



Dissertation
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FACULTY OF
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ILORIN

THE GAMBIA-TAIWAN RELATIONS
1970-2012

April 2014



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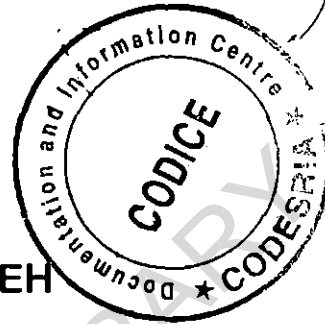
THE GAMBIA-TAIWAN RELATIONS, 1970-2012

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By



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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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CERTIFICATION

This project was read and approved as meeting the requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in History and International Studies of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin.

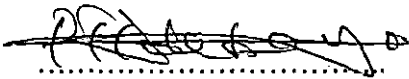
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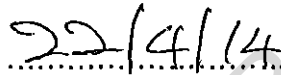
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Date

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my foster parents: Masanneh Jawara and Bintu Ceesay (nee Bintansay) who were always there when it matters and whose encouragement during their lifetime greatly inspired me. I will always love you.

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ABSTRACT

Taiwan's policy of assisting developing countries has contributed to her strong relations with some states in different parts of the world. This is especially true for the Gambia. This research work on the relations between the Gambia and Taiwan, 1970-2012 discusses change and continuity in the Gambia's foreign policy in its relations with Taiwan. The study explores Taiwan's contributions to the socio-economic and political development of the Gambia and also looked at the challenges arising from relations between the two countries, as well as the prospects of mutual benefits. The study shows the national interest of both countries dictated and governed the special relations between them. It investigates the existing relations between the two countries with a view to understanding why both nations are committed towards each-other. While the Gambia, which is endowed with little human and natural resources has benefitted from Taiwan in various areas of human development with a positive impact on the lives of the people, Taiwan has cherished the diplomatic recognition accorded it by the Gambia. The study concludes by appraising elements and contradictions of Gambia-Taiwan relations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	xi
Glossary	xi
Abbreviation	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Conceptual Framework	5
1.3 Objectives of the Study	7
1.4 Scope of the Study	7
1.5 Methodology and Research Problems	8
1.6 Literature Review	10
1.7 Justification	13
Notes and Reference	15

CHAPTER TWO: THE GAMBIA'S FOREIGN POLICY, 1970-2005

2.1	Introduction	18
2.2	Determinants of the Gambia's Foreign Policy	18
2.3	Goals and Objectives of the Gambia's Foreign Policy	23
2.4	Change and Continuity in the Gambia's Foreign Policy	24
2.4.1	Increased security	25
2.4.2	Boosting International Image	26
2.4.3	Enhancement of Socio-economy Development	29
2.5	Challenges of the Gambia's Foreign Policy	30
2.6	Conclusion	32
	Notes and References	34

CHAPTER THREE: POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

3.1	Introduction	36
3.2	The Principles and Objectives of Taiwan Policy towards the Gambia	36
3.3	Objectives of the Gambia's relations with Taiwan	39
3.4	Establishment of Political/Diplomatic Relations	40
3.5	The Environmental Context	43
3.6	Elements and Contradictions of the Gambia's Foreign Policy	44
3.7	Conclusion	45
	Notes and References	47

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONS

4.1	Introduction	49
4.2	Cooperation in Agriculture	49
4.3	Cooperation in Healthcare	55
4.4	Cooperation in Education	57
4.5	Cooperation in Infrastructural Development	61
4.6	Cooperation in Trade	63
4.7	Cooperation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention	64
4.8	Cultural Cooperation	64
4.9	Conclusion	65
	Notes and References	67

CHAPTER FIVE: DEVELOPMENT AID RELATIONS

5.1	Introduction	70
5.2	History of Taiwan Aid Relations	70
5.3	The institutional Framework and the Disbursement Channels of Taiwan Development Aid	72
5.3.1	Channels of Assistance	73
5.3.2	Types of Assistance	73
5.4	The Place and Importance of Taiwan Development Aid to the Gambia	74
5.5	Conclusion	75
	Notes and References	77

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1	Appraisal of the Gambia - Taiwan Relations	79
6.2	Summary	84
6.3	Conclusion	89
	Bibliography	91
	Appendices	96

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The Upland Rice Expansion Project by TTM, 2009-2012	51
Table 2: The Gambia 6-3-3-4 System	60
Table 3: Projects embarked upon by Taiwan in the Gambia, 1998-2012	62

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GLOSSARY

Bonga- a fish similar to herring that spawns upstream in rivers (shad).

Coup d'état- seizure of an existing government by a small group, usually military officers.

Harmattan- a hot, dry, dusty wind, frequently blows from the Sahara.

Madrassah- a system of education which uses Arabic as a medium of instruction.

Raison d'état- an overriding concern, usually the interests of the country concerned, that justifies political or diplomatic action that might otherwise be considered reprehensible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AU- African Union

AFPRC- Arm Forces Provisional Ruling Council

APRC- Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction

ASSEC- Armed and Security Service Engineering Company

CILLS- Inter-State Committee for the Control of Drought in the Sahel

CITC-Committee of International Technical Cooperation

CITS-Computer Tomography Scanners

COA- Council of Agriculture

CRR- Central River Region

ECOWAS- Economic Community of West African States

ECOMOG- ECOWAS Monitoring Group

EU- European Union

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

GIEPA- The Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency

GNA- The Gambia National Army

GTTI- The Gambia Technical Training Institute

HIPCs- Highly Indebted Poor Countries

HIPCs-Heavily Indebted Poor Countries

HIV/AIDS- Virus disabling Immune System/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ICAA- International Civil Aviation Administration

IECDF-International Economy Cooperation Development Fund

ICDF- International Cooperation Development Fund

ICT- International Computer Technology

IOs- International Organisations

MDG- Millennium Development Goal

MMM- Mobile Medical Missions

MoFA- Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoHERST- Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology

MOU- Memorandum of Understanding

MRC- Medical Research Council

NGOs- Non Governmental Organisations

NIA- National Intelligence Agency

NIIA- Nigerian Institute for International Affairs

OAU- Organisation of African Unity

PEGEP- President Empowerment of Girls Education Project

PPP- People Progressive Party

PRC- People's Republic of China

ROC- Republic of China

RVTH- Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital

SATCC- Sino-Africa Technical Cooperation Committee

TTM- Taiwanese Technical Mission

UNFCCC- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNO- United Nations Organisation

UTG - University of The Gambia

WHO- World Health Organisation

WTO- World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Most practitioners and students of foreign policy assert that countries that engaged in diplomacy have no permanent friends and enemies but only permanent interests. This can best be described as *raison d'état* of diplomatic relations between countries.

Prior to formal diplomatic relations between the Gambia and the Republic of China (ROC) or Taiwan, there had been a measure of relations between the parties. By 18 August 1966 the Gambia signed Technical Co-operation Agreement with Taiwan.¹ The formal diplomatic relations did not commence until November 1968.² This was followed by other agreements signed on 17 September 1970, 26 October 1972 and 10 September 1974.³ Earlier, in October 1972, the Gambian President, Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara paid his official first visit to Taiwan at the invitation of President Chiang Kai-Shek⁴.

The Gambia-Taiwan relations is characterized by two eras; the pre- and post - 1994. This is because there has been change and continuity in the Gambia's foreign policy. At independence in February 1965, the Gambia adopted a "Two China" policy recognizing both ROC and People's Republic of China (PRC). However in December 1974, Banjul reversed its policy, moving towards a "One China" policy in favour of Beijing, but changed direction in July 1995 to a "Pro-Taipei policy".⁵ What is important here is how the Gambia, Africa's smallest country, has been able to define and locate its national interest within the context of Sino-Taiwanese rivalry for diplomatic recognition and political influence in Africa.

The first resident Taiwanese ambassador in Banjul arrived in February 1972.⁶ In return, the Gambia received modest amounts of assistance with rice cultivation⁷ which entailed the deployment of 45 Taiwanese citizens that were skilful in rice production to help rice farmers in the Gambia.⁸ Following the expulsion of Taiwan from the United Nations (UN), the Gambian President, President Dawda Jawara stated that this expulsion does not preclude the country from having bilateral relations or continuing their bilateral relations with other countries. He opined that “I do not agree that it is going beyond our policy; there is no specific political purpose”.⁹

Beijing’s “One China” policy and the extension of diplomatic recognition to Mainland China by African states in the mid-1970s, partly explain the Gambian government’s volte face.¹⁰ It was observed that the Gambian Government was under intense pressure from all its neighbouring countries such as Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Mauritania, which at the time all had diplomatic ties with Mainland China. This left the Gambia, the only country in the region having ties with Taiwan, isolated.¹¹

However, this sense of isolation, coupled with the expectation of a greater amount of economic assistance from Beijing seems to have influenced the Gambia towards the establishment of diplomatic relations with China. Consequently, a high powered Gambian mission went to Beijing in February 1975 and signed valuable agreement on economic and technical cooperation. A loan of more than 1.7 million US dollars (roughly 25 million dalasis) was provided by the Chinese, together with a large team of rice experts.¹² President Jawara visited Beijing in June 1975 and obtained further Chinese aid to build a hospital and sports facilities. . Within five years, Chinese exports to the Gambia had trebled, suggesting that the benefits were not entirely in one direction. The Gambia remained on good terms with China throughout the President Jawara regime.¹³

However, following the July 1994 coup and the imposition of Western sanction on the country, relations between the Gambia's and the Western powers became very strained. This was particularly so with the United States, which until 2002 suspended most non-humanitarian assistance in accordance with Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act.¹⁶ Since then, President Yahya Jammeh has established diplomatic relations with several countries, known for their anti-American position such as Libya and Cuba. He also reverted back to a pro-Taiwan diplomatic relations, turning his back on Beijing.

Accordingly, Bukhari and Mohammed are of the view that despite the breakup, the Gambia did not lose much in breaking diplomatic ties with China. This is because the Gambia did not receive any international reprimand from China following the diplomatic break up. Also the interest sectors of China in the Gambia were adequately taken over by Taiwan for support and the latter has done far better than China in all the interest sectors of the Gambia except sports; and in net the Gambia's gains outweigh its losses from the diplomatic break up with China.¹⁷

In addition, Taiwanese financial assistance played an important part in enabling the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) to weather the economic crisis and in meeting Present Jammeh's government development objectives, including upgrading Gambian Information Technological capacity to meet Vision 2020 the Gateway Project Goal. In return, The Gambia supports Taiwan's bid for the UN membership.¹⁸

China strong opposition to any formal recognition of Taiwan as an independent state emanated from the struggle between China's Communists and Nationalists; while on the other hand Taiwan asserted to be the legitimate representative of all of China, the PRC also claimed to be the sole rightful representative of the Chinese people. Consequently, Taiwan's international political status was seriously undermined when the vast majority of nations,

recognized China as the sole representative of all of China, including Taiwan. Confronted with this reality, Taiwan was forced to modify its foreign policy strategies. Instead of breaking diplomatic ties with countries that recognized China, Taiwan adopted a policy which allowed it to maintain relations with countries that had derecognized Taipei.¹⁹

President Dawda Jawara and the Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) Government reiterated the Gambia's regret that Taiwan had been expelled from the United Nations. He stressed, however, that such expulsion in no way affected the Gambia relations with Taiwan. In fact, during the presentation of the letters of Credence of Taiwan's first resident Ambassador, Dr. Mei-Sheng Shu, President Jawara emphasized that the Gambia would not allow other states to choose her friends for her. He described the establishment of Taiwan's mission in the Gambia not only as a significant landmark in Sino-Gambian relations, but as "a concrete manifestation of my Government's intention to expand significantly the close co-operation between our two countries and peoples..."²⁰ The Gambia's attitude towards China was described by President Jawara as one of keeping an open mind. He stated thus:

...we do not preclude relations with them developing as opportunities arise, but at the moment, of course, we continue our bilateral relationship with Taiwan and we were sorry that the UN took this decision. We are sorry that another solution could not have been found to the Chinese problem at UN. We continued the very good relations we had with them before this vote at the UN, and as far as communist China is concerned, we keep an entire open mind as to how relations between us in the future.²¹

It is evident from this statement that the country's initial diplomatic ties with Taiwan between 1966 and 1974 was mainly due to the then Governments' policy against communism and communist countries like China. In that regard, the then PPP Government forged diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which was a democratic country like the Gambia. For several years, Taiwan has been offering a helping hand to some African countries through humanitarian,

emergency assistance and projects aimed at improving local industrial developments. Besides helping the people of those countries, the assistance programmes have also played a significant role in maintaining bilateral ties between Taiwan and its African allies.²²

The Gambia-Taiwan Relations refers to the current and historical relationship between the Gambia and Taiwan.²³ Taiwan has been implementing assistance programmes based on a model that requires local people to be engaged in the progress of the programmes under the guidance of Taiwanese consultants. For example, Taiwan has been helping the Gambia expands its upland rice projects in an effort to address food scarcity in the African country. Such initiatives echo Gambian President Yahya Jammeh's policy of attracting adults to return to the countryside and engage in the farming industry to help increase food supply.

Medical services are also among Taiwan's major assistance programme to the Gambia. In addition to providing medical care for the locals, a more important goal is to train doctors and other medical personnel and help them operate and manage the hospitals locally.²⁴ Taiwan assistance to the Gambia also include vocational training programmes aimed at improving the local people's skills and knowledge so that they can be self- dependent. The Taiwanese International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF), with its abundant experience in development cooperation, is proving a committed partner for the Gambia, putting Africa's smallest mainland nation well on its way to its vision of becoming a regional ICT hub.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to appreciate inter-state relations without understanding their foreign policies. Essentially, the concept of foreign policy is dynamic; scholars of International Relations define it variously depending on their perception. Aluko asserted that, nobody has really formulated a universally acceptable definition of the concept and probably nobody will ever succeed in doing so.²⁵

Akinnaso sees foreign policy as the course of action pursued by a nation in its dealing with other nations, usually in pursuance of its national objectives.²⁵ That is why, in diplomatic circles, “national interest” is often regarded as the basis for the foreign policy of a nation. Consequently, to Morgenthau, it is fundamentally concerned with the pursuit and defence of national interest.²⁶

From the above definitions, it is clear that national interest determines a country’s external relations. In like manner, Eyinla emphasises that it is an attempt by a state to achieve, protect and maintain its national interest and objectives within an international political system consisting predominantly of competing state units.²⁷ Hartman describes it “as a systematic statement of deliberately selected national interests”²⁸ and to Hill, “it is the content or substance of a nation’s effort to promote its interests vis-a-vis other nations”.²⁹ Holtsi observes that, it is the conscious behaviour of a national state towards the external environment.³⁰ Modelski offers a relatively popular definition, “the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behaviour of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment”.³¹

All these definitions show that a foreign policy is based on national interest. To Modelski and Holtsi, it is clear that a nation stands to benefit from its engagement with others on the condition that its domestic policies are maximally pursued. Even though these definitions have different approaches to the understanding of a foreign policy, the common factor in all is national interest.

Thus foreign policy involves a relationship between two or more states. For every state, foreign policies are pursued in the name of national interest. National interest therefore, expresses core-socio-economic and political ideals, values and aspirations of a nation. From the above, it shows that different scholars have approached foreign policy from different

theoretical frameworks. This work is going to be based on the combination of these approaches to determine why, how and the benefits of the Gambia-Taiwan Relations and to examine elements of change and continuity in the foreign policies of the two countries for the purpose of consistency and contradiction that may enhance or negate their relationship.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In spite of their long bilateral relations, there is yet to be a sufficient research on the Gambia-Taiwan relations. Therefore, this research attempts to examine the relations between Banjul and Taipei. The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the genesis and rationale for the Gambia's relations with Taiwan;
- To explore Taiwan's contributions to the socio-economic and political development of the Gambia and;
- To appraise the challenges arising from relations between the two countries and the prospects of mutual benefits.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The date 1970 has been chosen to be the most suitable period for the starting of this study. This is because 1970 is an exceptionally dynamic year in the history of the Gambia. It was the year the country became a republic on the 24 April. Thus, President Dawda Jawara became the country's first president under a new constitution.³⁵ Up to the time the Gambia became a Republic, the Queen of England was the Head of state in addition to being the Head of the Commonwealth.

