THE MILITARY IN GOVERNANCE IN THE GAMBIA AND THE QUEST FOR A POLITICAL LEGACY (FROM THE 27TH OF OCTOBER 1980 TO 30TH OF JULY 1981, AND 22ND OF JULY 1994 TO 19TH JANUARY 2017)

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ABSTRACT
This research examines Military Coup D'etats and its legacies in The Gambia. The Gambia experienced two military coups under the leaderships of Kukoi Samba Sanyang and Yahya A.J.J Jammeh, which had landmarks achievements in the country's polity and trajectory of development. The first military Coup took place on31 July 1981, while the second military coup was on 22nd July 1994. For the first military coup in 1981 under Kukoi Samba Sanyang, it led to the formation of the Senegambia Confederation and the establishment of the Gambia National Army (GNA). In the same vein, the Yahya Jammeh's military coup of 1994 was a turning point in the sociopolitical and economic development history of The Gambia, as it brought a total transformation of the socio-political and economic system of the country, such as the establishment of key infrastructures ranging from; education, health, agriculture, roads, telecommunications and new government institutions that strengthened the process of governance in the country. On the other hand, Yahya Jammeh's military government has been very controversial sometimes and had left many questions unanswered regarding the military's understanding and approach to some of the key principles of democracy as a governance system such as respect for and application of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the rule of law, separation of powers and judicial independence.Using both primary and mainly secondary sources, the author assessed the two military coups in The Gambia and its lasting legacies and sustainable impacts in the country. It used content analysis to arrive at the findings and conclusion. This research finds out that despite the hue and cry about military coups and governance in The Gambia, there have been breakthrough achievements in the country. The research concludes that, viewing critically the two military coups in The Gambia under the microscope of economics of development and their numerous fallouts in the country, the two coups had left permanent imprints in the sands of time in the political landscape and the sustainable development of the country.

Introduction

The Military involvement in politics and governance either through military coups, sometimes commonly referred to as military government or military regime, is a political phenomenon that has been the characteristic of many African and other Third World countries. While it is regarded as a political aberration across the globe in recent times, its positive impacts have continued to resonate in many societies mostly in Africa, even at this era of global "project democracy" (Edeh & Ugwu Eze, 2004). In fact, and generally, most African countries have been at one time or the other ruled by a combination of both military and democratic regimes. In West Africa for example and with the exception of Senegal every other country in the subregion has experienced some form of military rule. At the continent level, Botswana, Mauritius, Zimbabwe and of course Senegal are said to be the only countries that have been able to sustain the independent democratic regimes that took over power after the end of colonial rule in the last century even though some of them remained one party or quasi- one-party system in nature. (Ibrahim 2003). Here in West Africa, the countries that have experienced more military coups are Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Thus, from 1966 to 1993, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has experienced about eight (8) coups d'etat, (2 coups in January and July, 1966, others were in 1975, 1976- a failed coup that resulted into the death of Murtala Muhammed, 1983, , 1985, 1990, - another failed coup against İbrahim Babangida, and in 1993 that brought General Sain Abacha, the last Nigerian military ruler of the modern time to power.). (Chuks, 2016 and H. Chapin, 1991).

Similarly, from 1966 to 2022 Burkina Faso also like Nigeria has experienced eight (8) coups, (1966, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1987, 2014 and 2 coups in 2022 respectively). (T Clayton and P. Jonathan 2019). Burkina Faso was followed by Ghana and Niger republic, with each of the two countries experiencing six (6) coups between 1966 and 2023 respectively. As for Ghana- formerly the Gold Coast, the coups took place between 1966 and 1981, (1966, 1967, 1972, 1978, 1979 and 1981, when Jerry John Rawlings overthrew Dr. Hilla Liman. (Pinkeny 1972 & Al-Hassan, 2004). Regarding Niger, its coups took place between 1974 and 2023, (1974, 1996, 1999, 2010, 2021, which was a failed attempt, and on the 26 of July, 2023). (Higgott & Fuglestad, 1975 & Decalo, 1990 and BBC News, 26 July, 2023.). The Republic of Mali then followed with a total of five (5) coups, (1968, 1991, 2012, 2020 and 2021 respectively). Guinea Conakry has experienced three (3) (1984, 2008 and 2002), Guinea Bissau had suffered from a series of coups and a long period of political instability. As for the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, it's experienced a series of military takeovers during the past three decades. It is therefore fair to say that inasmuch as there is a preponderance of democratic rule across the continent, there are numerous cases of military dictatorships across Africa. The response of the African people to military interventions are mixed, as there is a preference of the military in some instances while there is a preference for constitutional order and civilian rule in others; depending on how much impact the government of the day has made in the life and welfare of the people.

The undeniable fact is that Military coups and counter coups became a regular occurrence in Africa in the decades that immediately followed independence and began to decline in the last 15 years. However, the phenomenon of military coups has recently witnessed a nightmarish resurgence in West Africa, where the subregional grouping (ECOWAS), had nearly succeeded in making them a thing of the past just about a few years ago. However**, t**he democratic dividends recently gained by ECOWAS appeared to have been lost or on the verge of being lost. For example, therewere two military takeovers in Burkina Faso in 2022, which was preceded by the coup in Mali as well as failed coup attempts in Guinea Bissau, The Gambia and the island nation of Sao Tome and Principe. In July 2023 another coup d'etat took place in the Republic of Niger prompting ECOWAS to threaten the use of force against the military junta in Niyami if the deposed regime of President Muhammad Bazoumi is not unconditionally reinstated and the military returned to Barracks. In the year 2022 alone, there were six coup attempts in Africa, and four of them were successful. A senior African Union official, Moussa Faki Mahamat, thus expressed concern about what he called "the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government" across the continent. (Alado, 2022).

As for the latest coup in Niger and the standoff between the military junta in Niyami and ECOWAS, the latter has found itself in a very funny situation and with a very difficult

moral question to answer**.** The question is why now? and why specifically Niger? The reason this question raises its head is that just about a year ago there were similar military coups in three other member states namely, Guinea Conakry, Mali and Burkina Faso but the subregional body did not threaten the military juntas in those countries with military action to dislodge them and restore democracy and civilian rule. One wonders therefore, whether ECOWAS is not attempting to stand in proxy for another player outside the region. In any case, military intervention in Niger at this moment could be counterproductive to the peace efforts that are already underway from the Muslim and traditional leaders of the region headed by the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emir of Kano in Northern Nigeria. The Gambia, which forms the major thrust of this treatise, has had a portion of military intervention in politics and governance. In 1981, there was a violent civilian- military coup in The Gambia led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang, a Gambian politician and leader of the National Revolutionary Council (NRC) against the government of Sir Dawda Jawara*.* In this short-lived military takeover, the coup leader, in his maiden speech condemned imperialism and neo-colonialism and accused the Jawara- led government of corruption, tribalism, economic mismanagement, nepotism and high-handedness. (E.J. Ceasasy,2006). But with the intervention of the Senegalese military in 1981 Kukoi Samba Sanyang was defeated and sent into exile in the West African subregion member state of Burkina Faso.

The 1981 coup led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang was preceded by an alarming political upheaval and security shakeup in October 1980. This was as a result of an unrest in the country's Paramilitary police otherwise known as the Gambia Field Force and thus signaling an imminent uprising, which later turned into the 1981 coup. Linking this 1980 incident with the 1981 coup is a logical conclusion simply because, the leader of this coup (Kukoi Samba Sanyang), had earlier in 1980 joined a radical political organization formed by Gibril (Pengu) George whose Gambia Revolutionary Socialist Party was somehow involved in or it influenced the 1980 unrest in the Gambia Field Force. (Hughes, & Perfect,2006)

Pengu George was a well-known opponent and fiercest critic of the Jawara-led PPP administration during the mid- 1970s and early 1980s. He was one of the young Gambian radicals attracted to the political ideas of the first generation of African radical-nationalist leaders of the 1950s, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Ahmed Seku Toure of Guinea. (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006) &, (Ceesay, 2006),

In the same vein, the second military coup occurred in The Gambia on the 22nd of July in 1994, when a group of young Army Officers led by then Capt. (later Col.) Yahya Jammeh staged a bloodless coup to once and for all end the life span of the first republican government of The Gambia which ruled the country since independence in 1965. The junior officers of the military, while justifying the takeover, cited rampant corruption and mismanagement of public funds and state resources by former President Jawara and members of his ruling People's Progressive Party (PPP) and immediately created the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC). The origin and causes of these two military coup d'etats in The Gambia would be discussed in detail later in the course of this study.

Although there is a plethora of literature on military rule in The Gambia, yet its legacies and footprints on the socio-political and economic development of the country have not been adequately and systematically examined well enough. The critical question this study sets to address is, has the Military left a permanent imprint in the sands of time in The Gambia? And if yes, what are the iconic or outstanding and most important of those legacies? There is a scholarly position that holds that there is no country in the world where the military does not intervene in politics. If politics is understood as authoritative allocation of values, then all participants in the political process intervene in politics at one point or another. So, the military in politics is phenomenal and this they do in the polity in several different ways.

Against this background, this piece is set to first interrogate the origin of Military Coups in The Gambia and its causes and its impact in the socio- political and economic development of the country; using both primary and mainly secondary sources (data) to analyze the subject of study. The author argues that as much as the civilian government can positively impact on the development of a country, the military can do equally well or even better and in actual fact, they did better and even qualitatively in The Gambia. In fact, the author argues that some Military Coups and their subsequent leadership and governance processes have brought some enduring and lasting transformations that have

changed the socio-political and economic trajectory of some countries, of which Gambia is not an exception. Countries like Egypt, Libya and Rwanda are good examples although their military leaderships like that of The Gambia had (in the case of Libya in the past) and still having (in the case Rwanda) serious challenges with regard to the principles of democratic governance, especially human rights and civil liberties.

Reasons and Causes for Military Intervention in Politics and Governance: An Overview

Military intervention refers to the state where the military marches out of their military barracks and takes over political power and authority from a constitutionally established civilian government of the day. Normally, this is done through a coup d'état. Many factors have been advanced as the reasons why the military intervenes in politics and governance in Africa. Overall, the reasons for military interventions in politics have taken place on the basis of vested interest in the military itself coupled with other factors such as increasing poverty, economic instability, total breakdown of law and order and collapse of internal security, weak institutions, rampant corruption, nepotism, tribalism as well as on the basis of low political culture and awareness. According to Huntington, the sources of military interventions in politics have not only been due to the keen interest of the military itself, but it is also the result of weak political institutions and low political culture of developing countries. These flaws have provided the opportunities for military coups in most countries in Africa.

He further explained the causes of military interventions in politics and maintained that the military always comes for a short stint but history tells us that they never returned back the government to the civilian in the proper way. In fact, sometimes they are forced to do so under humiliating circumstances living behind a bad legacy. It is pointed out that military governments are associated with their own class benefits and popularity.

Another most significant reason for military intervention in African politics is the politicization of the Army. Following the independence of most African countries, military recruits were based on ethnic sentiments. As such, whichever ethnic group occupies or controls the military hierarchy recruits more of their tribesmen and women, so as to use them as a weapon over other ethnic nationalities. In some cases, the army was seriously politicized to the extent that appointments and promotions were based on tribe and political sentiments rather than seniority and merit. This largely contributes to the reasons why the military intervenes in African politics since independence from the dawn of the 20th century until today. Scholars attest that the military at the beginning of nationhood in Africa was used by the leaders of the different countries of the continent to profit themselves or their fellow ethnic favorites alone. This was basically why military interventions in Africa were more rampant (Ndulo & Lulo, 2010).

After the independence of most African countries in the 1960s, the political system of many African states started experiencing highly flawed electoral systems, which culminated in the rigging of elections. Thus, with the inability or unwillingness of most African countries to conduct free and fair elections, the situation in those countries degenerated into post - electoral violence and lawlessness and thereby giving room for the military to strike. Many military coups had always been triggered by electoral frauds and thus forcing leaders to carry out Coups. The fact that many African leaders fail or are unwilling to conduct free and fair elections and rather they would choose to perpetuate their stay in power in the name of one party or another, has made military interventions in African politics inevitable. Recent election-related violence in some African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Zimbabwe have led some to question whether elections can in any way reduce the risk of conflict and lead to stability, democracy, peace and development for the continent or they could make matters worse. The military has always come under the pretext that they were trying to correct the lacuna of the poor and the corrupt political system in the polity with promises to return to barracks but ended up staying for good and in some cases endangering or worsening the system more than they had found it. There is abundant evidence from around the continent that junta leaders who choose to stay in power have become more corrupt, inept, incompetent and ineffective than the very governments they had overthrown (Ndulo & Lulo, 2010).

Although it is true that post-conflict elections have resulted in violence in some countries and even in worst case scenarios led to military coups, it is important to keep in mind that this scenario is not the whole story or indeed the only story. The experiences of Namibia (1989), South Africa (1994), Mozambique (1994), and, in many respects, Sierra Leone (2002), and Liberia (2005) are notable examples of successful elections held in so-called "fragile" countries (Ndulo & Lulo, 2010).

With different names and different guises, ethnicity is old in African polity. The African political system has been characterized by ethnocentric cleavages and rancor, so much so that it endangers the stability of most countries. It is noteworthy that there are instances where colonial architects foisted different ethnic groups into one political entity, a situation that has been a source of conflict and even military takeovers in those territories. It has been alleged that those ethnic cleavages had led to military coups in certain countries. Robin Luckham et al. claim that *disparate ethnic systems inherited from Europeans* have led to military coups in Africa. (Luckham, 1994).

The literature on conflict in the region is replete with a plethora of causal factors, with one of the focal issues in African politics being the impact of ethnicity on the behaviours and performances of the states. Moreover, it is striking and at the same time sobering that the incidence of ethnic-based violence in Africa has triggered a domino effect across the region, and this is witnessed in rampant military coups across the length and breadth of the continent. Thus, the military saw this as a reason why they should take over power and correct the problems of ethnicity and tribalism in politics. Regional and tribal- based political parties had caused so many crises and killings in many African countries that it has led to endless Military Coups and Counter-Coups. Almost all countries in sub- Saharan Africa, with the exception of Senegal and perhaps Cabo Varde, have experienced some kind of military rule with a couple of them experiencing several coups and coup attempts, in their so far short history of nationhood. As for the Gambia, the country has been very lucky and blessed by Almighty God that there has, so far, never been any ethnic or tribal conflict in the way and to the extent and level that other African countries have been experiencing.

