



ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENT DOCTORS (GARD) - THE GAMBIA

Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital, Banjul, The Gambia. West Africa.

15/03/2018

PRESS STATEMENT

The Association of Resident Doctors - The Gambia (GARD), a representative body of all Resident Doctors with now a current membership of 211 country wide and abroad is a professional body dedicated to delivering quality health care to the people of The Gambia.

As a body, we condemned the defamatory statements made by the Minister for Health and Social Welfare and in our first press conference read out 3 demands; that she retracts her statement, apologizes to the entire medical and health fraternity and appends her resignation within 48 hours.

We saw in the media a statement from the Minister dated 13th March 2018 titled '**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE ON THE RESIDENT DOCTORS' SIT-DOWN STRIKE.**'

In this statement, she said '*That the statement I made was not out of malice. On the contrary, it was made to turn around the negative image that the Ministry is synonymous with.*'

She further stated, '*As custodian of the sector and in the interest of the population, I extend an apology to ANYONE who might have been offended by the statement*'.

This '**apology**' contains no retraction and isn't specific to the party she denigrated. Moreover, it is insipid, half-hearted and falling short of the measure of humility expected of a serving public official.

Fellow Gambians, following the announcement of our sit-down strike 8th March 2018, we informed you it would be in phases. Phase 1 was commenced a week ago in which we offered only emergency services and promised to activate phase 2 if our demands were not met. We have been engaged in negotiations with the Office of the President, the Medical Advisory Group of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and also met the Medical and Dental Council of The Gambia over the past week but our demands are still yet to be met.

Therefore, we have been forced as a body and left with no choice but to proceed to the phase 2 of our sit-down strike. However we shall in the interim exhaust all options and pending negotiations.

We do this with utmost sadness for you are dear to us and you deserve better. You deserve the health care that people in other countries enjoy for it is your basic Human rights. You deserve to come to our hospitals and receive the care you need and go home happily with your families.

Thank you.

Dr. Ebrima Bah
President

Dr. Baboucarr Daffeh
Secretary General