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**EFSCRJ Submits Request for Information
about the Gambia's Oil and Mineral Resource Activities**

Today, June 13 EFSCRJ in partnership with a concerned Gambian accounting expert Nuha Ceesay have jointly submitted a request for information to the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy on oil and other mineral resources of the Gambia. The request is made out of our concern over the opacity and silence by the Government of The Gambia regarding highly consequential activities in the extractive sector, specifically oil exploration in offshore blocks A2 and A5 and the apparent discovery of strategic mineral resources including kaolinitic clay, plastic clay, and quartz sand.

The Gambia has six oil blocks, i.e., A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6, in which are located oil wells. Block A2 contains Bambo, Soloo, and Soloo Deep oil wells. Block A5 contains Jatto and Malo oil wells, while Jobo oil well is located between blocks A2 and A5.

Despite substantial exploration activities and investment in offshore drilling by FAR Oil through FAR Gambia Ltd and its partner PETRONAS culminating in the drilling of the Bambo-1 and Bambo-1ST1 wells in late 2021, there has been no formal communication by the Government to the people of this country. We note several publicly available investor reports that confirm the following:

- Oil shows were detected and up to 1.59 billion barrels of recoverable oil are estimated across four high-graded prospects: Panthera, Jatto, Malo, and Jobo oil wells.
- The Panthera prospect is now ranked as the top exploration target, yet there is no national strategy or public update regarding farm-out or sale negotiations.
- The Ministry has proceeded with new licensing rounds while the public remains uninformed about the lessons, prospects, or potential windfalls from past and ongoing contracts.

Furthermore, we note recent documents from the Ministry itself which reveal massive reserves of non-oil natural resources, including:

- Over 10 million tons of minable plastic clay across Mandinari, Busumbala, and other regions.
- Over 50 million tons of quartz sand, with industrial potential for glass, fibre, and electronics.
- Kaolinitic clay of over 3 million tons suitable for ceramics, and
- Heavy mineral sands along the coast containing ilmenite, rutile, and zircon.

In light of the foregoing, we have therefore submitted a letter of request for information in line with the Access to Information Act 2021, seeking the following:

1. Report on the exploration activities and investment in offshore drilling by FAR Oil through FAR Gambia Ltd and its partner PETRONAS
2. The report of the findings from the Bambo-1 and Bambo-1ST1 drilling campaigns.





3. The terms and beneficiaries of any farm-down, sale, or Petroleum, Exploration, and Production license in respect of a License Area (PEPLA) related negotiations involving offshore Blocks A2 and A5.
4. Report on the exploration and development of mineral resources including quartz sands and clay reserves.
5. Report on the enforcement of training, social development funds, and local content commitments as stipulated under the 2022 Model PEPLA.

We submitted our requests in accordance with and pursuant to the Access to Information Act 2021, with particular reference to the following provisions:

- Section 6(1), *“Every public body shall create, keep, organize and maintain its information in a manner which facilitates access to information, as provided in this Act”*.
- Section 7, on proactive disclosure, provides that a public body shall publish within 30 days information generated or received by that body.
- Section 11, provides that, *“every person has a right to access information from a public body”*.
- Section 14 provides that a public body will respond within 21 days upon receipt of a request for information to the requester.

We wish to remind the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy of their legal obligations under the Access to Information Act 2021 and respond accordingly.

Furthermore, we wish to call on the National Assembly to conduct a special public inquiry on the Gambia’s extractive industries. In this regard, we wish to also call on political parties, CSOs and the media to invest their resources and time in the extractive sector to ensure that the best interest of the country is served.

Our natural and mineral resources are a source of sovereign wealth for the Gambia. These natural and mineral resources are our collective heritage which must be secured and tapped for the benefit of all Gambians. We wish to therefore call on Gambians to demonstrate high level of interest and involvement in the natural and mineral resources of the Gambia by demanding transparency and accountability to ensure that these God-given resources are not a curse but a source of wealth, development, prosperity, and peace for the Gambia.

2025 – The Year of Transparency and Accountability

