THE GAMBIA

REPORT

VOLUME 11

2009 WITCH-HUNT EXERCISE
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A. OVERVIEW

1. Yahya Jammeh had a strong belief in superstition and supernatural activities. He used the powers of the state to carry out a state sponsored witch hunting exercise which he believed would purge the country of witches and wizard. The witch hunting exercise started in Kaniilai and Sintet in 2008 and it was expanded to government institutions and surrounding villages in the Kombos in 2009. Gambian citizens were abducted from Sintet, Jambur, Essau, Barra, Makumbaya, Galoya as well as villages in Foni. Other reported Witch-hunting exercises occurred at the headquarters of the Gambia Armed Forces, NIA, GPF, Banjul Fire Brigade and the Abuko abattoir (GAMTEL).

2. The witch hunters carried out the exercise with the assistance of the APRC militia group, the green boys and girls, armed police and military officers. They wielded considerable power and authority in the different locations they visited which was demonstrated by compelling the compliance of local government authorities, security forces, villagers and victims. The victims were generally elderly, however, there was a rare case of a pregnant woman and a student. Victims were forcefully detained for several days and forced to drink bitter or unpleasant herbal concoctions believed to have been made from “Kubejara” a local hallucinogenic plant which is poisonous and very harmful to the body. Some victims were reported to have tortured to force them to comply with the witch hunters. The witch hunting exercise was one of the most widespread and heinous violation which targeted the older and less privileged members of society. For this reason, the TRRC held three public sittings in the most affected communities, in order to give the victims the opportunity to narrate their ordeal.

3. The hearings on the Witch-hunting went on from November 11 to December 5, 2019, during the 10th session of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) with the largest number of witnesses heard. This theme was one of the longest recorded sessions with 39 sittings and 43 witness including those adversely mentioned.

4. During the hearings on this theme, the TRRC conducted sittings in line with its victim-centered approach in the most affected regions i.e. Jambur, Kombo South District, West Coast Region, Sibanor, Foni, West Coast Region and Essau, Lower Niumi District, North Bank Region., Some of the witnesses from the Gambia Police Force (GPF) HQ in Banjul and a few other witnesses from Makumbaya testified at the TRRC premises.

5. The Commission was able to grasp the nature, gravity and the various forms of violations suffered by the victims from different works of life.

B. SUMMARY OF WITNESS TESTIMONIES

3. Between 2008 and 2009, series of Witch-hunting exercises were conducted on the orders of Yahya Jammeh at different locations in The Gambia. This first witching exercise was said to have taken place in Kanilia (Jammeh’s village) after the death of Jammeh’s Aunt which he attributed to watch craft.
4. Yahya Jammeh then invited witch hunters led by Tambajiro to Kanilai to cleanse the village of witches. One of the elders of the village Ceesay Bujiling was given a concoction to drink. However, he did not react to the substance as expected. Ceesay Bujiling was later killed by the Junglers. Yahya Jammeh later confesses to Saihou Jallow (his close body guard) that he ordered his Junglers to kill Ceesay Bujiling because Ceesay was to ascend to the position of Chief Wizard in the Foni. To get to this position, Ceesay needed to eat a person of very high standing in the society and Yahya Jammeh believed that he was the target. Yahya Jammeh told Saihou Jallow that for this reason, he had to eliminate Ceesay Bujiling.2

5. Tambajiro head of the witch hunters, proceeded to Sintet (a village close to Kanilai), accompanied by Solo Bojang (one of the commanders of the Junglers), Sulayman Manga (Jungler) and Toffee Manga, police personnel and a large crowd of people dressed in black attire. They went around the village beating drums, using a mirror to search peoples’ compounds looking for witches/wizards. They took down the names of the people identified as witches and confiscating “jujus” that were purportedly hidden or buried in the ground. Those whose names were taken down were forced to follow them.2 On this particular occasion, Sulayman Manga, who was reported to have been armed, would fire warning shots in the air when “jujus” were found in an individual’s compound.

6. Shortly after the first witch hunt exercise, Tambajiro returned to Sintet with the same entourage as along with one Sainey Tamba and armed soldiers. They assembled residents of the village at the main yard of the Health Centre on the orders of Jammeh. Before he entered with his followers, Tambajiro was stood under a tree blew a horn. The area was subsequently sealed by armed soldiers who surrounded them and no one was allowed to leave the place. Witnesses testified that, Yahya Jammeh addressed the crowd through a phone that was connected to a loud speaker. He (Jammeh) directed them to light a fire on the coal pots they brought along and place some powdered medicine or leaves in it to burn.

7. After the fire was lit, and the medicine started to burn, it produced smoke which started to rise and cover the atmosphere, everyone present inhale it. Some people who were identified and targeted were standing directly over the coal pot and were forced to inhale the substance emanating from the smoke. Witnesses testified that while addressing the gathering, Yahya Jammeh accused them of being Wizards and eating their own children.5 The soldiers that were present treated the people with contempt and ensured that they stayed close to the smoke. Witnesses testified that at that point, they felt humiliated and were being suffocated by the smoke. However, they did as they were instructed because they feared Jammeh.6

The evidence suggests that Sintet was the only area that was visited by Tambajiro and his team in 2008.7

8. From the evidence, the witch hunting excise in 2008 was only conducted in Kanilai and Sinet under the instruction of Yahya Jammeh. According to Ali Jallow, Individuals who were accused of being witches were taken to the village hantaba (meeting place) and paraded in front of the village and subsequently forced to drink a herbal concoction purported to be a cure. The victims were subjected to humiliation and intimidation not only to themselves but their families as well.8

9. Individuals accused of being witches were paraded in the village bantaba and forced to drink concoctions to cure them from their perceived witchcraft. This further humiliation increase the apprehension, fear and embarrassment of the victims and their families. Witnesses were not certain as to where the witch hunters came from. Some said they were from Guinea Conakry9 while other said they were from Mali. However there is cogent evidence that they were hired by Jammeh to cleanse the country of witches after Jammeh blamed witchcraft for his aunt’s sudden death. This owed much to Jammeh’s strong belief in superstition and supernatural activities.10

10. In 2009, Yahya Jammeh launched a nation-wide witch hunt. The witch-doctors were escorted and assisted by members of the Gambia Armed Forces (GAF), members of the Police Intervention Unit (PIU), the paramilitary wing of the Police, conventional police officers in some villages and the Green Boys and Girls.11 In some villages, Alkalos (village heads) and other residents that were Jammeh and APRC supporters also accompanied the witch hunters. According to several witnesses, the security team was headed by Solo Bojang.12 In other areas such as Essau and Barra, other senior members of the State Guards Unit, closely associated to Jammeh and the Junglers such as Saihou Jallow and Salifu Corr of the Barra Army Barracks were seen to take prominent roles in the exercise.13 The team also included a cameraman who took footage of the events so that Jammeh would be able to follow what was happening. This showed that Yahya Jammeh had overall responsibility for these activities. Particulars of individuals’ alleged to be witches and wizards were also taken.14

11. The witch-hunters entered into villages and after rounding up those persons identified as witches and wizards, they were taken away to a secured location and forced to participate in ritual cleansing activities involving drinking and bathing in herbal concoctions. They travelled from village to village and had the backing of the state and its security apparatus. This was manifested by the fact that the victims were transported in state vehicles. The witch hunters wielded considerable power and authority in the different locations they visited which was demonstrated by how they commanded control and compelled the compliance of local government authorities, security forces, villagers and victims.
12. The witch Doctors were dressed in bizarrely red, visibly scary and elaborate costumes plastered with ornaments. They wore hats adorned with “jujus”, animal hair, bells, cowries and mirrors and they looked mystic with supernatural powers. 18 They also moved around with additional accessories such as horns, calabashes, horse tails, drums and mirrors which they pointed, twisted and turned at the victims in an inquisitive searching manner akin to reading or finding something before they were identified and accused of witch craft. After victims were unceremoniously picked out as witches or wizards, they were forcefully detained by the witch hunters and security personnel and removed from the security and privacy of their offices, homes, communities and markets 17 or farms and away to an unknown destination with the assistance of their security entourage who facilitated their movements in the communities and enforced strict compliance through, threats, the sight of guns and ammunitions, force, beatings and torture. 18

13. Some of the victims were deceived into thinking that the witch-hunters could cure/treat them of health problems. 19 However, even those who voluntarily joined the exercise for such reasons were not allowed to leave afterwards when they wanted to. When the witch hunters started their exercise in Foni, Many villagers abandoned their homes to hide in the bushes to avoid capture and others fled to Casamance, Southern Senegal, to avoid being caught. Even after the exercise was over, some never returned home. 20

14. Victims who were caught, were assembled at village bantahas or other meeting points where the infamous Green Boys and Girls and the witch-doctors would beat drums, sing and dance. This process attracted a large number of spectators as those accused of being witches or wizards were brought and assembled by the witch hunting team and ritual ceremonies involving the slaughter of animals were conducted. Witnesses testified that a red cock and goat were selected due to their spiritual significance, slaughtered and their blood drained in a hole which was dug for that purpose. At Banjul Police headquarters (HQ), the ritual included not only the blood sacrifice of those animals but also swearing allegiance to Jammeh which was a different oath from their oath of office and considered idolatry and/or anti religion. After everyone was assembled, those from Banjul, Greater Banjul Area and Niumi were all forced into buses and transported to the former house of the late Baba Jobe in Kololi. 21

15. The late Baba Jobe was a one-time close associate of Jammeh before his own victimisation and murder by the Junglers on the instructions of Jammeh. Victims from the Foni’s were driven to Jammeh’s residence in Kanilai under the escort 22 of the Green boys, the military and/or paramilitary. The witch-hunters were transported to the same locations in separate state vehicles. The victims were generally elderly although there were some cases of pregnant and nursing women and a student. They were forcefully detained for several days and forced to drink bitter or unpleasant herbal concoctions believed to have been made from “Kubejara” — a local hallucinogenic plant which reportedly has harmful effects on the body. This herbal concoction also included other local plants and it was believed to reveal and/or identify the true status of a person as a witch and wizard and cure/cleanse them of the perceived terrible witchcraft. 23

16. During the process of cleansing, victims were beaten, tortured, and subjected to horrific inhumane and degrading treatment at least one was raped and some died as a result of being subjected to this treatment. Apart from being forced to drink the harmful herbal liquid, victims were also forced to bathe in another smelly and repulsive herbal concoction whilst nude or semi-naked under humiliating and sexually abusive circumstances, especially for women. The herbal concoctions led to deaths, serious illnesses and other negative effects such as nausea, unconsciousness, intoxication and diarrhoea. During their period of detention, the victims were held under unhygienic, inhumane and degrading conditions and some of them were denied water, food, toilet facilities, shower, changing clothes and medical attention amongst other deprivations.

