

Gambian government says it will prosecute exiled ex-president Jammeh

By [Pap Saine](#)

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Gambia's government on Wednesday, 25 May 2022, said it accepted a recommendation by a truth and reconciliation commission that exiled former president Yahya Jammeh be prosecuted for killings and other suspected crimes from his time in office.



Gambia's former President Yahya Jammeh, who is also a presidential candidate for the Alliance for Patriotic Re-orientation and Construction (APRC), smiles during a rally in Banjul, Gambia, 29 November 2016. Reuters/Thierry Gouegnon

Attorney General Dawda Jallow said a special prosecutor would oversee cases of abuses found from Jammeh's 1994 to 2017 rule, which were laid out in the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission's (TRRC) report last year.

The independent commission said Jammeh and his henchmen were responsible for 44 specific crimes against journalists, former soldiers, political opponents and civilians, including killings and rapes.

Jammeh seized power of the tiny West African nation in a 1994 coup. He was forced out after losing a 2016 election to the current president, Adama Barrow, and fled to Equatorial Guinea. He has denied allegations of wrongdoing.

Marking the publication of the government's official response to the TRRC report, Jallow said implementation of its recommendations must include "clear timelines and measurable outcomes".

"What I can say for certain is that former President Jammeh will face justice," he said.

But Jallow declined to immediately lay out a timeline. Victims groups have complained about how slow progress toward eventual prosecutions has been.

"After so many years of waiting for justice or any form of step taken, we congratulate the TRRC and the government for this initiative," said Amie Sillah, whose father, a prominent lawyer, survived an assassination attempt ordered by Jammeh, according to the TRRC.

"All we need right now is implementation."

For Jammeh to face trial, Equatorial Guinea would have to agree to extradite Jammeh. Two-thirds of Gambia's parliament would also have to approve a prosecution.

The TRRC report recommended either prosecutions or amnesties for additional officials. The government said it accepted a recommendation that former vice president Isatou Njie Saidy be prosecuted but rejected one that Jammeh's number 2 during the 1994 putsch receive amnesty.

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