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United Against Torture Consortium Gathers Over 40 Human Rights Actors in Banjul Ahead of African Commission Session

Banjul, 16 October 2025 — The United Against Torture Consortium (UATC), a coalition of six leading anti-torture organisations working with over 200 civil society organisations across the world, convened a regional partners’ meeting in Banjul, The Gambia, from 15–16 October 2025.

Funded by the European Union since 2023, the UATC supports coordinated efforts to prevent torture, promote accountability, and provide holistic support to survivors. The meeting brought together 45 participants from 16 African countries for two days of strategic dialogue, review of progress made since the consortium’s formation, exchange of good practices, and to stand in solidarity. Key topics included torture prevention, monitoring, documentation, and accountability efforts, as well as holistic support for survivors and survivor engagement, including in high-risk situations such as protests.

Marie Salphati, a representative of the UATC, said:

“We are grateful for the support of our local partners, the African Network against Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances (ANEKED) and the Women’s Association for Victims’ Empowerment, whose collaboration made this gathering possible. It is vital that civil society across the continent continues to unite, share strategies, and stand in solidarity against torture.”

In the margins of the meeting, UATC and partners stressed the need for continued collaboration with Gambian authorities following the adoption of the 2023 Prevention Against Torture Act. Civil society called for further steps, including support for survivors, accountability for perpetrators, and the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

In her welcome remarks to the UATC regional partners’ meeting, Sirra Ndow, ANEKED Country Director said:

“This meeting is taking place in a country whose recent history reminds us sharply of the urgency of this work, is an opportunity to learn from the experiences of other, their successes and from obstacles they overcame.”

In opening remarks, Raphael Brigandi, Deputy head of the EU Delegation in The Gambia, said:

“The work, your work, representatives of civil society, National Human Rights Institutions, and members of National Preventive Mechanisms NPMs in all aspects of anti-torture efforts, including through the UATC, is indeed of a key importance. Let me also commend the Consortium’s holistic approach and your ability to engage with anti-torture actors worldwide, as reflected in this meeting ensures both a local and global impact.”

Participants will continue their advocacy efforts during the upcoming NGO Forum (17 October 2025) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights session (scheduled to begin 21 October 2025).

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