



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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22 July 2008

### GMB102899.E

Gambia: Treatment of members and supporters of the Gambia Students Union (GAMSU)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on the treatment of members and supporters of the Gambia Students Union (GAMSU) was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

On 10 April 2000, students led by GAMSU members, demonstrated against the killing of Ebrima Barry, a student who died while in the custody of Fire Services, and against the rape of a teenage girl by paramilitary officers (*The Gambia Echo* 9 Apr. 2008; *Freedom Newspaper* 9 Apr. 2008; see also *Foroyaa* 23 Apr. 2008). Security forces opened fire, resulting in the death of 14 students (*Freedom Newspaper* 9 Apr. 2008; see also *Foroyaa* 23 Apr. 2008 and *The Gambia Echo* 9 Apr. 2008).

Media sources indicate that several former members of the GAMSU, including Alhagie (or Alagi) Nyabally, a former leader of the GAMSU, Omar Joof, former GAMSU president, and Ebrima Dibba, also a former GAMSU leader and former Information Minister have left the Gambia to live abroad in exile (*Freedom Newspaper* 9 Apr. 2008; *Foroyaa* 23 Apr. 2008; *ibid.* 5 Nov. 2007). One newspaper states that Nyabally had to leave the Gambia because he was facing problems including repeated arrests and detentions (*ibid.*; *ibid.* 23 Apr. 2008). As an example, *The Gambia Journal* reports that Nyabally was arrested on 17 April 2006 and detained for 41 days (30 May 2006). *Freedom Newspaper* reports that after the events of 10 April 2000, he was expelled from the University of the Gambia and his scholarship was suspended (9 Apr. 2008).

Several articles from *The Gambia Echo*, a newspaper based in Raleigh, North Carolina which focuses on Gambian news (*The Gambia Echo* n.d.), report that GAMSU was dissolved or dismantled by the government and replaced by the National Patriotic Students Association (NAPSA) (*ibid.* 19 Mar. 2008; *ibid.* 9 Apr. 2008; *ibid.* 26 Apr. 2007; *ibid.* 10 Apr. 2007), which the regime uses to "keep the lid on student militancy" (*ibid.*) or "undermine" GAMSU's activities (*Freedom Newspaper* 9 Apr. 2008). However, no other source among those consulted by the Research Directorate corroborated GAMSU's dissolution.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to

the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

*Foroyaa* [Serrekunda]. 23 April 2008. "April 10: A Forgotten History." <<http://www.foroyaa.gm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=1410>> [Accessed 3 July 2008]

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*Freedom Newspaper* [Raleigh, North Carolina]. 9 April 2008. "SOS Badjie, SOS Jatta, Army Chief Jatta and IGP Rex King Blamed for the April 10th Killings!!" <<http://www.freedomnewspaper.com/Homepage/tabid/36/mid/367/newsid367/3134/Breaking-News-SOS-Badjie-SOS-Jatta-Army-Chief-Jatta-And-IGP-Rex-King-Blamed-For-The-APRIL-10TH-Killings/Default.aspx>> [Accessed 9 July 2008]

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\_\_\_\_\_. 10 April 2007. Adama Hawa. "Another Silent Anniversary for the April Student Massacre." (allAfrica.com) <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200704110412.html>> [Accessed 8 July 2008]

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*The Gambia Journal* [Banjul]. 30 May 2006. "Alhagie Nyabally Released." (allAfrica.com) <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200605310638.html>> [Accessed 8 July 2008]

### Additional Sources Consulted

**Internet sites, including:** AllAfrica.com, Amnesty International (AI), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), *Daily Observer* [Banjul], European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Freedom House, Gambianow.com, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), Jeuneafrique.com, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human

Rights (OHCHR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *The Point* [Banjul], United Kingdom Home Office Country of Origin Information Service, United States Department of State, World News Connection (WNC).

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