerful trigger for crises, as we have seen, in Rwanda, Bosnia and more recently in the Middle East. How incitement to violence has led to mass killings along identity lines. The Special Adviser stated, "we reminded President Jammeh that an advocate of national, racial or religious hatred that incites violence or discrimination, hostility or violence is prohibited under international human rights law as well as under national legislation.

States have the primary responsibility to protect their populations. In 2008, all 7 heads of State and Government acknowledged the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, as well as their incitement. The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide said the Special Adviser, "and ensure that the rights of all populations of the Gambia are respected, irrespective of ethnicity or political affiliation."

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