C. WITCH HUNTING EXERCISE AT THE GAMIBIA POLICE FORCE (GPF) HQ BANJUL

17. Witnesses testified that the GPF witch-hunt occurred on Wednesday 14, January, 2009 between the hours of 8:30am and 10:00am. Mustapha Ceesay claimed that the Witch Hunters arrived a day before, recorded some names of officers and the former IGP gave orders for all the men to attend the morning parade the next day when they were to return. 24 However, the former IGP Ensa Badjie testified that he received a call from former president Yahya Jammeh informing him that the witch-doctors and their entourage were on their way to the Police HQ and ordered total compliance with the instructions of the witch hunters and anyone who defies should be discharged. A few minutes after the phone call, Solo Bojang and the group arrived. Solo Bojang re-emphasized Jammeh instructed over the phone. When he realized that the entire Police HQ was cordoned off by armed military and paramilitary men, he claimed that he had no choice but to comply with the instructions of the Witch-hunters in the face of such show of force. 25

18. Testimony of Mustapha Ceesay; 12/11/19 lines 1801-1807 page 96 - 97
21. Testimony of Mustapha Ceesay; 12/11/19; lines 1801-1807 page 96 - 97
22. Testimony of Mustapha Ceesay; 12/11/19 lines 1824 – 1841 page 98
23. Testimony of Mustapha Ceesay; 12/11/19; lines 289-344; 428-488 pages 19-22, 24-27
18. About 4 to 5 witch hunters came to the GPF HQ accompanied by some Green Boys and armed paramilitary led by Solo Bojang who were sent to the GPF HQ on the instructions of Jammeh. Some of the officers were forced to strip on the instructions of the witch hunters and subjected to a personal body and office search. The witch hunters pointed mirrors at the officers and around their offices in all directions. Ken Mendy stated that the witch hunters spoke in Fula and it was translated to him in Mandinka by Solo Bojang.

19. Ken Mendy, was also called to the former IGP’s office and subjected to a similar body search in the presence of the latter and Commissioner Edward Sambou. Once both of them were declared “clean”, they escorted the Witch-hunters from office to office within the building. When they arrived in Ken’s office, his Secretary, Fatou Gaye was diagnosed by the witch hunters as having an illness.

20. Ken Mendy, was instructed by the former IGP Ensa Badjie to write down the names of people who were identified as witches and wizards. Ken Mendy listed ten (10) names. The evidence shows that several more people were pointed out as witches and wizards and their names taken down. The list was handed over to the former IGP Ensa Badjie who claimed to have handed it over to former president Jammeh. However, the list remains unaccounted for and the former IGP, Ensa Badjie later explained that he had misplaced the list and did not in fact handed it over to Jammeh as he previously claimed but rather the names on the said list were read out to former President Jammeh during an early morning phone conversation which he and former President Jammeh had when Jammeh called him.

21. From the former IGP’s (Ensa Badjie) office and the Administration Office, the witch hunters then moved to the Personnel Office which were all on the second floor. During drumming, chanting, singing and pointing of mirrors, Yahya Darboe was identified by the Witch-hunters as an alleged witch and his name was taken. The group then proceeded to the third floor which was housing the Information Technology (IT) office. Wuday Ceesay and Yusupha Saine, the IT personnel, were also identified as witches. The witch hunters were then led to the office of F.R.I. Jammeh (F.R.I) who was the Police Adviser at the time.

22. After the team of witch hunters went through all the offices within the Police HQ led by the former IGP, Ensa Badjie, Ken and other senior members of the GPF. Thereafter, the former IGP Ensa Badjie instructed the RSM Abdou Colley to assemble the men in a parade, where he addressed them about the purpose of the witch hunter’s visit. He informed them that the witch hunters were sent by Jammeh to identify officers who were witches and wizards and for those picked out to be given dosages of a drink and also to bathe in a witchcraft cleansing ritual. He warned them to comply or be dismissed as instructed by Jammeh.

23. There was ritual singing, drumming continued, more people were identified at the parade ground. They were then led to the office of Superintendent Kumba Jatta. He was pointed to and taken to his office, where he was searched and stripped of numerous jujus, which filled an entire plastic bag. The former IGP, Ensa Badjie testified that he was not present when Kumba was stripped of his jujus. However multiple witnesses testified that Ensa Badjie led them to Kumba’s office. After stripping him of his jujus, Kumba was taken to the parade ground in a shameful and humiliating manner. The witch huntersbrandished one juju that was taken off Kumba claiming that it was very dangerous. IGP Ensa Badjie described the said juju as an animal’s paw. Commissioner Pa Silva of the Banjul Police Station was also identified as a witch and his name taken down.

Ensa Badjie testified that he did not accompany the witch hunters when they escorted Kumba Jatta from the parade to his office and confirmed that he was not present when Kumba’s jujus were taken off his body. However, RSM Abdou Colley testified that Kumba was not at the morning parade and that only two persons were identified there, which were Mustapha Ceesay and Yaya Darboe. He added that the former IGP led the witch hunters to Kumba’s office. Mam Jarra Jatta daughter of Kumba Jatta also testified that her father, told them he was sitting in his office at Police HQ in Banjul when the former IGP, Ensa Badjie and the RSM Colley came into his office accompanied by the “Witch doctors” and plain-clothed officers.

24. More police officers were picked out from the parade and identified as witches in the midst of a ceremony of magic rituals which were repeated every time a person was supposedly identified as a witch. After all the officers alleged to be “witches” had been identified and paraded, an altar was created within the premises of the Police HQ near the palm tree around the Licensing Office. The witch hunters dug a hole and slaughtered a red cock and a goat. The blood of the animals were then poured in the hole with an unknown liquid from a bottle. The “juju” and charms that were confiscated from Kumba were also buried in that hole. As the head of the Police, the former IGP, Ensa Badjie was the first person called to the altar and made to swear allegiance to Jammeh. Other Senior Officers followed suit.

**Note:** The above text is a representation of the document content as per the extraction and is not a direct transcription of the digitalized image.
25. Abdou Colley who was the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) testified that he and others kept themselves away from the altar. However, according to Mustapha Ceesay all junior and senior officers as well as the general policemen all swore an oath of allegiance to Jammeh at the altar.

26. These types of rituals are generally regarded as a form of idol worshiping, dark magic or satanic. At the end of the ceremony, those whose names were listed were taken to Baba Jobe’s former residence in Kololi to be cleansed by spiritual washing and taking concoctions. Many of the police officers who testified viewed the witch hunting exercise at the police HQ as highly improper in a professional institution such as the police.50

27. Mustapha Ceesay and Darboe who had been pointed out and later paraded as witches refused to go regardless of the consequence, Ensa Badjie threatened to dismiss them if they did not do so. But, they stood their grounds.51 Mustapha Ceesay was later punished for not complying with the former IGP’s (Ensa Badjie) instructions as warned.52 He was later charged and marched by the RSM Abdou Colley to the former IGP’s office, demoted and transferred to the provinces.53 The charges against Mustapha Ceesay were only dropped after he complied with the instructions to go to Kololi.54 The others were also forced to go to Kololi for cleansing.55

28. The former IGP, Ensa Badjie testified that he visited Baba Jobe’s house in Kololi and saw the conditions of people that were taken there, according to him: “it was horribly, indescribable”. Elderly victims were maltreated, degraded and humiliated during their so-called treatment.56 After two days, those who were taken returned to work. However, they each became ill.57 The Commission received evidence that Kumba who was a “hefty, strong and healthy man in his fifties, had to be carried home by his children as he was too weak to walk on his own”. His daughter Mam Jarra testified that he was in a vulnerable state, unable to speak or do anything for himself, in pain and suffering when he was leaving the Kololi residence. His condition deteriorated rapidly as he lost weight, got weaker, began to lose his memory, suffering from mental illness and later unable to do anything for himself.58 Those who were identified as Wizards were also affected psychologically by the shame and stigma that came with being labeled a witch/wizard.59

29. From the evidence, Ensa Badjie and other witnesses, it is clear that the witch-hunting exercise at the Police HQ was sanctioned directly by Yahya Jammeh to spiritually cleanse those he believed practiced witchcraft. It was also Jammeh’s desire to ensure the loyalty of the police and a deliberate effort to defeat any opposition in the ranks of the police force through spiritual means, employing the tactics of fear, intimidation and humiliation.60 There were similar witch-hunting exercises in the military barracks and the NIA Headquarters using the same methods to achieve the same purpose guised in spiritual healing.61 However, not enough evidence has been gathered in respect of the targeting of the army and NIA in this whole saga.