The year 1970 is also crucial to this study because Taiwan became the seventh state on 27 July 1970 to tender letter of credence by Dr. Bernard T.K. Joei for accreditation to the Gambia.³² By 17 September 1970, agreements were signed by the governments of the

Gambia and Taiwan. Even though, there was a gap for 20 years in this relationship, a year after the July 1994 *coup d'état*, the government of the Gambia felt considerably isolated and had to break diplomatic ties with China. To appreciate the long time relations between the Gambia and Taiwan a deeper knowledge of 'Two policy' China and later "One Policy" is essential. Therefore, the period 1974 to 1994 is equally important as it was during that time that the Gambia shifted her relations from Taiwan. For a considerable part of this period, Taiwan provided aids to the Gambia.

The period, 1995-2012 is very important to this research; it marked the beginning of the Second Republic. In the year 1995, the People Republic of China Government withdrew all its technical assistance from the country and the same year, the Gambia- Taiwan relation was re-established. Since 1995, Taiwan has entered into many agreements with the Gambian Government and has provided lots of aid to the country. The period has also provided us with a comparative study of internal variations in the establishment of diplomatic, political, economic and socio-cultural relations among other things. The year 2012 will thus make us appreciate the series of changes, continuity and development in the Gambia-Taiwan Relations.

1.5 Methodology and Research Problems

The main sources of data for this research are both primary and secondary. These involve the use of the various sources of history for historical reconstruction. Most of the primary sources are written materials such as annual reports on the Gambia foreign relations, documents at the National Record Office in Banjul and relevant ministries like Foreign Affairs, Education and Agriculture. These sources have provided a lot of materials which have been collated and analysed to show information on government policies.

The information derived from these sources are guided and supplemented by secondary sources such as books, circulars, reports and periodicals got mainly from the Gambia National Library located in Banjul, Taiwanese Embassy in Banjul and the Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA), along Kairaba Avenue and Nigerian Institute for International Affairs (NIIA) in Lagos. It has been ensured that the choice of records, papers, books and magazines collated are representative of different available materials within and outside the Gambia. The biases and lopsided views have been mitigated by supplementing and confronting one point of view with another. Here the traditional technique of historical criticism is used in analyzing these sources.

Oral information was collected from various personalities who have direct knowledge of the Gambia-Taiwan Relations. These include the Taiwanese Ambassador, personnel at Taiwan Culture Centre, Kanifing, and some Gambian students who benefit from Taiwanese scholarship both within and outside the Gambia. An analysis has been done and made compatible with the themes of the dissertation. It is expected that this research will give a comprehensive historical analysis of the Gambia and Taiwan Relations. Hence, the period, 1970-2012 will not only improve our knowledge and understanding of these two nations' long time relationship, but also, give us an insight into Banjul-Beijing ties. It will also open up new horizons for further research into their respective countries.

One setback to this study was access to information from various ministries (especially the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance of the Gambia respectively) and data collection for the purpose of inquiry is a serious setback for this research. In particular, personnel in charge were hardly available to grant an interview in Banjul. Access to National Assembly library was very challenging. Besides, most information was said to be classified. More importantly, the researcher discovered that the library was not fully equipped and most records were not available.

Another setback for this study was the issue of “culture of silence”. Most of the interviewees did not open up. Some of the workforce who benefited from the Gambia-Taiwan Relations were reluctant to grant an interview even when the intention of the researcher was explained to them. The researcher also had problem with how to get in touch with the informants at appointed time. Many of them did not honour their appointment.

1.6 Literature Review

There is hardly a comprehensive work on the Gambia-Taiwan relations. However, there are few works touching on different aspects of the Gambia foreign relations. This research therefore, examines this issue, bridges the research gap and suggests solutions to the identified problems. There are works of general interest to the current research. Such works are divided into three broad categories: Works focusing on the Gambia foreign policy, especially those by Omar Touray, Gallo Demba Bah, Arnold Hughes and David Perfect and Paul Addae which discuss the Gambia’s foreign policy objectives, and the country’s relations with the outside world in terms of bilateral and multi-lateral relations. However the scopes of these works do not go beyond 2005. The works also lose sight of an appraisal of the Gambia relations with Taiwan.

For instance, Touray’s work, *The Gambia and the World: A History of the Foreign Policy of Africa’s Smallest State, 1965-1995*,³³ extensively analyses the Gambia’s relations with the outside world which enabled her to survive economically and safeguard her Independence. In spite of Gambia’s relations with Asian countries that were examined, Sino-Gambia relations were but briefly discussed.

Gallo’s work, *Trends of The Gambia foreign Policy, 1965-2005*,³⁴ acknowledges that the Second Republic gave birth to a “New Gambia” but not a complete change of the Gambia’s foreign policy. He also observes that under President Jammeh, the country’s foreign policy

was fairly inconsistent due to pressure from the West. Despite this analysis, the work lacks sufficient information on how and why Banjul established strong ties with Taipei.

Hughes and Perfect, *A Political History of The Gambia 1816-1994*,³⁵ provided a wealth of information and understanding of the intricacies of Gambian politics from 1816-1994, covering the period from the establishment of the British settlement of Bathurst in St. Mary's in 1816 to the over throw of President Jawara's government in July 1994. The Gambia-Taiwan Relations however was not the focus of the book.

Works by Shelley Rigger, Dennis Hickey, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, Richard J. Payne and Cassandra Veney, discuss Taiwan foreign policy towards the USA, China and the world. They critically assess Taiwan policies and factors that determine her foreign policy during the era.

While analyzing Taiwan's foreign policy, Shelley Rigger's work, *Why Taiwan Matters: Small Island, Global Powerhouse*³⁶ explains how Taiwan became such a key global player, highlighting economic and political breakthroughs. She asserts that Taiwan performs a useful service in outlining Taiwan's signal contributions to democratic development and its crucial role play in the international economy. However, the author does not discuss the Gambia's relations with Taiwan.

In her work, *Strait Talk; US-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China*,³⁷ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker blames the whole of Taiwan-China problem for failure to recognize Taiwan as a state. Apart from the understanding of US policy towards Taiwan and new administration of Ma Ying-Jeou, the book is relevant because it assessed Taiwan's foreign policy. Despite that, the work made only a passing reference to the existing relations between Taiwan and the Gambia.

*Taiwan and Africa: Taipei's Continuing Search for International Recognition*³⁸ by Payne and Venev examines Taiwan's relations with Africa in general and South Africa in particular within the context of Taipei's relentless search for international recognition. It focuses on the continuing importance of sovereignty and recognition in a world characterized by proliferation of non-state actors and a globalized economy. Relations between China and Taiwan were around how Taiwan uses its economic strength to improve its international status and counter China's pressure. It argues that Taiwan's economic strength and Africa's economic vulnerability have created a convergence of interests between Taipei and several African states. The book omitted the Gambian-Taiwan Relations as a discourse.

*Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan: From Principle to Pragmatism*³⁹ by Hickey reveals that external factors, particularly gigantic shifts in global politics and the role of China and the US, have had an extraordinary degree of influence over the island's foreign relations. It also provides a clear analysis of the dynamics of Taiwan's foreign policy. In spite of the relevance of this work, the Gambia-Taiwan Relations is not discussed.

The third category of works does not necessarily treat Taiwan per se but discuss the Gambia generally. These books include *Stories of Senegambia* by Mahoney, *Leaders of the Senegambia Region: Reaction to European Infiltration, 19th -20th Centuries*, by Patience Sonko-Godwin, the work of Remy, *The Gambia Today* and *A Naturalist's Guide to The Gambia* by Etienne Ebborg.

The work of Sonko-Godwin titled: *Leaders of the Senegambia Region: Reaction to European Infiltration, 19th -20th Centuries*,⁴⁰ provides a clear picture of the political integration within the Senegambia region. The work provides a better understanding of the nature of political interaction within the Senegambia region from the colonial period to date. Though the book does not discuss political events of the Gambia beyond the Senegambia region and does not

mention anything about the Gambia-Taiwan Relations, it is relevant for this study as it gives a better understanding of the Gambia socio-political history.

A Naturalist's Guide to The Gambia, by Ebberg⁴² gives a clear description of the Gambia's geographical and strategic location, as well as the tourism activities in the country. Though the book does not discuss anything beyond geographical relevance of tourist activities, it is found to be very useful to this study.

Ajayi in his book, *Yahya Jammeh and The Gambia Revolution: 1994-2001*,⁴³ examine the major goal of historical development in contemporary Gambia. Even though the book provides data for scholarly analysis of events in that country since July 1994, it fails to assess the Gambia's relations with Taiwan.

Gray: *A History of The Gambia*⁴⁴ could be described as a masterpiece. But within the context of historical scholarship, the work is technically inadequate at explaining Banjul-Taipei relations.

In like manner, Sallah's, *The Road to Self Determination and Independence*,⁴⁵ explores the development projects of the Gambia since the colonial era. It outlines the challenges of self-determination process. In spite of the scholarly comparison of economic paradigms of the colonial period, the first and second republics, it leaves certain gaps which have to be filled in addition to other important issues slated for discussion in the present study.

1.7 Justification for Study

The review of existing literature shows that several aspects of a history of the Gambia's foreign relations with Taiwan have been neglected and therefore further study is required. A comprehensive work such as this research hopes to fill the gap. There is a great need for

research into many aspects of the Gambia and Taiwan in order to facilitate a better understanding of their foreign policies.

Apart from contributing to better understanding of their bilateral relations the study would hopefully fill yawning gap created in knowledge the of Gambia's foreign policy. As pointed out in the above review of existing literature, little attention has been given to Gambia-Taiwan Relations thus this work provides much needed complements to the historical knowledge of existing relations among the two nations.

The research also seeks to highlight factors responsible for the shift of policy from Taiwan to Mainland China and from the latter to the former. It is hoped that this work will pave way for more literature on the Sino-Gambia Relations.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE GAMBIA'S FOREIGN POLICY, 1970-2005

2.1 Introduction

Decolonization of African states which began in late 1950s gave Africa the opportunity to participate in world state system or international politics. Despite the post colonial experience of multiple motives African elites have treated foreign policy as a way for nation-states to become participants and claimant in international arena. Africa's foreign policy in the 1960s was a product of distinct fears of exploitation from both the West and East and the need to reduce the penetration of the Cold War into emergent Africa.

Soon after independence, the Gambia established diplomatic ties with nations around the globe. Virtually all independent African states at the time adopted the principle of Non-Alignment and Pan-Africanism or Afro-centralism as their foreign policy. The Gambia external policy since 1970 has generally been seen as remarkable because of its responsiveness to time, yearnings and aspirations of the citizenry. This therefore gave room for change in order to meet the goals of the state. It is against this background that this chapter examines the Gambia's foreign policy between 1970 and 2005. Through the exploration of policy documents and theories, we conclude that changes and continuity in the Gambia's foreign policy are influenced among other factors by economy, security, and the country's membership and commitment to multilateral diplomacy.

2.2 Determinants of the Gambia's Foreign Policy

The Gambia's foreign policy is inevitably shaped by a variety of factors which include: geographical location, historical relation with other states, quality of leadership, economic opportunities, domestic policy/interest, international alliance/ foreign interest, defence and public opinion.

Geography has been one of the most potent factors influencing the formulation of Gambian foreign policy. It is said that “pacts may be broken, treaties unilaterally denounced, geography holds its victims fast”.¹ That is, a nation can escape anything but constraints of geography. The geographical location of The Gambia has a lot to do with the implementation of the country’s foreign policy. For instance, The Gambia is called the “gate way to Africa” because every part of it is easily accessible.² The port of Banjul which was opened in 1972 is particularly well located to become a major distribution centre for goods coming from and going to the 16 member-states³ of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to which the Gambia belongs. Certainly, the geographical factor and strategic location of the country naturally affect the foreign policy implementation of the country.⁴ In addition, the official language is English, which makes it easy for Anglophone visitors to get along. The country also possesses an amazing diversity of landscape and habitat.

The economic status of the Gambia is another factor which determines the implementation of the country’s foreign policy. There is a consensus that economic strength of a state naturally attracts nations to interact with one another. Trade negotiation is a vital factor that could bring states together through exchange of goods and services. States that are endowed with more natural resources have the opportunity to forge more relations with many more countries, particularly the world powers. The economic potentialities attract more foreign investors, and this shapes relationships among the states involved.⁵ In contrast, states with limited or weak economic base may not attract as many friendly and cordial commercial partners. The Gambia, which possesses only agricultural and tourism potentials, as well as the busy water ways—the Banjul port- as the main natural resources certainly attract less trading partners compared to countries like Nigeria that is economically blessed with human and natural resources.

Consequently, the Gambia has to encourage investors in the hotel industry by offering appreciable incentives like initial tax holidays in the country. It achieves this by fostering friendly relations with government all over the world. Since the Gambia is a major exporter of groundnuts it will therefore be out of place to permit governments or foreign firms to import groundnuts into the country. This 'close policy', influenced by the domestic conditions, is pursued by countries worldwide and it is known in the area of economics as 'protectionism'.⁶

The patriotic commitment of leaders of a state naturally dictates the terms of agreements he or she enters into with another state. It thus explains direct involvement of the Gambian leaders. The Islamic orientation of both President Dawda Jawara and President Yahya A.J.J Jammeh has attracted friendly Islamic States. Throughout the First Republic, President Dawda Jawara remained a constant factor behind the country's foreign policy. The Gambian foreign relations directly reflected Jawara's personality through his "presidential diplomacy", which earned the country as many friends as possible.⁷ In like manner, President Yahya Jammeh has cordial relationship with most Asian countries.

Public opinion plays a great role in the country's foreign policy implementation. The main objective of The Gambia's foreign policy is to pursue the national interest of the country. This entails the consideration of the reaction of the citizens towards any policy formulated or any decision reached, and to call the attention of decision makers to their feelings. It is most likely that public opinion in The Gambia was partly responsible for the collapse of the Senegambia Confederation in 1989.⁸

For the Gambia to enjoy peace, tranquillity and prosperity, it needs to defend itself against internal and external saboteurs or aggressors. Therefore, whenever its policy is being determined, defence is given a major consideration. This led to establishing military ties with

some countries like Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana among others.⁹ At independence, the country maintained close relations with Senegal with which it signed agreements for cooperation in the fields of defence and foreign affairs. Leaders of the two countries met periodically to consider issues of mutual interest, and technical questions were referred to an inter-ministerial committee for resolution. Each state appointed a High Commissioner to reside in Banjul and Dakar in order to facilitate regular consultations and harmonization, whenever possible, of Gambian and Senegalese policies. A Senegambia permanent secretariat was therefore established in the 1970s.¹⁰

The Gambia enjoyed relative peace when the rest of the continent was frequently mired in political instabilities. President Dawda Jawara, the country's first leader, crafted modest developmental goals, pursued a moderate foreign policy and adhered in principles to political democracy, human rights, and an open economy. Over the years these qualities won the Gambia much respect.¹¹ The Gambia had no army until 1983; internal security was left to the police and a small Para-military field force. After the failed coup d'état in July 1981, a decision was taken to create a national army. By 1990, the national army was established and it remained poorly armed to resist any external threat. From 1965 to 1994, the Gambia relied totally on diplomacy for its security.¹² External factors such as the policies and attitudes of other states also affected Gambian foreign policy but only to a limited extent.