Ostensibly, corruption, including nepotism, is also a major instrumental factor for the frequent military interventions in Africa. The military has always taken over power because the high rate of corruption in a given Africa country was becoming unbearable. Several African countries have been ranked among the most corrupt nations in the world. Given the high rate of corruption and widespread misuse of state resources by Politicians, the economy of most African countries became hugely and adversely affected. The wealth of the continent has always been spent by politicians recklessly and this encourages incessant military coups and coup attempts across the continent. The menace of corruption is fuelling several military takeovers of existing democratic governments in many African countries, even though the military governments replacing former civilian governments do equally become corrupt or even more corrupt in many instances. (Owasanoye, 2022).

> *Owasanoye noted how the West Africa region has experienced a resurgence of military takeovers of government in the last two years. According to the ICPC boss, civil unrest has remained a factor in military juntas' violent takeover of authority. Mr Owasanoye said weak institutions, absence of rule of law, corruption in government, insecurity, and political instability have continued to stymie growth in the sub-region, prompting ordinary people to demand a change of administration (Owasanoye, 2022).*

It should be noted at this juncture that in spite of the several interventions of the military, corruption has not reduced in Africa. This is mainly because and as I have already alluded to above, the military themselves have become corrupt or even more corrupt than the civilian authorities they unseated. Asides inability to end corruption when in government, many military Chiefs in Africa have made the headlines on corruption allegations. A report by the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies blamed corruption on the continent, in part, on corruption in the military. For instance, Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and the continent's largest economy, was reported to have recorded high levels of corruption during the military era. It was alleged that a sum of $5

billion was reported to have been taken, at the least, by its former Military ruler, General Sani Abacha (Oyedeji, 2022).

Political ambition of the military in Africa and its unquenchable thirst for power had led to constant military takeovers in most countries of the continent. In the past several years, there has been a proliferation of studies on coup d'états in Africa and the political role of the African military in various countries. Armies have been analyzed in terms of their social and ethnic composition, training, ideology, and socializing influences. Intense debate has focused around the overt and covert reasons for their intervention in the political arena (Decalo, 2008). It has been posited that the Military are power hungry, hence the need to take over a constituted authority. In light of this, they had to look for other reasons to justify their act of taking over power by force. In the researcher's view, the political ambition of the military is the basic reason for military interventions in most African countries. It is perhaps for this reason that military regimes across the continent would in most cases end up transforming themselves into civilian governments at least by name. Any other reason advanced by the military was just used as justification for taking over power forcefully.

Overall, the reasons for military takeover of government have largely been based on *dissatisfaction with civilian governments and specific grievances and ambitions* of military officers. Politicized militaries often get involved when countries face political, security and socio-economic problems. The most promising way to reduce politicization of the military is through raising professional security forces. Professionalism, for the military, refers to staying out of politics, which facilitates an improved ability to tackle security risks such as rioting, intertribal and ethnic conflicts, drug abuse, increasing crime rates and insurgencies without resorting to excessive force (Abdallah, 2020).

Foreign actors or powers have been instrumental in influencing military Coups in various parts of Africa. Some of the big powers are often accused of supporting failing or dis-functioning civilian or even military governments to secure their own interests. In the same way, they can be engaged in some clandestine activities to directly or indirectly influence or sponsor the removal of any civilian administration in Africa that fails to dance to their whims and caprice. The recent rise in coups in Africa (a pattern not observed in other regions of the world) reflects a waning in regional and international actors' unwillingness to enforce anti-coup norms in Africa. This is a result of a confluence of factors, including a regional democratic recession, an inclination by regional bodies to negotiate compromises with coup leaders, reticence to mount military interventions, and distractions of international actors with internal crises or with bigger regional or global challenges and other emergencies like the pandemic, among others. International actors, in short, have a critical role in validating coups. By treating coups as unfortunate but normal means of transferring power in Africa, international actors inadvertently provide coup leaders a helping hand across the finishing line to consolidate their putsch (Siegle, 2021).

Russia has also been actively supporting coups in Africa. Often working through the Wagner Mercenary Group Moscow has maintained a close relationship with the military throughout Sudan's democratic transition and reportedly agitated for it to seize power. In exchange for its support, the Sudanese junta is likely to grant Russia naval port access to Port Sudan, giving Moscow a military foothold in the important Red Sea corridor. Wagner interests will also continue to operate in western Sudan in support of gold and other illicit trafficking through the Central African Republic (Siegle, 2021).

The need to consolidate power has opened up for the struggle for power at all levels within society even outside elections. The presence of opposition groups which do not share the same ideology with those in the military has forced at times the military to act under the pretext of being the custodians and guardians of society and the country's peace and security as noted in Egypt a couple of years ago. In developing countries, the lack of democratic means or inability of such means of changing governments has meant that military force has been made an alternative as noted in The Gambia in 1994. This is because the culture of voting for incumbents and people's hesitant to change the status quo is deeply rooted in the political traditions of peoples in many African communities. Let's take the case of The Gambia for instance where Voting for the incumbent has been a long-time surviving trend of the country's every presidential and parliamentary elections ever since it became independent

from Britain more than half a century ago. However, in 2016 this trend was reversed following an unexpected but decisive victory for the coalition of opposition parties against the quasi-military government of former president Yahya Jammeh's ruling Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) party. The trend of voting for the incumbent In Gambian elections was quickly resurrected in the 2017 Parliamentary elections conducted under the watchful eyes and auspices of the ruling coalition of president Adama Barrow as the then flag bearer of the United Democratic Party (the UDP), the largest and main political party of the Barrow coalition that unseated President Yahya Jammeh. Thus, the UDP won the majority of seats in the National Assembly during that election. The trend reaffirmed its position In Gambia's political and election culture in the 2021 Presidential Elections during which president Adama Barrow's newly formed party-the National People's Party swept the polls with a landslide victory.

Thus, the reasons for military interventions in politics particularly in Africa and the Middle East are multifaceted and multidimensional as well with ethnic, tribal and ideological differences occupying the center stage. Ideologies such as Marxism are relevant to understand how the military acts as gatekeepers to defend the liberation movements in Southern Africa through open political support and ideological requirements for one to hold the highest office in government as noted in Zimbabwe. As mentioned above the main push factor for the coup in Egypt a couple of years ago was ideologically motivated and the military government that followed the coup is still in power in Cairo showing no signs of interest or readiness to return the country to democratic rule and constitutional order. In the same vein ideologically motivated coup d'etats were staged against three democratically elected governments of Turkey during the period from 1960 to 2016. Former Prime Minister Adnan Mandris was overthrown by the then powerful Turkish military on 27/ 5/ 1960 and subsequently hanged on flimsy charges of taking the country closer to its Islamic past. Similarly, the country's first Islamist Prime Minister Prof. Dr. Najmuddin Arbakan was deposed by the military on 28/2/ 1997 just after one year when he was democratically elected as modern Turkey's first Islamist leader. The biggest quarrel between him and the country's powerful secular military was his (Arbakan) attempt to redirect Turkey towards and bring it closer to the Islamic east.

The biggest surprise regarding the history of military coup d'etats in the Republic of Turkey came on the 15/7/ 2016, when a bloody coup was staged against the current president Rajab Taieb Ardogan- modern Turkey's best known and most successful Islamist politician. The biggest surprise here was not necessarily the coup proper but rather it was the level and magnitude of the popular opposition and resistance to the coup. As soon as the coup was announced hundreds of thousands of people (unarmed civilians) had spontaneously come out onto the streets to vehemently protest against the coup. They confronted heavily armed soldiers in the streets of Istanbul and in other major cities and vowed to fight until the president's safety was assured and that his government would not be forced out by the military and further that president Ardogan had to and would continue to govern the country.

Origin of the Two Military Coup D'etats in The Gambia

For the purpose of this research study and also for emphasis, the paper briefly examines the first military- civilian Coup led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang of 1981 and his members of The Gambia Socialist Revolutionary Party (GSRP) and disaffected staff of the Gambia Field Force. This is preceded by a brief account of the 1980 imminent uprising and precarious security situation that led to the assassination of a senior commander of The Gambia Field Force in October of that year. These two political upheavals struck ostensibly because the Jawara administration was accused of messing up the polity and as such the players wanted a radical and transformative revolution. The ideology of the group was a "wooly and vulgarized form" of Marxist and radical pan-Africanist thinking. They spoke of "Victory for the Gambian revolutionary struggle under the stewardship of the proletariat and the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party" and of "Death to neo-colonialism, racism and fascism (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) & (Omasanjuwa, &Tarro, 2021

While studying the two coups of 1981 and 1994 as well as the events preceding them in 1980, the paper focuses a lot of attention on

the legacies and impacts created and left behind by the military's involvement and its earlier attempt to be involved in governance in The Gambia.

As has been pointed out elsewhere in this treatise, the first Military Coup occurred in The Gambia on 30th July 1981by a group comprising mainly of radical civilian opposition politicians and few members of the country's Paramilitary Field Force and led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang himself a civilian opposition politician who had earlier in 1980, joined the radical Gambia Revolutionary Socialist party of Gibril Pengu George. The coup was unusual and unique in the history of coup d'etats in Africa in that it was plotted and partly executed by civilians rather than the country's military themselves. This military coup led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang was a follow -up of the alarming political upheaval and security shakeup in October 1980. This was as a result of an unrest in the country's Paramilitary police otherwise known as the Gambia Field Force and thus, signaling an imminent uprising, which later turned into the 1981 coup. Linking this 1980 incident with the 1981 coup is a logical conclusion simply because, the leader of this coup (Kukoi Samba Sanyang), had earlier in 1980 joined a radical political organization formed by Gibril (Pengu) George, whose Gambian Revolutionary Socialist Party was somehow involved in or influenced the 1980 unrest in the Gambia Field Force. (Hughes, & Perfect,2006)

Pengu George was a well-known opponent and fiercest critic of the Jawara-led PPP administration during the mid- 1970s and early 1980s. He was one of the young Gambian radicals attracted to the political ideas of the first generation of African radical-nationalist leaders of the 1950s, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Ahmed Seku Toure of Guinea (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006). The Gambia Field Force was created in 1958 to replace the former colonial security company known as international Royal West African Frontier Force which was abolished for financial reasons. Consequently, The Gambia was left without a regular army and hence the formation of the Paramilitary Field Force, which started with a modest number of about 140 personnel but at the time of the 1981 coup the Force had between 350 to about 500 members. (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006).

Since its establishment in 1958, The Gambia Field Force had remained politically inactive and dormant throughout its existence, although there had been few unsubstantiated rumors of internal discontent within the Force in the late 1960s.There were also rumors of likely insurrection in the 1970s and as such the Field Force and the government had to take precautionary measures to avoid and prevent any likely imminent danger. The situation became more worrying when news circulated that there were Gambian dissidents receiving military training in Libya preparing to bring down the PPP-led government. Upon receiving firsthand information on the Libya training story from an eyewitness in 1979; the Gambian authorities became more convinced that there was a looming threat to the government's existence and thus more stringent preventive measures were taken to ensure internal stability and security.

Consequently, tensions within the ranks of the Field Force continued to rise as some of its officers came under suspicion and were accused of providing sensitive information to the perceived enemy. Subsequently, the officers whose loyalty to the Force came under suspicion were discharged or dismissed from the Paramilitary Police while others suffered banishment to faraway and remote areas on postings. (Omasanjuwa & Tarro.2021) & (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006). Despite the rising tensions within the ranks of The Gambia Field Force, The Gambian Paramilitary Police continued to maintain its passive and politically non-active characteristic at least in the eyes and perceptions of The Gambian people.

However, this general belief and perception by most Gambians that the Paramilitary Police or the Gambia Field Force was passive, peaceful and politically dormant was turned upside down, on the 27 of October ,1980, when the nation learned with considerable shock that the deputy commander of the Field Force, E.J. Eku Mahoney was gunned down by an insubordinate soldier of the very Force , Mustapha Danso, on that fateful day at the Bakau Depot .The reason for this horrible killing was never explained and the Jawara government was definitely and rightly so very worried although it initially and seemingly tried to downplay the situation by describing the incident "as a solitary murderous act of mutiny by a drug-intoxicated constable" (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006). On the contrary the Jawar administration reacted rapidly by invoking a

1965 mutual assistance treaty with the Republic of Senegal and called in the Senegalese army.

Thus, on the 30th of October, 1980 a contingent of 150 Senegalese soldiers arrived in The Gambia and were deployed in various strategic areas of the capital Banjul and its surroundings to protect key installations and also to prevent the disaffection spreading further among the ranks of the Field Force. Having stayed in the country for one week the visiting Senegalese soldiers succeeded in stabilizing the situation and returned to their country. (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006).

Some of the precautionary measures taken in the wake of commander Mahoney's assassination included the forced retirement of Assistant Commander Ousman Bojang of the Gambia Field Force on suspicion of his involvement in causing or stirring up disaffection in the Field Force. This decision to send Commander Bojang onto forced retirement angered him and as a result, his ensuing resentment undoubtedly led him to join the subsequent 1981 coup. This is clearly a good example of how the 1980 unrest in the Field Force had served as a prelude to the 1981 coup. I have already explained above the connection between the coup leader and the radical revolutionary movement led by Pengu George.

However, it should be clarified at this juncture that commander Bojang was not personally attracted to or sympathetic with the revolutionary aspirations of Gibril (Pengu) George and Kukoi Samba Sanyang- the main characters of the coup. Rather, he (Bojang), a member of the majority Mandinka ethnic group, was said to have been unhappy with the Wolof/Aku dominance of the Field Force leadership and in his view, this was what led to his ousting. (Hughes, & Perfect, 2006).

To conclude this section, it is clearly shown from the above discussion that the 1980 events and the unrest in the country's paramilitary police had resulted into the following outstanding legacies that The Gambia and its people will never forget:

a. The assassination of the most senior military commander in the country, which was perhaps the first ever high-profile case of a politically motivated killing in the history of independent Gambia. Use of assassination as a weapon against one's enemies is still not known to Gambians of all walks of life.

b. The first ever deployment of foreign troops in parts of the territory of the sovereign Republic of The Gambia since independence from Britain in 1965.

c. The 1980 events served as a prelude to and culminated into the first ever coup d'etat or unconstitutional toppling of a legitimate and democratically instituted government in The Gambia since independence i. 1965.