30. Ensa Badjie testified that after the incident, Yahya Jammeh called him around 3:00a.m and 4:00a.m one morning and he (Ensa) gave him the names of those identified as witches. When asked about the list, he stated that he had misplaced it. According to him, during the phone call, Jammeh told him that anybody who did not comply with the orders should be immediately sacked.62

31. Ensa Badjie denied the allegations made by some of the officers, that the witch Hunters were there under his instructions, stating that he was only executing Jammeh’s orders as the head of the Police Force. He highlighted that Solo Bojang and the witch-hunting group led the way and that he merely took them around. According to him, he only followed them to account for his men who were his responsibility. When they get to an office, he stood by the door and watched the activities of Solo and the witch hunters who went round all the offices and identified those accused of witchcraft. He also claimed that Yahya Jammeh instructed him to write down the names of those identified as witches.63

32. He further stated that a few days after the incident, Yahya Jammeh called and he informed him that everyone complied except one officer Mustapha Ceesay. Jammeh then gave an order to dismiss Mustapha Ceesay with immediate effect. He instead gave orders for him to charge Mustapha Ceesay. He demoted him (Ceesay) and transferred him to a remote location. This was done three days after the incident. He indicated that he knew the witch hunting exercise was unlawful, but that everyone was afraid of Jammeh and no one dared disobey him.64

33. He was confronted with Mustapha Ceesay’s statement, in which is stated that on 16th January, 2009, he (Ensa Badjie) was informed that certain police officers refused to go to Baba Jobe’s former residence. Ensa Badjie personally took the list and started calling out the names and ordered them to board the truck and go to Kololi. Mustapha Ceesay also indicated that Ensa Badjie asked him and Yaya Darboe to write a personal statement and thereafter instructed that they be charged. Ensa Badjie argued that Mustapha Ceesay was a Sergeant at the time so he could not directly deal with him or give him orders, as that is breach of the chain of command. He claimed the command could not be directly from him to a Sergeant. However, he agreed that there were instances when an IGP addressed police officers directly. He emphasised that he addressed the Police Officers only on Mondays at the parade ground. When it was suggested that he would also address junior officers if they were charged and then brought before him for orders, he responded that before they came to him, they went through the chain of command starting from their own station officers (S.O.s) to
the Commissioners or to the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) before they were referred to him. He claimed that he only looks at the charges on the file and he would take a decision based on the recommendations and in such an instance, the officer would appear before him to receive the final order. He agreed that in the case of Mustapha Ceesay he did not recall any orders being issued. He was not aware of Yaya Darboe being charged and later his charges being dropped. The only person he could remember whose report was given to him and who had refused to go was Mustapha Ceesay.65

34. Ensa Badjie denied ordering the arrest of any person in connection with their refusal to participate in the witch hunt. He stated that he was not aware and explained that even the Minister of Interior Ousman Sonko, who was his superior, was aware of what was going on but he did not dare take any actions. He added that if he went to the Minister of Interior, he would just say: “Hey! Me, I cannot be part of this”, this was why he (Ensa Badjie) could not refuse the order. He further claimed that he tried to protect them in the best possible way he could and that if he had enforced Jammeh’s directive, Mustapha Ceesay would have been dismissed.66

35. The RSM Abdou Colley who was also the Disciplinary Officer of the police testified that he had no role in the punishment of Mustapha Ceesay. RSM said that, the former IGP, Ensa Badjie made the decision, and no charge sheet was forwarded to him. However, Mustapha Ceesay testified that the RSM marched the officers to the orderly room with charge sheets.

D. SUMMARY OF WITNESS TESTIMONIES FROM FONI

38. The 2009 witch-hunting happened on a day when most of the villagers were attending a naming ceremony in Sintet.49 On the morning of the witch-hunt, villagers could hear the sound of drums beating and singing from a nearby area called Bakong where the witch-hunt had begun and some people had already been identified as witches and detained.49 Later, some villagers and members of the PIU surrounded the village.70 Several people were captured in the morning from Sintet. Ali Jallow narrated how they stormed into the Imam’s compound, broke down his gate and got hold of his wife and started shouting “where are the sons of witches living in this house hiding”. They also abducted his father, his grandmother, his brother and his wife as well as other people from his house.71 The witch hunters dispersed within the village72 led by Solo Bojang73 and his team of armed soldiers, paramilitary officers and Green Boys and Girls who assisted the witch hunters to capture their victims. They forcefully dragged and beat up people who were mostly elderly men and women74.

39. The witch hunters wore red attires adorned with mirrors and cowries and jujoo. This strange and unconventional dress terrified most of the villagers. Dado Bah stated that the sight of these strange men sent her pregnant daughter-in-law into shock which led to high blood pressure resulting in the premature birth and loss of her baby. Her family members wailed and cried when she was captured and being taken away, as they did not know what would happen to her, fearing that she would be killed or beaten.75

40. It was reported that the team of Witch-hunters were sent on the instructions of Jammeh76 to identify and capture witches and wizards.77 Some Witnesses even claimed to have had their names read from a written list.78 The people that ran into their homes were pursued and their doors broken down to get to them and when caught, they were dragged on the floor and beaten during their capture.79

41. Matty Sanyang testified that a mentally ill person Malangai Gaye was beaten so severely by Solo Bojang that he sustained serious injuries on his head resulting in blood oozing profusely from various parts of his body. He was vomiting blood and subsequently died from his injuries.80

42. Some victims also had their belongings seized.81 Victims were taken by foot or boarded on a pick-up truck which was transporting those arrested82 to the Bantaba. This was an area under the two big “Taba” trees situated near the village health Center and the Alkalos residence around Fula Kunda. A bus and a military truck were waiting to transport male and female victims respectively as the Green Boys and Girls drummed, sang and danced whilst the victims boarded the vehicles.83
43. Many people who were identified as witches and wizards were captured from Sintet and its surroundings including visitors. Some managed to escape to Casamance. Some visitors were also captured and forcefully made to drink the concoction to supposedly cure them from ill health.

44. Nyima Jarju testified that her father in law, Bulli Badjie who was the Alkalo of Sintet fled to Casamance with his wife Lamin Badjie before the arrival of the witch hunters in their village. Consequently, she and her three-month-old child along with her mother-in-law were arrested and detained at Kalagi police station by the officer in command Tamsir Bah. She stated that while at the station, O.C called Tamsir and asked his men to lock them inside the cell. In the afternoon, they spread a carton to sit on and in the evening, they gave them mat to lie down. She had to take off her head tie and spread it on the mat for the child and used her wrapper to wrap the child. The following morning, which was on a Wednesday, O.C Tamsir came and said, “Fatou Bojang and Nyima Jarju, where ever Bulli Badjie is, if you do not tell us you will remain here.” The witness confirmed that they were detained in the cell for about a week with the baby.

45. Those captured were made to wait in vehicles from morning to evening without food or water. Whilst waiting, a ceremony was performed by the witch hunters in between the two big trees near the health centre where a hole was dug by the Green Boys. A red male goat was slaughtered and its blood buried.

46. Two vehicles were filled with people in Sintet, to the extent that some passengers were made to sit or stand on the floor because all the seats were occupied. The victims were then transported to Jammeh’s residence in Kanilai. When they arrived, they were assembled and detained in a covered sitting area or “Bantaba” with steps/benches, near the crocodile pool where the mosque and a small building is located. They were made to sit on the bare floor.

47. The men were separated from the women and their names were written down. Most of the victims were elderly and from different ethnic groups. They were provided food and told that the medicine would be overpowering if taken on empty stomach. Some people however refused to eat. They were stripped off their belongings, including monies and mobile phones. Thereafter, they were called one after the other one by Solo Bojang who escorted them to the small room that resembled a toilet.

48. In that room, there were two big pans containing different herbal concoctions, one for drinking and the other for bathing. As soon as they entered the room, they were given a cup filled with a herbal concoction. Witnesses stated that the concoction was made from leaves of two plants known locally as “Kubejaro” and “Talo” which had an unpleasant taste and intoxicating properties. The effect of the liquid on the victims caused them to faint, fall and become delirious, not fully aware of their surroundings. Victims described becoming unconscious and motionless like corpse in some instances. Some witnesses stated that they were forced to drink two big cups of the concoction. They described the substance as a liquid having a strange taste, thick and slimy, which was mixed with uncrusched leaves, bark of trees, roots and other herbs. After drinking the concoction, they were forced to chew and swallow the residues. Dado Bah stated that the water used to mix the herbs was fetched from the crocodile pool to mix the medicine with which they were forced to drink through intimidation and pressure.

49. After forcing them to drink the first concoction, victims were then forced to strip naked by the witch hunters and made to bath in the other herbal concoction which had an unpleasant odor. Fatou Camara and Jarra Colley described the whole ordeal as embarrassing and undignified to be bathed by men as young as their grandsons. The liquid was also splashed on their faces and eyes which caused burning sensations in their eyes, causing them extreme pain and discomfort.

50. After taking the concoction, some were intoxicated and unconscious for a day following the treatment, victims were later forced to confess to practicing witchcraft. Some who did not show any sign of being affected by the concoction were beaten, insulted, mocked and held at
gun point. On the other hand, those who confessed were released. Some claimed to have spoken to Jammeh directly through Solo Bojang’s phone, and he accused them of being witches and killers. Many victims sustained injuries from falling down on bare concrete floors as a result of being in a delirious state. Others sustained injuries from the beatings and torture. Victims generally suffered pain, hardship and other heath complications during their detention and after their release as a result of the harmful side-effects of the drugs taken and the manner in which they were treated.

51. Some of the villagers managed to escape taking the concoction and left the same day they arrived. Dado Bah stated that she managed to escape without taking the concoction. Others were released after two days. Some family members of the people abducted had to bribe the Witch Hunters with money before their relatives were returned back to them. Matty Sanyang testified that some family members that came for their loved ones were beaten. The commission heard that many victims who took the concoction were behaving strangely after they were released. Some victims could not even recognise their loved ones.

52. In addition to their subsequent deteriorating health, most of them sought conventional and/or traditional treatment without any success while some reported that they were denied medical treatment at state hospitals because of the fear of being arrested if they admit any of the victims. Some victim’s health deteriorated to the point that they did not have the strength to work and consequently lost their livelihood. Furthermore, they suffered social stigma as a result of the false accusation levelled against them. Witnesses told the Commission that many victims died as a result of the effects of the concoction, for some, it was due to the injuries they suffered from their torture. Before they were able to recuperate from their ordeal, they were forced to harvest groundnut on Yahya Jammeh’s farm and asked them to exchange bags of salt for rice in their condition which they were unable to do. Many witnesses described how they were forced to work on Jammeh’s farms as Labors for years without pay. For many of the victims, Jammeh is responsible and is to blame for their condition and/or the deaths of their loved ones, having given orders for the witch-hunting exercise to be undertaken.