The Gambia's foreign policy is also conditioned by international relations. Since no country is an island, the Gambia needs the cooperation of other nations to achieve some of its foreign policy objectives. It, therefore, continuously modifies its policies in order to obtain and preserve allies with stronger impact.

The Gambia knowing her weak economic position, establishes economic ties with developed nations. This was to enable the country receive financial support such as grants and loans as

well as technical support in the form of personnel to help manage some sectors of the state machinery and train local human resources.¹³ For instance, The People's Republic of China became one of the major international allies that provided both material and technical assistance during the First Republic.¹⁴ likewise Taiwan during the Second Republic. In addition, the Gambia's economic ambition is to promote industrialisation since her economy depends greatly on the export of primary products like groundnuts and cotton. Therefore, trade related issues are very important to the Gambia's foreign policy. The goal is to attracting foreign investors into the country.

The history of the Gambian tradition is one of the determinants of her foreign policy. The Gambia and Senegal have rich history of cordial relations and this has shaped the interactions between the two countries. The Gambia's linguistic groups are same with those in Senegal, though geographically divided by the colonial masters. The two states are separated by colonial interests of Britain and France. The two sister countries realized their common heritage and values, and have maintained traditional and cultural contacts between their populations. This, to a large extent, influences the implementation of the country's foreign policy as it tends to adopt a flexible policy to guide its interaction with Senegal.

The basic determinants (geography, economic development, domestic and international milieu) of Gambia's foreign policy constitute the boundary conditions of decision making which no national policy maker can ignore. Political institutions, such as public opinion, party organisations, pressure groups, legislature, executive and foreign office must be regarded as major parameters of the contents and objectives of the policies. The personalities of the ultimate decision makers and above all, their need for personal political survival, inevitably conditioned ends and means. The Gambian foreign policy is thus, a product of a

complex interplay of history, geography, present circumstances, and perception of the ruling elite in addition to regional and international affairs.

2.3 Goals and objectives of the Gambia's Foreign Policy

The principal goals and objectives of the Gambia's foreign policy are summed up in section 219 of the country's constitution thus:

promotes and protects the interest of the Gambia; seeks the establishment of a just and equitable economic and social order; fosters respect for international law, treaty obligation and settlement of international disputes by peaceful means; and guided by the principle and goals of international and regional organisations of which the Gambia is a signatory.¹⁵

The Gambia has been pursuing these goals and objectives in her relations with other countries. It has always been the policy of the Gambia to cultivate high degree of mutual understanding and friendly relations with the government of Senegal. The reason is that, the country's geographical lay out is bordered on the north, east and west of Senegal and that may easily threaten its security.¹⁶ Hughes and Perfect affirm that in realizing the core value of the Gambia's foreign relations, the country's various governments are determine to defend the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This involved attaining its independence from Britain and defining an effective relationship with Senegal. It also necessitated adequate military defence for the survival of the territorial integrity of the Gambia and to maintain internal security.

The Gambia has also established friendship and cooperation with other states or nations that respect her sovereignty. Thus, despite international outcry against Libya for promoting international terrorism, the Gambia maintained relations with her because Libya respected its sovereignty and vice versa.¹⁷ This therefore means that, no one dictates to the Gambia who her friends or enemies shall be.

It is the Gambia's goal to promote the socio-economic and political wellbeing of its people. This objective involves active pursuit of foreign policies design to promote trade and investment in order to complement domestic economic reforms such as trade liberalism and commercialization of public enterprises.¹⁸ To achieve this goal, the Gambia adopted the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states in respect of the territorial integrity of other states across the world.

The Gambia's foreign policy is also targeted at promoting international cooperation and understanding and to consolidating global peace and security. This is reflected in peaceful co-existence which the country maintains with its neighbours. The Gambia is also guided by the principle and goals of international and regional organisations to which the country is a signatory. These organisations include UNO, OAU/AU, ECOWAS, among others.

One of the major diplomatic steps the Gambia took was the application for membership of the UN. Addressing the UN General Assembly on 21st September, 1965, President Jawara declared that "The Gambia having today attained independence, wishes here-with to apply for membership in the UN, with all the rights and duties attached thereto".¹⁹ The General Assembly approved the country's admission thereby making The Gambia 115th member.

2.4 Change and Continuity in the Gambia's Foreign Policy

Significant changes have occurred and still unfolding in the international arena and all of this has consequently influenced change in the Gambia's foreign relations. During the period under study, The Gambia's foreign policy sought to promote three main objectives: to increase security, to enhance the country's economy and to boost the international image of the country and its leaders. These objectives are shaped by the country's underdevelopment, its size, geographical location, and religious composition of the Gambian society. All of these variables play an enhancing role in the Gambia's pursuit of its goals and objectives.

2.4.1 Increased security

There has been continuity in the objective of increased security despite its unpromising political and economic situation between 1970 and 2005. Gambian leaders ensure that the country achieves its primary objective of retaining its sovereignty, albeit with difficulty in the 1980s. The Gambia's most important relationship is with Senegal notwithstanding that it gradually developed good relations with a wide range of countries, including fellow African states.

However, the attempted coup of 30 July 1981 disrupted the continuity of The Gambia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The coup was organised and led by Kukoi Samba Sanyang.²⁰ It was put down by the Senegalese army, called in by President Jawara who was in London when the coup attempt occurred.²¹ After this disruption of national security, the pursuit of this objective (increased security) continued until 22 July 1994 when some elements of the GNA successfully carried out a bloodless coup against President Jawara's government. Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh emerged as the leader of the military coup and was appointed as chairman of the junta, the AFPRC.

These junior officers who organised the coup claimed to be acting in the national interest to replace a corrupt and undemocratic government of PPP. Following the coup, all political parties were banned and the constitution was suspended. However, domestic and international pressures led the army to withdraw from power in 1996; although Jammeh and his fellow military men contested for the Presidential and parliamentary elections through their newly created APRC.²²

A serious division within the ranks of the new military regime resulted in an alleged attempted counter coup on 11 November 1994. It was led by Basiru Barrow, Abdoulie Faal, and Gibril Saye. Opinion remains divided over whether this was a genuine coup attempt, or a

fabricated incident to eliminate potential rivals within the army. The incident was savagely crushed by the junta's leadership, with 30 insurgents reportedly killed. Attempts by the other members of the group, who had escaped to Senegal, were foiled as they advanced on Banjul in July 1997, following an attack on a police post in Kartong on the Gambia border with Casamance.²³

Another significant change on the country's objective of sovereignty and territorial integrity was the attempted coup of 21st March, 2006. During the absence of President Yahya Jammeh to Mauritania, the chief of staff of GNA, Colonel Ndure Cham, backed by elements within the army and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), together with some civilian supporters, attempted to seize power. He sought to capitalise on the acclaimed growing dissatisfaction with the Jammeh government, as well as disaffection within GNA. Poor security arrangements among the plotters allowed loyalist elements to regain control quickly and Cham fled to neighbouring Senegal. It was then that five individuals, including a former head of the NIA, Daba Marenah, were summarily executed in April 2006 in the wake of the abortive coup. Following a court-martial, ten soldiers were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment in April 2007, as were three civilians, following a trial before the Banjul High Court, in August 2007.²⁴ Since 2006, there has not been a significant threat on the Gambian national security.

2.4.2 Boosting International Image

In promoting its international image, The Gambia became a member of various international bodies such as UN, ECOWAS, OAU/AU, Commonwealth, and African Liberation Movements in Lusophone and Southern African countries. There has been continuity in its membership of the UN. In spite of its limited resources, The Gambia relatively fulfilled its obligations towards UN. Reflecting its moderate foreign policy under President Dawda

Jawara, the country adopted a broadly pro-western interpretation of non-alignment. Under President Yahya Jammeh, The Gambia served a two-year rotating term on the UN Security Council, in 2000-2001 and President Yahya Jammeh has addressed its General Assembly in New York.²⁵ President Yahya Jammeh has tended to be more assertive than President Dawda Jawara in his contribution, particularly with regards to greater African voice in the organisation.

The Gambia also cultivated support at a regional level in West Africa. An early supporter of the idea of a regional economic organisation, The Gambia joined ECOWAS when it was established in May 1975, seeing membership as a means of reducing its dependency on its large neighbour, Senegal, gaining the friendship of Nigeria (together with, Togo one of the two initiators of ECOWAS), and overcoming the severe limitations of its resources through access to a wider regional market.

Both President Dawda Jawara and President Yahya Jammeh governments have supported ECOWAS. President Dawda Jawara emerged as one of its elder statesmen, serving as its chairman in 1989-90 and again in 1991-92. In August- September 1990, President Dawda Jawara hosted a meeting of Liberian political leaders in Banjul that led to the formation of government of National Unity in that country; and, even after being overthrown, he served as the leader of ECOWAS observer team monitoring the Nigerian elections of April 2007. President Yahya Jammeh also sought to gain ECOWAS approval, following the July coup d'état of The Gambia. He structured his major economic policies, vision 2020 and the Gateway project, to benefit from the creation of a regional economic union under the auspices of ECOWAS. President Yahya Jammeh actively backed ECOMOG involvement in neighbouring countries torn by civil war, sending detachments of The Gambian National Army to join ECOMOG forces in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s.²⁶

Since the country joined what was then known as OAU in 1965, The Gambia identified itself with the more moderate group of states within the OAU- the “Monrovia Bloc”. The Gambian government supported attempts to achieve independence, or black majority rule, in these parts of the African continent that remained under European rule-by the mid 1960s. This consisted primarily of Portuguese-held territories, together with South Africa, south West Africa (Namibia), and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), where the Prime Minister, Ian Smith, announced a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in November 1965.

President Dawda Jawara also urged the OAU and fellow African heads-of-state to denounce oppression in Uganda under Idi-Amin and to adhere to a continental agreement on human rights. An African Charter on Human and People’s Rights, known as the “Banjul Charter”, was adopted in 1981 as a result of determined canvassing by the Gambian government. In further recognition The Gambia’s crucial role in bringing about the charter, the headquarters of the African Charter for Democracy and Human Rights Studies was established at Fajara near Banjul in June 1989.²⁷

Equally, President Yahya Jammeh has been a strong supporter of African unity more especially the Libyan move to recast the OAU as the AU in 2002. And she played a more forceful part in the activities of OAU, including conflict resolution. The Gambia hosted an AU heads-of-state Summit in July 2006. Despite its size, The Gambia refused to play a subservient role in African Continental affairs. However, to many observers, Jammeh’s human rights performance was relatively poor when compared to the record of Jawara. The PPP government enjoyed international acclaim for its commitment to multiparty democracy, the rule of law and an open market economy.²⁸

Relations with the Commonwealth were great under President Dawda Jawara government and there have been much frictions under President Yahya Jammeh. The Gambia National

Army's illegal seizure of power in 1994, restrictions on opposition political parties, and human rights abuses led to the threat of suspension from the organisation in 2001. President Yahya Jammeh has also used the Commonwealth summit to attack his critics within the organisation. In May 2007, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative called on African Commission on Human and People's Rights to investigate the unlawful killing by elements of the Gambia security forces of up to 50, mainly Ghanaian immigrants, in July 2005, an act that had gone un-investigated by the Gambian authorities.

2.4.3 Enhancement of Socio-economy Development

The Gambia attained this goal of socio-economic development despite its economic hardship. The country's foreign policy was designed particularly to attract greater foreign economic assistance. It was estimated that aid from Britain alone accounted for 80 per cent of foreign aid to the Gambia. Britain remained a significant contributor to the country's annual budget until 1974. In that year, aid from Britain accounted for 62 per cent of Gambia's public loan. The remaining 37.3 per cent was provided by the African Development Bank and International Development Bank.²⁹ The willingness to achieve self-sufficiency in food, made The Gambia to establish closer ties with Taiwan to provide assistance especially in the areas of irrigation agriculture.

However, there has been a significant continuity in this objective of The Gambia's foreign policy. Both PPP and APRC governments have ensured that the economic status of the country develops. For instance, in the 1980s the country ranked among the 49 low-income countries of the world. It was also one of the 45 countries considered by the UN as most seriously affected by the adverse economic conditions.³⁰

The return to civilian rule improved the Gambia's international reputation; aid organizations that left the Gambia after the coup began assisting the country once again. The Gambia sent

peacekeeping forces into war-ravaged Liberia and worked on improving relations with Senegal, though areas along the border on the upper river region remained in dispute. Eventually, signs of domestic discord appeared and President Yahya Jammeh's rule became increasingly authoritative. In 1998 the corruption he has pledged to eliminate is evident in his own administration. Media freedom was restricted, and an increasing number of human rights abuses are cited by international observers. Jammeh's administration was the subject of coup attempts in 2000 and 2006, which, although unsuccessful, seemed to underline growing discontent in the country. Still, Jammeh was re-elected in 2001 and 2006 in elections generally deemed free and fair.³¹

2.5 Challenges of the Gambia's Foreign Policy

A vibrant foreign policy in any country depends on the availability of effective institutional and administrative machinery for foreign policy formulation, execution, as well as policy refinement, complemented by resourceful foreign affairs experts.³² Unlike other developed and developing countries, the Gambia cannot boast of foreign policy apparatus, or think-tank with equivalent reach or intellectual format. This has affected the actuality of foreign policy outputs in the country. The country does not have the requisite human and material resources, needed to weigh policy options and make strategic calculations and forecasts which are the stuff of foreign policy.

At independence, the country did not possess a standard foreign policy but rather depended on the direction of Britain, her former colonial master. This was the trend until 1994. In spite of the fact that President Jawara was an active participant in negotiation which could be described as 'presidential diplomacy' the PPP government was not consistent with its foreign policy position. This could be due partly to inadequate foreign policy experience by

Gambia's new political leadership and largely because Jawara did not want to antagonize British interest.

The key challenges to the Gambia's foreign policy have remained basically the same. They centred on few key themes, namely: the economy; security; and the issues of human rights. As the country consolidate democracy, its voice on democratization, human rights and rule of law is better respected in the international community.

It is observed how domestic issues define and shape the way not only articulates the foreign policy within the international space, but also how we go about pursuing the objectives of this policy. The domestic space also determines to a large degree the results that could accrue from the implementation of the foreign policy. A subsidiary point is that the past weigh heavily in determining the shape of the present and future in the foreign policy making. This means that challenges to foreign policy making and implementation are also embedded in the Gambia's foreign policy.

The first was the weakness of the economy. One's foreign rating and influence in a very fundamental sense is a reflection of the health and size of one's economy. The Gambia has a small economy and to some extent it was in a state of crisis as a result of mismanagement, neglect and corrupt practice. The economy is still not robust enough to allow the Gambia to play meaningful role within the African continent.

Foreign investment as a vehicle for economic development is simultaneously a foreign and national policy objective, a perfect example of the inter-dependence between domestic and foreign policy making. Various reforms have been and are still being implemented as part of the process of creating the environment conducive for the flow of foreign investments. While in themselves these reform initiatives appear useful and necessary, often their immediate effects on ordinary citizens have not been directly positive.

Another challenge is the puzzle surrounding the issue of how far foreign policy can or should be accountable to citizen who are probably ignorant of the issues but who may ultimately be asked to die in its name. This dilemma is what was described as the 'tension between efficiency and democracy and the need to trade them off'.³³ This was the case when EU had to condition the APRC government in February 2013 to respect the fundamental human rights of the citizens or the organisation would withdrew its assistance from the country. In reaction to this, a protest march was held in Banjul. The Gambia's shift foreign policy from pro west to Asia especially Islamic nations has also challenge the policy of the country.

