



Commonwealth Lawyers Association Statement relating to the challenge by the Gambia Bar Association to the appointment of the Chief Justice of The Gambia

The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA) notes the Statement of the Gambia Bar Association (GBA) dated 31st July 2026. The Statement records that the GBA has commenced proceedings in the Supreme Court challenging the appointment of Mr Edi M.O. Faal as Chief Justice of the Republic of The Gambia.

The GBA acknowledges that this action is unprecedented and extraordinary. Its Statement emphasises that the proceedings are not an attack on Mr Faal, his person, integrity, competence or professional career. Rather, the GBA confirms that the question it brings before the Supreme Court is a constitutional one, namely “whether the appointment satisfies the requirements prescribed by the Constitution”.

The CLA supports responsible Law Societies and Bar Councils that act to defend the independence of the legal profession and the Judiciary and to uphold the rule of law.

A Chief Justice presides over a Court that hears constitutional disputes, electoral petitions, human rights cases and other matters of national importance. The appointment of a Chief Justice is therefore central to maintaining public confidence in the administration of justice and the rule of law.

The Commonwealth (Latimer House) Principles on the Three Branches of Government, records that an independent, impartial, honest and competent judiciary is integral to upholding the rule of law, engendering public confidence and dispensing justice. The Principles also affirm that an independent, effective and competent legal profession is fundamental to the upholding of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

It is in that context that the GBA, in placing a constitutional question before the Supreme Court for determination, and in undertaking to abide by the outcome, discharges the responsibility of an independent Bar to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law.

The CLA notes the GBA’s stated intention to pursue the proceedings in accordance with the law and to respect the determination of the Court.

The CLA will follow the proceedings with interest. It encourages all parties to respect the right to bring the proceedings, to conduct themselves with dignity and in accordance with the highest professional standards, and to respect the decision of the Court when it is handed down.

Commonwealth Lawyers Association

5th August 2026

The **Commonwealth Lawyers Association** is an international non-profit organisation which exists to promote and maintain the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth by ensuring that an independent and efficient legal profession, with the highest standards of ethics and integrity, serves the people of the Commonwealth.
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