In other words, in the 1981 coup, whether you call it "a coup attempt "or an abortive coup d'etat, "a rebellion or insurrection "as done by many authors and writers on Gambian affairs, (E. J Ceesay, 2006), (Hughes& Perfect 2006), (A. Hughes,2000) and many more, the coup makers actually brought down the Jawara government, announced a provisional ruling council and would have taken over control of the whole country if Senegal didn't intervene militarily. Thus, in my view, it was a successful but a short-lived coup/takeover. This was why the casualties were heavy on the side of the intervening Senegalese soldiers.

Suffice it to point out here that at the time of the coup, former President Sir Dawda Jawara was in London attending the wedding of the then Prince Charles the Prince of Wales (now King Charles) to Lady Diana Spencer and upon learning the new development at home, Sir Dawda flew to Senegal within the next twenty-four hours to successfully invoke the relevant provisions of the 1965 Defence Treaty with the Republic of Senegal, already referred to above. Thus, former President Jawara prevailed upon former President Abdou Diouf of Senegal to send troops into The Gambia to reverse the coup, dislodge the rebels from Banjul and surroundings and have him (Sir Dawda) reinstated. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). The 1965 Defense Treaty provided for direct intervention in the event of attack against or "if power was to be seized in either country". (E.J. Ceesay, 2006). Consequently, Senegal intervened heavily by sending troops into the Gambia despite having to confront a very hostile and anti- Senegalese environment and landing on a risky and dangerous battlefield. This is because only few hours after the coup were launched the coup makers were able to take over the Field Force Depot in Bakau to obtain much

needed weapons and ammunitions and also, they took over the Radio Gambia Building, which was close to the military Depot, the Yundum International Airport and the State House in Banjul. Thus, with all these strategic institutions and targets under their control, the rebels had actually taken over the country and had achieved almost complete success in their mission albeit very briefly.

However, this momentum could not be maintained by the coup makers because as Hughes and Perfect have explained, despite those "initial successes the insurgents quickly ran into serious difficulties and began to disintegrate into uncoordinated elements. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). Bloody infighting within the coup makers' leadership coupled with stiff resistance from the Jawara loyalists and the subsequent killing of two senior members of the coup leaders (commander Ousman Bojang and Gibril Pengu George) as casualties of both the infighting and the resistance together with Kukoi's (the coup leader)'s inexperience in military operations were the main factors behind their weakness and eventual disintegration into uncoordinated elements of a fighting force.

One of the earliest actions of the coup makers, which later turned out to be a dangerous act and a huge liability against them, was to take over the prison at Mile Two and free Mustapha Danso, who earlier in October,1980 murdered Deputy Commander Eku Mahoney and who had his appeal against his death sentencing for Mahoney's killing, rejected by the Court of Appeal in Banjul. This was a very serious miscalculated gambling because first, all other prisoners were released alongside Danso and second, as Hughes and Perfect aptly put it some of these freed prisoners "acquired weapons and turned what the rebels intended as a popular insurrection into personal vendettas and criminal forays" (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) & (Omasanjuwa and Tarro. 2021)

This was therefore a scenario that went against both sides of the conflict. For the loyalists resisting the coup the situation was both confusing and frustrating, whereas for the coup leaders the activities of the freed and loose armed criminals further undermined their patriotic credentials and eroded the popular support they started receiving. At the same time, when civilian supporters of the coup were supplied with weapons to fight alongside the rebels, widespread looting and criminal activity was going on in and around the capital and thus further justifying the Jawara government's decision to call in Senegalese soldiers to help quell the coup and the ensuing unrest.

As alluded to above, the government of Senegal agreed to intervene and thus former President Abdou Joof sent in a contingent of seaborne troops, airborne and ground forces into Banjul and surroundings to finally quell the rebellion and reinstated Sir Dawda Jawara in his presidency. During the insurrection, the coup makers had taken many senior Gambia government officers and some prominent Senegalo-Gambia personalities hostage. There was an estimated number of 105 people taken hostage including one of President Jawara's two wives, Lady Chilel and ten of his children, Dembou Jatta the Minister of Education, Commander M.B. Khan the deputy inspector general of police, Seydou Nourou Bah the then Excessive Secretary of the Senegalo-Gambia Permanent Secretariat and an official of the Senegalese High Commission in Banjul. The hostages were safely released without any casualties by a small team of the British Special Air Service, (SAS), who had earlier on managed to successfully infiltrate the military camp in Bakau where the hostages were being held. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) & (Omasanjuwa, and Tarro, 2021)

Despite having been successful in safely rescuing all the hostages, neither the visiting SAS nor the intervening Senegalese army could save the country from the large-scale destruction of life and property it had suffered from as a result of the weeklong mayhem and its suppression. Although the exact number of people killed during the fighting could never have been determined, the Gambia government estimated that five hundred lives were lost whereas the Senegalese army admitted losing thirty-three soldiers. The actual figure of both civilian and military casualties, as well as the extent of damage to property, was believed to have been higher than what was officially reported. However, it could still be argued that although the scale of the violence, damage and destruction to life and property befallen the country during the mayhem, was beyond the experience and comprehension of The Gambian people, the level of destruction of life and property here was modest and very much on the low side if compared with what usually comes out of coups, or failed coups, counter coups and similar domestic conflicts in

sub Saharan Africa.,.(Hughes & Perfect, 2006) & (Omasanjuwa and Tarro, 2021)

To conclude this section, it is clearly demonstrated here that both the 1980 and 1981 events signaling the imminent, on one hand and marking the actual beginning, on the other, of the military's involvement or attempt to get involved in governance and state management in The Gambia have left behind some landmark and iconic legacies in the history of governance and state system of The Gambia, which will be discussed in the next sub-heading.

The Second Military Coup D'etat n The Gambia

The second major Military Coup D'etat occurred in The Gambia on July 22nd 1994 under the leadership of Lt. Yahya A.J.J Jammeh of the Gambia Armed Forces. It was on Friday July 22, in 1994 that a group of junior officers of the Gambia National Army launched another coup d'etat against the democratically elected government of the founding father of the sovereign republic of The Gambia Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara. This time and unlike the 1981 short lived takeover/abortive coup, the military successfully and decisively overthrew President Jawara and his People's Progressive Party (the PPP) government and immediately created the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council otherwise known as AFPRC to replace the PPP government. To avoid a repetition of one of the fatal mistakes of the 1981 coup makers in delaying the formation of a new government immediately after the coup was announced, the 1994 coup leaders wasted no time in forming a new government replacing the PPP government which included civilian ministers and many senior public servants immediately after the coup took place.

The 1994 takeover came at a time when the circumstances were more favorable and the political environment more conducive for a successful military coup due mainly to the following reasons:

a. This time the country has already had a standing regular and professional army some of whose members were already exposed to the use and application of techniques and strategies of warfare after serving in the ECOMOG peacekeeping mission in Liberia...

b. Unlike the 1981 coup, which was planned and executed mainly by radical civilian politicians supported by a few members of the country's paramilitary Field Force, the 1994 coup was absolutely and entirely a military affair.

c. Unlike the 1981 coup which had been planned for a considerable period of time by a group of radical civilians who led it with support from a few members of the Paramilitary Field Force, in 1994, the coup was essentially spontaneous. As Hughes and Perfect explained the coup was triggered by an incident on July 21, when a senior Nigerian Commander of the GNA and the Gambian director general of the National Security Service (NSS), ordered a public search for weapons of the guard of honor who had gone to the airport to greet the president on his return from a month's long visit to London. This group of soldiers who included Sana Sabally and Edward Singhateh but not Yahya Jammeh, were subsequently disarmed and sent back to the barracks. Interestingly enough the group of soldiers so disarmed were not arrested and detained and for this reason at this moment both Sabally and Singhateh were able to convince a number of soldiers that the incident at the airport was a prelude to their subsequent arrest and possibly to be tried as coup suspects and therefore they had to act fast. Subsequently the coup was planned that very night with Yahya Jammeh joining both Sabbally and Singhateh together with other discontented lieutenants of the army such as Sadiou Hydara and others. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) Also, (E. J. Ceesay, 2006).

d. By 1994, there was significant discontent among junior members of the Gambia National Army and high-level resentments from them against the Nigerian commander's domination of the senior officer corps of the GNA. They were resentful of the fact that their food, accommodation and general living conditions at Yundum Barracks were clearly inferior to those of their

senior officers, particularly the Nigerian commanders. Similarly, there were wide differences between the salaries and allowances of the Gambian officers and those of their Nigerian counterparts. Furthermore, the army rank and file corps shared the grievances of the junior officers about their living conditions. There were also additional complaints from those soldiers who served with ECOMOG in Liberia that the Jawara government was reluctant to pay them their allowances for the Liberia mission.

e. By 1994, the popularity of the PPP government in the Gambia had apparently sharply declined to its lowest level. This was due mainly to two reasons. First, there was a widespread belief that after staying in power for almost three decades, the Jawara administration had become complacent and out of touch with public opinion, especially with the younger generation. It was an ailing government that had become increasingly unpopular and ineffective to or even unable to achieve or bring in any meaningful development for the people of The Gambia. Second, it was also widely believed that many, if not most ministers, senior civil servants, heads of parastatal organizations and leading pro- government businessmen were involved in large scale and high-level corruption and the party leader and president Sir Dawda Jawara was unwilling to take the necessary and decisive measures to hold them to account.

f. The relationship between the government of Senegal and The Gambia, particularly between the two leaders of Diouf and Jawara was at a very low level as the Senegalese people and their government had not yet recovered from their devastating disappointment over the failure of the Senegambia Confederation due mainly to foot dragging tactics by the Gambian side. Needless to say, the Confederation was a special project that Senegal had obviously spent a lot in anticipation of realizing a long-standing territorial ambition in or over The Gambia.

g. Both the Nigerian Army Training Team with their most senior officer serving as head and Commander of the Gambia National Army, and the American war or tank landing ship, *La Moure County*, then visiting The Gambia chose not to intervene militarily to quell the coup.

h. The absence of almost total resistance from the Jawara loyalists against the new military government when the coup was announced went in favour of the coup leaders.

i. The 1994 coup in The Gambia was believed to have been influenced by the spillover effects of military rules in the country's Anglophone neighbors. In Sierra Leone for instance, Captain Valentine Strasser seized power from president Joseph Momoh in May 1992 and Nigeria the Gambia's giant and most important Anglophone neighbor and ally was by November 1993 under full military rule under the stewardship of General Sani Abacha who later become like a mentor and strong ally of the military ruler in Banjul. In the same way, the most direct model for Jammeh, the new military ruler in Banjul was perhaps provided by Lieutenant Flight Jerry Rawlings the then military ruler and later President of Ghana who was obviously a strong influence on Jammeh and a strong supporter as well. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) Also, (E. J. Ceesay, 2006).

Now that the new military rulers are in firm control and a new government machinery created with the establishment of the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) headed by Lt. Yahya Jammeh, serious business had to start in earnest.

As alluded to earlier, the new military government included many civilian ministers and senior public servants including the last finance minister of the deposed PPP government, Hon. Bakary Bunja Darboe. On the other hand, the provincial governments of the five regions of The Gambia, the Banjul City Council and the Kanifing Municipal Council were headed by military commissioners and Mayors. (E. J. Ceesay, 2006).

To start with, the AFPRC government had to prepare and present to the Gambian people a

genuine transitional program to return the country to a democratic constitutional order and barely after spending about three months in office, the new military ruler Lt. Yahya Jammeh at a rally to celebrate his junta's first 100 days in office at the Independence Stadium in Bakau in October 1994, announced a four year transitional timetable meaning the continuation of fully fledged military rule in The Gambia until 1998. This four-year transitional period was spontaneously and unanimously rejected by both The Gambia's development partners including the EU and the USAID and the Gambian people because they deemed it too long.

In view of the spontaneous and widespread rejection of his four-year transitional plan, Lt. Jammeh had no option but to backdown on the four-year period and in late November 1994, he declared that his government would set up a National Consultative Committee (N.C.C) whose main task would be to re-examine the four-year time span keeping in view the possibility of reducing it to a shorter period of time acceptable to the Gambian people. Consequently, a twenty-three-member consultative committee was appointed by the military ruler headed by Dr. Lenrie Peters- a distinguished Gambian writer and outstanding surgeon. The NCC membership included representatives from the Gambia Press Union, the Bar Association, Trade Unions, traditional rulers or Chiefs and other professional organizations.

The NCC started work in December,1994 holding consultation meetings in all parts of the Gambia and after a five- week period of hard work and national consultations the Committee completed its work. On January 27 1995, the NCC submitted its report to Lt. Jammeh and as expected the report recommended a substantial reduction of the transitional time from four to a two-year life span as recommended by the majority of Gambians and international donor organizations and countries consulted. On his part, Lt. Jammeh accepted the recommendation of reducing the four-year period to two years but the military ruler and his junta rejected outright another critical recommendation by the NCC for them (the military) to hand over power to an interim government pending the elections. (E. J. Ceesay, 2006).

The setting up of the NCC marked the beginning of a long process of expansion, reorganization or restructuring and realignment, and renaming of existing state institutions as well as establishing and creating new institutions within the machinery of governance and state management in The Gambia not only as part of the transition process to return the country to democratic constitutional order but also or perhaps most importantly, to pave the way for the military's continuous involvement in the business of governance and state management in the Gambia. Thus, in April 1994 the AFPRC set up a Constitutional Review Commission (C.R.C) to review the country's First Republican Constitution of 1970 with a view to producing a new constitution for the Second Republic and by December 1995, the CRC was able to complete work on a draft new constitution which was then submitted to the AFPRC Chairman Lt. Jammeh. The AFPRC government was accused of having doctored the CRC's findings and recommendations in the draft new constitution to create space for the military ruler and his junta not only to be able to contest but also to win both the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in September and December of 1996 respectively. This perhaps was why the military did not publish the CRC's findings and recommendations immediately after the draft constitution was submitted to the government. Instead, it took about four months before the military government finally published the draft constitution together with the Committee's findings and recommendations in March 1996. (E. J. Ceesay, 2006).

