

ticular concerning participation in public life and enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights;

- ♦ provide information on the existing legal mechanisms available to lodge complaints in cases of racial discrimination and to emphasize the role of the judicial system in eliminating racial discrimination; provide information on measures undertaken or envisaged for improving public awareness of the Convention; and
- ♦ take all necessary measures to ensure the training and education of law enforcement officials, teachers, social workers and students in the prevention of racial discrimination; include the teaching of human rights in school curricula.

### THEMATIC REPORTS

#### Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

##### Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/6, paras. 48, 50)

The report refers to violations of freedom of religion and belief against Jehovah's Witnesses, but no details are provided.



## GAMBIA

**Date of admission to UN:** 21 September 1965.

### TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

**Land and People:** Gambia has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

#### Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 29 December 1978.

Gambia's initial and second periodic reports were due 30 June 1990 and 1995 respectively.

#### Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 22 March 1979.

Gambia's second, third and fourth periodic reports were due 21 June 1985, 1990 and 1995.

*Reservations and Declarations:* Paragraph (3) (d) of article 14; declaration under article 41.

**Optional Protocol:** Acceded: 9 June 1988.

#### Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 29 December 1978.

Gambia's second through tenth periodic reports have not been submitted (covering the period 1982-1998); the tenth periodic report was due 28 January 1998.

#### Discrimination against Women

Signed: 29 July 1980; ratified: 16 April 1993.

Gambia's initial and second periodic reports were due 16 May 1994 and 1998 respectively.

#### Torture

Signed: 23 October 1985.

#### Rights of the Child

Signed: 5 February 1990; ratified: 8 August 1990.

Gambia's initial report was due 6 September 1992; the second periodic report was due 6 September 1997.

### COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

At its 1998 session, the Commission on Human Rights considered the situation in Gambia under the confidential 1503 procedure. The Commission decided to continue consideration under 1503 at its 1999 session.

### THEMATIC REPORTS

#### Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

##### Arbitrary detention, Working Group on: (E/CN.4/1998/44/Add.1, Decision No. 40/1996)

Decision No. 40/1996 was adopted in December 1996 and concerned 35 individuals who were reportedly arrested in October 1995 and held at a disused hangar at Fayara army barracks in Bakau, outside the capital. Information indicated that they had been denied visits by their families and experienced serious difficulties in gaining access to their lawyers. Among the 35 detainees were 25 alleged supporters of the People's Progressive Party (PPP) who were reportedly charged with sedition and released on bail in January 1996, but were rearrested later the same day. They had reportedly been granted bail by the magistrate in accordance with the provision of the decree which allows for bail after 90 days in custody. The source reported that the legal basis for their rearrest was unclear. Although a decree was said to have been issued permitting their rearrest, the source affirmed that the decree was not invoked in court by the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions acting as counsel for the prosecution. This suggested that it had not in fact been issued by that time. Information alleged that a retrospective decree was used to justify illegal acts taken by the authorities.

At least 10 other persons remained in holding without charge, in contravention of the decree providing for a detainee to be brought before a court within 90 days.

The Working Group decided that the detention of all the named persons was arbitrary since it could not be linked to any legal basis.

##### Disappearances, Working Group on enforced or involuntary: (E/CN.4/1998/43, paras. 13, 404)

One case of disappearance was clarified when the source reported that the person concerned had been released