2.6 Conclusion

To all intents and purposes, the Gambia's foreign policy to a large extent adheres to its goals and objectives but has not attained. This shows that a pro-active and dynamic position is taken in pursuing her national interests. The realisation of these goals and objectives are ensured on the condition of peace and security. Her foreign policy has succeeded in protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country in the face of a lone coup success out of several others. The foreign policy also succeeded in the promotion of its socio-economic and political wellbeing of the Gambia.

Despite the Gambia's scarce human and natural resources, she has been struggling to promote and improve the socio-economic and political wellbeing of her citizens. Therefore, high dependency on foreign relations for economic survival becomes a necessity. The foreign policy is designed in such a way to attract foreign assistances and aids. The promotion of unity and solidarity among African states has been actualized to a large extent through her involvement in various peace-keeping missions in Africa. The successful attainment of the Gambia's foreign policy objective is through the use of diplomacy as the main mechanism. As mentioned, presidential diplomacy earned the country many friends. However, change and continuity in the Gambia's foreign policy have been influenced by a number of factors such

as economy, security, and the country's membership and commitment to several international organisations such as the UN, Commonwealth, OAU/AU, and ECOWAS among others.

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- ¹⁸ "Ten Years of Nationhood." *The Gambia News Bulletin*, 13 February 1975, No. 18.

- ¹⁹ Omar Touray's work- *The Gambia and the World...* is by far the most comprehensive book on the foreign policy of The Gambia to date. It is an important contribution to the growing literature on the international relations of small states and The Gambia's specifically.
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CHAPTER THREE

POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

3.1 Introduction

Diplomatic/political ties resumed between the Gambia and Taiwan in 1995, after the 1994 *coup d'état*. This relationship opened a new chapter in the Gambia-Taiwan relations and it is of great historical significance. This chapter covers the pre- and post-1994 era in their relationship. It gives an analysis of Taiwan policy towards the Gambia and discusses the establishment of their diplomatic relations. An attempt is also made to examine the environmental context of the two countries, as well as elements and contradictions in their foreign policies.

3.2 The Principles and Objectives of Taiwan's Policy towards the Gambia

In its pursuit of international cooperation, Taiwan maintains a mission of working for humanity, sustainable development and economic progress. Therefore, its principles and objectives towards the Gambia are based upon this.

Richard and Cassandra examine that Taiwan uses its economic strength to improve its international status. The authors' central argument is that Taiwan's economic strength and Africa's economic vulnerability created a convergence of interests between Taipei and several African states. "Although economically weak, African states are contributing to improving Taiwan's international status by extending diplomatic recognition to that pariah state".¹ But the Gambia disputed this and describe Taiwan's situation as a "victim of injustice". Accordingly, The Gambia Government affirms that, the country will continue to fight against injustices in the world of which Taiwan is a victim.² But China's own

international prestige is based in part, on its ability to prevent countries from recognizing Taiwan as an independent state.

According to Cooper, Beijing systematically pursued a policy aimed at excluding Taiwan from all international organisations and isolating it from international community.³ The circumstances of Taiwan's new democracy saw Taipei energize its policy of 'check book diplomacy' in order to win diplomatic recognition.⁴

Richard and Cassandra further observe that, non-recognition forces Taiwan to engage in high cost foreign policies that ordinary states routinely avoid. Therefore, Taiwan's relations with Africa clearly demonstrate the continuing significance of diplomatic recognition in an interdependent world. In Taiwan's case, international recognition is essential to its continued existence as a sovereign country.⁵

Scholars⁶ have said that both Taiwan and Mainland China employ their economic power to achieve essentially political and diplomatic goals. For these two rivals, trade and politics are virtually indistinguishable. Given Africa's large number of votes in the UN, that continent has become a battle ground on which Taipei and Beijing fiercely compete to achieve extremely important foreign policy objectives.

China sought to use its relations with African states to enhance its position vis-à-vis Taiwan and the US, as it has previously done with the Soviet Union.⁸ After China gained admission to the UN with the help of votes from Africa, its 'smiling diplomacy and silver-bullet policy on Africa' was criticized by Taiwan, whose position in international politics has been significantly undermined.⁹ Coverage of Taiwan in Africa continued in the 1990s amidst a reinvigorated African engagement by Taipei in the aftermath of Tiananmen.¹⁰

Meanwhile, seven countries had re-established relations with Taiwan by the end of 1990. These include Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Lesotho, and other African states would switch to Taipei in many cases Beijing again as the competition continued. Taipei's economic power enabled it to win recognition from Sao Tome and Principe (1997, \$30 million loan), Niger (1992, \$50 million loan), and Chad in 1997 (\$125 million loan). However, in general, political competition ensured Africa remained a zone wherein cross-straits rivalry continued to play itself out.¹¹

The Chinese government's aim to deny space to Taiwan in Africa succeeded. Taiwan had diplomatic ties with ten countries in 1997, and lost Guinea-Bissau and Central Africa Republic in 1998, Liberia in 2003, Senegal in 2005, Chad in 2006 and Malawi in 2008. Today Taiwan's political prospects in the continent are bleak and rest on a dwindling number of small, strategically insignificant states. Following Malawi's switch to Beijing in January 2008, the ROC currently has diplomatic relations with just four African states: Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe and the Kingdom of Swaziland. Apart from Sao Tome's oil deposits, these remaining countries are all strategically insignificant and serve to confirm Taiwan's political marginalization.

The Gambia remains a comparatively important arena for Taiwan as a potential support base for its foreign policy objectives, although in practice concrete options have dwindled to the point of being rendered little more than symbolic value. Nonetheless Taipei has continued to attempt to use the support of its African allies in the international diplomatic arena. This is seen in Taiwan's annual bid to join the UN. In July 2007, for example, Foreign Affairs Minister James Huang Chih-toured Swaziland, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, the Gambia, Chad and Burkina Faso in an attempt to promote its bid to join the UN bid but this failed to materialize. Africa has also continued to be on regional engagement pursued in a similar way

to Taipei's other regional relations, including Taiwan's cooperation with the annual Mixed Commission Conference of Central American Nations with Taiwan, the ROC-Central American Summit, as well as the first Taiwan-Pacific Allies Summit in September 2006.

3.3 Objectives of the Gambia Relations with Taiwan

The Gambia's relation with Taiwan is based on relations influenced by mutual friendship. This is affirmed by President Jammeh proclamation on that; "we do not believe in money, we believe in humanity because what is more important is the dignity of human being, and our dignity will never be sold". The Gambia's relations with Taiwan is also premised on justice and uprightness that Banjul and Taipei share together as freedom loving people who want to live in peace and dignity. According to President Jammeh, his country will stand by the island-nation no matter the circumstance and what it takes unless Taipei does not welcome this friendship.¹²

The Gambian president opined that the cordial bond that exists between the two countries can be strengthened and deepened as a model for south-south co-operation. There is the need for both nations to collectively defend their strategic national interest and sovereign interests of all the world's small states. The Gambia's foreign policy reflects such fundamental humanistic principles and the shared values enshrined in her cultural heritage. These principles and values are manifested distinctively in the country's interpersonal and international relations both socially and politically.

This explains why the Gambia rejects and strongly opposes the exclusion of Taiwan from active participation in international fora, including membership of specialized institutions in the UN. The mutual interest that characterize the very cordial bonds that exist between the governments and people of these countries could not have climaxed into anything less than such high-level of political engagements at presidential level, which offer both nations the

opportunity for in-depth bilateral discussions that in turn brought about understanding and mutual trust at the highest political level between the two countries.¹³

3.4 Establishment of Political Relations

The Gambia-Taiwan Relations since its commencement has been friendly and warm. Despite being far away geographically, from each other they have both shown the world that they are true partners. Modelski has outlined five varieties of friendly diplomatic exchange. These are:

1. Diplomatic support;
2. Supporting Actions of Other States' organs, Lending Direct Assistance to the Foreign Policy Agencies of Other States;
3. Exchange of material, equipment and ideas through educational training programmes and exchange of technology;
4. Putting the services of power, resources and territory at the disposal of other states;
5. Supporting the activities of non-state entities within other states and vice-versa.¹⁴

All of these especially the third scheme is very pertinent as far as parties are supporting the actions and efforts of each other without sabotage. Accordingly, John Quistard has also identified five indicators of friendly foreign relations among nations. These are measures of diplomatic contact, trade, UN voting behaviour, conflict event interactions and cooperative event interactions.¹⁵ The two countries share a common stance in justice, democracy, freedom, and development. It is based on shared common understanding and mutual respect. These have been shaping the relations of the two countries. These ideals, which constitute the foundation for any genuine friendship, have been the springboard for bilateral cooperation between the governments of both nations and their peoples. It is sufficient to say that the assistance of Taiwan in the Gambia's development processes has been quite immense. Thus,

these have resulted in many accomplishments that have a direct bearing on the socio-economic livelihood of the people, thereby complementing the Gambia government's efforts.

Apparently, the agreements between the Gambia and Taiwan fall within the categories of friendly relations as outlined above. Even though there is little or no trade between them¹⁶, as it is shown in chapter four, there has been significant coordination of foreign policy and cooperative event interactions both within and outside international fora. After the break off in ties which lasted almost twenty years, diplomatic ties between the two have shifted to Ambassadorial level with diplomatic representatives in both Banjul and Taipei. The Gambian government created a visa-free policy for ROC passport holders to facilitate easy entry into the country. Currently, Taiwanese Ambassador to the Gambia is Samuel Chen, while that of the Gambia in Taipei is Alhagie Ebrima Jarjou.

According to Ambassador Jarjou, the world is losing a lot as a result of the exclusion of Taiwan from the workings of UN specialized agencies and therefore call on the UN and other world bodies to consider admitting Taiwan. It is further observed that the relationship has been cordial and it can be best described as a model for south-south cooperation. The Gambians cherish their relationship with Taiwan for the benefit of the people of the two countries. The Gambia Government is grateful to the Taiwanese government for rendering assistance to the Gambia in vital areas of the economy such as agriculture, education, health, information and technology and nothing can separate them as true and sincere friends.¹⁷

Taiwan continues to support almost all the development endeavours of the Gambia. Over the years, Taiwan has demonstrated her resolve in complementing the efforts of the Gambian government in improving the living standards of its people. Sectors such as education, agriculture, infrastructure and health have all benefited from the largess of Taiwan during all these years.

Visits by high-level officials of the two states' have built up a tighter relationship between them. For instance, President Jammeh has visited Taiwan nine times with various members of his cabinet and parliamentarians. Likewise Taiwanese dignitaries visited the Gambia on several occasions. The government of President Ma Ying-Jeou has reaffirmed its resolve to maintain and strengthen relations with The Gambia. In 2008, President Ma Ying-Jeou acknowledged that "Taiwan has always treasured the brotherhood that the two nations share and, based on this solid friendship; Taiwan will explore the potential for further co-operation in the future".¹⁸

Taiwan has made great progress in its bid for international participation and for many years, the Gambia has supported Taiwan's inclusion in the international community. At present, Taiwan has formal diplomatic ties with twenty-three countries.¹⁹ At the same time, Taiwan has cultivated informal ties with many countries to offset its diplomatic isolation and to expand its economic relations. Many nations have set up unofficial organizations to carry out commercial and other relations with Taiwan. Today, Taiwan is represented in 122 countries.²⁰

During the administration of President Chen, Taiwan lobbied strongly for admission into the UN and other international organizations, such as WHO. The PRC opposes Taiwan's membership in such organizations, most of which require statehood for membership, because it considers Taiwan to be a part of its territory, not a separate sovereign state. The administration of President Ma has called for a "diplomatic truce" with Beijing, under which Taiwan would retain its existing diplomatic allies but not seek to win over countries that recognize the PRC. The Ma administration also hopes to expand Taiwan's "international space," increasing its participation in international organizations, such as the WHO, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the International Civil Aviation Administration (ICAA).²¹

3.5 The Environmental Context

The Gambia covers a land area of 11,360 square kilometers and a population of about 1.7million.²² The country is bordered by Senegal except at the Atlantic coastline. There is no natural feature between these two countries and no physical land mark to separate them. At different times in history, the present area covered by the Gambia was under different indigenous authorities in West Africa. It was originally part of Old Ghana Empire, later Mali Empire and finally Songhai before it became an entity. Until 18 February 1965, the Gambia was under the British rule. Situated on a sandy peninsula between the mouth of the Gambia River and the Atlantic Ocean, Banjul was founded by the British as Bathurst in 1816 as a base for suppressing the slave trade and was later changed to Banjul in 1973.²³

The Gambia has a tropical climate with well-defined rainy and dry seasons. The rainy season lasts from June to October while the dry season extends from November to May and *harmattan* commences during the months of March, April, and May.²⁴ The country is a relatively flat land with its lowest point being the sea level at the Atlantic Ocean. The River Gambia is the dominant geographical feature of the country, providing both a useful means of transportation and irrigation as well as a rich ground for fishing, boating, and sailing.

The country is divided into five administrative divisions and these are Western Region, North Bank Region, Lower River Region, Central River Region, Upper River Region and two municipalities-KMC and BMC. Politically, the Gambia is divided into eight Local Government Areas (LGAs), 35 Districts, 114 Wards and 2070 Village Development Councils.²⁵

Taiwan on the other hand, has for all practical purposes been independent for half a century but China considers it as a part of its territory and wants it re-united with the Mainland. Legally, most nations and even the UN acknowledge the position of the Chinese government

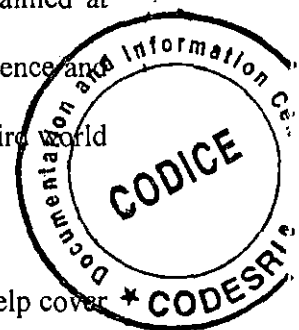
that Taiwan is a province of China. However in reality Taiwan's official name; Republic of China is an independent republic state based on parliamentary democracy and it has a semi-presidential form of government.²⁶

In 1895, military defeat forced China to cede Taiwan to Japan.²⁷ The ROC was established in 1912. After World War II in 1945, Japan surrendered Taiwan to ROC military forces on behalf of the Allied powers. Following the Chinese Civil War, the Communist Party took full control of Mainland China and founded the PRC in 1949 while 2 million Nationalists fled to Taiwan and established a government. Over the next five decades, the ruling authorities gradually democratized and incorporated the local population into the governing structure. Its jurisdiction became limited to Taiwan and its surrounding islands.²⁸

3.6 Foreign Policies: Elements and contradictions

The contradictions in the Gambia and Taiwan explain the attitudes of both countries towards each other and the different dynamics and elements of their foreign policies. It is important to stress the impact of international environmental politics on Taiwan's determination to restore its lost prestige and position under UN. In the same vein, in an attempt to build a new and more equal Taiwanese society, President Chen Shu Biyai in his foreign policy aimed at bridging the gap between the north and the south. He considered that Chinese influence and destabilization strategies could be contained by modernizing the economies of the third world through new export markets.

Thus, Africa, as a means to Taiwan foreign policy was conceptualized not only to help cover Taiwanese foreign policy goal but to enable Taiwan to escape Chinese prejudice and domination in third world countries. This is partly why Taiwan has been trying to establish and maintain dollar foreign policy in Africa particularly, West Africa. For instance, even though Taiwan has no diplomatic ties with Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana among others, the country still maintain trade relations with these countries. It should be emphasised that



Taiwan enjoys the tacit leeway given her by these countries to enable her trade in Africa. It is believed that Taiwan is protecting Taiwanese interest through its dollar policy. From the foregoing analysis, it is safe to note that Taiwan attaches great importance to her status and she is determined in aspiring not only to restore its past glory but to ensure that she becomes recognize by powers of the world.