In the same way and in December 1995, the AFPRC Chairman and head of State Lt. Jammeh appointed an eighteen-member Provisional Independent Electoral Commission (PIEC) tasked to supervise the referendum on the draft new constitution which would establish the Second Republic, and also to be in charge of conducting both the Presidential and Parliamentary elections scheduled for September and December 1996 respectively. This provisional election supervision body was later to become a new government institution created by the military within the provisions of the 1997 Second Republican Constitution of The Gambia called " the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).(sections 42-49 of the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia).Around the same time, the AFPRC government promulgated three controversial decrees which raised serious questions about the military's genuine intention to return the country to democratic civilian rule.

These decrees, known as decrees 70 and 71 which ordered individuals wishing to establish newspapers to execute a bond of 100000 Dalasis - representing a 100 % increase from what was only 1000 Dalasis. As for third decree-decree 89 which banned all pre-coup major political parties from participating in the upcoming elections, it had definitely tainted the process of transition to democracy in the Gambia under the watchful eyes of the military rulers who seemed to have acted as judges in their own course. (E. J. Ceesay, 2006, Saine 2009). The above development had clearly shown that the military who were now in full control of the country had no plan or even intention of handing over the government of The Gambia to civilian authorities and returned to Barracks. Rather, they were going to stay for as long as God permits. Thus, the following section examines the political and socio-economic impacts of the military's involvement in governance in The Gambia beginning with the 1980 and 1981 political events and followed by the aftermath of the 1994 coup d'etat and their subsequent control of government in the country. This includes the two periods they governed; both under the system of full-fledged military rule as from the 22nd of July 1994 to the 31st December 1996 and under diluted or quasi military rule which covers the period from January 1997 to January 2017. This is preceded by a short account of the causes of the two military camps in the country.

Brief Account of the Causes of the Two Military Coups in The Gambia

As alluded to above, the 1981 coup was preceded by a series of events that resulted from sharp differences and serious misunderstandings among members and various factions of the then Gambia Field Force. This unfortunate situation culminated in the assassination of Deputy Field Force Commander Ekundayo Mahoney by Mustapha Danso of the same force on the 27 of October 1980.

Following this horrible incident, the Jawara government, fearing that an uprising was imminent, called on Senegal for assistance and on October 31,1980 a contingent of the Senegalese military arrived in Banjul and were deployed to Bijilo, Yundum and in other strategic locations of the capital and its surroundings. The Senegalese troops, after having stayed in the country for about one week, restored order and left. (Omasanjuwa & Tarro, 2021) This political scenario is further discussed in more detail in the following section.

In an interview with Hassoun Ceesay, (Standard Newspaper, 2021), he provides a clue to the prevailing socio-political and economic situations in The Gambia before the 1980 security shakeup and the 1981 coup:

> *"The writings were literally and figuratively on the walls. There was a looming disaster and all Gambians knew something terrible will befall our nation. In the period 1979-1981, there was a youth revolt led by the various antigovernment subterranean groups like Black Scorpions, Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA), and The Gambia Socialist Revolutionary Party of Pengu George etc. These groups organized youths into resistance mood, and there was arson such as the burning of President Jawara's yacht, the MV Mansa Kila - ba; the burning of markets, street graffiti and sustained insults on state leaders including Jawara and denigrating of state institutions like The Gambia Commercial and Development Bank" (H. Ceesay, 2021)."*

In short, a lot of damage had been done to the nation, the PPP government was under sustained attacks and its authorities severely undermined, while the morale of the people of the country was very low, seeking for who will salvage the terrible situation, thus, Kukoi's coup was the coup de grace as a lot of damage had been inflicted on the state already. (H. Ceesay, 2021 & Cham, 2021)

In the same way, the Yahya Jammeh led Coup of 22nd July 1994 was caused principally by the delegitimization of the Jawara led-government, the lack of accountability, its overall ineffectiveness, and the rampant corruption that prevailed in the country. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). President Jawar, practiced liberal democracy with a one-party monopoly state, where power was centered around him and his People's Progressive Party (PPP) and also with their full control over government and state resources to the detriment of the opposition parties and the civil society, leaving them vulnerable and weak.

The PPP government was reportedly entangled in several accusations of electoral malpractices and misconduct, including vote-buying, intimidation of the opposition, and election tampering. And with no term limit set for the presidency, President Jawara was able to perpetuate himself in office as president of The Gambia for about thirty years, until the Yahya Jammeh-led military coup of 1994 swept him out of imperial government (Falola, 2021 & Hughes & Perfect 2006).

Again, the Jawara government was embroiled in a scandal involving three high-ranking government officials accused of embezzling millions of dollars from union funds in late 1993 (Hughes & Perfect 2006). Jawara and his government were reluctant to investigate this scandal and once the officials' guilt was proven they were even more reluctant to punish them, except for seizing and auctioning their houses. This made many citizens very angry at the Jawara government's complacency with corruption and corrupt officers, this public anger eventually translated into a strong domestic pressure which later resulted in the establishment in June 1994 of a commission of enquiry to investigate the corruption allegations. However, this move, seen by many as a last-minute attempt by President Jawara to regain the trust of the people, came far too late; as the commission could not reach a conclusion to save the Jawara government before the military struck on the 22nd of July in 1994 (Hughes & Perfect 2006).

The Impact and Legacies of the Two Military Coup D'etats in The Gambia

The Gambia as a country had experienced two outstanding military coups that reshaped the trajectory of its socio-political and economic development. These Coups were the 30th July 1981 military -civilian rebellion led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang and the 22nd July, 1994 military coup led by Yahya A.J.J Jammeh. The 1981 coup was preceded, in October 1980, by an alarming political upheaval and security shakeup as a result of an unrest in the country's Paramilitary police otherwise known as the Gambia Field Force and thus signaling the imminent happening of an uprising, which culminated into the 1981 coup. The military is not by inclination trained to rule, but to defend. However, when the situation arises which brings the military into the corridors of power, it could be an aberration. However, taking into consideration the nature of their calling, a dedicated and disciplined military could bring sanity into the body politics and other sectors of a nation. Indeed, the various controversial military coups d'etat might be undesirable, yet they recorded some landmark successes. It is in this wise, that this paper examines the impact of these military coups d'etat on the socio-political and economic development of The Gambia.

The first Military Coup in The Gambia under the leadership of Kukoi Samba Sanyang had far-reaching impact on the political and economic trajectory of the country. One of the outstanding fallouts of the first Military Coup in The Gambia was the formation of the Senegambia Confederation 1st February 1982 between Senegal and The Gambia. It was a loose Union following an agreement between the two countries signed on 12 December 1981 with the intention to promote cooperation between the two countries. However, the union was dissolved by Senegal on 30 September 1989 after The Gambia's failure to move closer toward a real Union (Hughes, 1992). It could be argued at this point that the Senegambia Confederation was a child of exigency and would not have been formed if the 1981 coup had not taken place.

Be it as it may, the Senegambia Confederation occasioned by the first civilian – military coup in The Gambia had brought some positive changes in the process of the entente of the two nations. The pact between Senegal and The Gambia promoted closer political ties as demonstrated by the establishment of a Confederal Cabinet, Confederal parliament, a Confederal army and a Confederal Permanent Secretariat. Interestingly, the lion shares of political power and authority went Senegal's way because as per the 1981 agreement, Senegal would for good assume the presidency of the Confederation while the tiny but independent sovereign Republic of The Gambia relegated permanently to the position of vice president of the union. This mode of division of executive power and political authority was probably not properly checked and critically examined particularly by the Gambian side and it therefore, later turned out to be a major problem between Jawara and Joof.

On the other hand, both countries agreed to coordinate their defense and foreign policies. The confederal parliament began meeting for one month annually from 1984 while the

Senegambia Permanent Secretariat was tasked with the responsibility of implementing the various agreements of the two countries (Phillips, 1987).

In the same vein, the Confederation Parliament was established and it stipulated that as a Representative Parliament of the Confederation, it shall be called The Confederal Parliament. Its members shall have the title Members of the Confederal Parliament and one-third of members of the Confederal Parliament shall be selected by the House of Representatives of The Gambia from among its members, and the other two-thirds shall be selected by the National Parliament of Senegal, from among its members. The Confederal Parliament shall elect its President from among its members, it shall establish its rules of procedure and related rules and guidelines. This permutation is believed to have prompted harmony and cordiality among members in the handling of the affairs of the Union.

As already referred to above, one of the good aftermaths of the Senegambia Confederation was the creation of a standing National Army for The Gambia, or The Gambian military, which was named as The Gambia National Army and The Gambia National Gendarmerie in 1983. In the second republic it came to be called "The Armed Forces and the National Intelligence Agency, (sections 186- 191 of the 1997 second republican constitution). As a result of the establishment of a new standing army in 1983, part of the two Units, (the National Army and Gendarmerie), became part of the Confederate Army which consisted of two-thirds Senegalese and one-third Gambian soldiers (Dwyer, 2017). As The Gambia government was unable, probably due to very limited financial resources, to heavily invest in the country's new military establishment to match Senegal's security spending, the Confederal Army remained Senegalese-dominated and the Gambians stayed in as junior partners. The provision of security for Key positions in The Gambia such as the airport, the Banjul Port or harbour, and even the protection of president Jawara himself thus, remained the responsibility of Senegalese soldiers. Ironically, this caused opposition parties to claim that the confederation was threatening the Gambia's national sovereignty and economy (Dwyer, 2017).

Another significant landmark of the Senegambia Confederation was the formation of the Confederation Army; that is a combination of the Senegalese military, and the Gambian military. While the latter two remained national forces, the Confederate Army was organized from 1983/84 as an integrated force of the confederation. As already mentioned, it was composed of two-thirds Senegalese and one-third Gambian soldiers, and was supposed to be deployed anywhere within the confederation. In the Gambia, the Confederate Army quickly assumed a position of prestige. This is because the living costs were much higher in Senegal than The Gambia and the pay grade in the Senegalese military was higher than in The Gambian military. It was therefore, necessary for the Confederate Army's pay grade to be adjusted to fit the Senegalese standards, meaning that Gambian troops in the Confederal Army were paid better than those in the National Gambian Military (Dwyer, 2017)

One of the consequences of the Kukoi Samba Sanyang forceful intervention in the governance of The Gambia was the deployment of foreign forces (Senegalese Soldiers) in and around the country. For the first time ever in the political history of independent Gambia foreign forces were deployed in and around the territory of the sovereign Republic of The Gambia, first to protect and safeguard the PPP led government and second, to restore order, internal security and stability for the whole country. There was therefore a necessity, in the wake of the coup, for the Jawara administration to seek for and rely on Senegalese security shield at least for a short term. However, in view of the fact that the government's need for security was a long-term issue, the Jawara administration had to put in place a new mechanism or a strategy which was the establishment of The Senegambia confederation; which was also discussed as one of the impacts of the first coup in The Gambia.

The need for a closer formal relationship between The Gambia and Senegal and given the dire need for the Jawara government to secure a long-term security guarantee from his country's powerful neighbor coupled with Senegal's long standing extra territorial interests and expansionist ambitions, the two countries discussed and agreed to create a lose form of union to be called "Senegambia Confederation "otherwise, known as the Kaur Declaration. The treaty of the confederation was signed in December, 1981, in Kaur, a small peri urban settlement in the northern region of

The Gambia about three hundred kilometers away from the capital Banjul. Thus, the 1981 cancelled coup d'etat was, as E. J. Ceesay aptly puts it, the "midwife to the Confederation, which was signed in February,1982" (E.J. Ceesay,2006).

Similarly, while the treaty or agreement to establish the Senegambia confederation between the two countries was made on 14 November 1981 and ratified by their respective Parliaments in December 1981, the treaty itself entered into force and therefore the confederation came into being on 1st of February 1982. The confederation treaty , while introducing a closer union between the two countries stressed that the sovereignty of both nations remained intact, it had guaranteed the PPP government the permanent stationing of Senegalese security forces on Gambian soil and as Hughes and Perfect argue, the presence of the Senegalese soldiers in The Gambia, " however controversial and unpopular in certain quarters, allowed the Jawara government to reestablish itself and return to electoral politics and governance. It also enabled Jawara to reorganize his security forces totally." (Hughes & Perfect, 2006).

On the economic scale, the Kukoi Samba Sanyang violent coup, which led to the formation of the Senegambia Confederation had in turn strengthened economic ties between The Gambia and Senegal. Trade and tariffs were liberalized and transportation networks of the two countries were facilitated, mercantilist control of their economies and a protective network of industrial tariffs were encouraged as there was transborder free access. It is worth mentioning at this point that The Gambia found its economic niche in a free trade policy, and lower tariffs. Before the confederation and also after its collapse, the border between the two former British and French colonies remained one of the starkest examples of colonial geographical bartering, and it continues to serve a dual function as a bridge and a barrier in the social, cultural, political and economic relations of the two countries- the two neighbors between whom a union is more naturally and readily available than between other neighbors anywhere else on the planet. (Khan, 2019). Obviously, Gambia's economy was re-oriented by the confederation, ostensibly for the better.

The military intervention in 1981 in Gambia helped in the creation of a Standing National Army for the country. It is worth mentioning at this point that The Gambia did not have a regular and standing army before the 1981 abortive coup d'etat. Rather, the country's internal security was entrusted to and entirely being handled by a Paramilitary Police Force, otherwise, known as the Field Force, which was instituted in 1958 to replace the Gambia Company of the old inter -colonial Royal West African Frontier Force following the latter's abolition on excuses of financial reasons. Thus, the discredited or defunct Gambia Field Force gave birth to the present-day Gambia National Army and with Senegal's heavy influence and almost full control of the force, it emerged with two countervailing military formations, with one of them bearing trademarks of the French system.

The first formation, the Gambia National Army, which consisted of the remnants of the former Field Force together with new recruits, was set up in 1983-84 by a small British training team, The British Army Training Team. The British trainers were later replaced by a much larger Nigerian mission in 1991. The other formation, The Gambia National Gendarmerie, consisted of a paramilitary second line of support for civil policing. This particular force, established in 1986, was based on the Francophone model and trained by the Senegalese army. (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) & (E.J. Ceesay, 2006). The move by President Jawara to create a national army for the first time in the political history of The Gambia was criticized by many concerned Gambians who felt that there was no guarantee that the formation of a new standing army could prevent another coup. They rightly argued that by creating a standing army President Jawara was actually planting the seeds for his eventual political demise and this was exactly what happened in 1994 when Sir Dawda was overthrown by the very national army he had created for his survival. (E.J. Ceesay, 2006).

