

1.3 Political and administrative organisation

The Gambia gained her independence from Britain in 1965 and became a Republic in 1971 and was one of the very few multiparty democracy systems in Africa. The Gambia formed a short-lived confederation of Senegambia with Senegal between 1982 and 1989. In 1991 the two neighbouring countries signed a friendship and co-operation treaty.

The Gambia has since independence experienced political stability except during the period of the 1994 peaceful coup followed by a nearly two year-ban of political parties. The 1996 constitution and subsequent parliamentary elections in 1997 have so far maintained stability and have completed a return to constitutional and civilian rule in the country. The country undertook another round of presidential and legislative elections in late 2001 and early 2002. Dr Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh, the leader of the 1994 political change was been elected president in all subsequent elections.

In 2004 the political landscape of the country saw the creation of a political alliance grouping the main opposition parties, NADD (National Alliance for Democracy and Development) and an MOU was signed among all the political parties registered in the country. In October 2006 presidential election President Yahya Jammeh was re-elected a third five-year term of offices.

The Government of the Gambia has, however, made significant strides in improving gender equality, economic and political good governance. Some of the key indicators include the appointment of four Cabinet ministers, one of which is the Vice President, the establishment of the Independent Electoral Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Governance Commission, safeguarding the independence of the Judiciary, Gambia's qualification for the Millennium Challenge Account of the United State, the creation of the Anti-corruption Commission and a number of policy and legal reforms. In additional, the government of the Gambia made crucial policies and legal reforms in the areas of Public Financial Management, Public Procurement, The Judiciary, the Civil Service,

Decentralization and Local Government, institutional reorganization of the Central Bank of the Gambia.