Until November 2013, the Gambia remained a comparatively important arena for Taiwan as a potential support base for its foreign policy objective, although in practice concrete options have dwindled to the point of being rendered little more than symbolic value. Nonetheless, Taiwan has continued to attempt to use the support of its Gambian ally in international diplomatic environment. This is seen in Taiwan annual bid to join international organisation. In July 2007 for example, the Taiwanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, James Huang Chih-Fang came to the Gambia in an attempt to promote the UN bid that again failed to materialize.

At the level of the Gambia, the situation is quiet different as the country has not lost any position and she cannot lose what she does not have. The Gambia is still trying to carve out a niche for herself in world affairs and she has little or no human and natural resources. Many scholars are of the opinion that the Gambia have no major role to play in world politics and had never played any significant role in world affairs. There is no gain saying that the Gambia is the smallest country in Africa considering her territorial size, human and natural resources.

3.7 Conclusion

The pattern of diplomatic ties between Taiwan and the Gambia is said to be operating within a frame work of various manifestations of the doctrines of friendship and national interests. As such it was observed that formal bilateral relations were initiated by the concept of

national interest. Each of the countries' domestic policies contradiction led to the promotion and protection of dual friendship.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE GAMBIA-TAIWAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Taiwan is one of the four “Asian tigers” along with Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea. It has developed its economic base from small-holder of agriculture to a high manufacturing and exporting country, and it reformed its society and environment to distribute Taiwan’s new wealth. Taiwan has transformed itself from one party state into a liberal democracy in less than a quarter of a Century.

The Gambia-Taiwan ties transcend political-cum-diplomatic matters, even though these relations are manifest more in the diplomatic and technical co-operation. The Gambia falls among eight African countries that benefited from lending Technical Assistance offered by the Taiwanese Government in the areas of education, health, agriculture, ICT, social infrastructure and services, among others. This chapter therefore investigates the socio-economic relations between Taipei and Banjul and its impact.

4.2 Co-operation in Agriculture

After the first established diplomatic relations between the Gambia and Taiwan in 1968, the two nations signed an Agricultural Technology Agreement in which Taiwan was to dispatch a cultivation group to the Gambia to assist in its agricultural development. After the reestablishment of diplomatic ties with Taiwan in 1995, Taiwan agreed to provide assistance in cooperation with agriculture and related technology.

Taiwan continues to invest in the agricultural sector, the backbone of the Gambia’s economy, as part of its West African ally’s bid at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The Taiwan Government has executed several projects in this area including the Upland Rice expansion-

2009-2012,¹ with the objective of achieving self-sufficiency in rice production; improve per-unit yields of rice by supplying rice seeds and fertilizer, as well as training in cultivation and the establishment of farmers' organisations in order to promote the economy and reduce poverty.

Among the project components of the upland Rice Expansion Project is the development of aquaculture plant in Sapu, in the CRR and to train farmers on how to utilize the River Gambia for fish farming and manufacturing of fish food. The effects of this vital intervention in this area are premised on the great need of developing the country's economy, reducing the importation of rice and other foods lowering. Foreign reserve loss, and keeping hunger and poverty at bay in the country.²

There are currently some Taiwanese Technical Assistance Missions in the country, most notably the Taiwanese Agricultural Team based at Sapu, in the CRR. The assistance of TTM is important in the agricultural sector. The TTM has been involved in helping the farmers produce more than 10,000 metric tons³ of high quality and high-yielding rice yearly with about 1,000 hectares of tidal irrigation farms at Sapu and Jahally.⁴ It has also been involved in helping the farmers in horticultural farming across the country, especially in the Greater Banjul Area and Western Region.

After helping its African allies in areas such as agriculture and medical services for decades, Taiwan is now putting greater emphasis on training local people to do the work themselves to create sustainable development.⁵ According to Lee Pai-Po, Deputy Secretary-General of the Taipei-based, ICDF localization is key to Taiwan's aid programmes for African allies. However, a common problem identified and associated with many international assistance projects set up in developing countries is that they take a top-down approach based on the idea that "you take whatever I give,"⁶ which often fails to deliver sustainable outcomes. Lee

opined that “a localized project is a must for sustainable development, the goal of which is to provide training aimed at making them able to work independently”.⁷

Taiwan has been implementing assistance programmes based on a model that requires local people to engage in the programs themselves under the guidance of Taiwanese consultants. Such programmes include agricultural projects in Burkina Faso, one of Taiwan’s four allies in Africa, which have been ongoing for more than forty years. Taiwan has been helping the Gambia in this area in an effort to address food scarcity in the African countries. Such initiatives echo President Jammeh’s policy of attracting young adults to return to the countryside and engage in the farming industry to help increase food supplies.⁸

Table 1: the Upland Rice Expansion Project by Taiwan Technical Mission, 2009-2012

Year	Expansion Area (hectare)	Rice seed (mt.)	Fertilizer	
			NPK (mt.)	Urea (mt.)
2009	6,929.20	418.15	712.40	357.04
2010	9,096.58	543.9	910.94	456.47
2011	8,941.83	664.14	895.48	448.76
2012	8,700.85	553.75	851.48	436.76
2012 CRS	500	30		
2012 Augmentation	20,008.10	1,200.50		
Total	54,176.56	3,269.30	3,370.3	1,699.03

Source: Taiwan Embassy in Banjul, April, 2013

The Gambia’s economy is largely dependent on agriculture. Its agriculture can be described as a classic monoculture.⁹ It is the most important sector contributing 32 per cent¹⁰ of the GDP, providing employment and income for approximately 80 per cent¹¹ of the population and accounting for 70 per cent¹² of the country’s foreign exchange. It remains the prime sector to improve food security and reduce levels of poverty. About 54 per cent¹³ of the land area in the Gambia is good quality arable land (5,500 square kilometre) and is currently

farmed by the 41000 subsistence farmers.¹⁴ However, sporadic drought conditions cause large fluctuations in the peanut harvest. The GDP in 2002 was 357 million US dollars, or 260 US dollars per person.¹⁵ The Gambia's exports do not pay for its imports.¹⁶

More so, there is a sharp division of labour, with men involved in planting, cultivating, and harvesting cash crops while women cultivate subsistence crops such as cassava, yams, eggplant, tomatoes, rice, and lentils. There are citrus orchards in the western area near Banjul.¹⁷ Some 82 per cent of the working population of the Gambia is engaged in agriculture.¹⁸ Rice and millet, as well as cattle, sheep, goats, and poultry, are raised for local consumption. Peanuts are grown primarily for export; the crop amounted to 100,000 metric tons in 2006.¹⁹ The sale of peanuts and peanut products accounts for about two-thirds of the total yearly domestic exports by value. The government has made efforts to diversify agricultural production by encouraging the planting of oil palms, citrus trees, cotton, and other plants.²⁰

The production of peanuts has increased with the wider use of fertilizers and ox-drawn equipment and the introduction of better seeds. In order to diversify the economy, the government has encouraged the production of rice. A pilot scheme was begun in the mid-1960s to introduce plantation oil palm production, but this has had little impact on the national economy. Stock farming, always a factor in the Fulani culture, has also received government support, but factors such as insufficient animal husbandry techniques and the scarcity of suitable pasture and water have limited the size of herds. The drought years of the 1970s and '80s seriously damaged agricultural production, particularly in the upriver. The country was not as hard hit as other countries in the region, however, and recovery has been steady.²¹

Although the country's small ocean coastline limits marine fishing, there is some potential for commercial fishing offshore and in the river. Most Gambians are not fishermen, but those who are have been handicapped by inadequate equipment.²¹ The government has offered small loans for the purchase of motorized fishing boats and the construction of smoke huts for the processing of *bonga*, which is exported to other West African states. The coastal villages of the Gambia engage in fishing. In 2005, the fish catch was 32,000 metric tons, mostly from marine waters. Shad is by far the most common catch in the Atlantic waters. The Gambia exports fish and fish products.²²

The cost of the Gambia's yearly imports is usually much more than its export earnings. In 2003, imports totalled 163 million US dollars and exports were valued at 5 million US dollars.²³ The main trading partners for exports are Japan, Belgium and Luxembourg, Senegal, Guinea, France, and the United States; principal partners for imports are China, Côte d'Ivoire, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Germany, Senegal, Thailand, and the United States.²⁴

The Gambia's tourist industry is a growing source of foreign exchange. Revenues from this sector helped offset growing imports, unemployment, and rising prices at home. The current three-year development programme stresses agricultural diversification and self-sufficiency; technical assistance from Taiwan and a loan from the World Bank are being used to help curtail increasing rice imports from Burma. The current development plan also calls for the accelerated construction of educational institutions, roadways, and tourist facilities.²⁵

As for Taiwan, agriculture has served as a strong foundation for its economic miracle.²⁶ Until the mid-20th century, Taiwan's best assets were its fertile soils, tropical climate, and large agricultural labour force. Agriculture provided the logical starting point for economic development after World War II. Since 1970, however, rising agricultural costs have made agricultural exports uncompetitive, and Taiwan has had to rely increasingly on food imports.

Agriculture became the foundation for Taiwan's economic development. The government announced a long-term development strategy of "developing industry through agriculture, and developing agriculture through industry" while promoting growth in industry and commerce. In 1951 for instance, agricultural production accounted for 35.8 per cent of its GDP.²⁷ Although only about one-quarter of Taiwan's land area is suitable for farming, virtually all farmland is intensely cultivated, with some areas suitable for two and even three crops a year. However, increases in agricultural production have been much slower than industrial growth. Agricultural modernization has been inhibited by the small size of farms and the lack of investment in better facilities and training to develop more profitable businesses.³² Today, agriculture only comprises about 2.6 per cent of Taiwan's GDP or about US\$1 billion.²⁸

In 2002, farming accounted for 43.33 per cent²⁹ of the industry, with livestock constituting 30.02 per cent³⁰ and fishing 26.41 per cent³¹ making up a significant portion of the rest. Since its accession into the World Trade Organization and the subsequent trade liberalization, the government has implemented new policies to develop the sector into a more competitive and modernized green industry.

Taiwan's agricultural population has steadily decreased from 1974 to 2002, prompting the COA to introduce modern farm management, provide technical training, and offer counselling for better production and distribution systems. Promotion of farm mechanization has helped to alleviate labour shortages while increasing productivity; both rice and sugar cane production are completely mechanized.³³

Rice is the principal food crop. Other major crops include sweet potatoes, citrus fruits, sugarcane, watermelons, pineapples, bananas, peanuts, mushrooms, tea, asparagus, and soybeans. Although self-sufficient in rice production, Taiwan imports large amounts of

wheat, mostly from the United States and exported large amounts of frozen pork, although this was affected by an outbreak of hoof and mouth disease in 1997. Other agricultural exports include fish, aquaculture and sea products, canned and frozen vegetables, and grain products. Imports of agriculture products are expected to increase due to the WTO accession, which is opening previously protected agricultural markets.³⁴

4.3 Co-operation in Healthcare

Another major area of cooperation between the Gambia and Taiwan is the health sector. Medical services are among Taiwan's major assistance programme to the Gambia and many projects and programmes have been funded. In an effort to reduce the maternal mortality and mortality rate in the Gambia, the two governments have signed an agreement on the Maternal Health Improvement Programme. It seeks to train the country's regional health care staff and midwifery, upgrade maternal health level to a lower mortality rate.³⁵

Following the agreement, ICDF funds the programme in order to improve the maternal healthcare services in the Gambia. Taiwan ICDF is scheduled to fund nine classes of improve maternal health programme (each classes for 3 years) in Basse. The focal point of the programme is to enhance the capacity of the Gambia Government to attain the MDG, improve maternal health and reduce mortality rate.³⁶

Since the health facilities are not end in themselves the need for the provision of the requisite human and man power needs became very urgent. It is as a result of this that the school of Nursing was expanded to provide improved quality health delivery, and the establishment of the School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences at the University of the Gambia.³⁷

Since its inception, many have benefitted from Taiwanese scholarship for further training. In addition to providing medical care for the locals, a more important goal is to train doctors and

other medical personnel and develop their ability to operate and manage the hospitals on their own. This way, “their hospitals will count to be up and running after our assistance team leave.”³⁸

The health care system in the Gambia is built around three levels which are primary, secondary and tertiary. There are to date four referral hospitals operated by the government. In addition, there are eight main health centres and a further sixteen smaller centres, two hundred plus mobile clinic unit teams as well as MRC, which is funded by the UK government. There are also a number of privately owned clinics as well as a few health focused NGOs operating in the Gambia.³⁹

Primary Healthcare focuses on villages with a population of four hundred individuals where a village health worker and a Traditional midwife would be initially trained. Then he/she is assigned to deliver primary health care to their village. This includes providing out-patient care, community health education, among others.

Secondary healthcare is provided by the large and small health centres. There are around seven main government-run and private health centres, twelve smaller centres and 17 pharmacies with each providing in-patient and out-patient treatment.⁴⁰ Each has its resident nurses, doctors and ancillary staff.

Tertiary healthcare which is the third level health services are delivered by four main referral hospitals, the MRC, several private clinics and NGO operated clinics. The main referral hospital is the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital formerly called Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital (RVTH), in the capital on Independence drive. The other three are located at Bansang, Farafenni and Bwiam.⁴¹

4.4 Co-operation in Education

Based on the fact that education plays a very crucial role in the socio-economic and political development of any nation, the governments of the Gambia and Taiwan have been partnering in this respect. Part of such partnership is evident in a project entitled: “President Empowerment of Girls Education Project (PEGEP)” with a view to promoting gender equity and empowering women in line with the MGD three. The project has two cardinal objectives: to enable Gambian girls to attend schools and reduce the illiteracy rate of girls; and to assist the Gambia to promote girls’ education and gender equality provided with the capacity of career pursuit.⁴²

The government’s bilateral co-operation in education has really increased tremendously. This is seen in the number of Gambian students studying in Taiwan, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Malaysia, Cuba, and Russia. The Gambia government’s commitment to education is portrayed in its support both at the governmental level and personal level by President Jammeh. This is one of the reasons for the increase in the national budget for the education sector and the establishment of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (MoHERST).⁴³

From 2002 to 2012, the government of Taiwan provided between 625,000 US dollars to 700,000 US dollars each year⁴⁴ to the Gambian government in order to help the Gambian girls attend primary, junior and high schools free of charge. The resultant effect according to the embassy is that each year, there are 36,500 girls out of 125 primary and junior high schools that benefited from the project in the Greater Banjul Area.⁴⁵ Out of this number, 25,200 female students from Grade 7-9 and, 11,300 girl students from Grade 10-12, could go to schools free of charge.⁴⁶ For the past ten years, the Gambian girls’ employment

opportunity has been gradually upgraded. Equally, girls' opportunity for career pursuit and equality has greatly improved.

Aside the foregoing, the two countries also have a Higher Education Co-operation whereby scholarships are given to qualified Gambian nationals at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. This initiative is premised on the belief that Higher Education has far-reaching influence on implementing MDGs. Therefore, the Taiwanese government provides various scholarships to Gambians to study in Taiwan in order for the beneficiaries to give back to their country upon completion of their programmes.

Through these scholarships, it has been estimated that over two hundred Gambian students have the opportunity to study in Taiwan in the past ten years in various academic disciplines.⁴⁷ In addition to this, more than 150 students have studied in Science and Technology special classes; and most students have since graduated from various universities in Taiwan under various scholarship categories. These scholarships include those provided by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Mandarin Enrichment Scholarship with a one year study of Mandarin Course, ICDF and various scholarships provided by Taiwan Universities mostly in science and medical fields. Most of these graduates who have since returned to the Gambia are engaged in different public sector; contributing their quota to national development.⁴⁸

Meanwhile, education in the Gambia at the primary level is free but not compulsory. There are secondary and postsecondary schools, including a Teacher-Training College at Brikama. The government established the country's first university, the University of The Gambia, in 1999. Prior to that, Gambian students seeking higher education had to leave the country, many of them travelling to Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Britain, or the United States.⁴⁹ The Gambia's most precious resource is its people. This wealth is developed for the good of the

individual likewise the nation. To this end the Gambia continues to strive to provide educational opportunities for all of its citizens; adults as well as children, girls as well as boys, the handicapped and the disadvantaged as well as most fortunate members of the nation.