The opinions of Huntington and that of Finer and Morris Janowitz cited above summed up that of Omo-bare. Fundamentally and unlike the second coup in 1994, what made the Gambian first coup situation exceptional (unique) is that the prime movers of the insurgency were civilians who co-opted some members of the paramilitary Field Force into their ranks and executed the coup. In other instances, in Africa and in other climes, it is unconventional for civilians to play major roles in executing a coup plot let alone being the

instigators. Also, in all cases of either attempted or successful overthrow of regimes, the execution stage is strictly a military affair (Omasanjuwa & Tarro 2021).

As for The Second Military Coup in The Gambia, which was entirely a military affair and led by Yahya A.J.J Jammeh, it has a meaningful and sustainable impact on the country. Yahya Jammeh who was born on 25th May 1965, came in as a young military officer and later a politician who served as both head of state and Commander in Chief of the Gambian Army from July 1994 to January 2017. During the period of full-fledged military rule , from July ,1994 to December,1996, he was called the Chairman of the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) and then as President of The Republic of Gambia from January 1997 to January 2017. This is what one would describe as the period of diluted or quasi- military rule in the Gambia. Contrary to the view held by some of his critics and perhaps enemies, Yahya Jammeh was seen by many as both a savior and transformer of his country as aptly captured by Nnaocha & Bojang: "The interesting rise of Yahya Jammeh from a Junior Army Officer to a Head of State, president and transformer of the polity in The Gambia is one of the greatest phenomena in the history of the country (Nnaocha & Bojang, 2018).

On assumption of office as the military Head of State, Jammeh on 17 October 1994, announced a four-year transition period for the country to revert to civilian rule. In November 1994, he appointed a National Consultative Committee (NCC) following the widespread rejection of his four-year plan, to review the transition process, and the Committee submitted its report on 27 January 1995, recommending only a two-year transition period. Let. Jammed then appointed The Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) in April 1995 to work on a new constitution and the CRC reported to the government in November 1995. Its report was published in March 1996, and the resulting draft constitution was put to a national referendum on 8 August 1996. The new constitution, which provided for multiparty periodic elections, an independent electoral commission, the incorporation of all the AFPRC decrees promulgated during the days of full-fledged military rule into the laws of the Gambia (section 7 paragraph c of the 1997 Constitution), and originally a term limit of two five-year presidential terms, as well as a lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18, (section 39 paragraph e of the constitution), and a couple of other new institutions and processes, was approved by a majority of 70% of the Gambian electorate and in turn this opened the floodgate for multi-party politics and marked the formal beginning of a second republic for The Gambia.

One of the milestone achievements of Jammeh's military government was the establishment of the Provisional Independent Electoral Commission (PIEC) on the 20th of December 1995, charged with the responsibility of conducting and supervising public elections and referenda in The Gambia among other things during the transition period. The PIEC embarked on a Voter Registration exercise, from 13th May to the 22nd of June 1996. The result of this exercise was crucial for the conduct of the referendum and elections that followed it in September and December of that year. On the 8th of August 1996, a referendum on the Revised Draft Constitution was conducted and supervised by the PIEC. Shortly afterwards the Presidential and National Assembly elections were held in September and December 1996 respectively. The PIEC has now become a permanent election conducting and supervising watchdog, called the Independent Electoral Commission (the IEC) for all elections and referenda in The Gambia.

In the same sentiment, after The PIEC was dissolved and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was formed on the 17th of April 1997. The IEC inherited the mandate of the (Provisional Independent Electoral Commission (PIEC), but peculiar to the IEC was its permanent status and a reduction of its membership from seven to five members, as provided for under Sections 42-49 of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia.
The Mandate of the PIEC was clearly stated in section 6 of the PIEC Decree, (Decree 62 of 1995).

In 1996, the military government ushered in a new political party in The Gambia, perhaps the last or one of the last political parties to be established in the dying days of the First Republic of the Gambia. For the first time ever in the political history of The Gambia a political party was formed by the military and as shown in the abbreviation of the name of the new party (APRC), which sounds like a slight amendment of AFPRC the name that the military was known for during the period of full-fledged military rule in the country, it gave the

impression that the business of governing the country would still be a military affair. In other words, this was a clear signal of what the nature of the incoming government should be if the military party should win the September 1996 presidential elections, that is to say, it was going to be diluted military rule and this was exactly what happened from January,1997 to January, 2017. APRC is the short form of "Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction" (APRC), which was a good turning point in the history of the country. In late 2001 and early 2002, the Gambia completed a full cycle of presidential, legislative, and local government elections for the second republic, which foreign observers deemed free, fair, and transparent. President Yahya Jammeh, who was elected as president for a second term, took the oath of office again on 21 December 2001. Jammeh's Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) maintained its strong majority and domination in the National Assembly till the end of his reign in January 2017.

In order to upgrade the status and guarantee more autonomy and responsibilities to the six Administrative Divisions of The Gambia and as part of the process of restructuring, reorganization, realignment and creating of new institutions, he had started immediately after the coup to strengthen the country's government machinery, Lt. Jammeh changed the status of the provinces from Divisions to regions and the titles or positions of administrative heads from Commissioners to Governors. He also renamed McCarthy Island Division as the Central River Region and its regional capital from George Town to Jangjandbure.

Thus, status and names of the five provinces became as follows: from: Western Division to West Coast Region, North Bank Division to North Bank Region, Lower River Division to Lower River Region, McCarthy Island Division to Central River Region and Upper River Division to Upper River Region. These changes were introduced in 2007 and as mentioned above the positions of Commissioners for the former Divisions were upgraded to Regional Governors who are directly answerable to the President of the Republic. The Council for the City of Banjul (BCC) and the Kanifing Municipal Councils (KMC) are headed by mayors. In the past and before Jammeh the latter was headed by a chairman whose position has now been upgraded to Mayor/ Mayoress. (see Sections 192 to 194 of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia and Parts 1 & 2 and Schedule 1 together with section 123 of the Local Government Act, 2002- As Amended.). I now quickly and briefly highlight the state and parastatal institutions established by the AFPRC/ APRC government from 1994 to 2016.

The Second Republic of The Gambia under the stewardship of Lieutenant and later President Yahya Jammeh had immediately after the 1994 coup, began a massive campaign of state institutions building and strengthening both in the form of creating new state institutions and parastatal organizations as well as restructuring or revamping, reorganizing and renaming existing institutions to strengthen both the structure and functioning of the machinery of state management and governance in The Gambia.

In the views of a Gambian historian and author, Hasoum Ceesay, he argues strongly that "One of the unsung realities of the much-chided Jammeh era from 1994 to 2016 is the attempt made at building institutions and extending the frontiers of Gambian diplomacy and State outreach. During this period there was a steady effort to strengthen the reach of the State through regional administration innovations; there was a serious attempt to extend Gambian diplomatic outreach through the opening of Missions." Ceesay further posits that there was also "an attempt at state strengthening through the multiplication of state institutions. This fact is usually overlooked in the scholarship on the Jammeh era." (Hasoun Ceesay 2023)

Thus, the main sectors of government affected by this campaign of state institutions building from 1994 to 2016, include Ministries, government agencies, parastatal organizations, the foreign service sector and the civil society sub-sector.

New ministries Created:

The new ministries created by the Jammeh administration from 1994 to 2016 include the following:

Ministry of Defence- 1994

Ministries of Fisheries-1997

Ministry of National Assembly Matters-1997

Ministry of Presidential Affairs- 199

Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology-2002

Ministry of Climate Change-2012

Ministry of Gambians Abroad-

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

Government Departments, Agencies and Parastatals created Under Yahya Jammeh:

The government Agencies and Parastatal enumerated below were created by the AFPRC administration between 1994 and 2016.

National Sport Council

National Youth Council

Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, PURA, 2002

Alternative Dispute Resolution Services, ADRS

National Enterprise Development Initiative-NEDI

Gambia Import Export Promotion Agency, GIEPA; this agency was revamped and transformed from the former National Investment Board- NIB inherited from the Jawara administration.

The Gambia Standards Bureau

National Agency Against Trafficking In persons NAATIP

National disaster management Agency

The University of The Gambia

The Gambia Tourism Board, 2001

The Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency

The Gambia National Petroleum Company

The Gambia radio and TV Services GRTS

Police paramilitary-1995

The Gambia Revenue Authority

National Audit Office

Directorate of National Treasury

Independent Electoral Commission, 1996

National Youth Council (NYS)

Office of the Ombudsman

Provincial Divisions upgraded and renamed Regions-1997

Constituencies increased from 36 to 43-1997.

National Roads Authority- NRA.

Gambia International Airlines. (GIA), In the first republic it was known as Gambia Airways.

Expansions in the Frontiers of Gambian Diplomacy and the Foreign Service

The military rulers in Banjul, governing the country from 1994 to 2016 have also left their footprints and indelible marks in the country's foreign service and diplomatic field. The Jammeh administration had both increased and strengthened diplomatic ties with the following countries through the opening of new Gambian Missions, or establishing of formal diplomatic relations etc:

Cuba- Gambian embassy opened in Havana in 1999

Venezuela- Gambian embassy opened in Caracas 2007

Iran-Gambian embassy opened in Tehran in 2000, although this mission is now temporarily closed.

Guinea Bissau- Gambian embassy opened in 1999

Kuwait- Gambian embassy opened in 1999

The Gulf State of Qatar

Morocco-Gambian embassy opened in 1999

Malaysia- Gambian embassy opened in 2015

Russian Federation - Gambian embassy in Musco opened in 2012

Mauretania- Gambian embassy opened in 2005

Turkey-Gambian embassy opened in 2010

Ties with Belarus were established in 2002

South Africa- relations established with an embassy still functioning, in 1998

Relations with Mauritius were established in 2003

Addis Ababa- Gambian embassy opened in 1998

UAE-Gambian embassy opened.

Ukraine-established ties in 1999.

Relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan were established in 1995; while the Gambian Embassy in Taipei was opened in 1996.

However, The Gambia has since 2013 severed ties with Taiwan and Immediately after that the country began negotiations with Beijing to resume ties with Communist China. Thus, The Gambia r-established ties with the People's Republic of China since 2014. It may be worth mentioning at this juncture that negotiations for The Gambia's resumption of ties with China was started by the author of this article in early 2014 when he served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Gambians abroad. In early January 2014, the then Gambia Foreign Minister traveled to Dakar the capital of Senegal for a couple of missions including to meet with the Chinese Ambassador for formal talks on the resumption of bilateral diplomatic relations between the two countries and the meeting was held at the Chinese Embassy in Dakar. Consequently, and after a long and difficult discussion the Ambassador of China started to back down and announced that his country would agree to resume diplomatic ties with The Gambia based on conditions contained in a document that was handed over to the Gambia Foreign Minister by the China Ambassador. The document contains five principles that the Ambassador described: as the directive and governing principles of Chinese diplomatic relations with all countries and actors in the international system.

The Ambassador then requested from The Gambian Minister to respond positively to those five points via an email to be sent to him for onward transmission to the Foreign Ministry in Beijing. After returning to Banjul the Gambia Foreign Minister responded positively to the Chinese conditions via an email sent through the Gambia Embassy in Dakar for onward transmission to the Chinese authorities. The unedited versions of both the document containing the five Principles on the basis of which China Gambia diplomatic relations were to be restored and the subsequent email from the government of The Gambia are attached as annexes to this article. Notwithstanding the annexes, here is a brief summary of those principles which govern the People's Republic of China's International relations with all countries in the world.

According to the document the Chinese authorities handed over to the Gambian delegation, comprising the Foreign Minister of the time- the author of this article, the Former Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Hon. Kebba S. Touray and the former Ambassador of Gambia to Senegal H. E. Samba Fall, fifty years had passed since the five principles of China's foreign relations with the international community were established. The document further explained that history has proven that the five principles are norms for handling state-to- state relations and that the People's Republic of China has strived to develop relations of friendship and mutual cooperation with other countries on the basis of those principles. Thus, upon The Gambia's positive response to and formal acceptance of China's terms and conditions for the resumption of ties, diplomatic relations between Banjul and Beijing were restored in 2014.

The Military Government and the Education Sector in The Gambia:

Contrary to expectations and predictions of many critics of military rule in Africa, the Gambian Military ruler had given a huge attention to education and scientific research as demonstrated in several major projects embarked upon and achieved by his

government throughout the period of both full-fledged and diluted military rule in the country. The Jammeh administration made tremendous and huge successes in the Education sector from 1994-2016. Education was at a lower ebb during The Gambia's First Republic under Sir Dawda Jawara. For instance, during the First Republic, there was only one government high school in the country, that is Armitage High School founded in 1923 in Georgetown, the provincial capital of the Central River region of The Gambia. All the other schools in the rest of the country were missionary-based schools. But with the ascendancy of Jammeh's administration, he built 123 High Schools across the tiny West African country. (Waan, 2019). It could also be added here that the number of High Schools in the Kanifing Municipality Council (KMC) were very few before the APRC-AFPRC government came into power, but today KMC has over forty- one (41) High Schools. The West Coast Region has about forty- three (43) High Schools. Moreover, during the time of the PPP government, the North Bank Region was not having a single High School but currently it has about nineteen (19) High Schools, while the Lower River Region which was having only one High school now got eight (8) High Schools. Likewise, the Central River Region has jumped from one to twelve (12) High Schools and the Upper River Region which was having only one High school in those days, now has ten (10) High Schools (Waan, 2019).

More on the education sector, 'twenty years on, the number of lower basic schools increased from 250 to 590, while the number of upper basic schools increased from 22 to 196, and senior secondary schools from 12 to 103. The total number of schools increased from 284 in 1994 to 889 in 2014, excluding madrassas-Islamic schools based on the conventional model. "Correspondingly, the total enrollment from lower basic to senior secondary increased from 132,591 in 1994 to 411,443 in 2014 with the lower basic increasing from 105,471 to 274,939. Enrolment in the upper basic increased from 17,899 to 87,391 and in senior secondary from 9,221 to 49,113. Similarly, the number of teachers increased at the lower level from 3,158 in 1994 to 7,464 in 2014, while in upper basic schools it increased from 666 to 3,154 and in senior secondary schools from 460 to 1971 (The Point Newspaper, 2014).