53. Karamo Sanneh testified that roughly 12 to 13 people died from the effects of the treatment including his own brother’s wife who did not utter a word after being released by the witch hunters until she took her last breath. His Protected Information Sheet (PIS) was tendered as Exhibit 100, which contains the names of 17 victims of the Sintet witch-hunt.

54. The PIS of Fatou Camara also tendered PIS Exhibit 101 containing the names of eleven (11) Mandinka victims of the witch-hunt and nine (9) Jola victims making a total of twenty (20) victims.

55. The PIS of Matty Sanyang was tendered PIS Exhibit 102 listing nine (9) witnesses including those who passed away, those who were battling with illnesses, including a boy who was also forced to drink the concoction when he came looking for his father in Kanilai.

56. PIS for Jarra Colley was tendered PIS Exhibit 103 listing six (6) victims taken from Sintet including four (4) deceased.

57. Investigations revealed that witnesses were not comfortable to name the individuals that were victims of the witch-hunting exercise because many of the families were not willing to come forward as a result of the stigma associated with being labelled as a witch and the fear of being persecuted by Yahya Jammeh’s supporters.

**LIST OF VICTIMS FROM SINTET INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:-**

1. Ali Kumba Bah
2. Ali Metta Bah
3. Binta Bah
4. Bojei Bah
5. Dado Bah
6. Dado Bah (2nd dado)
7. Egeh Bah
8. Jabou Bah
9. Kumba Bah
10. Metta Bah
11. Nyappa Bah
12. Samba Bah
13. Alieu Baldeh
15. Fatou Camara
16. Faye Camara
17. Masanneh Camara
18. Sansang Camara
19. Ousman Ceecay
20. Fatou Darboe
21. Molifa Dibba
22. Burama Dibba
23. Mustapha Fanneh

112 Testimony of Mustapha Fanneh 26th November, 2021; lines 417-436, 464-471; pages 20, 22
113 Testimony of Fatou Darboe; 27th November, 2019; line 473 – 513; page 22-24
114 Testimony of Mustapha Fanneh 26th November, 2021; lines 504-562 page 23-26
117 Testimony of Ali Jallow; 25th November 2019 lines 639 – 644,651 page 33-34
118 Testimony of Ali Jallow; 25th November 2019 lines 565-594, 719-727 page 31-33, 40
119 Testimony of Matty Sanyang;28th November, 2019; Lines 546-557; page 25-26
120 Testimony of Ali Jallow; 25th November 2019 lines 602-615 page 33-34
121 Testimony of Ali Jallow; 25th November 2019 lines 639 – 644,649-651 page 35-36; Testimony of Karamo Sanneh; 25th November 2019 lines 692-719,741-743; pages 29-30, 32 (The Witness stated that even those who survived the treatment are like dead men and women walking), Testimony of Fatou Camara; 26th November, 2019; lines 599-604 381; 647 – 654, 662-690 page 22-23, 34, 38, 37, 38 (The witness testified that many victims suffered, eye problems, internal problems, ulcer, dysentery, high blood and pain in their bones); Testimony of Mustapha Fanneh 26th November, 2021; lines 582-610 page 27-28, Testimony of Dado Bah, 26th November, 2019; lines 386-398 page 22; Testimony of Dado Bah; 26th November, 2019; lines 427-430; page 24
122 Testimony of Matty Sanyang; 28th November, 2019; Lines 563-587; page 26-27 (The witness testified that her Aunt Sarsang Camara passed away after she was denied medical treatment at Brian Health Centre a state facility)
123 Testimony of Karamo Sanneh; 25th November 2019 lines 757-765; pages 32; Testimony of Fatou Darboe; 26th November, 2019; Lines 655-661 381; page 22-23, 34, 37, 39, 37; Testimony of Mustapha Fanneh 26th November 2016, 2021; lines 611-614; page 28; Testimony of Fatou Darboe; 27th November, 2019; line 522-537; page 24-25; Testimony of Buba Jarju; 27th November, 2019; Lines 270-292; page 15-16
124 Testimony of Fatou Darboe; 27th November, 2019; line 516-521; page 24; Testimony of Buba Jarju; 27th November, 2019, Lines 470-483 page 20-21;
125 Testimony of Ali Jallow; 25th November 2019 lines 645-703 page 36-39; Testimony of Karamo Sanneh; 25th November 2019 lines 735-743 pages 31; Testimony of Mustapha Fanneh 26th November 2021; lines 621-626 page 29; Testimony of Fatou Darboe; 27th November, 2019; line 337-354 page 16-17; Testimony of Alagie Ma Sanneh Camara; 27th November, 2019, lines 486-511 pages 23-24, 25 (The Witness testified that roughly 13 people died including a person called Sansang who he claims was confused with Sarsang the Alkalo who was the person who should have been given the Medication but he escaped); Testimony of Buba Jarju; 27th November, 2019; Lines 73-91, 407-445 page 4,5,18-19
34. Jaieh Sowe 35. Manlafi Tamba

E. WITCH HUNTING IN KOMBO NORTH DISTRICT, WEST COAST REGION

58. During the regional hearings in Jambur, victims/witnesses from the Jambur and Makumbaya Witch-hunt in 2009 testified on their individual experiences of the Witch Hunt in those two areas which followed more or less the same trend with some differences which will be high - lighted below.

MAKUMBAYA WITCH-HUNT

59. Although witnesses could not recall the exact date of the witch-hunt in Makumbaya, there are reports that it occurred on the 9th day of March, 2009.138 During the witch-hunt in Makumbaya, local victims as well as those from surrounding areas such as Busumbala, Galoya (Fatou Sowe) who was captured by the witch hunters was a petty trader at the market in Makumbaya although she was resident in Galoya139 and Kumbuneh were forcefully captured from their homes, markets/farms/rice fields, roads, garage and neighborhoods by the same team of witch-hunters, soldiers and the green boys and girls described previously by the victims of the Banjul Witch hunt.

60. Many victims were under the impression that they were being taken to their deaths because of the manner in which they were forcefully captured. Sonna Bass narrated how she was grabbed by the neck, dragged by the hand by the witch doctor along the public highway whilst she was half naked in a humiliating and degrading manner, at that point she thought that she was going to be killed.132 Where victims resisted capture they were subjected to beatings by the green boys.133

61. Some victims were tricked into going with the witch hunters after they were told that they were sick or that a spell had been cast on them by a witch.134 Ansumana Sarjo stated that one of the Witch Hunters read his palm and informed him that he had an illness they could cure. He was reluctant to go with them but his friend managed to convince him to go with them, telling him that if he refused the witch hunters would summon the Green Boys to beat him. As an elder in the community that would be embracing for him

62. Some people, in particular the Jolas in the community hid in the bush. They had received information about the arrival of the witch hunters. Some of the victims who tried to run away were chased and captured.135 After they were captured, the victims were assembled at the centre of the village where big green Gambia Public Transport Corporation (GPTC) buses were parked near the Alkalo’s compound136 while the witch doctors and Green Boys and Girls were participating in a ceremony of chanting, singing, clapping, dancing and drumming which was heard throughout the village whilst more victims accused of witchcraft were being captured by other witch-hunters dispersed around.137

According to witnesses, the entire process was filmed on camera by one Morro Ceesay from Faraba.138 Victims were then forced on board the waiting buses which were full to capacity with elderly people. There were people from Makumbaya and other surrounding villages. One witness estimated that between 50-60 people may have been on board. Ansumana Sarjo provided a list of people he recognised on board the bus which he did not want to reveal in public. Witnesses told the commission that on that afternoon, between the hours of 2pm and 4pm, they were taken to Baba Jobe’s House in Kololi.

64. When they arrived in Kololi in the evening around 4pm - 5pm, victims were led by their captors to an open hall their names were recorded and their belongings, valuables and cash confiscated when they were being admitted into the compound. They were also offered food and told to eat otherwise they would die. They were placed in a big sitting area, divided into groups, lined up in a queue, called one after another, taken to a small room which resembled a bathroom or toilet and forced to drink an unpleasant/bitter tasting medicine which they believed to be “Kubejara”.

65. The men were separated from the women for this process and the men were first called. The medicines were stored in big pan or bucket containers and given to victims by the witch hunters in a big one litre tin cup filled to capacity. In some cases they were ordered to chew the remnants of leaves in the cup. Ansumana Sarjo explained that the witch doctor rushed at him to slap him but he managed to block it in time. He was reprimanded and told him to ingest everything when he locked his teeth to avoid drinking those particles which he later spat out. As a result he was forced to drink a second cup.139 Witnesses said that the taste of the medicine was unpleasant and bitter and in some cases it was so harsh that it caused soreness in the mouth.140

136 Testimony of Fatou Sowe, Lamarana Jallow and Sukai 19/11/2019; lines 912-926 page 47
137 Lamarana Jallow
138 Testimony of Sonna Bass lines 14/11/2009; 275 – 289; 348 – 354 page 15-16, 19 (The Alkalo was named Sakarr Kujabi);
140 Testimony of Ansumana Sarjo 20th November 2019 page 23, line 413; 416
141 Testimony of Therese Gomez 14/11/2009 lines 137 - 139 pages 7-8, Testimony of Sonna Bass lines 14/11/2009; 290 – 258;
142 Testimony of Ansumana Sarjo 20th November 2019 page 23, line 413; 416
66. The first batch of victims that were taken away and given the medicine were brought back into the big room where they were all gathered. Witnesses said that it was a terrifying sight to see those who were carried back unconscious and motionless laid on the ground like corpses. One witness, Therese Bass, narrates how she fearfully stared at the bodies which she believed had been killed by whatever was in the room they were brought out from, but unfortunately there was no escape for her. Sonna Bass also described how victims fell to the ground after drinking the medicine and were no longer in control of themselves. In fact some victims failed to recover from that state until they died.144 Ansumana Sarjo stated that those who first drank the concoction came out hanging their necks like sick chickens. He said that after he drank the medicine, he fell into a state of limbo between life and death and only managed to regain consciousness the next morning around ten (10) a.m.145