The education system in the Gambia is characterised by the co-existence of two complementary streams. The mainstream is based on secular education system carried over from the colonial era. There also exists a religious or *Madrassah* system of education. While the mainstream uses English as the medium of instruction modelled after the British education system, the *Madrassah* uses Arabic as a medium of instruction and is modelled after certain common elements, and there exists plans for absorbing *Madrassah* graduates into the mainstream at all level formal schools. This enables *Madrassah* graduates to secure equal chances of employment in the formal sector.⁵⁰

Although the financing of education in the Gambia is basically in the hands of the state, external aid finances more than 50 per cent of government development expenditures on education. Collaboration with partners and donors therefore has produced numerous benefits for children especially girls whose enrolment and participation in this sector was low compared to that of boys. Globally, however, Africa is dragging its feet with 64 per cent of 104 million children⁵¹ without access to education in sub-Saharan Africa including the Gambia.

Table 2: The Gambia Operates 6-3-3-4 System

Education level	Years of study/age	Certificate/Exam/Degree
Lower Basic School	6 years/ages 7–13	Grade six Placement Exam
Upper Basic School	3 years/ages 13–16	Basic Education Certificate Exam
Senior Secondary School	3 years/ages 16–19	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE)
University (undergrad)	4 , 5years	Bachelor's Degree
University (grad)	1+ years	Master's Degree

Source: *Janneh, Fatou. WAMY and Educational Development in the Gambia.*

Comparatively, both the Taiwanese government and the Taiwanese family have long believed in investing heavily in education. Today, Taiwan has a well-developed educational system which has virtually eliminated illiteracy. Technological and vocational education is said to be one of the driving forces behind Taiwan's miraculous economic growth.⁵² The education system has trained students in job skills and provided the manpower needs for social development. It is for this reason that some observers argue that one of the distinguishing features for the success of vocational education in Taiwan has been the ability to forge a working relationship between learning institutions and business for the betterment of the country. This is not a static but a dynamic relationship: as the technological revolution affects Taiwan's industry, so reforms in the education system are initiated. Garth Shelton, in describing the overall Taiwanese education system currently, has this to say:

Taiwan's education system is based on what is known as a 'six-three-three-four' system. This system includes two years of kindergarten for ages four to six; six years of elementary school for ages six to twelve; three years of junior high school for ages twelve to fifteen; three years of senior high school for ages fifteen to eighteen and four years of university study. Postgraduate Masters Programmes last from one year to four years and doctoral programmes from two to seven years.⁵³

Upon completing their nine years of compulsory education, students have the option of choosing between an academic education and a vocational education. Education is free and mandatory for children from six to 15. The government also provides for secondary and post-secondary education. All special schools are government-run; private schools receive a combination of government funding and private aid. Many children between the ages of three and six attend pre-school. Educational spending amounts to just below 20 per cent of government expenditures. In addition to regular educational spending, the Ministry of Education supports classes in the aboriginal language in primary schools in order to help preserve aboriginal culture.⁵⁴

Taiwan has more than 150 universities and other institutes of higher education. Major universities include National Taiwan University, in Taipei; National Central University, in Chungli; National Chungshing University, in T'aichung; National Cheng Kung University, in T'ainan; and National Chung-shan University, in Kaohsiung.⁵⁵

4.5 Co-operation in Infrastructural Development

Taiwan has carried out various cooperative projects in the Gambia, especially from 1995 to 2012. Chief among the projects of Taiwan in the Gambia include the construction of Banjul refrigeration facility in 1998; the purchase of 6,00KW diesel generator in 2001 to improve the country's power supply.

Since transportation is crucial to any development process, the Gambia has benefited from Taiwan's assistance in the construction of the Highway from Barra to Kerewan, Essa-Kerewan highway, Taiwan Highway, Banjul-Serrekunda Highway; the Sankuleh Kunda Bridge, installation of city streetlights and the Gambia Radio and Television Services Satellite Project.

Table 3: Projects embarked upon by Taiwan in the Gambia, 1998-2012

Item: Cooperative Project (Public Works)		
Calendar	Chronicle	Currency: USD
Sept 1998	Loan to help build Banjul refrigeration facilities (5 tonnes of ice-making daily)	300,000
July 2000	To improve the Gambian power supply, ROC provided USD 5 million loan to purchase a set of 6,000KW diesel generator.	30,542,00
May 2001	Loan to assist construct Essau Kerewan highway of North bank, also called "Taiwan Highway", 52 kms in length.	7,262,711
Aug 2001	Loan to purchase 2 sets of generators.	25,542,000
June 2002	Aid to renovate building of Yundum barrack near the Gambian international airport.	8,000,000
June 2006	Aid to install city street lamps.	1,700,000
June 2006	Aid to build a compound of 52 rooms to accommodate Heads of State for AU Summit.	3,285,703
July 2006	Aid to build CT Scanner accommodating room.	170,000
February 2007	Aid to renovate WCR Children hospital.	100,000
April 2007	Aid to renovate Yundum battalion.	1,627,794.75
May 2007	1. Aid to build Siffoe High school & Mayork High school, 2. Kanilai Conference Centre and Recording Building.	6,523,590.90 2,800,000 each 2,000,000
Jan 2008	Aid to construct 7 dormitories (each 3-storey) for single soldiers to boost morale.	1,627,794.75
June 2008	Aid to build 3 WCR roads and sewage system,	6,647,000
Sept 2009	Aid building express way from Banjul to Kanifing, payment due in two years.	9,500,000
Jan 2010	Aid build Satellite programme for Gambian GRTS	3,000,000
2010	An extra construction finance	1,014,433
February 2010	To build West Bank Bwiam Market.	369,642
June 2010	To build Kanifing NO. 1 highway, Talinding Village and NO. 3 highways Buffer Zone; To build NO. 2 highway, from Churchill's Town to Abuko.	1,481,482 954,084 Total: 2,435,566
July 2010	Building Kanilai Festival Dormitory.	642,963
July 2010	Building Sankuleh Kunda bridge, the first Gambian modern bridge. Building Gambia University Library, located at MDI	3,000,000 200,000

Oct 2010	Constructing University of the Gambia library, located at MDI.	681,779
Nov 2011	Building roads inside & around Gambia Presidential Office	824,974
June 2012	Building Gambia National Guard Headquarters Building Farafenni Presidential Residence	63,318 247,698 Total: 311,016
Aug 2012	Building official Residence for Deputy Governor of Gambia Lower River Region	91,852
Nov 2012	Building oil reserve tank for four Barracks	660,807
Nov 2012	Building extra road around Gambia Presidential Office	408,598
Dec 2012	Building the Gambia Police Dormitory	1,500,000
Dec 2012	Building fence for Banjul international airport	970,443
Dec 2012	Procuring engines for the Gambia ferries (down payment)	

Source: Taiwan Embassy in Banjul, April, 2013

4.6 Co-operation in Trade

The Gambia-Taiwan Relations are manifest in the Diplomatic and Technical Cooperation but not in the trade and other commercial activities. In the year 2006, machinery and chemical products were some few items that feature in their trade relations. Thus no stakeholders in the sub-sectors are yet to be affected favourably or unfavourably by commercial relations with Taiwan.⁵⁷ However, the Gambia Government has assured a transformed economy in the Gambia.

...we want to transform the Gambia into a trading, export-oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well-educated, trained, skilled healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population and in so doing bring to fruition this fundamental aim and aspiration of 2020.⁵⁸

Taiwan has an industrial economy that produces computers and computer products, and the Gambia has little, if any, to offer to satisfy the needs of computer and chemical industries of Taiwan. Thus, Gambia has negligible amount of exports to Taiwan. However, the Taiwanese Technical Assistance is almost everywhere in the Gambia while the bulk of Gambia's export

to Taiwan is vegetable oil from groundnuts, which is the country's main cash crop and major export item. It imports little from Taiwan, except knowledge and skills.

4.7 Co-operation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention

The governments of Taiwan and the Gambia through their ministries of Interior signed an agreement aimed at providing co-operation between the national immigration agencies of both countries. The scope of the co-operation includes the exchange of anti terrorist intelligence and exchange of skills related to entry and exit controls. Both nations have also agreed to include personnel training and sharing of working experience such as exchange of criminal information and exchange visits for official business.⁵⁹ The agreement is based on the principles of equality and reciprocity concerning trans-national crimes especially human trafficking prevention.

Article 8 of the Agreement states that "expenses need for personnel training shall be paid according to the result of negotiations conducted on a case basis. While other expenses incurred by way of parties after granting a request made by the other party in accordance with the agreement would be paid by the requested party unless it is otherwise negotiated by the parties".⁶⁰ But if the request involves a large amount of money, the parties shall negotiate beforehand to affirm the conditions of the request and the defrayment of the expenses.

4.8 Cultural Co-operation

The governments of Taiwan and the Gambia desirously strengthened friendship and understanding on the basis of equality, respect for sovereignty and non interference in the internal affairs of each other. Both agreed to exchange and promote co-operation in the fields of culture, education, technology, agriculture, scientific research and sports. The two countries promote the establishment of good relations between the cultural bodies,

universities and scientific research with a view of acquiring each other with the life of their people and exchange of views and experience.

The Taiwanese government has established Taiwan Culture Centre in the Gambia. The centre organizes three months intensive training in basic and advanced Chinese language. It also exposes students to Chinese culture and tradition as well as different Chinese cultural philosophy. Since its inception in 2012, the centre has graduated many students.

The Taiwanese embassy also opened exhibition of 65 pictures of Taiwanese culture and geography in the Gambia the essence of which was geared towards exposing the island nation to the Gambian community.

4.9 Conclusion

The socio-economic nature of Taiwan's current relations with the Gambia is more apparent in diplomatic and technical cooperation. The Gambia has benefited from lending technical assistance funded by Taiwanese government in the areas of education, agriculture, healthcare services, infrastructural services, immigration and culture.

The Taiwanese government has executed several projects in the agricultural sector including the upland Rice expansion as part of its West African ally's bid at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The two governments have also signed the Maternal Health Improvement Programme which seeks to upgrade maternal health level to lower mortality rate. In addition to this, it has established the school of medicine and Allied health science at the University of the Gambia as well as sending more medical personnel for further training abroad.

We have also discussed that the Gambia and Taiwan have been partnering in the area of education. The essence of this cooperation is to ensure that Gambian children attend school in order to reduce illiteracy rate, with a view to promote gender equity and empowering women.

The Taiwanese government has also contributed to infrastructural development in the Gambia among which is the construction of the Sankulay Kunda-Janjabureh Bridge.

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beyond the scope of their cooperation or that to meet the request will disrupt the public order
or good practice of the country of the requested party, it may refuse to grant the request along
with an explanation.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPMENT AID RELATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Economic aspects of the Gambia-Taiwan relations are the most important according to various scholars and because of the priority given by the governments of both nations to this sector. The need to revamp the economy of the Gambia compelled President Yahya Jammeh to turn to the Asian countries particularly Taiwan not only for foreign aid but encourage them to invest in the country. However, the need for international recognition also compelled Taiwan to look for more allies especially in sub Sahara-Africa.

In this chapter, attempt will be made to show the existence of enthusiasm on both sides and how Taiwan aid is able to boost the economy of the Gambia and how this friendship has been characterized by cooperation. In our study, special emphasis is placed on the rationale of Taiwan aid policy to the Gambia.

5.2 A History of Taiwan Aid Relations

Taiwan has transformed itself from a recipient of U.S. aid in the 1950s and early 1960s to an aid donor and major foreign investor, with investments primarily centred in Asia.¹ Taiwan began its overseas technical assistance in 1959.² After two years, under operation vanguard, technical missions helped improve agricultural production in many newly-independent African countries. In 1962 it was expanded to become the Sino-Africa Technical Co-operation Committee (SATCC), a permanent agency responsible for agricultural co-operation with African nations. It metamorphosed into the Committee of International Technical Co-operation (CITC) in 1972.³

Taiwan began to enter a period of rapid economic development in 1989, when the government established the International Economic Co-operation Development Fund (IECDF) to provide economic assistance to developing partners. As the variety of cooperative development projects expanded further and the number of overseas technical missions increased, Taiwanese government dissolved the IECDF in 1996, and established an independent organisation, the Taiwan ICDF. After a year, the CITC was incorporated into the Taiwan ICDF.⁴

Beginning in 1951, Taiwan received approximately US\$100 million per year—equivalent to nine per cent of GDP at the time—and a total of US\$2.4522 billion in foreign aid.⁵ Developed countries and international organizations provided loans and technical co-operation to help Taiwan with its transportation infrastructure, industrial facilities, financial development, improvement of medical care and public health, agricultural and fisheries development, education and personnel training programs. The US provided a total of US\$1.482 billion of assistance to Taiwan over the course of 15 years.⁶

In 1959, the arrival of Taiwan's first agricultural technical mission in Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), Vietnam, with the financial backing of the US government, marked Taiwan's first foray into international aid. Operation Vanguard, launched in 1960, saw Taiwan begin to dispatch agricultural missions to assist emerging independent states in Africa with modernization of their agricultural production and to help garner support for the Taiwan's representation in the United Nations. At one time, the number of Taiwan's agricultural specialists in Africa exceeded 1,200. Taiwan-Africa Technical Co-operation Committee was established in 1962 to further expand the program.⁷ In the 1980s, Taiwan caught the world's attention with its stellar economic performance. As a newly industrialized country that had

amassed huge foreign exchange reserves, Taiwan sought to expand its foreign relations through development aid.

In the 1990s, International aid was increasingly linked to development and cooperation between partners. As aid operations became increasingly complex and specialized, local authorities were keenly aware of a growing need to consolidate all aid resources so as to further strengthen international cooperation and booster foreign relations. Consequently, the government launched a specialized aid agency, ICDF to offer technical assistance, hosts overseas volunteer programmes, offers humanitarian aid, and organize international workshops and sponsor scholarships.⁸

5.3 The Institutional Framework and the Disbursement Channels of Taiwan

Development Aid

Taiwanese aid is often disbursed through projects co-funded with NGO's and multilateral institutions. The Taiwan development aid agency channels its disbursement from various sources. These include: the general fund, interest, returns on investments and income from commissions by the government of Taiwan or other institutions. Its main partners are governments, IOs or their designated agencies, corporate bodies, and NGOs. Its members of staff comprise both domestic and overseas experts with an estimated number of 98 and 188 personnel respectively.⁹

As at December 31, 2011, the total balance of fund was over fifteen million Taiwan dollars.¹⁰ However, at the time of its establishment, the initial endowment was almost twelve billion Taiwanese dollars.¹¹ This was the net value of the funds in the possession of IECD at the time of its dissolution in 1996. According to Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)s, Chad (which used to recognize Taiwan) and Sao Tome & Principe receive all of their Taiwanese aid in grants.¹²

5.3.1 Channels of Assistance

The OECD/DAC reports that the bulk of Taiwanese ODA is provided through bilateral channels.¹³ Among HIPCs, Malawi, Nicaragua and Sao Tome and Principe indicate that almost all aid is recorded on budget, though others suggest some off-budget aid for individual projects. Taiwan is not a member state of any major international organisation, and therefore does not make formal contributions.¹⁴ As discussed above it has developed innovative ways of delivering aid through or with NGOs and multilateral institutions.