Not only that, the number (ratio) of student's enrolment in both primary and secondary schools increased but President Jammeh granted Free Primary Education for girls on October 17, 2002. The Scholarship programme was administered by a secretariat and it covered the cost of tuition fees and books for girls in all schools both public and private within the West Coast Region and the Greater Banjul Area (GBA). However, the support to girls in privately-run schools would be pegged to the costs in public schools and their parents were expected to pay the difference. Accordingly, literacy level in the country appreciably increased under Jammeh.

When Yahya Jammeh came to power in 1994, being a university graduate, a lawyer or a doctor was mainly the preserve of the elites in Banjul and its surroundings and for one to have a university education he/she has to travel to either Sierra-Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, United Kingdom or the United States and few other friendly countries including the Arab world. Jammeh was obviously not happy with this status quo and he quickly set up a commission to look into the feasibility of pioneering the country's first-ever university after 30 years of nationhood without a University under Jawara. The so-called experts committee told Jammeh that having a university was not feasible for The Gambia at the time but as expected the former military Head of State was not convinced and therefore, he rejected the conclusion. The military ruler went ahead and started a university system - the first of its kind in The Gambia in partnership with Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. Many people spread rumours that the graduates would not be recognized abroad but the rest, as they say, is history with the university now producing the country's home-grown doctors, lawyers, educators, economists and accountants as well as top academic scholars that went on to do graduate studies in top universities around the world.

Consequently, University Education in The Gambia, its foundation, development successes, and achievements can only be attributed to the military's involvement in governance in the country in general and to the indefatigable efforts of former Let. and later President Yahya Jammeh and his visionary leadership in particular. Under his government, he established the University Extension Programme (U.E.P) in 1995, which was aptly described as First World Education in a Third World. In 1995, the country began a partnership with Saint Mary's University of Canada to

provide undergraduate degrees for Gambian citizens for the first time in their own country.

This programme was called the Saint Mary's University Extension Programme (U.E.P), Nova Scotia, Canada, in The Gambia. Professors from Saint Mary's travelled to The Gambia to teach, and also qualified Gambian instructors were hired as adjunct professors (Waan, 2019). Under this programme, the first local intelligentsia or cohort of intellectuals graduated and are now contributing meaningfully to the socio-political and economic development of the country. This partnership with Saint Mary's University ultimately led to the founding of the University of The Gambia on March 3rd 1999 following an Act of Parliament passed by the National Assembly of the Gambia, and the University now operates as an independent degree-granting institution. The credit of the founding of the University of The Gambia (UTG), as already alluded to, goes to the astute leadership of Yahya Jammeh as a military ruler. The University is now playing a key role in personal and national development and granting all levels of academic degrees-from undergraduate diplomas to graduate and postgraduate degrees including doctoral degrees. The military government was in its early days granted a loan of $35 million by the Republic of China on Taiwan and another £ 10 million from Libya. It was with this money that the military ruler Lieutenant Jammeh and his AFPRC government engaged in a number of development projects including massive infrastructure and institutions building. (Ceesay, 2006). Thus, it is Crystal clear from the above exposition that the successes of the military government in the education sector have contributed significantly to the socio-economic development of Gambians in particular and their country in general.

The Military Government and Infrastructure Department in The Gambia

The Jammeh administration embarked upon massive infrastructure development in the nooks and crannies of The Gambia. By infrastructure here reference is made to health, transportation, telecommunications and information and technology (IT) infrastructure across the length and breadth of the country. Regarding the health infrastructure, Jammeh built major hospitals at Farafenni in the North Bank region, Bwiam in the West Coast region and Serrekunda in the KMC region. Alongside with the building of hospitals was also the establishment of more health centres in the Kombos and rural areas of the country. As regards health facilities,prior to 1994, there were a total of 28 health facilities throughout the country, with only two referral hospitals in Bansang and Banjul. At the present, there are 91 health facilities out of which 6 are major referral hospitals strategically located around the country to ensure universal health coverage for all people living in The Gambia. (The Point Newspaper, 2014).

These hospitals drastically reduced the high rate of mortality in the country and it can be added here that the Gambia, under Yahya Jammeh, had one of the best Primary Health Care systems in West Africa. Further, the two colonial-built hospitals in Bansang and the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVTH), now Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH) were expanded and thoroughly modernized as crucial hospital equipment and facilities were installed to address the challenge of health care delivery in the country. According to Jeffrey Smith, an international consultant who had closely worked with Gambian NGOs and civil society actively working in the relevant field, The Gambia achieved one of Africa's highest vaccination rates, which should certainly be applauded, and counted as one of the major successes and a credit for the military government. (Nnaocha Bojang, 2018). The former Royal Victoria hospital in Banjul was further upgraded and converted into a research and teaching hospital and attached to the university of The Gambia, hence the change of name to Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH).

It is acknowledged that one of the most important steps taken by the military government to advance the Gambian cause was the introduction of requisite basic infrastructure upon which any development can meaningfully take place. To this effect, the military ruler constructed and rehabilitated a number of road networks including a couple of ultramodern highways such as the Kombo Coastal Roads, Serrekunda-Mandinaba, Mandinaba-Soma, Brikama-Sanyang, Essau-Kerewan, Kerewan-Farafenni, Farafenni-Laminkoto, Westfield-Sukuta, Barra-Amdalai, Trans-GambiaHighway,Soma-Basse-Sabi,Basse-

Velingara,Mandinaba-Seleti,Brikama-Dimbaya-Darsilami, Sukuta – Jambajelly etc., and also laying the foundation and actually starting the construction of the Trans-Gambia or the Senegambia Bridge, which was completed and inaugurated during the time of President Adama Barrow. The construction of the Lamin Koto Passemas road was also started by the quasi-military government after having done all the necessary groundwork including securing the funding and the relevant technicalities.

Under Yahya Jammeh, the mileage of tarred and paved roads in the country increased significantly, as the provinces now are linked with the coastal areas. Road networks are one of the critical links in the rural - urban road networks and they provide access to a large population of the communities in the KMC, the West Coast and the Northern regions (Jallow, 2015).

In terms of Air transportation, the military led-government built the new terminal building at and expanded the Banjul International Airport, in Yundum, in 1996. The airport was originally a World War II Allied airfield which served as a port of call for Allied naval convoys and an air stopover for the U.S. Army Air Corps. After World War II, Yundum airport was used for passenger flights. Both British South American Airways and the British Overseas Airways Corporation had services in Yundum, although the former later moved its service to Dakar, which had a concrete runway (as opposed to pierced steel planking of Yundum) (West Africa Hansard, 1947). The airport was rebuilt in 1963 and the building is still in use today. After building the new airport the military government converted the 1963 building into a Hajj terminal for those passengers heading to the holy sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to perform the annual Hajj or pilgrimage. The Banjul International Airport of today has the nature and facility of a modern Airport which serves as the gateway to other parts of the world.

In February 2001, Ghana Airways commenced a flight from Banjul to Baltimore, which originated in Accra. Cooperation among Ghana Airways, Gambia International Airlines, and the Ghanaian and Gambian governments gave rise to the service. (Ghana Airways - Baltimore flight Touched Down in Banjul, in 2001) No doubt, the Banjul International Airport built by the military government plays a vital role in supporting the tourism sector, (another important source of revenue for the country), and it meets travel needs of both Gambians and other nationals transiting via Banjul. Reinvigorating the Tourism Sector meant that it became the second-highest contributor to GDP in The Gambia (currently between 12 and 16 percent). It directly supports over 35,000 jobs (and indirectly supports 40,000) and generates $85 million in foreign exchange earnings. Despite going under diluted military rule, The Gambia was still regarded and chosen as a destination by a lot of tourists all over the world, thus boosting the revenue of the country. (. The Independent. Accra, 13 February ,2021.) As mentioned above, the country's national carrier, called Gambia Airways in the past, was upgraded and renamed Gambia International Airlines (GIA) by the APRC led government.

Similarly, under Yahya Jammeh, the Banjul Port was expanded and refurbished with modern equipment and facilities. Principal facilities included the Banjul Wharf and the New Banjul Jetty and Extension; a container terminal, freight terminal, bonded warehouse complex, oil boom, workshops and a document handling centre. Expansion plans include jetty expansion; a new ferry terminal and head office building; new computer cabling and a new car and truck terminal area (Gambia Ports Authority History, 2021). It is most significant to note that more Crossing -Points were established and more Ferries injected into the sea transportation of the country. In 2001, the management and operations of the ferry service were taken away from the Gambia Public Transport Corporation (GPTC) and handed over to the Gambia Ports Authority (GPA0. Included in the transfer were the other eight ferry crossing points in the country.

In the power sector, Jammeh's Quasi military government made remarkable achievements. Before he came into office electricity was concentrated only in Banjul, the Capital, and some parts of the Kombos. The APRC government improved and expanded the Kotu Power Station by introducing generating plants and also built Regional Power stations in all the six administrative regions of the country, Under the credit of the military, electricity is dotted in all the nooks and crannies of The Gambia. Though consumers pay a high cost for power in The Gambia – the average tariff of $0.23/kilowatt hour (kWh) is one of the highest in the world. This is a result of high costs to produce and supply electricity, driven by

expensive imports of HFO for NAWEC's generators (Gambia, The - Country Commercial Guide Date?). Be it as it may, electricity supplies improved under Jammeh as at independence.

On IT infrastructure development, President Yahya Jammeh's designation of 2012 as the year of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in the Gambia was seen by many as part of his main development agenda to transform the country into an economic success story backed by a well-structured and functioning IT infrastructure.

This initiative by the military ruler in Banjul was similar to Egypt's declaration of 2007-20016 as a decade of science and technology in the middle eastern country. President Jammeh was also on the same page with African ministers of science who earlier designated 2007 as a year for science, technology and innovation in Africa as well as their declaration of 2011- 2020 as the decade of science in the continent.

The Jammeh government identified education, training, scientific and innovative research as the roadmap that would assure the achieving of his year of science dream. One of the main targets of the year of science, technology and innovation declaration was to enhance the implementation of a couple of higher education projects and initiatives that were already underway. These included the development of a higher education observatory and quality assurance mechanism and the submission of a tertiary education act to cabinet for approval. These two major targeted objectives were all achieved. The Gambia Tertiary Education Act and the Quality Assurance Authority were enacted into law by Parliament and assented to by President Jammeh before he left office following his ousting by a coalition of opposition parties in the December 2016 Presidential elections. The Tertiary Education Act focuses on a number of strategies including improving access and relevance, avoiding duplication of programmes and increasing efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability in the delivery of higher education. (Sawahel, 29 January, 2012). Suffice one to add that the University of the Gambia is definitely working on this track. The country's quality assurance mechanism is functioning effectively and efficiently as well.

The military government first prepared the ground for the IT infrastructure of the country by introducing the relevant IT/ ICT regimes in The Gambia. It is worth mentioning at this point that there were no such policies in the country before the advent of the AFPRC/APRC administrations on the 22nd of July in 1994 and on first of January in 1997.

In January 2011 the military ruler ushered in two major IT/ICT projects and as such laying the foundations and structures for the IT and ICT infrastructure of the Gambia.

The first one was the fiber optic cable construction project funded by the World Bank at the tune of 27 million American dollars. This cable enables the population of the Gambia to access the latest generation of high- speed internet. The fiber optic cable can also stimulate economic development by enabling Gambia's enterprises to create and develop new businesses on the web. (the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa- ICA, 20 January 2011).

The other project was The Gambia Submarine Cable Company (GSC). This is a consortium of companies whose membership comprises all licensed operators-both mobile and fixed lines as well as a couple of internet service providers (ISPs) in the Gambia. The GSC manages the ACE Submarine cable capacity for all stakeholders in the country. It plays a very important and strategic role in reducing the digital divide in the country, it also helps in the development and use of Information and Communication Technology throughout the Gambia. The GSC is described as "the unique gateway for incoming and outgoing communications to and from The Gambia" (info@gsc.gm).

The above initiatives have been described as "a success story of public private partnerships (PPP) where the private sector works hand in hand with the public sector to deliver efficient communications services." (info@gsc.gm). The ACE cable landed in the Gambia on the Bijillo beach from France on the 12 of September 2011.

Furthermore, all the existing GSM companies and service providers in the Gambia were ushered in by the military government. Thus, Gamcell- a state-owned GSM company, was established by the Jammeh administration in November2001. The private GSM companies, Africell, Comium and Qcel, were all established

after having been issued licenses by the military government in 2001, 2006 and 2009 respectively. (for more information on Gambia's private GSM companies, you can visit their respective websites). Similarly, there has been a proliferation of internet service providers (ISPs) in the Gambia during the lifespan of the second republic- 1994 to 2016.

The above expose has clearly shown that laying down the foundations and subsequent development of the current IT/ICT infrastructure and regime are a legacy of the military government in the Gambia and should be counted as one of the great achievements of the former Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and military ruler of the Republic of The Gambia then lieutenant/ major and later President Yahya Jammeh.

On information flow and broadcasting, it can be safely and fairly argued that one of the iconic and outstanding achievements of the Jammeh administration was the establishment of the Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS) TV Station in 1995. In December 1995, the AFPRC Government under the stewardship of Lieutenant Jammeh commissioned the Gambia Radio and Television Service (GRTS) TV station. GRTS is The Gambia's only public service broadcaster and under the umbrella of Gambia Telecommunications Company (Gamtel). The new television station was to perform test transmissions from a 5KW transmitter situated at Abuko covering the Greater Banjul Area. For better transmission, GRTS acquired state of the art Satellite for a broad-based transmission of information. Later, a couple of transmitting stations were erected in the provincial towns of Bansang and Jara Soma inland to achieve better national broadcasting coverage (GRTS, 2009). However, despite these earlier efforts some areas of The Gambia, in particular the Upper - River regions still remain outside the full airing range of GRTS. Notwithstanding this and many other challenges, GRTS was able to go global during Yahya Jammeh's time and it was available within and could be monitored or followed on the family of the international satellite systems. Gambians in the diaspora all over the world were able to receive the Television signals and watch its various programmes continuously.

