



## **GAMBIA: ALLEGED “DEATH SQUAD” MEMBER INDICTED IN GERMANY Major Advance for Victims of Abuses During Yahya Jammeh Rule**

**(Berlin and Geneva, 03.03.2022) – The indictment in Germany announced on 03.03.2022, of an alleged former Gambian “death squad” member suspected of crimes against humanity is an important step for Gambian victims and international justice, TRIAL International and the International Commission of Jurists said today.**

“Bai L.” was an alleged member of the notorious “Junglers” death squad, set up by then-president Yahya Jammeh, whose 22-year rule was marked by [widespread human rights violations](#). Jammeh is now in Equatorial Guinea, to which he fled after losing the 2016 Gambian presidential election to Adama Barrow, who was elected in December 2021 to a second term. The Gambian Truth Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) [recently called](#) for the prosecution of Jammeh and scores of others, including Bai L., for their alleged crimes.

Bai L., who was arrested by the German authorities in March 2021, is the third alleged accomplice of Jammeh to be detained abroad. The other suspects are Gambia’s former interior minister, [Ousman Sonko](#), under investigation in Switzerland since 2017, and another former Jungler, [Michael Sang Correa](#), indicted in June 2020 in the United States.

“The long arm of the law is catching up to Yahya Jammeh and his accomplices around the world,” said [Reed Brody](#), a Commissioner with the International Commission of Jurists who [works](#) with Jammeh’s victims. “Jammeh’s henchmen have been arrested in Germany, Switzerland and the United States, and the Gambian truth commission has called for the prosecution of his accomplices in The Gambia, and of Jammeh himself, now in Equatorial Guinea.”

The indictment of Bai L., as well as the arrests in Switzerland and the United States, have been carried out under the legal principle of universal jurisdiction which allows for, and in some cases requires, investigating and prosecuting the most serious crimes under international law regardless of where they were committed, and of the nationality of the suspects or victims. [German authorities](#) are also investigating individuals alleged to have committed grave crimes in a number of other countries. On January 13, a German court [sentenced](#) a Syrian colonel linked to the torture of thousands of people to life in prison for crimes against humanity.

German prosecutors [accuse](#) Bai L., who was living in the city of Hannover, as a Jungler, of having notably driven his accomplices to various crime scenes between December 2003 and December 2006. He is thus alleged to have been involved in three “liquidation orders,” driving other Junglers to attack sites. Among those targeted were the prominent newspaper editor, [Deyda Hydar](#), a critic of the Jammeh government who was murdered in 2004, an alleged opponent, [Dawda Nyassi](#), who

TRIAL International is a non-governmental organization fighting impunity for international crimes and supporting victims in their quest for justice.

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was killed in 2006, and a lawyer, [Ousman Sillah](#), who survived a murder attempt a year earlier. Bai L. himself described in [2013](#) and 2014 radio interviews his participation in these events.

“I want to see justice done for my father and for all the others who were victimized by Yahya Jammeh and his security forces,” said Baba Hydera, son of Deyda Hydera and a plaintiff in the German prosecution. “Everyone involved in the murder of my dad will face justice, and we won’t stop until each one of them is brought to a court of law.”

The TRRC whose [final report](#) was [released](#) on December 24, 2021, called for Bai L.’s prosecution in connection with the Hydera and Sillah cases, though he was not mentioned regarding the Nyassi case. The TRRC also called for Bai L.’s prosecution in the [murder of 59 West African migrants](#) in 2005. The two organizations asked the German authorities to further investigate this massacre, which is one of the most emblematic atrocities committed under Jammeh. Bai L. himself [described](#) in the 2013 radio interview his participation in the operations leading to the migrants’ assassination, as well as in the execution of former intelligence chief Daba Marenah and four associates in April 2006 and the killing of Jammeh’s brother Haruna Jammeh.

Now the indictment of Bai L., who is currently in pre-trial detention, goes to the Higher Regional Court of Celle. If the court approves it, a trial could begin in the first half of 2022.

“The indictment of Bai L. is meaningful in several ways” according to [Philip Grant](#), Executive Director of TRIAL International, who has provided evidence to the German authorities about this case: “It would lead to the opening of the first trial based on universal jurisdiction to judge the atrocities committed under Jammeh’s regime, and it would allow to shed light on the paramilitary unit of the Junglers and their ties to the former President, further preparing the ground for his prosecution.”

**The press release on the indictment can be found on the website of the German Federal Prosecutor at the following page:**

[https://www.generalbundesanwalt.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/aktuelle/Pressemitteilung\\_2-vom-03-03-2022.html?nn=478184](https://www.generalbundesanwalt.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/aktuelle/Pressemitteilung_2-vom-03-03-2022.html?nn=478184)

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