

The Gambia: UN, ECOWAS, AU hail 'goodwill' of former President Jammeh; commit to work for his dignity and security

22 January 2017 – The United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) have commended the goodwill and the statesmanship of the former President of The Gambia, Yahya Jammeh, who decided to facilitate an immediate and orderly transition process and transfer of power to President Adama Barrow.

In a joint declaration late yesterday, UN, ECOWAS and AU pledged to work with the Government of The Gambia to ensure that it assures and ensures the dignity, respect, security and rights of former President Jammeh, as a citizen, a party leader and a former Head of State as provided for and guaranteed by the 1997 Gambian Constitution and other Laws of The Gambia.

The same also extended to the former President's immediate family, cabinet members, government and security officials, and party supporters and loyalists.

The declaration noted that former President Jammeh will temporarily leave the country, without any prejudice to his rights, to assist the peaceful and orderly transition and transfer of power and the establishment of a new government,.

Furthermore, the three organizations also said that they would work with the Government to ensure that no legislative action is taken against the former President and his entourage, as well as to prevent seizure of assets and properties lawfully belonging to them, and urged the authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure that there is no intimidation or harassment of former regime members and supporters.

They also pledged to work with Gambian authorities on national reconciliation to cement social, cultural and national cohesion.

The joint declaration further noted that the UN, ECOWAS and AU will work to ensure that host countries that offer African hospitality to former President Jammeh and his family do not become undue targets of harassment, intimidation and all other pressures and sanctions.

It added that the three organizations would also work the Government to ensure that former President Jammeh is at liberty to return to The Gambia at any time of his choosing in accordance with international human rights law and his rights as a citizen of The Gambia and a former head of state.

The joint declaration further noted that ECOWAS will halt any military operations in the country and will continue to pursue peaceful and political resolution of the crisis.

PM condoles the loss of lives due to the derailment of Jagdalpur-Bhubaneswar Express train

PM condoles the loss of lives due to the derailment of Jagdalpur-Bhubaneswar Express train

Huang Xingguo under graft investigation

Huang Xingguo, former acting Party chief and mayor of Tianjin Municipality, is under investigation on suspicion of accepting bribes, the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) announced on Sunday.

The SPP said Huang has been placed under "coercive measures," which may include summons by force, bail, residential surveillance, detention and arrest.

Investigation into his case is currently under way, according to the SPP.

PLA helicopter crashes during night training

A helicopter that belonged to the PLA Army Aviation Corps crashed on Thursday evening during a night time training flight. The two pilots remain missing as of Friday 20:10, the Chinese Ministry of National Defense (MOD) confirmed late on Friday.

The MOD statement says that the accident happened around 19:20 on Thursday evening in the rural area of the Quangan District, Quanzhou City in southeast China's coastal Fujian Province. The MOD did not specify the model of the helicopter nor which military unit it belonged to, adding that the cause of the crash is still being investigated.

The crash also resulted in four damaged village houses and three injured local people with non-life-threatening injuries.

Media have released the news of the helicopter crash in Quanzhou soon after the accident happened, but local authorities said the military authorities will announce the official account of the accident.

12 feared dead in central China landslide

Rescuers have found no signs of life of the 10 people missing after a landslide in central China's Hubei Province on Friday night, indicating the death toll is very likely to stay at 12.

Two people have been confirmed dead.

The Mirage Hotel in Nanzhang County was devastated at around 7:30 p.m. Friday when around 3,000 cubic meters of debris slid down a slope behind the hotel, said the firefighters in charge of the rescue.

Hotel owner He Dahui is among the missing.

A total of 15 people were trapped, and rescuers pulled five survivors from the debris, two of whom died in hospital.

A three-storey building collapsed, trapping hotel workers and guests in the restaurant on the first floor.

Rescue work has been suspended due to risks of a secondary disaster. Rescuers will remove rocks that pose threat to the people on site before the work restarts.