The Independent Media and Press Freedom Under the Military in The Gambia:

On the question of independent media practice, both print and broadcast media and on the question of human rights protection in general, I must admit, the military government had not been doing well in terms of granting press freedom and free flow of information to the media practitioners, right from the onset in 1994 to its downfall in 2016. The relationship between the private media and the Jammeh administration was always problematic with most of the blame being placed on the government although there were times that the media was to blame for certain frictions between them and the government. Nonetheless, any objective study that takes a right based approach to the relationship between the military government and the independent media in The Gambia from 1994 to 2016 would arrive at the same conclusion. ie; that the military government's performance in this sector was very poor and didn't leave anything to be desired for the future of the country.

There were numerous instances and so many cases of arbitrary arrests and detentions of journalists, court cases instituted and jail sentences handed down by the courts against journalists and independent media organizations. There were also many cases of closing down of and arson attacks against newspapers, radio stations and journalists mainly around the Greater Banjul Area and other media outlets elsewhere in the country. The government also kept on changing the rules and regulations concerning the establishment and payment of registration fees for establishing new media organizations.

It will be very useful at this point to briefly revisit press laws in The Gambia during the days of military rule in the country making a reference to one of my previous articles published by the university of Pretoria in South Africa In 2012.

Press Laws in The Gambia:

"The print media in The Gambia is governed by the Newspaper Act 1944. Thus, registration, printing, publication and distribution of Newspapers in The Gambia continue to be

governed by the Act throughout the First Republic (Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Act). Section 2 of the Act defines newspapers as "any paper containing and reporting any public news, intelligence or occurrences or any remarks, observations or comments thereon printed and published for sale in The Gambia periodically or in parts or numbers but does not include any such paper published by or under the authority of the government. According to this definition, government controlled or owned papers are not newspapers. Thus, apparently the Act is meant to govern the privately owned print papers. Despite a 1990 amendment the main provisions of the Act remained the same throughout the First Republic. Section 7 of the Act provided for a mandatory registration fee of only 1000 (One thousand Dalasis about 19 US Dollars) for anyone who wished to establish a newspaper. Similarly, Section 13 imposes a maximum of 1000 Dalasis fine for an offence under the Act. In 1996, the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council under the watchful eyes of its Commander-in-Chief then, Captain Yahya Jammeh introduced a drastic amendment to that Act. This amendment known as Decree No 71 of (the Newspaper Act Amendment No 2, 1996) increased registration fee from 1000 (One thousand Dalasis) to 100, 000 (One hundred thousand Dalasis) that is from about 19 US Dollars to about 1800 (one thousand eight hundred Dollars) for anyone wishing to establish a newspaper. This was a crucial turning point in the relationship between the new military government that had set out to establish the Second Republic and the independent media organizations of the time.

As for the broadcast media, there was no specific legislation regulating private radio and television stations. From the inception of the First Republic to 2005 the privately owned broadcast media continued to be governed by the provisions of the Telegraphic Stations Act 1913, which was very fairly favourable to the independent broadcast media. In July 2001 the Gambian parliament which was dominated by the ruling party of the military (the APRC) passed a highly controversial law to be called the National Media Commission Act, as stipulated in Section 210 of the 1997 Constitution. The independent press cried foul and argued that the new law was too draconian and that it violated the 1997 Constitution. The government, on its part, believed that the passage of the new law was a significant gain in the country's democratization process as it would not only regulate media practice as a profession and a means of communication and expression but it would also ensure better protection of the freedom of the press including free speech and press freedom as well as ensuring honesty and truthfulness in reporting, publishing and broadcasting in The Gambia (Daily Observer: June 2004). The Gambia Press Union then filed a lawsuit before the Supreme Court of The Gambia challenging the constitutionality of the new Act. Among the most controversial clauses of the Act were the following: there was a provision on annual licensing of journalists, which also gave the Commission powers to renew or not to renew the operating licences of journalists and media houses. Other controversial provisions were:

- The Power of the Commission to force journalists to reveal their sources of information
- That all decisions of the Commission are not contestable in any local court
- That the new regulations would not be applicable to the government owned or controlled media
- That the composition of the Commission had among its eleven members only two persons with media background who included the director general of the Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS) (Johnson 2004:413-416, also see Section 52 of the defunct Act).

The media houses in The Gambia resolutely refused to comply with different deadlines set by the Commission for their registration. On October 19, 2004 the State television announced the government's intention to repeal the Act during the November sitting of the National Assembly. During its sitting in December 2004, the National Assembly finally repealed the National Media Commission Act 2001. The provisions of the Constitution which had provided for the setting up of the Commission were subsequently repealed (Section 210 of the 1997 Constitution). Repealing the National Media Commission Act did not bring an end to the struggle by authorities to use the law to control or even suppress the private media. Rather as a replacement, the National Assembly further amended the Newspaper Act and the Criminal Code Act late in December 2004 and July 2005 respectively. This latest amendment to the Newspaper Act increased the registration

fees/bondage of Newspapers / publishers and managers of broadcasting institutions from D100, 000 to D500.000 (five hundred thousand Dalasis) which is about $9800. This increase in a country where the average salary for a civil servant range between US 40 and US 70 is deemed by many as unfair and unreasonable and thus, it is fair to argue at this juncture that its constitutionality could be successfully challenged before the Supreme Court of The Gambia under whose jurisdiction falls the interpretation of the constitution. Sections 3 and 4, as amended, have brought broadcasting institutions (Radio and T.V stations) into the jurisdiction of the Newspaper Act.

Like the 1944 Act, the 2004 Act (amendment) has excluded broadcasting institutions owned or operated by or under the authority of the government from the application of the Act. Similarly, Section 7 has been amended to include broadcasting stations. Based on the Act, no person should be allowed to operate a broadcasting station or cause it to be operated unless he/she gave and executed and registered in the office of the Registrar General a bond in the sum of five hundred thousand Dalasis with such surety or sureties as may be required and approved by the Attorney General. Section 7 (a) cancelled any bond given and executed before coming into effect of the newly amended Act in the sum of D100, 000. Furthermore, the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2004 had introduced mandatory prison terms for seditious publications, libel and defamation without the option of fines (Section 52 of the Act). As for the 2005 amendment of the same law, it provided for a fine of not less than fifty thousand Dalasis and not more than two hundred and fifty thousand Dalasis or imprisonment of a term of not less than one year or to both fine and imprisonment, for anyone who is found guilty of seditious publication (Johnson 2004:236-238 and Conateh 2000: paper presented in June of the same year)."

This brief survey of press laws in The Gambia has shown that successive governments of The Gambia and the people as well do not recognize or may not necessarily be conscious of the rights dimension of press freedom and of the fact that it is a prerequisite for or a pillar of a democratic system. Many human rights activists and media practitioners of the time had argued that the use of restrictive laws by the state to control the private media was one of the main reasons why press freedom was very weak in The Gambia.

Notwithstanding this restrictive and unfriendly regime of press laws during the years of full-fledged and Quasi-military rule in The Gambia, the broadcast media proliferated under the military and the number of radio stations significantly increased from about three to close to forty stations spreading across the length and breadth of the country although the majority of them were concentrated in the Greater Banjul area and the West Coast region. (Senghore,2012 & 2018).

Youth and Women Empowerment Under the military government in The Gambia

On Youth and Women Empowerment, the AFPRC/APRC led-government under Let. Jammeh played a significant role in supporting and empowering the youth and women throughout the country. The youth and women empowerment programs of the military government touched on diverse areas and various sectors of life in the country- be they political, social, economic, cultural and the list goes on. Under Sir Dawda Jawara in the first republic, the voting age stood at 21 but this was reduced under Jammeh to 18 years, thereby enfranchising more youths of The Gambia (Waam, 2019). Women were given their pride of place in The Gambia as enshrined in the 1997 republican constitution of the Gambia. Likewise, human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals and groups were guaranteed to all Gambians- men and women alike by the same constitution.

The Jammeh administration also demonstrated serious commitments to empowering women and reducing gender inequality, including by establishing the National Women's Council within the Department of State (now Ministry) for Women's Affairs, which acts as a forum for women to access legal support. The ensuing adoption of the Women's Act (2010), the Sexual Offences Act (2013), and the Women's Amendment Act (2015) banning female genital mutilation also signified further progress in advancing the rights of women in the country. In addition, in 2012 The Gambia adopted a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, recognizing the impact that conflicts in

neighboring countries have on Gambian women directly or indirectly.

The Gambia is a party to various international human rights treaties-both global and regional instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). The military government, like the Jawara government, had committed itself to taking appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect women and children from all forms ofviolence, abuse, neglect or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

The military government therefore fulfilled part of its international obligations, when it enacted special legal instruments and formulated policies for the protection of women and children in The Gambia including the passing of the Children's Act of 2005 amended in 2016 to prohibit child marriage in the Gambia (Gambia Education Policy, 2004-2015). Under Jammeh, the girl-child care was paramount and he was on course to achieve one of the goals of the SDGs, which is to "achieve full and productive employment, and decent work, for all women and men by 2030." To achieve this goal in the Gambia, the Jammeh administration promoted skills development training and education programmes, especially for youth, who make up more than half of the population.

On Security Sector Reforms (SSR), the military government of former Lieutenant and later President Yahya Jammeh, had given considerable attention to that sector and had implemented its reforms program in various ways covering mainly the military, the police and intelligence services. This was largely in the form of expansion of the security sector, including the establishment of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) in 1995. During Jammeh's tenure, it must be admitted, the state security machinery was strongly controlled by him and it largely served to protect his government and of course to also ensure internal security, Peace and stability of the country. It should also be pointed out here that both former presidents Jawara and Jammeh were suspicious of the military and each deliberately limited their influence and could have done more on the development of a professional officer corps. The security landscape in The Gambia was identified as a legacy of the Jawara administration and hence, the necessity for the reform undertaken by the Jammeh government.

Agriculture was another key component of the development programs of the Jammeh administration. In what he termed "Green Revolution", the former military ruler of the Gambia embarked upon massive agricultural projects such as "Operation Feed Yourself' (OFY) and "Back -to- the Land" and "grow what you eat" or "eat from what you grow". In this regard, Jammeh, (the former Chief Farmer) launched the Tidal irrigation system, which regularly supplied water to farm fields. Other irrigation projects, which developed and ran in the same year, were the Jahally & Pacharr Smallholders Project (JPSP), funded by the African Development Bank and the World Bank, and the Irrigated Rice Development Project (IRDEP), financed by the African Development Bank (Ndow, 2013). The JPSP developed 849 hectares of tidally irrigated land and 560 hectares of pump-irrigated land, but the 242.6 hectares developed by the IRDEP were all pump-irrigated. In order to guarantee food security, he launched two five-year US$24 million projects, called the Gambia Growth and Competitiveness Project (GGCP) and the West African Agricultural Production Project (WAAPP). Agriculture has ever since been the traditional pillar of the Gambian economy, contributing 26.2 percent of the country's GDP and providing employment and income to the majority of Gambians (Darboe, 2011).

Taking the WAAPP project as an example, it was meant to provide financial support to West African Agricultural research programs of all countries of the region. The project therefore contributed significantly to the improvement of national agricultural research programs of member countries of the subregion including The Gambia by injecting the badly needed funds into those projects. The 2017 status report of the project provides us with the following explanation regarding the overall objective and ultimate benefits of the WAAPP project;

"WAAPP supports the generation, dissemination, and adoption of improved technologies; the creation of enabling conditions for regional cooperation; and the development of human and institutional capacity across the subregion; along with the creation of youth employment, the

participation of women, and adaptation to climate change. Consequently, the program supports a comparatively large number of recipients, both at the country and regional levels. These include research agencies, extension agencies, universities, the private sector, research coordination bodies, NGOs, farmers' organizations, international research institutes, and more. (For an overview of agricultural research spending and capacity trends in West Africa," the 2017 status report concluded as follows:

"WAAPP has injected significant funding into West African NARSs since 2008 and made substantial progress in addressing the subregion's most acute agricultural research challenges. The program has invested extensively in the construction and rehabilitation of research infrastructure and in the provision of laboratory equipment for predefined priority commodities. As such, it has strengthened the position of West African countries to perform high-quality, priority research over the coming years. WAAPP has also invested in postgraduate training for more than 1,000 young scientists across West Africa—30 percent of whom are female—which has significantly contributed to offsetting impending large-scale human capacity losses due to the retirement of senior researchers."

As mentioned above, the WAAPP project was initiated by the military government and launched in 2011 although part B. of the project in which The Gambia is included was approved in 2010. (ASTI Status Report, 2017).

During Jammeh's tenure, he encouraged horticulture and livestock production among women by giving them loans and incentives as part of his encouragement package. He encouraged several agricultural projects such as the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project (NEMA) and livestock and horticulture development projects. This latter project specifically works to aid women, youths and even adults in The Gambia and would in no small measure, reduce poverty rates in the country. By implementing sustainable land and water management practices, productivity will increase among this group. The sector goal is not only to contribute to food security but also to reduce poverty and subsequently, improve the quality of life and the living standards of the group concerned. Thus, the overall objective of this project was to increase, on a sustainable basis, the production and marketability of horticultural and livestock products and by-products, nationwide.

For a more detailed study and critical analysis of the situation of human rights, the media and press freedom as well as the general question of democratic governance in The Gambia under the military government- both under full-fledged and diluted military rule in The Gambia, reference can be made to my previous studies on the subjects including the following peer-reviewed and published academic journal articles:

Human Rights and Democracy in The Gambia: is The Gambia a Democratic State? By Aboubacar Abdullah Senghore PhD. In: The Gambia: Perspectives on Contemporary Issues and Future Direction (s): 1965 – 2016; Continuity or Change (New Jersey: Africa World Press and CODESRIA Dakar, 2017).

