



**Launching of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission
of The Gambia**

Address

By

Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Legal Counsel

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Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today for the launch of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission of The Gambia. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank





We have also been supporting nationally-owned efforts towards ensuring accountability for serious crimes under international law. Allow me to cite two examples.

The first one is the Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic. The Court is steadily moving forward with its own investigations, cooperation with the ICC, judicial training and outreach to constituencies.

This trend towards national ownership of transitional justice processes is very encouraging and is consistent with the principle of complementarity, as established in Article 17 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

In this regard, I wish to commend the Government of The Gambia, and in particular President Barrow, for its decision to remain a State Party to the Statute of the International Criminal Court. The United Nations considers the ICC as the central institution of the international criminal justice system, and fundamental to achieving accountability for serious crimes under international law.

In addition to the development of domestic accountability mechanisms to fight impunity with an international participation, we have also recently noted an increased interest in establishing non-judicial international accountability mechanisms. Particularly in contexts where it is difficult to foresee effective accountability, there is an increasing appetite for, at a minimum, gathering and securing evidence in the interim so that such evidence can be used in national, regional or international courts that may in the future have jurisdiction over these crimes.

In this regard, the General Assembly established, in December 2016, the new International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under international law committed in Syria since March 2011.

More recently, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General, in September 2017, to establish an Investigative Team to support domestic efforts

evidence in Iraq of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against







promote healing and reconciliation among Gambian people. This Commission, through a focus on the testimony of victims of atrocities, will hopefully provide acknowledgment and recognition of suffering to those most affected.

This Commission will also provide an opportunity to begin the process of rebuilding trust among citizens as well as their trust in the institutions which are in place to serve them. I believe that i