5.3.2 Types of Assistance

Taiwan provides relatively little balance of payments or budget support, with its bilateral aid (projects and technical assistance). However, Sao Tome has indicated that it was provided with budget support. Taiwan is not a member of the Paris Club and has not provided any debt relief to HIPCs. Full debt relief to HIPCs would cost Taiwan around US\$ 300 million; making up about nine per cent of total expected HIPC Initiative debt relief from non-Paris Club creditors.¹⁵ Taiwan has a long history of supplying developing countries with technical assistance. Its TA policy states it should be designed to fulfil the needs of partner countries.¹⁶

ICDF operates several overseas TA missions, including the Mobile Medical Missions (MMM) and the Youth Overseas Service Program. HIPC analysis of the degree to which Taiwanese TA is based on government priorities, with the Gambia and Sao Tome and Principe indicating high levels of country leadership. HIPCs assess its achievements in terms of capacity-building as lower, with only the Gambia assessing that more than 50per cent of Taiwanese TA effectively builds capacity.¹⁷

5.4 The Place and Importance of Taiwan Development Aid to The Gambia

The Taiwanese aid have remarkably helped the Gambia since 1994 in agriculture and light industries development, manufacturing, social services provision (electricity and water), infrastructural development and transportation as well as in poverty alleviation. Many sectors of the country's economy benefited from such aid.

In addition to this, Taiwan has assisted the Gambia with aid in other areas. In May, 2007, Dr Patrick Chang, the Taiwanese Ambassador to the Gambia, presented two cheques for US\$59,188 and US\$86,916 respectively¹⁸ to GTTI and ASSEC, through Ms. Fatou Lamin Faye, Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education in Banjul. The two cheques were part of Taiwanese continuous financial support towards the construction of Siffoe and Mayork Model Senior Secondary Schools in the Western Region. The reason for such grant/aid is to assist the Education Sector which is an important tool in eradicating poverty. In the same year, Taiwan donated US \$370,370 to the Academy in Kanilai,¹⁹ the Gambia Navy received a boost from Taiwan with some donations during the same year. Furthermore, Taiwan donated US \$400,000 towards girls' education²⁰ in the country.

For the past few years, Taiwan's assistance to the Gambia's health sector has been consistent. Annually, Taiwan provides grants to the government to employ a team of foreign doctors to serve at various public hospitals and health centres in the country. Besides the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Gambia government to combat the avian flu, Taiwan has also provided two brand-new CT Scanners to enhance the health care service of the country. It has also sponsored Gambians to undergo training on the operation of the CT in Taiwan. As a result, the Gambia's Health Sector continues to show remarkably, culminating into the ranking of the Gambia by WHO as having one of the best primary health care systems in the sub-region. Taiwan assistance to the Gambia also includes vocational training

programmes aimed at improving local people's skills and knowledge so that they can earn a living.

For several years, Taiwan has been offering a helping hand to African countries most especially the Gambia through humanitarian, emergency assistance and projects aimed at improving local industrial developments. Besides helping the Gambian people, the assistance programmes have also played a significant role in maintaining bilateral ties between Taiwan and the Gambia.

Helping the African allies in particular, the Gambia is an opportunity for Taiwan to give something back to the international community at a time when its economic achievement allows it to do so. The assistance programmes not only help the countries in need, Taiwan also cement ties with them²¹. Meanwhile, studies have shown that the Gambia often stand up for Taiwan, voicing unrelenting support of Taiwan bid to participate in international bodies like WHO, ICAO and UNFCCC. On such international occasions, the Gambia has played a part in pushing for Taiwan's participation.

5.5 Conclusion

Taiwan aid development programme is spearheaded by ICDF, responsible for sharing Taiwan experience of growth and opportunity. The aid is usually disbursed through NGOs and multilateral institutions. Over the years, Taiwan has provided lots of aid to the Gambia and it has been consistent. It ranges from agriculture, education, health care to infrastructural development. We have discussed that besides helping the Gambian people, the development aid programmes have also played a significant role in maintaining bilateral ties between the two countries.

We have further pointed out that Taiwan which is now a provider of foreign aid to its African allies, especially the Gambia was once a receiver of aid from USA up till 1959. By using this aid, Taiwan was able to build up its infrastructure, reservoir, and railways among other things.

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CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Appraisal of the Gambia-Taiwan Relations

Just as the USA and the USSR entered into rigorous competition for influence in the world during the Cold War period, China and Taiwan are equally locked in the battle for recognition and non-recognition of Taiwan as sovereign state. The basis for this struggle is historically tied to the post - World War II struggle for power in China between the nationalists and the communists and the ultimate outcome in 1947. Consequently, both Taipei and Beijing have actively wooed African states utilizing aid packages as a means of winning foreign governments to their side. This is particularly true for Taiwan who has been using its development aid programme otherwise known as “dollar diplomacy” to win more backing in its bid for international for recognition and acceptance within the international system. As observed by Bot Taiwan’s non-recognition is an indication that the state in question lacks international legitimacy and has failed to gain widespread international acceptance. The Gambia has been a major beneficiary of such assistance as its economic vulnerability opens it up for an influence relationship with Taipei.

The Gambia and Taiwan have developed relatively coherent policies towards each other, on the basis of the convergence of their national interest. On Taiwanese side, the evidence suggests the main aims of its government policy towards the Gambia were:

- To expand continuing searching for international recognition;
- To increase Gambia’s ICT orientation and;
- To seek international support in resolving the territorial disputes in the East China Sea; known as “The East China Sea Peace Initiative”.

The key element in the pursuit of the Gambia's national interest is its recognition of Taiwan as a means of securing Taipei's commitment to provide technical assistance with major infrastructural development projects.

Since independence in 1965, the Gambia has been conscientiously working to attain national development by seeking peace, stability and economic development. The Gambia has not only actively participated in South-South co-operation, it has worked to promote North-South dialogue. For the past 18 years, Taiwan and the Gambia have enjoyed close political ties and frequent exchange of high level visits and people to people contacts. Cooperation in different sectors or fields has yielded good results while consultation and coordination in international affairs have been intensified. Taiwan has provided a lot of assistance to the Gambia and the country has reciprocated by giving solidarity to the Island nation in various ways. Despite foreign aid packages, this research reveals that the Gambia still faces many challenges in its road to development despite the persistent effort and continuous support of Taiwan and international organisations. This is partly due to President Yahya Jammeh style of "military diplomacy". Although the Gambian government worked increasingly hard to maintain cordial relationship with Taiwanese government, but its efforts failed in its lobbying for a UN seat for its Island country ally.

The volume of Gambia-Taiwan trade is quite small and there is no diversification of export products. The Gambia's main export item is groundnut, which often accounted for about two-thirds of the total yearly domestic exports. The problem of lack of expansion in trade is partly based on the fact that Taiwan exports to the Gambia is limited to computers. The Gambia's inability to diversify her export towards Taiwan explains the permanent trade imbalance between the two countries recorded by the Gambia.

As emphasized earlier, there is no diversification of the productive base of the economy to link raw material production to processing and technological development to manufacture simple processing and labour saving devices to enhance value added production, employment and revenue generation for social and infrastructural development. The country still imports what it consumes and consumes what it does not produce.

In 2004, the development disbursement was valued at 81.9 million US dollars (1637 million dalasis). 71.8 per cent of the sum total was derived from loans and 14.7 per cent was from grants. Halifa Sallah explained that the country's debt in 2004 had gone beyond 1 million US dollars (20 million dalasis) mark with the external debt comprising 892.5 million US dollars (17.85 billion dalasis) and the internal debt adding to 140 million US dollars (2.18 billion dalasis). In 2008, an export was estimated to be 12 million US dollars (300 million dalasis) leaving the country with a trade deficit of 272 million US dollars (6800 million dalasis). Therefore, the revenue could not meet expenditure and as a result of that, the budget deficit in 2009 was projected to be 14.5 million US dollars (363million dalasis). Not until 17 December 2007 when the Gambia received debt relief as one of the heavily indebted poor countries did it obtain a debt relief from the IMF and World Bank. In the course of the fieldwork, it was ascertained that the country nevertheless depends on loans and grants in order to execute development projects.

Taiwan ICDF offers technical assistance, hosts volunteer programmes, offers humanitarian aid, organizes international workshops and sponsor scholarship. In the past decades, many Gambian students have benefited from Taiwanese scholarship, some of who are presently working in various sectors in the Gambia. Taiwan ICDF has also been organizing workshops in various themes such as ICT, good governance and democracy through the Taiwanese embassy in Banjul. Statistics has shown that out of Taiwan diplomatic allies, twenty-two are

developing countries and Taiwan's most important and closed partner in terms of international cooperation is the Gambia.

Taiwan strengthens its co-operation with the Gambia in various fields which generally conform to international practices. It observes professional standard and effectiveness in promoting the prosperity of the Gambia. Through bilateral projects assistance, Taiwan allocated fund based on the expected effectiveness of the projects and budget which provide long term and planned assistance as well.

In the future, it is hoped that the Gambia will exert feasible measures for maximizing effectiveness of cooperation and creating a win-win situation for Taiwan. The Gambia would try to employ investment incentives and other measures to encourage Taiwanese businesses to set up factories in the Gambia. From this research, it has been revealed that most of the products in the Gambian market are from China instead of Taiwan; there is little trade between the two countries. The Gambian government also limited the participation of domestic enterprises in the construction projects and procurements stemming from Taiwan's aid programme. It is observed that the government is not using tax cuts and other incentives to encourage private enterprises to play a bigger role.

The Gambia-Taiwan Relations, which is dominated by foreign assistances, comes in form of zero-interest loans, cash donations and technical assistances, was intended to foster economic and social development. According to Taiwan News Channel, Taiwan foreign aid budget rose to about US\$366.2 million in 2013, down from NT\$13 billion in 2012 and NT\$14 billion in 2011. Studies have also disclosed that the Island nation would not reach the international spending target of 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income any time soon.

Taiwan has enhanced medical personnel and information exchange in the Gambia. It has sent medical teams and provided medicines and medical materials for the Gambian people and

helped them improve medical facilities and medical personnel. However, there is need for improvement in the health sector of the country. More specialists are needed especially in the health centres. In spite of the efforts of the government and its ally, life expectancy in the Gambia is below 60 years. The issue of HIV/AIDS and other life threatening diseases still require greater attention.

During the fieldwork, the researcher was made to understand that The Gambia-Taiwan relations does not actively involve co-operation in areas like Climate Change, Bio-diversity and other areas of environmental protection for facilitating technological exchange.

Taiwan has also responded quickly in urgent humanitarian and disaster aid. In area of security and defence Taiwanese government had given some boats for marine in 2012 and had supported the military personnel. However, there is still need for more improvement in the Gambian security. The duo also signed an agreement through their immigration departments in tackling human trafficking, combating terrorism and other related problems. But its impact is not felt by the masses.

Although, the Gambia-Taiwan relation was severed on the 15 November 2013, many critics are of the opinion that President Ma-Ying-Jeou gets the blame for the split with the Gambia. Taiwan needs to maintain a basic number of diplomatic allies, or else development of cross-strait relations could be affected. Scholars like Lin Cheng-Yi believed that a diplomatic crisis (as in the case of the Gambia) does not simply happen, it always leaves certain signs. It is clear that the Gambia had asked earlier in 2013 if Taiwan could loan her more money and was turned down. Others agreed that President Yahya Jammeh's understanding of China's role in Africa could have been a contributing factor. It is also clear that Jammeh's aspirations for the Gambia to become a principal exporter of crude oil may play a role in his seeking to make China a strategic ally due to funding and technology from Chinese companies.

However, from numerous conversations, many people believe that China has something to do with the Gambia's decision on Taiwan. China has established offices in many of Taiwan's diplomatic allies, and many of them responded positively by establishing offices in China. Payne and Veney opined that recognition of Taiwan by African states like the Gambia is viewed by China as a zero-sum game. Therefore, the struggle between Taiwan and China for African support is heightened by constraints on China's ability to settle forcefully the Taiwan issue.

Apparently, the cordial ties of friendship and co-operation that exists between the Gambia and ROC continue to flourish with technical and financial support provided to various sectors of our economy. However, the support for Taiwan is driven by considerations of financial gain rather than belief in the principle of self-determination and the right to exist for every nation as claimed by the Gambian government.

6.2 Summary

The Gambia-Taiwan Relations is divided into two periods: 1968 to 1974 and 1995 to 2012 as a result of the change and continuity in the Gambian foreign policy which coincided with the eras President Jawara and President Jammeh respectively. Under President Jawara, the country's foreign policy sought to enhance the nation economy, increase security and portray a positive international image for the country and its leaders while President Yahya Jammeh's policy sought to safeguard national security, promote socio-economic well-being of the citizens and advance international co-operation. All these objectives were shaped by foreign policy elite, the size of the country and its low level of development.

It is a fact that the Gambia established political relations with Senegal and economic ties with Britain soon after independence for security reasons. Even though the Senegambia confederation was born out of the security needs of the country, the political union collapsed

in August 1989 due to several reasons. For instance, Jawara's foreign policy was basically an aid dependent policy. The country used diplomacy for its security. As a result, the foreign policy was influenced by its benefactors. It is argued that that is why the Senegambia confederation came about as it was not because the Senegalese like President Jawara but because they knew that a fragile reinstated Jawara would accept dictates from Dakar than resurgent and angry Kukoi Samba Sanyang.

Although the Gambia's foreign policy since 1970 has been characterized by change and continuity, it had always leaned towards the West. However, this special relationship became severed following the military coup of 1994 led by Yahya A.J.J Jammeh. Consequently, there was a drop of 60 per cent in revenue from the tourism sector between the periods of 1994/95. Faced with a series of economic sanction, the Gambia once again, turned to Taiwan which resumed diplomatic relations with it in July 1995.

Essentially, the Gambia's relations with the Middle East from 1994-2012 was comprehensive since the diplomatic gain was beyond just financial aid, there were political benefits which entailed recruitment of professional military personnel and many other beneficial areas to the Gambia.

Conversely, changes and continuity in the Gambia's foreign policy has been influenced by economic, the country's membership and commitment to several international organisation among which include UNO, AU, ECOWAS, and CILLS.

Diplomatic ties that were resumed between the Gambia and Taiwan has re-opened a new chapter which is of great historical significant. They operate within the framework of various perceptions on the doctrine of friendship and national interest. It is our view that bilateral relations were initiated by the concept of national interest. Likewise, Sino-Gambia relations were more or less a marriage of convenience.

The study brought to light that the desire to diversify agriculture to achieve self-sufficiency in food led to the country's decision to sign technical cooperation with Taiwan in 1966, which eventually provided assistance in the area of agriculture irrigation. Between 1968 and 1974, assistance from both the World Bank and Taiwan greatly altered the Gambia's rice production and rice import situation. It led to increased rice from 7,000 tonnes in 1968 to around 14,000 tonnes by 1974.

From 2009 to 2012, Taiwanese government has executed several projects in Upland Rice expansion. Among its components was to assist in the development of aquaculture plant in Sapu in the Central River Region, and to train farmers on how to utilize The River Gambia for fish farming and manufacturing of fish food. Peanuts were grown primarily for export; the crop amounted to 100,000 metric tons in 2006. The sale of peanuts and peanut products accounts for about two-thirds of total yearly domestic exports by value.

Comparatively, agriculture has served as a strong foundation for Taiwan's economic miracle. Agricultural production accounted for 35.8 per cent of its GDP in 1951. Today, agriculture only comprises about 2.6 per cent of Taiwan's GDP or about US\$1 billion. The Gambia, however, considered foreign economic assistance a short-term solution to her economic problems, and worse still, an instrument for greater dependence. Self-reliance was the country's ultimate objective. It was particularly needed in food production, which together with commercial agriculture continued to be adversely affected by bad weather conditions. It was this consideration that accounted for the Gambia's relations with the neighbouring states in West Africa.