Finally, I must, with all sincerity, admit at this point that the former military government in Banjul did not do very well in the area of human rights protection and democratic governance in general as compared to its outstanding achievements in other areas of socio-economic and political development. Despite having introduced drastic changes into the governance and state management system of The Gambia by adding numerous new institutions and revamping, reorganizing and restructuring a couple of the existing institutions and despite having done extremely well in infrastructure development and in terms of ensuring and maintaining internal security, domestic peace and stability, the military government's performance in the domain of respect for, promoting and protection of human rights and full adherence to the principles of democratic governance was fluctuating and in many occasions disappointing. There were many instances of high-profile cases of government failures to protect human rights, as well as cases of abuses and violations of fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals and groups. One of the biggest challenges the military authorities were grappling with was the democratic principles of respect for the rule of law and the authority and supremacy of the law and the independence of the judiciary. It is always difficult for military rulers and military commanders in general anywhere across the continent to come to terms with and wholeheartedly accept and submit to the democratic reality that decisions of the justices of the courts are superior to and therefore

should prevail over any administrative decisions or executive directives and orders including orders from the Military High Command, that they can be reviewed by or challenged before and set aside by the courts. Our experience with the military has repeatedly shown that a military ruler cannot simply come to terms with or accept the fact that there exists in the state or in the very government he is heading a higher authority that can definitively nullify, invalidate or set aside an administrative order or decision of his government or even his own executive directives. For the military authorities, orders from the Military High Command are superior orders and must therefore be obeyed by all at any cost. To reconcile this culture of authority and command in the military tradition with the principles of democratic governance and state management (such as constitutional rule, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for the rule of law , independence of the judiciary and the supremacy of the constitution and the laws in general etc…), is one of the biggest and most difficult challenges facing the modern day political phenomenon of military rule and the possible attempts to normalize or legitimize military takeovers of power and their involvement in governance and state management across the globe. The military ruler in Banjul was obviously not an exception to the above challenge.

The December 2016 Presidential Elections and The Resulting Political Impasse in The Gambia-December 2016 to February 2017.

The overall outcome of the first of December 2016 Presidential elections is perhaps the biggest and the most towering political legacy of military rule in The Gambia. For the first time ever in the political history of independent Gambia a sitting or an incumbent government was defeated and ousted from office by a coalition of opposition parties in a largely free and fair democratic elections. Throughout the entire lifespan of the first republic-1970 to 1994, the government of the founding father of independent Gambia, Sir Dawda Jawara, never lost a presidential election. Likewise, since the inception of the second republic in 1997 following the transition from fully fledged to diluted or quasi- military rule, Yahya Jammeh, President and Commander- in- Chief of The Gambia Armed Forces has been winning every presidential election except of course for the historic December 2016 elections. Thus, in the 2016 Presidential elections, the longest surviving political and electoral trend of voting for incumbent presidents in Gambia elections was abruptly brought to an end and hastily buried alive. However, only a few months later in 2017 during the Parliamentary elections, this political and electoral trend in Gambia elections, proving itself to be a very stubborn challenger, successfully resisted death and came out of its grave to be reinstated into the forefront of the political process and the electoral traditions of The Gambia. This was clearly demonstrated by the outcome of the 2017 parliamentary elections during which the United Democratic Party (UDP)swept the polls. This is because during the early days of the Barrow- led administration most Gambians understood or believed it to be a UDP government and this was a logical conclusion on the part of the populace due to several reasons including the following:

- That President Adama Barrow came from and was nominated to head the coalition on behalf of the UDP. So, he came into power from a UDP platform and on the party's ticket.

- That the UDP leader, Lawyer Ousainu Darboe, was not only serving in the coalition government in a senior ministerial position but also, he commanded a huge influence in and became the political heavyweight and most influential political player in the Barrow led- coalition government.

- That before the beginning of campaigning for the parliamentary elections, Barrow the President and Darboe the UDP leader, travelled together on an extension tour of the country. This was seen by many observers as a strategic support from the president for and a special solidarity with the United Democratic Party so that the latter can win sympathy and more votes from the electorate in the forthcoming Parliamentary elections.

- Many appointments were made by the new government from within the UDP camp to fill in several senior positions in the civil service, diplomatic missions and elsewhere in the government of The Gambia led by President Adama Barrow.

These and many other developments in and around the coalition government supported the understanding or assumption and conclusion by many Gambians that the Barrow- led coalition government was largely a United Democratic Party government, hence the majority of the Gambian electorate voted for them during the 1997 Parliamentary elections.

The second component of the biggest political legacy of military rule in The Gambia that emanated from the 2016 Presidential elections was the resulting political impasse ushered in by the incumbent's refusal to accept final results and concede defeat by his opponents in the general elections. This was the first time ever in the political history of this tiny but beautiful and blessed country that its people were experiencing a political impasse. Initially, the incumbent president, Yahya Jammeh admitted defeat and called to congratulate the president-elect Adama Barrow but he suddenly changed his mind and rejected the election results describing the entire process as fraudulent and he went further to annul the election results and called for a fresh election.

Many observers including the former IEC Chairman, Alhagie Mustafa Criol, blamed the IEC for failing to make a careful calculation and accurate tallying of the final results before declaring them. In other words, if the IEC did not declare two different final results, President Yahya Jammeh wouldn't have found any ground to renege on his decision to concede defeat to and congratulate his opponent in the general elections, the coalition leader and president-elect Adama Barrow.

In any case, the refusal by Jammeh to leave and peacefully hand over power to the president-elect generated a new political and international legal crisis for the subregional grouping - the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS which had already assumed the role of human rights and democracy policing in West Africa. The Organization had earlier succeeded in restoring peace, stability and democratic rule in Liberia and Sierraleone. Thus, a political impasse quickly evolved and the subregional body had no choice but to act quickly to resolve the crisis and end the Impasse.

Consequently, ECOWAS began to mobilize and dispatch delegation upon delegation to Banjul to mediate and mace for mediation and peace. Most of the missions dispatched by ECOWAS were unsuccessful. At this level, Senegal, a giant neighbor with longstanding territorial ambitions over Gambia never came in directly but of course its Head of State, Macky Sall, who never trusted Jammeh as he saw the strong military man in Banjul as his biggest antagonist in the region, kept on shuttling between Dakar and Abuja, Dakar and America, Paris and London until use of force to dislodge Jammeh was kind of endorsed or accepted by the relevant political authorities in those capitals. Thereafter, ECOWAS did not immediately start preparations for the use of force but rather the organization threatened to take military action should Jammeh insist on his refusal to accept peaceful negotiation for peaceful transition. After several weeks of difficult negotiations with the military ruler in Banjul without any progress in its efforts to convince Jammeh to accept peaceful solutions, ECOWAS constituted ECOMIG to deliver the use of force mandate.

ECOMIG was the name given to the combined forces drawn from the ECOWAS member states that had agreed to contribute soldiers, namely Nigeria, Liberia, Ghana, Togo, Ivory Coast, Mali and Senegal (the Arch rival and untrusted negotiator), to confront Jammeh's troops right away on his own soil, with the backing of the international community. While all this was happening, there was a major legal obstacle on the ground confronting the newly constituted subregional peace enforcement and peacekeeping mechanism, namely the absence of a properly constituted Gambian legal authority to allow the foreign forces to enter the country and fight. This is because Barrow- the president elect was living in exile and therefore not sworn in yet, and Jammeh- the president who lost the election had lost legitimacy and hence did not have any legal authority any more.

To temporarily remove the above-mentioned legal obstacles, ECOWAS leaders innovated a new practice in the art or business of governance, state management and international relations and thus the president - elect Adama Barrow was sworn in within the premises of The Gambian Embassy in Dakar the capital of the republic of Senegal given that the embassy was an extension of Gambian territory. In international legal relations embassies are

considered as part of the extra-territorial jurisdiction of sending states. This was the first time ever in the political history of The Gambia that an incoming or newly elected president has been sworn in on a foreign land and this becomes one of the most important and indelible legacies of military rule in the country. Immediately after having been sworn in the new president, acting under the authority of his nation's constitution as the legitimate president of The Gambia, now formally invited ECOWAS troops to The Gambia and he also called for the UN's backing to restore peace in the Gambia under his legitimate watch. At the same time the new president pronounced Yahya Jammeh and his forces as rebels who should be treated as terrorists/insurgents, should they continue to resist the legally constituted authority and control by the legitimate government. This consent by president Barrow and backed by relevant international instruments from the subregional bloc as well as the tacit endorsement obtained by ECOWAS from Abuja, London and Paris constituted the basis for ECOWAS's decision to opt for military intervention and subsequent peacekeeping operations to stabilize democracy in The Gambia. The ECOMIG troops have continued to be stationed in the country till today (about eight years now), not necessarily for the sake of keeping Jammeh at bay any more but most importantly to protect President Adama Barrow anywhere he goes and comes.

Notwithstanding, the role played by ECOWAS to surmount the conflict that could have spilled to a civil war in the Gambia had succeeded in peacefully ending the political impasse in the country. It was initially meant to be a mediatory process through dialogue for a peaceful settlement of the crisis but this did not work and hence the military option. When the going got tougher with The ECOWAS authorities in their efforts to reach a peaceful solution to the crisis and as a last-minute attempt, they invited other negotiators in the region such as the former president of Guinea Conakry, Alpha Conde and the former president of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Abdulazeez Obeed to mediate with Jammeh (a friend of theirs), for a peaceful settlement.

This time, the mediation worked and the two presidents succeeded in convincing Jammeh to peacefully give up and repatriate to Equatorial Guinea. Consequently, the long awaited and much talked about military intervention was, at the very last minute, averted and the first ever political impasse in the history of independent Gambia ended peacefully. (Omotosho &Senghore 2018). The 2016/2017 political impasse and its peace and security implications on The Gambian economy as well as the international legal justifications for/ against Ecowas intervention have been studied in a more detailed and comprehensive manner in another article that I co-authored with a UTG colleague of mine, Dr. O. F. Omotosho and published in 2018.

Overall, the political culture of unconstitutional change of government was the creation of the military. The use of unconstitutional means of changing a democratically elected government is a legacy of the military's attempts to involve itself in politics and governance in The Gambia. Thus, the 1981 experiment was successfully repeated in 1994, when the democratic government of the founding father of the sovereign Republic of The Gambia, Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, was overthrown by the very national army he created in the wake of the 1981 abortive coup commandeered by the then Captain Yahya Jammeh who, two years later transformed himself into a civilian politician and his administration into a civilian government, although and as argued above, the Jammeh administration was right from the onset in 1994 till its ousting in January 2017, was either a fully -fledged or quasi/ diluted military government.

Throughout the two decades of Jammeh's rule as a civilian president there were numerous instances of reported coup attempts, all of which he survived. Likewise, the present democratically elected government of President Adama Barrow reported a coup attempt earlier in 2023 and up to the time of writing this article, there is no guarantee that there will be no more coup attempts in the country. Thus, Military coup d'etat was not in The Gambia's political dictionary before 1981.

Conclusion

This research has focused on the legacies and impact of military coup d'etats on The Gambia in regard to the country's socio-

political, economic and infrastructure development and its transformative effect in the country. The Gambia had experienced two polity-changing and outstanding Military coups in 1981 and 1994 respectively; under the influence of Kukoi Samba Sanyang and Yahya A.J.J Jammeh. The first military coup of 1981 had a landmark effect of leading to the formation of the Senegambia Confederation in 1982, which altered the political trajectory of Senegal and Gambia as far as it lasted (1982-1989). Within the period it lasted, it strengthened both the political and economic ties of Senegal and Gambia, the climax of which was the formation of the Senegambia Confederation government and trade liberalization (free trade without tariffs) between the two countries. Another important political legacy and fallout was the formation of the country's first standing and regular army known as Gambia National Army (GNA). In the same vein, Yahya Jammeh's military coup of 1994 was a turning point in the history of The Gambia as it brought a total transformation of the socio-political and economic system of the country. As the first successful and uninterrupted coup in the history of independent Gambia, it resulted into the introduction of full-fledged military rule in the country for a period of two and a half years. This was followed by the inception, in 1997, of a new (Second Republic), with a new Republican Constitution that introduced several key democratic institutions such an office of Ombudsman, system of presidential executive and a bill of rights and liberties, an independent election supervision authority and a couple of new governance mechanisms. Another interesting development in the early days of the military in politics in The Gambia was the formation of a political party by the military themselves to contest the first democratic elections of the new political dispensation. The military was thus preparing the country's New Republic for an indefinite period of diluted and quasi-military rule, which is no more or less than running democratic institutions in the military style or governing militarily within the framework of a democratic system. Notwithstanding the problematic nature and public outcry of Yahya Jammeh government, he introduced key infrastructure for sustainable development, such as education, health, agriculture, telecommunications and road networks in various parts of the country and he established new government institutions that strengthened the act of governance in the country.

Thus, the outstanding legacies and indelible footprints left behind as a result of military rule and their attempts to be involved in governance in The Gambia include but not limited to the following:

First, and probably the only politically motivated assassination of a senior military commander in 1980, deployments of foreign forces in the sovereign territory of the Republic of The Gambia in 1980 and 1981, Creation of a regular standing army (The Gambia National Army), a civilian- led and dominated coup d'etat in 1981, formation of the Senegambia Confederation in 1982, another but this time around a successful coup d'etat in 1994, ushering in a new (second) republic in 1997 with a new republican constitution which introduced a clear cut system of presidential executive, formation of a new political party by the military (APRC) and introduction of key governance institutions which had the potential of strengthening the country's democracy and ensuring good governance. Such democratic institutions include a bill of rights, an Office of Ombudsman, an independent election watchdog body (the IEC), Gambia's first National University, a tertiary education quality assurance agency, the country's first and only state-owned television station, creation of new key ministries of higher education, research, science and technology, petroleum and energy, Defence, women's affairs and a host of other important ministries and government agencies and institutions. Furthermore, Combining two incompatible systems of governance (military rulers running or governing with democratic institutions but in the military way and style of management), Voting an incumbent president out of office in a free and fair democratic elections by a coalition of opposition parties, a political impasse, swearing in a new president (president elect) on a foreign land and the circumstances leading to and the actual establishment of a Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) together with the Commission's findings are all among the indelible and unforgettable legacies of military rule in the Gambia.

The development achievements of the military administration under Yahya Jammeh clearly indicates the facts that as much as the civilian government can positively impact the development of the country, the military can also do better and qualitatively, if they stay on course and continue to maintain and ensure security, stability, discipline, respect for human

rights and rule of law in the polity. This research posits that despite the hue and cry about military coups and governance in The Gambia, there have been landmark achievements in the country. Viewing critically the two military coups in The Gambia under the microscope of economics of development and their numerous fallouts in the country, the coupists had left permanent imprints in the sands of time in The Gambia.

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