67. Some victims were intoxicated, vomiting, dizzy, falling down, suffering blurry vision, hallucinating and behaving as if they had lost their minds.146 Victims were not allowed to drink water or eat any food after drinking the medicine so as not to dilute its strength and lessen its effects.147 However, it was believed that the medicine's potency was diminishing as time passed because those who drank last were not affected as much as those who drank first. Ansumana Sarjo explained that he was one of those who drank last. He believed that the people before him had already drunk the most potent part of the medicine before they arrived.148

68. Victims were also stripped naked and bathed in a similar herbal concoction. Some victims describe the concoction used to bath them as green, fermented and very smelly.149 One witness explained that the concoction made her body itch. Ansumana Sarjo testified that an old man that may have been about 100 years was asked to strip in front of him and because he was not allowed to leave the room, so he had to face the other way out of respect to avoid seeing the old man's nakedness.150 Female victims were asked to undress and bathe in front of the witch hunters who were male. Fatou Sowe explained how the medicine was poured and rubbed all over her body by a boy young enough to be her son. Another witness Sonna Bass explains how she was embarrassed and humiliated by a young person as young as her grandson seeing her nakedness and bathing her.151 Another humiliating experience by the witnesses was being escorted to the toilet by the Green Boys who stood by and watched as they (female victims) squatted to urinate.152

69. One of the reported effects of the medicine was that it made some victims hyperactive and out of control. Consequently, these victims were moving around so much so that the green boys that were placed in charge of them would kick them with their military boots to trip them up intentionally causing them to fall down. The Green Boys also slapped, kicked and beat victims causing various injuries.153 Some victims were beaten so mercilessly by the Green Boys that it caused their eventual death.154 The witch hunters were aware of the torture that was being carried out by the Green Boys but said or did nothing to stop it.155

70. The victims were taunted by the Green Boys who would ask them how many people they had eaten. In some cases they threatened and beat victims into confessing that they were witches.156 Victims were subject to forced detention during the course of the treatment.157 Some of victims were released on the same day, after they took the medicine whilst the effect was still on them. They were not assisted by their captors and had to make their way home on their own158 leading to some very strange and dangerous behavior in certain instances and more pain and suffering for victims.159

71. Some victims spent the night at the Kololi residence they were taken to because they were either not conscious or were not in a position to go home due to some adverse effects associated with the medication.160 Those who drank the medicine first and where more adversely affected by the medicine spent the night and those who drank the medication last were sent home because the medication affected them less. Those victims who spent the night had to sleep on the bare floor.161

72. On the second day, those who remained there for the night were made to drink and bath with the medicine (s) again. They were not given an opportunity to take a clean bath after being bathed with the smelly concoction or change their dirty clothes. Some of them were also not given food or drink during this time nor were they given an opportunity to pray. When victims were departing, those items that were confiscated from them were not returned. They were released around 7pm in the evening and reached Makumbaya late at night.162

73. Ansumana Sarjo testified that as soon as the engine of the vehicle started, something ignited in him and that was the last time he felt “any peace in his body”. He started running along the aisle of the bus, saying that the driver was not a good driver and that he was going to kill them. He had to be restrained in his seat by one of the passengers. When he alighted off the bus, the back of his clothes were all torn and ripped off and by the time he arrived home, he had lost his shirt and shoes somewhere along the way, someone returned it to him the next day.
day. When they arrived in Makumbaya he had no strength left in him. He passed by a shop to buy bread and attaya for his family for dinner but while walking home, the loaf of bread felt as heavy as a bag of rice, and he had to use both hands to carry it on his head. When he arrived home, he asked his wife to brew the attaya (green tea) while he ate the entire loaf of bread. He asked for another loaf, which he finished and was still asking for more. 163

Therese Gomez narrated that she did not know how she got home because she was so intoxicated from the medicine. It was narrated to her by members of her family that when she arrived at home she was frantic. At first, she tried to snatch her daughter’s infant baby but when her daughter saw the manner in which she was behaving she refused to allow her to touch the baby. Subsequently, she took a bucket and said she was going to her garden that night and her brother’s wife held on to the bucket and prevented her from going. She then went inside her room, brought all her clothes, put them outside and said that she was going to launder them and again her brother’s wife took the clothes away and returned them to the house. When day broke, she went to the fire to warm some water to take a bath and instead placed her hand inside the fire. Her family took her away from the fire and put it off. This continued until the morning. She said that for the next three days, she could not have peace of mind and if it was not for her sister-in-law, she may not have been alive to tell her story after that first night, because at that time she was overcome by the medicine and she did not know what she was doing, but her family understood her and were patient with her through it all. 164

After the release of the victims, they suffered a range of symptoms and mental/physical health complications ranging from headaches, stomach aches, vomiting, joint aches and blurry vision, even though they were in good health before the so-called treatment. 165 Witnesses told the Commission that they were not informed of the reasons they were taken to Kololi and made to drink the herbal concoction. However, they suffered the stigma associated with being branded witches in their close knit communities which led to social harassment and exclusion in more serious cases. 166

The incident had a serious impact on the lives and livelihood of victims and their families. Many victims lost their means of earning a living because they were no longer fit enough to work. 167 They were forced to spend what little money they had on medical treatment although it failed to cure them or did little to alleviate their suffering. 168 Some people also died from health complications related to either drinking the liquid concoction or being tortured during the process of detention and treatment. The victims accused the former President Yaya Jammeh of sending the witch hunters to carry out their activities and said that they held him responsible for the deaths, their pain, suffering and injuries. 169

The witch-hunt in Jambur occurred on the 28th January, 2019. It was similar in nature and pattern to the previous ones in terms of how victims were forcefully abducted and beaten in the process. As in what happened in Makumbaya, some people were told they were sick and whether they agreed or not with the diagnosis or whether they wished to go and be treated or not, they were forced to go. In fact some victims did not know that the sickness that they were being treated for was witchcraft until much later. 170

It was the same team of witch hunters assisted and led by Solo Bojang and his security detail of soldiers, and Green Boys led by one Ali Ceesay of Latriya. In Jambur, the witch-hunting team gained the cooperation of the Alkalo Kebba and Juju Bojang who led the group as they went from house to house identifying certain individuals to them for arrest. Initially the youth of the village joined the witch-hunting team until they saw that their own mothers and fathers were also being arrested after which their participation diminished. The homes of victims were also searched for Jujus. 171 Aliu Mbaye testified that he was at a

LIST FROM MAKUMBAYA AND BAFULOTO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

1. Amadou Bah
2. Mariam Bah
3. Sonna Bass
4. Wudy Ceesay
5. Dusu Fatty
6. Banna Gomez
7. Therese Gomez
8. Larna Jallow
9. Sukai Jallow
10. Ansumana Sarjo
11. Fatou Sowe

WITCH-HUNTING IN JAMBUR

Those who died among the victims captured from Makumbaya include Danjan Sowe who according to witnesses, was unconscious, motionless and speechless after she was forced to drink the herbal concoction until she died a week later, as well as Lansana Darboe who was beaten so mercilessly that he died shortly after his ordeal and one Kemo. 174

1. Amadou Bah
2. Mariam Bah
3. Sonna Bass
4. Wudy Ceesay
5. Dusu Fatty
6. Banna Gomez
7. Therese Gomez
8. Larna Jallow
9. Sukai Jallow
10. Ansumana Sarjo
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It was the same team of witch hunters assisted and led by Solo Bojang and his security detail of soldiers, and Green Boys led by one Ali Ceesay of Latriya. In Jambur, the witch-hunting team gained the cooperation of the Alkalo Kebba and Juju Bojang who led the group as they went from house to house identifying certain individuals to them for arrest. Initially the youth of the village joined the witch-hunting team until they saw that their own mothers and fathers were also being arrested after which their participation diminished. The homes of victims were also searched for Jujus. Aliu Mbaye testified that he was at a
friend’s house when he was confronted with the witch-hunting team who asked him to lead them to his house. Upon arrival there, the witch hunting team searched his house with their mirrors until they noticed a juju hanging on the top of a door and asked the witness to give it to them. He refused saying that he met the juju there and this led to an argument between him and the witch hunters.

80. The witness was asked to bring the juju down, at gun point by Solo Bojang who threatened to shoot him if he did not comply. He was also advised by one of the Green Boys to do as he was told to avoid trouble. So he brought it down and when he gave it to the witch Hunter, the witch-hunter declined to accept it and ordered him to hold it and go with them to the bantaba. When they arrived at the bantaba, others were already there, sitting on the ground. He was then asked to go around in circles and raise and brandish the juju in the air, which according to him he refused to do. He further narrated that they told him that he would rather die than to be asked to do such a perverse thing by associating himself with witchcraft.183

81. Omar Bojang’s house was also searched and something was retrieved underneath a concrete slab in a detached bathroom where he bathed. The witch hunters claimed that it was a bad juju that he had put there. The witch-hunters accused him of making dangerous juju and said that people like him were the reason why the youth in Jambur were not making any progress in life. Even though he tried to protest by asking why he would put bad juju in his own bath, the Witch-hunters turned a deaf ear and ordered him to go with them.

82. They also interrogated him about his visitors who came to pay their last respects to him on the death of his Mother but the Alkalo who was also there, lied to the Witch-hunters. Abdoulie Bojang, the witness explained how the witch-hunt campaign was therefore used as a method to punish and his guests were expatriated from Casamance making bad juju with the intention of toppling Jammeh and his leadership.184 However, witnesses explained how the witch-hunt campaign was therefore used as a method to punish perceived opposition to Jammeh’s administration because Jambur was a UDP stronghold. Abdoulie Bojang also testified that he believed the Jambur witch-hunt was politically motivated because the position of Alkaloship which was determined by the communities was politicised.