Diplomatic relations between Taiwan and the Gambia were therefore extended beyond agricultural cooperation. The diplomatic expansion led to the signing of the Maternal Health Improvement programme which sought to upgrade maternal health level to lower mortality

rate. In addition to providing medical care for the locals, many medical personnel have benefitted from Taiwanese scholarship for further training.

The health care system in the Gambia is built around primary, secondary and tertiary. There are to date four referral hospitals which are operated by the government. There are eight main health centres, 200 plus mobile clinic unit teams as well as MRC funded by UK government. There are a number of privately run clinics as well as few health focused NGOs operating in the country.

In 1995, Taiwan launched a government-funded health insurance program. Medical resources increased and rural facilities were upgraded. Taiwan's highest public health authority is the Department of Health under the Executive Yuan. The department determines health policies and co-ordinates health services at all levels. Among the major health programs are pre-natal and post-natal care, prevention of cancer, and the control of communicable diseases. The infant mortality rate (5 deaths per 1000 live births in 2010) and life expectancy rivals the rates of most industrialised democracies.

The Gambia government bilateral co-operation with Taiwan in education has really increased tremendously. From 2002-2012, the Taiwanese government provided between US\$625,000 to \$700,000 each year to the Gambia government in order to help the Gambian girls to attend school free of charge. This is to ensure literacy and to enhance girls' education and gender equity with the capacity of career pursuit.

Unlike the Gambia, Taiwan has a well-developed educational system which has virtually eliminated illiteracy. Technological and vocational education is said to be one of the driving force behind Taiwan's miraculous economic growth. Its educational system was able to train students in job skills and it provided the manpower needs for social development. The country has more than 150 universities and other institutions of higher learning.

The Taiwanese government has also contributed to infrastructural development in the Gambia and this includes the construction of the Sankuleh Kunda-Janjanbureh Bridge. The study has also shown that their relationship is manifested in diplomatic and technical cooperation but not in trade and other commercial activities. Taiwanese technical assistance is almost everywhere in the Gambia while the bulk of the country's export to Taiwan is vegetable oil from groundnut which is the Gambia's main cash crop and major export item.

The two allies also signed an agreement for providing cooperation in Immigration Affairs and Human Trafficking Prevention. The scope of the cooperation consists of the exchange of anti terrorist intelligence and exchange of skills related to entry and exist control. The agreement was based on the principles of equality and reciprocity concerning about trans-national crimes.

They were desirous at strengthening friendship and understanding on the basis of equality and mutual respect for each of their sovereignty. There is a Taiwan Culture Centre in the Gambia established in 2012 with the aim of teaching the community Chinese culture and tradition as well as different Chinese cultural philosophy. It is also a training ground for those learning Chinese.

The driving force of Taiwan development programme is ICDF. It is in charge of sharing Taiwan's experience of growth and opportunity. The aid is disbursed through NGOs and multilateral institution. Over the years, Taiwan has provided lots of aid to the Gambia and it has been consistent. This ranges from agriculture, education, health care, infrastructural development to cultural cooperation.

The Banjul's defection leaves only Sao Tome and Principe, Burkina Faso and Swaziland as the remaining African countries to recognize Taipei instead of Beijing at a diplomatic level. Since 1971, when mainland China was admitted to the UN, the total number of diplomatic

allies of the island has fallen to the current 22, including the Vatican. Since the end of the civil war in 1946 and the flight of nationalists to the island, Beijing has claimed Taiwan as a "renegade province" to be annexed to the motherland, while Taipei terms itself the "legitimate government" of China, even if they make no claim of sovereignty over the territory.

Over the decades, the two countries have challenged each other in what has been called "yuan diplomacy" or economic support to the poorest countries to achieve greater international status. Over the past 18 years, Taiwan has paid tens of millions of dollars to support health, education, agriculture and infrastructure in the Gambia. The last project in chronological order - funded by Taipei to the tune of 22 million dollars - was the construction of 42 km of highway to connect the capital Banjul with the western part of the country. In 2010, Jammeh called the island "one of Gambia's best allies", hoping that it "may soon take its rightful place" on the world stage.

6.3 Conclusion

Since the military took over, Taiwan has substantially increased its aid to the Gambia. However, the aid policies and aid distribution channels through which Taiwan provides its aid are not well known. Using available aid data from the various recipients and information from the Taiwanese embassy in the Gambia, this research provides insights on how Taiwan's aid has impacted on the socio-economic and cultural development of the people of the Gambia.

The study further appraises sector specific opportunities and challenges faced by the Gambia as a result of the impacts generated through the growth of this relationship with Taiwan. The research reveals that the aid development programme of which the Gambia is benefitting

from has mainly been in the form of technical assistance, with emphasis on training in Taiwanese Universities and institutions; grants; interest-free loans; preferential loans that have an interest subsidy; and debt relief. Indirect benefits have been felt for example in debts that have been cancelled which has reduced the Gambia's external burden.

The study implores that there is a strong need for the government to contribute meaningfully to donor funded projects for sustainability and for further poverty reduction of the beneficiaries of these services. In addition, urges government to re-strategize its position in its relations with Taiwan most importantly, the public should have a greater say in the Gambia-Taiwan bilateral relations instead of the president having a greater influence and the final say on major policy issues.

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Ms. Cary	Female	22	Volunteer	Taiwan Culture Centre, Kanifing	9 th April 2013
Mrs. Chen	Female	30 +	Teacher	Taiwan Culture Centre, Kanifing	27 th April 2013
Anonymous	Male	31	Civil Servant	Banjul	2 nd May, 2013
Anonymous	Male	28	Civil Servant	Banjul	2 nd May, 2013
Dr. Sallah	Male	40	GAIPE	Kairaba Avenue	30 th April 2013
Aunty Maimuna	Female	32	Volunteer	Taiwan Culture Centre, Kanifing	16 th April 2013
Ms. Cary	Female	22	Volunteer	Kairaba Avenue Centre, Kanifing	6 th April, 2013

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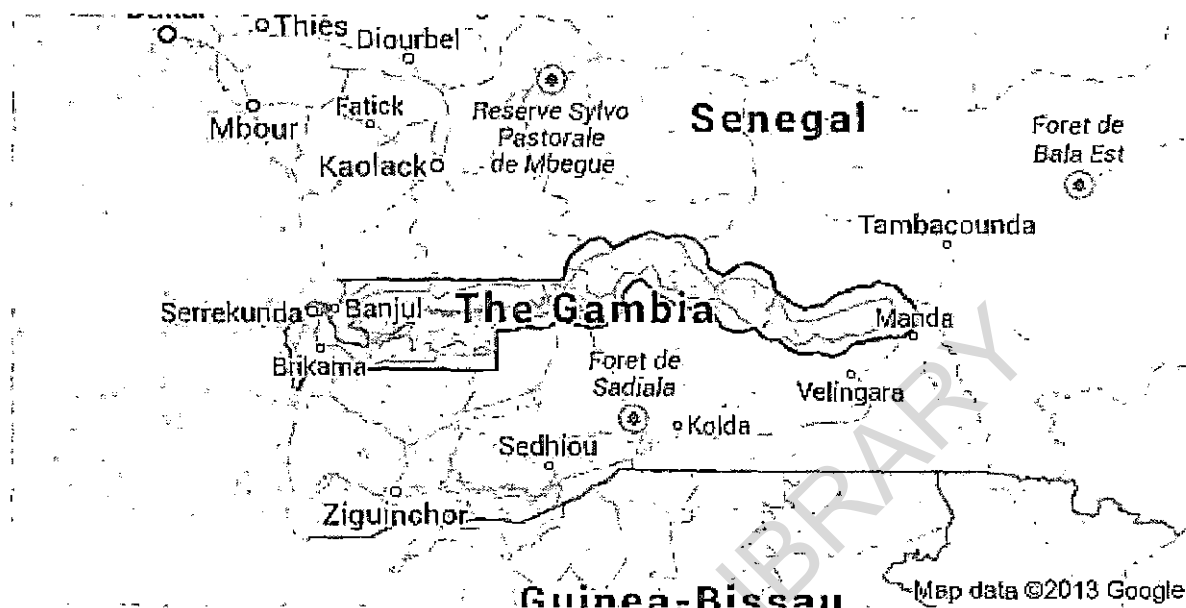
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APPENDICES

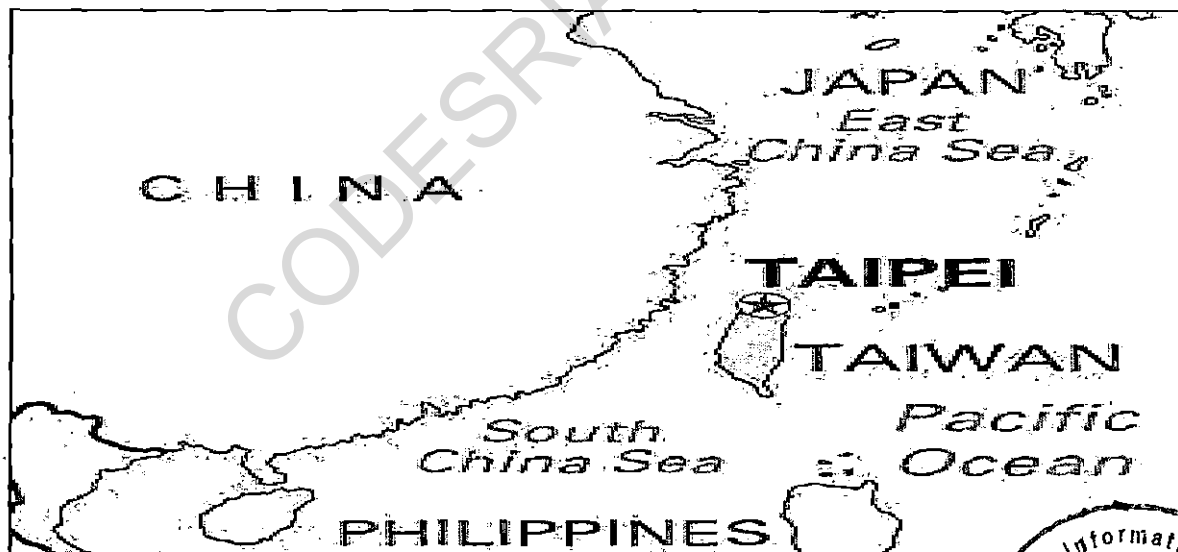
Appendix 1

Map of the Gambia up to 2013

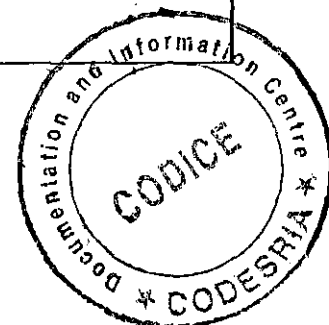


The Gambia is surrounded by Senegal in the north, east and south.

Appendix 2



The map shows the tiny Island nation in the midst of its neighbours.



Appendix 3

The chronology of relations between the Republic of China and Republic of The Gambia, 1995-2012

Taiwan VIP's visit to The Gambia	
Date	Chronology
8/ 2000	H.E President Chen Shui-Bian Visited The Gambia
12/2001	H.E President Annette Lu Hsiu-Lien
7/2004	Hon. Yao Chia-Wen, President of the Examination Yuan
11/2004	Hon. Chen Tang-Shan, Minister of Foreign Affairs
8/7/2007	Hon. Huang Chih-Fang, Minister of Foreign Affairs
23/10/2008	Hon. Francisco Ou, Minister of Foreign Affairs
25/6/2009	Hon. Andrew Hsia, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
20/7/2010	Hon. Wang. Jin-Pyng, President of Legislative Yuan, led a delegation to attend the July 22 Revolutionary ceremony of The Gambia
14/12/2010	Hon. Kao Hua-Chu, Minister of Defence
30/8/2011	Mr. Tao Wen-Lung, secretary General of International Cooperation & Development fund (ICDF)
17/1/2012	Hon. Timothy Yang, Minister of Foreign Affairs, attended the Inauguration of H.E. President Jammeh
11/4/2012	H.E. President Ma Ying-Jeou, led a delegation to make a state visit

Appendix 4

The Gambia's VIP visit to Taiwan	
Date	Chronology
4/12/1997	H.E. President Jammeh's 1 st visit to Taiwan
19/12/1998	H.E. President Jammeh's 2 nd visit to Taiwan
8/1/2001	H.E. President Jammeh's 3 rd visit to Taiwan
15/2/2001	Hon. Tamsir Jallow, leader of the majority party of the National Assembly
1/11/2002	Hon. Sheriff Mustapha Dibba, Speaker of the National Assembly
8/10/2003	H.E. President Jammeh's 4 th visit to Taiwan
19/5/2004	H.E. President Jammeh's 5 th visit to Taiwan
9/10/2005	H.E. President Jammeh's 6 th visit to Taiwan
14/3/2006	Hon. Lamin K. Bajo, Minister of Foreign affairs
17/7/2006	Hon. Mambury Njie & Madame Njie, Minister of foreign Affairs
6/8/2006	Hon. Neneh MacDoual-Njie, Minister of Communication, Information & Technology
6/10/2006	Hon. George Aziz, Deputy Speaker Of the National Assembly
7/11/2006	Hon. Belinda Bidwell, Speaker Of the National Assembly
25/11/2006	Hon. Bala Garpa-Jahumpha; Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Sheikh Omar Faye, Minister of Youth & Sport Mr. Lamin Bojang, Director General of The Gambia Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA)
29/7/2007	Hon. Crispin Grey-Johnson, Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology
8/9/2007	H.E. Dr. Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice President, on behalf of H.E. President

	Jammeh, attended ROC (Taiwan)- Africa Summit
20/10/2007	Marie Saine-Firdous, Minister of Justice, His Lordship, Justice Abdou Hareem Savage, Chief Justice of The Gambia
4/12/2007	H.E. President Jammeh 7 th Visit to Taiwan
17/5/2008	H.E. Dr. Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice President attended the inauguration of President Ma Ying-Jeou & Vice President H.E. Vicent Shew
9/8/2008	Hon. Ousman Sonko, Minister of Interior
9/10/2008	Hon. Fatoumata Jahumpa-Ceesay, Speaker of the National Assembly
19/10/2008	General Lang Tombong Tamba, Chief of Defence Staff, GAF
20/4/2009	H.E. President Jammeh's 8 th visit to Taiwan
10/9/2009	Hon. Abdoulie Sallah, Secretary General, Office of the president
16/3/2009	Hon. Jato Sillah, Minister of Forestry & Environment
5/6/2010	Hon. Yusupha Kah, Minister of Economic Planning & Enterprise Development
6/6/2010	CDS Gen. Masanneh Kinteh, Chief of Defence Staff, GAF
7/10/2010	Hon. Elizabeth Renner, Speaker of the National Assembly
4/11/2010	Hon. H.E. Dr. Isatou Njie-Saidy, Vice President, attended Taipei Flora Expo
6/1/2011	Hon. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Habib Jarra, Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs
15/6/2011	Hon. Dr. Mariama Sarr-Ceesay, Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology
29/7/2011	Hon. Fatou Mass Jobe-Njie, Minister of Tourism & Culture
17/9/2011	Hon. Dr. Njogou Bah, Minister of Local Government, Land & Religious Affairs
8/10/2011	Hon. Abdoulie Bojang, Speaker of the National Assembly
15/10/2011	Hon. Fatim Badjie, Minister of Health & Social Welfare
6/11/2012	General Ousman Badjie, Deputy CDS, GAF
17/5/2012	Hon. Mambury Njie, Minister of Foreign Affairs, attended the inauguration of H.E. President Ma Yin-Jeou and Vice President Wu Den-Yih
26/6/2012	H.E. President Jammeh's 9 th visit to Taiwan