

January 23, 2015

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for the actions your Administration has taken thus far to express the United States' deep concern regarding ongoing human rights violations in The Gambia. The National Security Council's statement on December 4, 2014 rightly called out their government for a wide range of abuses, including torture, extrajudicial executions and recently enacted legislation that imposes harsh penalties for "aggravated homosexuality." We also commend the decision to revoke The Gambia's African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) eligibility as a result of similar human rights concerns.

However, the situation in The Gambia remains dire. We believe more can be done to assist those who have been unjustly detained following passage of the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act. In particular, we respectfully urge the U.S. Department of State to request from Gambian officials more information about the health and safety of individuals who have been detained incommunicado on the basis of their sexual orientation. Some of them may have been released, but an unknown number remain in detention. There are credible reports that at least some of these individuals have been tortured and the lives of those remaining in detention might be in danger. We therefore urge the United States government to obtain information about the Gambian authorities' plans to either prosecute or release them.

Based on reports from civil society leaders in The Gambia, as well as in the diaspora, we also believe that there are other tools at your disposal to hold President Yahya Jammeh and his associates accountable for their deplorable human rights record. President Jammeh has personally made statements that he would like to "kill gays and lesbians like dogs," and that LGBT people are like "vermin" who need to be killed off like malaria-carrying mosquitoes. This past weekend, Jammeh made further alarming statements on national television, claiming that the public crackdown on LGBT people will continue.

We recommend you place a visa ban on key Gambian officials, including President Jammeh, who have promoted discriminatory laws and who are responsible for grave human rights abuses. Additionally, we understand President Jammeh's family has assets in the U.S., including a multi-million dollar home in Potomac, Maryland, and we would therefore urge you to consider freezing those assets.

It is not too late for the United States to send President Jammeh and his regime a clear and unequivocal message: human rights violations will not be tolerated, and the U.S. government will respond with actions, as well as with strong condemnation. It is crucial that the United States

take concrete action whenever countries enact discriminatory laws, and The Gambia should be no exception.

We respectfully urge you to consider these actions and we look forward to collaborating with your administration further to craft an appropriate and timely response to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



THE FELLOWSHIP GLOBAL