

# Gambia

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| <b>Response to Information Request Number:</b> | GMB 01001.ZHN   |
| <b>Date:</b>                                   | 10 October 2000   |
| <b>Subject:</b>                                | Gambia: Information on residence and citizenship status by marriage to a Gambian citizen and the legality of Islamic marriage                                       |
| <b>From:</b>                                   | INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC   |
| <b>Keywords:</b>                               | Gambia / Citizenship / Foreigners / Immigration policy / Islamic Law / Legal systems / Marriage / Nationality / Naturalization / Residence / Right to a nationality |

## Query:

- Is a male foreign national who is married to a Gambian citizen entitled to legal residence and/or citizenship in Gambia?
- Does the Gambian government legally recognize Islamic marriage?

## Response:

According to the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Gambian Embassy in Washington, D.C., a man who is a citizen of another country who marries a Gambian citizen is entitled to the equivalent of permanent resident status in The Gambia and would also be entitled to make an application for citizenship to the Office of the President--the office that deals with citizenship matters (Embassy of Gambia, 6 Oct. 2000).

The Gambia recognizes Islamic marriages and, in fact, some 90-95 percent of marriages are carried out subject to Islamic rites, according to the Deputy Chief of Mission (Embassy of Gambia, 6 Oct. 2000). The Gambia has a population of 1,367,000 of whom an estimated 90 percent are Muslim (CIA, *The World Factbook* 2000).

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee or asylum status.

## References

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 2000, *The World Factbook 2000*. [Internet] URL: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ga.html>

Embassy of Gambia, 6 October 2000, Telephone interview with Deputy Chief of Mission.

*Last Modified 06/14/2002*