83. A prayer ritual and charity ceremony was performed at the village cemetery by the witch hunters. The witch-hunters escorted some senior elders to the graveyard where the son of Imam Bubaccarr Bojang was forced to dig a pit and slaughter a red cock and a red hen and their blood emptied into the pit. Bubaccarr was then asked to recite “Surtatul Ikla” (a Chapter in the Quran) 17 times before being ordered to beat a ritual drum decorated with jujus, charms, mirrors and glasses for another 17 times. The witch hunters buried the red cock in the pit together with a red bottle believed to be containing ritual mirrors until they noticed a juju hanging on the top of a door and asked the witness to give it in the presence of everyone. The Commission was told that even the imam had his tablet seized by the witch-hunters.185

84. Those arrested were later taken to the bantaba around 2 to 3 pm where they were asked to sit on the bare ground whilst other victims were brought to join them. Those who had Jujus seized from their person or their houses were asked to go around the bantaba and brandish the said juju in the presence of everyone. The Commission was told that even the imam had his tablet seized by the witch-hunters.186

85. Around 5pm, they were boarded on a bus and taken to Baba Jone’s House in Kololi and they were there till the next day. The experience of victims at Kololi is similar to what was narrated by those from Makumbaya. They were given the concoction to drink in a filthy, smelly and unhygienic room and the cup used to scoop it was one used for the toilet.187 Sainey Ba Bojang explained that after he drank the concoction he tried to jump up to get hold of the light bulb and that was when they caught him. He became unconscious thereafter and woke up the next morning trying to give lunch to his children who were not there. He later realized that he was hallucinating and that himself was not aware of what was happening.

86. As in the previous Witch-hunts the medicine produced similar negative health effects although the health complications from the medicine varied from victim to victim.188 Masireh Bojang testified that as soon as she drank the medicine, her stomach started to hurt and she was in so much pain that she was rolling around on the floor. She testified that another woman by the name of Nanny Bojang had to stay near the toilet all the time due to acute diarrhea. Momodou Kah Bojang explained that as soon as he drank the medicine, he started to urinate continuously. He still has this problem and sometimes feels intense pain from his waist down to his feet and when this occurs, he is unable to walk and has to be carried.189

87. Fatou Fatty testified that her mother could not speak, her tongue was limp and her words were unclear. She remained this way until her death, unable to communicate with her children even though at the time that she was taken away to Kololi, she had no trouble communicating.190 Alieu Mbye stated that what happened at Kololi was “very, very sad because those old women and men, really suffered there. The drug had some mental or psychological effects including hallucinations. They were talking to themselves like mad people and saying things that were not real. In describing the state of the people after taking the concoction, Alieu Mbye said, “someone was there who was attempting to bring down the light bulb. Someone was there shouting saying ‘let no one eat his couscous’.”

88. The drug also had some physical effects. Many of them could not even get up to reach the toilet and therefore some people urinated on themselves while some had diarrhea.191 After he drank the medicine and he was released to go home, he got very sick to the point of being incapacitated. Conventional medicine did not do much for him so he tried traditional
LIST OF THOSE WHOSE DEATHS ARE ATTRIBUTED TO THE WITCH HUNTING EXERCISE IN JUMBUR

1. Lamin Dandang Bah 203
2. Momodou Kumba Bah204
3. Dembo Jaring (Jariatou) Bojang 205
4. Ma Sabou Bojang
5. Adama Camara.206
6. Saikou Camara
7. Lamin Cham
8. Mangikey Cham
9. Mbayick Cham
10. Bui Korteh/ Burie Coutra
11. Korsa Darboe
12. Wassa Darboe 208
13. Mamba Jamba209
14. Lamin Jammeh (Senior) 210
15. Kaddy Jatta
16. Kaddy Makung Jatta 211
17. Mamadou Kumba
18. Keboa Sait212

89. The most extensive list of people captured at Jambur was given by Aliou Mbye as the number recorded by Sol after they drank the concoction at Kololi. Abdouli Bojang recorded about 62 names of individuals captured at Sintet200. According to the witness, 32 survived and 18 died shortly after the incident.202 The witness also submitted a Foroya Newspaper Article from 9th to 10th February 2009 with the headline “Jamburians Narrate Their Ordeal: the article indicated that 60 individuals were abducted Including the Imam and Elders.

LIST OF SICK VICTIMS

1. Amadou Tijan Saidy Kartong
2. Na Amie Bojang – 213
3. Momodou Kha Bojang 214
4. Sainabou Sannch – disabled215
5. Ma Sirrehe/Sirrehe Bojang – incapacitated216
6. Karamo Bojang
7. Arafang Yahya Bojang –
8. Lamin Touray217
9. Amadou Tijan Saidy218

There was one case of rape reported by Kemo Nabou Bojang who wrote a statement on behalf of his mother Sainabou Sannch stating that his mother was abducted by Witch Hunters in Jambur, taken to Kololi and raped by the Witch Hunters.

According to the testimony of witnesses, there was as general feeling of helplessness and people had no help or place to turn to.219 After the Witch Hunt in Jambur, the Youth were angry about their parents being accused of witchcraft, taken away, drugged, humiliated and maltreated. The Alkalo Keba Bojang was largely blamed and he also claimed that those youths who blamed him burned down his home. Although it is not clear whether these accusations are valid or not and if they did it in vengeance for what happened to their parents. One Morro Gassama was arrested and detained by the police for three months as a result of this accusation.220

Anusmana Sarjo was arrested and taken to the Police HQ after he granted an interview to Halifa Sallah about his experience during the witch-hunting campaign and was later detained at the NIA where he was interrogated by the former IGP after he (the former IGP) arrested Halifa and brought him to the NIA and detained him there for covering the story of the witch hunt at Makumbaya. During his detention his statement was taken, but when he tried to give a narration about the green boys he was asked to keep quiet about their activities. He was released shortly thereafter and asked to make his way home without any assistance. He had no money for transport and was able to get back home at dawn only with much difficulty.221

203 Testimony of Aliou Mbye, 21/11/2019; lines 518-564; 24-26
204 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 398-423; pages 19-20
205 Testimony of Abdouli Bojang; 21/11/2019; lines 637- 672; page 29-31
206 Testimony of Aliou Mbye, 21/11/2019; lines 289-305; page 15
207 Testimony of Abdouli Bojang 21/11/2019; lines 565 - 615; page 26-29
208 Testimony of Omar Bojang; 18/11/2019; lines 386 – 388; page 17 (the witness stated that the victim died of stomach complications)
209 Testimony of Dembo Manno Bojang 18/11/2019; lines 553 - 555; page 19 (the victim was the chairman of the VDC)
210 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 403, 409-410; page 19 (the victim was the chairman of the VDC)
211 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 402, 413-414; page 19
212 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 402, 410-408; page 19
213 Testimony of Dembo Manno Bojang 18/11/2019; lines 553-555; pages 23-24; (The victim is now hard of hearing which was not the case before the treatment)
214 Testimony of Aliou Mbye, 21/11/2019; lines 545-549; page 23
215 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 18/11/2019; lines 534 - 544; page 23 (the victim was seriously ill in hospital during the time of treatment);
216 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 398-423; pages 19-20 (The victim was the wife of Saikou Camara above in footnote 200)
217 Testimony of Masireh Bojang 20/11/2019; lines 392-393; page 17
218 Testimony of Dembo Manno Bojang 18/11/2019; lines 570 – 573; page 32
219 Testimony of Sainey Ba Bojang 19/11/2019; lines 565-615; page 26-29
220 Testimony for Momodou Kah Bojang 20/11/2019; lines 392-393; page 17
221 Testimony of Ansumana Sarjo 20/11/2019; lines 545-553; pages 23-24; (The victim is now hard of hearing which was not the case before the treatment)
After the witch hunting exercise in Jambur, some victims were interviewed by Halifa Sallah, leading to their arrest and detention. Ansumana Sarjo from Makumbaya testified that he was arrested and taken to the office of the former IGP and later detained at the NIA after he gave an interview to Halifa Sallah about his witch-hunting ordeal. He also testified that whilst he was detained at the NIA, Halifa Sallah was also arrested.221

The witness stated that Yahya Jammeh called him former IGP Esa Badjie and instructed him to go after Halifa Sallah because he had a recorder. He refused to carry out the order for about a week, then Jammeh called him and cautioned him that if he (Jammeh) gave a directive and the former IGP refused to implement it, he would “regret the day his mother gave birth to him”. Esa Badjie said that was why he ordered the arrest of Halifa Sallah. According to him, Yahya Jammeh sent men to verify if indeed his orders had been carried out. He said that he handed Halifa Sallah over to the former Director of the NIA, Louis Gomez, and informed him that Jammeh asked him to hand over Halifa to the NIA and they should await further directives from Jammeh. Halifa Sallah was later charged with spying and sedition. However, the case was withdrawn.222

93. The witch hunters, similar to the other regions used their special mirrors to search compounds and people and identify purported witches and wizards.232 In some cases they seem to be looking for particular individuals who were either listed or not.235 In other cases they searched for items buried under the ground which they unearthed and the victims were forced to brandish those items whilst they paraded them in the streets for everyone to see.246 Some victims were also taken away voluntarily for treatment although after they agreed they were not allowed to change their minds and were subsequently detained against their will.253

94. However in this region the local Police Station, it’s Officer Commanding (OC) Jawo and his officials were also involved in assisting the Witch Hunters and their team. The security apparatus was present to enforce the instructions of the Witch Hunters and secure their victims.233 They beat those who did not comply.237 Lamin Cessay was one of those who was slapped several times, severely beaten, gun butted, handcuffed and shoved inside the bus by Saliou Jallow and a group of about 10-15 Green boys including Oumar Jowo, the OC Barra Police Station because he dared to object to his parents being taken away.238 He sustained injuries to his nose and mouth. In that commotion his parents and some other elders managed to escape and he was taken instead.239 The Witch Hunters and their group were bashed at the Bantaba where vehicles were parked and their victims (captured from around the village), brought to the Bantaba.240 There was drumming, singing and dancing going on at the Bantaba by the Green Boys and Girls.241

95. The witch hunting exercise in Essau and Barra was conducted on Sunday the 8th day of February, 2009.242 It is also believed to have been conducted on the instructions of the former President Jammeh.243 It took a similar path as the previous ones, albeit with its own peculiarities.

