



WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING  
WANEP POLICY BRIEF  
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## PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE GAMBIA AS AN ISLAMIC STATE: PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

On December 11 2014 President Yahya Jammeh declared The Gambia as an "Islamic State during his tour of Brazil a community 20km from Banjul. He stressed that the rights of the Christian minority and other religions will be respected Islamic nations would not be held to any particular dress code. However, a directive from the

proclaim The Gambia as an Islamic state as Muslims are the majority in the country. The Gambia cannot afford to continue the colonial legacy in 2013. Gambia pulled out of the Commonwealth, which President Jammeh described as neo-colonialist. The declaration seems to have thrown the nation into a state of uncertainty as the president did not give full details of

the country. The Gambia has been able to maintain peaceful coexistence among its people largely due to a number of cultural and social ties between its ethnic and faith groups. There is perception and perhaps reality that the declaration of the country as an Islamic state could negatively impact the social fabric that has underpinned Christian-Muslim relations for

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