96. As in most of the cases, victims who were accused of being witches and wizards were mainly elderly.244 However, pregnant women, nursing mothers and children were not spared.245 Victims were captured from their homes and other public areas in Essau and Barra by a similar team of witch hunters from Guinea and their entourage of Gambian Soldiers, Green Boys and Para Military.246 The team was headed by prominent soldiers from the State House including Solo Bojang, Saliou Jallow and Salifu Corr based in Barra who were all believed to be part of Jammeh’s notorious hit and torture squad known as the Junglers.247 A cameraman was also part of the entourage.248

97. There was a big, wide, long “MAN” bus parked at the Bantaba not far from the Station. It was filled to capacity and the victims were boarded and transported to Barra249 escorted by the soldiers, Green Boys and the witch hunters.250 The bus departed around five (5) pm.251 when they arrived at Barra, they were taken to Fort Bullen, Barra by the ocean front252 by OC Jawo, Saliou Jallow, Salifu Corr and other military and security personnel.253 Other people who were arrested by the Witch Hunters at Barra as alleged witches and wizards were marched to the bus to join those who were brought from Barra on board the bus.254 Those who were captured in Barra included Pa Alagie Tabora Manneh, Mary Taal, Rohey Faye and Alhagie Baboucarr Faye.255

98. In some cases they seem to be looking for particular individuals who were either listed or not.235 In other cases they searched for items buried under the ground which they unearthed and the victims were forced to brandish those items whilst they paraded them in the streets for everyone to see.246 Some victims were also taken away voluntarily for treatment although after they agreed they were not allowed to change their minds and were subsequently detained against their will.253

F. WITCH HUNTING EXERCISE IN ESSAU AND BARRA LOWER NUIMI

The witch hunters, similar to the other regions used their special mirrors to search compounds and people and identify purported witches and wizards.232 In some cases they seem to be looking for particular individuals who were either listed or not.235 In other cases they searched for items buried under the ground which they unearthed and the victims were forced to brandish those items whilst they paraded them in the streets for everyone to see.246 Some victims were also taken away voluntarily for treatment although after they agreed they were not allowed to change their minds and were subsequently detained against their will.253
Ahajie Baboucarr Faye whose father was captured by the Witch Hunters, taken to Baba Jobe’s residence and made to drink the concoction, was asked to report to the Barra Police Station. He testified that when he arrived, the Station was heavily guarded by military personnel. When he arrived he was arrested by OC Jawo with the assistance of other police personnel including one Pa Wally Njie a Police Sergeant who then handed him over to Sallfu Corr. Corr later collected him in a pick-up truck with other armed soldiers and drove him to Fort Bullen where he met the others arrested in Barra. He was subsequently detained there in a sheep pen under poor conditions which was secured with an armed guard.

Lamin Ceesay was made to alight from the bus in Fort Bullen and he was the only one who remained there with about 20-30 soldiers.249 Sainah Jallow took him to a small room and he was asked to say his last prayers at gun point. Afterwards, some more soldiers were called, they held his hands and his legs and whilst he was suspended in the air, all of them (about 20-30) beat him with canes, sticks and pipes all over his body. When they were finished with him, he was injured and bleeding from his mouth and other parts of his body, and his clothes were soaked in blood. This was all done in the presence of OC Jawo who kept insulting him during the entire process for having the audacity to interfere with the process and say that his parents will not be taken.250 After Lamin Ceesay was released to go home, Captain Jatta (who was in charge of the Barra Barracks) came to apologise on behalf of his men who were assisting the Witch hunting team, saying that he had no other choice.251

Witnesses estimate that the number of victims on the bus was about 50-100.252 Subsequently they were brought to Baba Jobe’s residence in Kololi around 8/9pm.253 according to witnesses254 the residence was manned by armed guards including the green boys, to prevent those detained there from escaping.255 Just like the other victims of the Witch-hunts who were identified as witches and wizards, they were made to queue, their names were taken down and their properties seized.256 The victims were all detained in the big hall regardless of whether they were men or women.257 They were offered food and although some refused, they were advised that eating would mitigate some of the effects of the medication. They were later called out one by one into a small room or building resembling a toilet and forcefully given the concoction to drink.258 The witch hunters were assisted by soldiers and green boys who would force compliance.259 The commission was told that even if victims could not finish the quantity given to them, they were forced to finish it and even chew and swallow the remaining leaves and other remnants in the cup.260

Witnesses testified that the bitter herbal concoction261 was contained in a large container measured in big cups and given to victims to drink.262 Witnesses described the intoxicating effect it had on them263. Furthermore, some suffered from diarrhoea264, others vomiting or nausea,265 while some rolled around groaning, and exhibiting other symptoms.266 Witnesses said that after they drank and bathed in it, they were monitored by the Green Boys who were listening to anything they had to say.267 Like the previous victims, the concoction affected their state of health.268 Some of the victims were also beaten and maltreated after they took the concoction and started behaving strangely. Some of them were asked to walk and when they could not do so properly, due to the intoxicating effect of the medicine, they were beaten. They sustained injuries as a result that affected their health.269 A nylon bag was put over the head of the Alkalo of Barra who was over eighty (80) years old in his intoxicated state whilst being questioned after being given the concoction to drink twice.

Jaina Sonko also stated that she was restrained by two men in civilian clothes whilst a third held a plastic bag over her head until she started to shiver and become dizzy270 they were also pushed over and deliberately made to fall.271 The victims who did not exhibit any symptoms from the drug or did not appear to be intoxicated where released the next day.272 The others were detained over several nights.273 Those who appeared intoxicated by the medication were given a second dose of the medicine.274 The effect of the medication on them was shocking and gruesome. Many became unconscious275 while some vomited on themselves, others urinated and defecated and were found in very humiliating circumstances.276 They were detained under very poor conditions and made to sit and lie on the bare floor.277

After the victims were released, they were given fares to go home278 but the combined effects of the concoction and maltreatment lead to the death of some victims.279 Others developed serious long term health complications.280 Responsibility for those conditions and deaths were attributed mainly to Jammeh by victims.281 It is clear from the evidence heard by the
commission that the witch-hunt exercise had a serious impact on victims and their families. A special case is that of Ali Marr who was captured with members of his family including a sick brother (who was carried away in a wheel barrow) and a sister. He left behind his sick son and a donkey which was invaluable to his livelihood and by the time he returned, both his sick son and the donkey had died because he could not leave anyone behind to care for them. Within a short period of time, his parents also died. Victims like Marr blame Jammeh for their ordeal. Lamin Ceesay provided a list of 32 names of victims who had been captured in Essau and Barra and taken to Kololi in PIS Exhibit 106. The list of 32 names included 8 deceased. Buba Jarjue also tendered a PIS with a list of 17 names of those that were captured and taken to Kanilai.

105. Lamin Jorbateh. the 16 year old that was abducted had this to say about the stigma he faces after the incident: “Some students were looking at me and they were even pointing at me, saying that look at this man he is also a wizard and that they took him away, they said they took me away. Even later on if I have any argument or issue with somebody in the class that is what they always tell me. I cannot concentrate when I am in class because I think when I go out how people will look at me, how they will approach me. Because I know that one day, they will even say things to me.” The witness latter dropped out of school as he could not cope with the stigma and that also affected his mental health.

106. Omar Jawo. was the Officer Commanding Barra Police Station and the most Senior Officer on the ground during the Barra/Essau Witch-hunt. Witnesses testified that he arrived in the community with a convoy of double cabin vehicles carrying Solo Bojang from the State Guard, Salifou Corr and Saikou Jallow (both soldiers close to Jammeh and posted at Barra) pulled up at the entrance of the Barra Police Station (Station). He also saw four to five witch-doctors dressed in red with mirrors. According to Omar Jawo, he was approached by Solo Bojang, who said he had been sent by Jammeh to Barra and Essau the north bank to catch the witches and wizards.” He was surprised because he was not aware of any laws at the time about witches and wizards. He then went to police Commissioner Kebb Jammeh about the situation. The commissioner told him that the same group had come to Police HQ the previous week and that the former IGP, their superior, had complied with their orders. Kebb Jammeh advised him to comply with the Witch Hunters and he protested that this was an unlawful order. However, he admitted that carrying out unlawful orders was unlawful in and of itself. He said he was given an indirect order from Solo to participate in the operation. According to him, in those years when someone said ‘you are committing an unlawful order.” When he was asked about Lamin Ceesay’s torture, he responded that he only saw Lamin Ceesay and Saikou Jallow after Lamin Ceesay was already in handcuffs and he heard noise of a scuffle when he got down from his vehicle. He denied being present. He was not present when Lamin Ceesay was being beaten. When he was confronted with the testimony of Lamin Ceesay that he was present when he had his altercation with Saikou Jallow, he denied it. Contrary to the evidence of Lamin Ceesay and other witnesses, he denied that he saw soldiers, Lamin Ceesay or his injuries afterwards. Jawo agreed that Lamin Ceesay was taken to Fort Bullen and he was present there but denied that he participated in his beating there. He later denied that he was in the Fort itself but rather in the general vicinity. He denied insulting Ceesay or telling him that he was disobeying Jammeh. In response to whether he called Alagie Faye to his office to lure him into getting arrested he said that he actually did it to protect him from being publicly disgraced. He also testified that he accompanied the accused to Baba Jobe’s house in Kololi and saw victims in very bad conditions there.

107. The witness admitted that he was the most senior police officer in the region and gave the whole witch-hunting process an official stamp of approval. However, he insisted that he was an unwilling participant in the arrest of the late Alkalo Kenbugul Faye, Lamin Ceesay, elderly men, pregnant and nursing mothers, and a 16-year-old boy. Although witnesses testified that he seemed to have happily complied, but he denied those allegations.

108. Jawo stated that he was powerless to stop the Witch-hunt. When it was put to him that he was not forced to participate and that he was more than an innocent bystander, his response did not clarify to what extent he participated in the arrest of Alhajie Faye and Lamin Ceesay. He did acknowledge that he was in Sankung Balajo’s compound with the witch hunters when he was arrested and that he was present for the arrest of others. However, he portrayed himself as part of a group, which he said included Salifou Corr, Saikou Jallow, and the Witch-hunters. He accepted that he was the only person in the group with the statutory power to arrest, and that he participated in an illegal activity, but he argued that the conditions were forced on him.

109. When he was asked about Lamin Ceesay’s torture, he responded that he only saw Lamin Ceesay and Saikou Jallow after Lamin Ceesay was already in handcuffs and he heard noise of a scuffle when he got down from his vehicle. He denied being present. He was not present when Lamin Ceesay was being beaten. When he was confronted with the testimony of Lamin Ceesay that he was present when he had his altercation with Saikou Jallow, he denied it. Contrary to the evidence of Lamin Ceesay and other witnesses, he denied that he saw soldiers, Lamin Ceesay or his injuries afterwards. Jawo agreed that Lamin Ceesay was taken to Fort Bullen and he was present there but denied that he participated in his beating there. He later denied that he was in the Fort itself but rather in the general vicinity. He denied insulting Ceesay or telling him that he was disobeying Jammeh. In response to whether he called Alagie Faye to his office to lure him into getting arrested he said that he actually did it to protect him from being publicly disgraced. He also testified that he accompanied the accused to Baba Jobe’s house in Kololi and saw victims in very bad conditions there.

110. Despite the evidence from witnesses in all the Witch hunts who consistently testify having been beaten, Saikou Jallow denied that ever occurred except on one incident involving Solo Bojang and his Aunt in the village of Karo. He also denied that he beat and tortured Lamin Ceesay, stating that he was not present in Essau. According to him, he subsequently went to Barra after he was informed about the arrest and released those detained at Fort Bullen. Saikou Jallow admitted to only two (2) deaths during the witch hunting exercise whereas the evidence indicated about forty one (41) deaths are attributed to the witch hunt. The evidence suggests that he may have been trying to reduce the gravity of the witch-hunt and in particular his individual responsibility and participation in it. He stated that he tried to stop Jammeh from pursuing the Witch-hunt because people were dying as a result of drinking the herbal concoction, but Jammeh refused to stop because of the influence of Solo Bojang.

111. Jawo admitted that he participated in the arrest of innocent Gambian civilians and in branding them as witches and wizards and he admitted that it was unlawful to corral people and accuse them of witchcraft.

112. The evidence from witnesses indicated that at least forty one (41) people across the affected communities died from the impact of the treatment although it is likely that the victims far exceeded that formal number but due to the stigma of being branded a witch in Gambian culture, many declined to testify or were unaccounted for. All of the victims that testified as well as others mentioned in their testimonies suffered serious short and long term health complications in addition to living with the stigma of being labelled a witch in their local communities.
and the security forces, witch hunters and were sent by Jammeh. In fact, some witnesses also stated.

The fact that the former IGP gave the impression that he was an innocent bystander or a mere subordinate under the forceful command of Jammeh’s accomplice and tried to extricate himself from responsibility even though some inconsistent statements suggest that he had more control over the situation and knew much more than he was letting on. From the evidence, it can be deduced that there was a desire attempt to cover up the impact of the witch-hunt and conceal the gravity of what really happened especially in the provinces.

The witch hunting incidents in the various regions resulted in serious human rights violations and abuses against a large proportion of victims. The fact that one was accused of being a witch is a violation, given that the individual was stigmatized by society and treated with contempt. Additionally, people were being taken forcefully from their homes with armed men and been assaulted. In the Gambian culture, it is a shameful thing for an elderly person to be seen naked by young people. The witch hunting exercise exposed elderly men and women to this humiliation. The hallucinating effect of the concoction they were forced to drink led to temporal insanity for some victims. The effects of the herbs also caused permanent damage to some witnesses. From the force of the witch hunting and the entourage that ensured its success, it can be said that it was a state sponsored witch hunt. It is evident from the testimonies and statements of victims and witnesses that the orders for the 2008 and 2009 Witch-hunt came directly from the former President Yahya Jammeh himself.

However, many others who played various roles in the Witch Hunt were also mentioned by witnesses. It is also evident that the violations were personally orchestrated by these individuals with the knowledge of Jammeh. The Witnesses who testified as to the 2008 witch hunt in Sintet confirmed that the witch hunting team lead by the Witch Doctor Tambajiro and Solo Bojang were sent by Jammeh. In fact, some witnesses also stated that Jammeh spoke directly to them during the smoking ritual ceremony and personally accused some of those identified as Wizards. Saihou Jallow admitted that without a shadow of a doubt, Jammeh ordered the Witch-hunts in Kanilai, Karone, Dorbong, Bajaga, Sintet, Makumbaya and Jambr and was responsible for the suffering of hundreds of Gambians who were identified and labeled as witches and given the concoction leading to some deaths. He was also in charge of the witch hunts.

The former IGP gave the impression that he was an innocent bystander or a mere subordinate under the forceful command of Jammeh the Commander in Chief as he puts it during the witch hunting exercise at the Police Headquarters rather than taking a leading role or being Jammeh’s accomplice and tried to extricate himself from responsibility even though some inconsistent statements suggest that he had more control over the situation and knew much more than he was letting on. From the evidence, it can be deduced that there was a desire attempt to cover up the impact of the witch-hunt and conceal the gravity of what really happened especially in the provinces.

The fact that Halifa Sallah was arrested, detained and his recorder destroyed when he tried to uncover the story is also a clear indication of the intention from the government to conceal evidence and ensure that what really happened did not come out. Some of the evidence also points to the fact that the witch-hunt was used to persecute personal enemies and execute personal vendettas against individuals with impunity as in Sintet whose Alkalo was targeted and Jambr, which was considered an opposition territory. The testimony of the witnesses were also corroborated by reliable media sources including the Foroyaa newspaper in which Halifa Sallah reported that he was arrested on March 15, 2009 by the former IGP and later detained at the NIA in connection with his probing and speaking out against the witch-hunt after he was accused of meddling or interfering with the issue.

9. From the testimonies of witnesses, the drinking of the concoction administered by the Witch hunters and assisted by the green boys has led to death and life threatening diseases.

10. The witch hunt exercise brought out to the open an entrenched belief in the notion of witchcraft, witches and wizards resulting in the stigmatization and discrimination against victims.

G. FINDINGS

THE COMMISSION FINDS THAT:

1. Former President Yahya Jammeh, Solo Bojang, the security forces, witch hunters and Green Boys are all individually and collectively responsible for ordering the persecution, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, inhuman and degrading and sexual gender-based violence treatment of hundreds of persons, leading to about forty one (41) deaths during the 2009 witch-hunting exercise. These persons have been incapacitated and many are still suffering from physical and mental ailments as a result of the concoctions they drank and the terrible treatment meted out against them. Branding them as witches and wizards has resulted in them being stigmatised and discriminated against for the rest of their lives.

2. Yahya Jammeh is held responsible for the forced labour of several people in the Fonis and other areas in his home village Kanilai. Some individuals who assisted him deserve special mention and must also be held responsible for their role in the witch-hunts. These are:

3. Solo Bojang and those soldiers who participated in the unlawful beating of his aunt/stepmother after accusing her of witchcraft thereby resulting in her unlawful death.

4. Tambajiro. Solo Bojang, Sulayman (Solomon) Manga and Toffee Manga are held individually and collectively responsible for ordering the persecution, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of hundreds of persons during a series of Witch-hunts in Sintet in 2008 under the instructions of Jammeh.

5. Saihou Jallow unlawfully assaulted, and tortured Lamin Ceesay and participated in the Essau and Barra witch hunts under the instructions of Jammeh.

6. Ensa Badjie, participated in the Banjul Police Force witch hunt with the security forces, witch hunters and Green Boys under the instructions of Jammeh and he should be held responsible for ordering the persecution, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of police officers during the 2009 witch-hunting exercises who have been incapacitated, sick and are suffering, in pain, stigmatised and branded as witches and wizards for the rest of their lives.

7. Omar Jawo as the most senior member of the police in the North Bank Region participated in the Witch-hunt and unlawful arrests, detention, assault and beating and torture of Lamin Ceesay leading to the persecution, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of hundreds of persons, leading to 40 deaths or even much more during the 2009 witch-hunting exercises who have been rendered incapacitated, sick, suffering, in pain, stigmatised and branded as Witches and Wizards for the rest of their lives.

8. Tamsir Bah the OC of Sihanor Police Station in 2009 unlawfully arrested and detained Nyima Jarju, and her mother-in-law Fatou Bojang in 2009 during the Sintet Witch Hunt.

9. From the testimonies of witnesses, the drinking of the concoction administered by the Witch hunters and assisted by the green boys has led to death and life threatening diseases.

10. The witch hunt exercise brought out to the open an entrenched belief in the notion of witchcraft, witches and wizards resulting in the stigmatization and discrimination against victims.
H. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evidence gathered, the Commission recommends the following:-

1. The prosecution of Yahya Jammeh, Solo Bojang and Saikou Jallow for the murder, manslaughter of forty one (41) individuals (Jamburr (18), Sintet (13), Makumbuya (2), and Essau (8) who died as a result of being targeted and forced to drink toxic concoctions which resulted in all the deaths.

2. The prosecution of Yahya Jammeh, Solo Bojang, Ensa Badjie, Tambajiro, Saikou Jallow, Omar Jawo for the inhumane and degrading treatment and torture inflicted on the victims during the witch hunting exercise.

3. The referral of Tamsir Bah to The Gambia Police Force high command for disciplinary measure for his role in the unlawful arrest and detention of Nyima Jarju, her baby and her mother-in-law Fatou Bojang in 2009 during the Sintet Witch Hunting exercise.

4. Ensa Badjie, Omar Jawo and should be banned from serving in the security services or holding any public office in the civil service or government in general.

5. Consideration be given to passing of legislation to criminalise labelling individuals as witches because of the societal stigma attached to it.

6. Training of security personnel to be able to know and appreciate the negative impact of witchcraft in society and how damaging it is to persons being accused of being witches/wizards.

7. The National Council for Civic Education (NCCE), Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MOBSE) and Civil Society Organizations engage in advocacy and awareness programmes to sensitize the public and local communities to change the mindset and attitudes regarding the stigma attached to Witch Craft so as to remove negative impacts against persons accused of being witches, wizards and witchcraft.

8. That guideline be provided to prevent security forces being used to carry out unlawful orders.