

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

**NAME:** AMINA SAHO CEESAY

**ADDRESS:** Bijilo Highway  
Bijilo, West Coast Region  
The Gambia

**DATE OF BIRTH:** 15th May 1975

**GENDER:** Female

**MARITAL STATUS:** Married

**NATIONALITY:** Gambian

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**PROFESSION:** Barrister-at-Law and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of The Gambia.

**OCCUPATION:** Judge of the Court of The Court of Appeal of The Gambia

## **EDUCATION:**

**Law School:** Sierra Leone Law School (2003 – 2004) - awarded Degree of Utter Barrister  
B.L

**University:** University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom (2000-2003) -  
awarded Bachelor of Laws Degree - LL.B (Hons)

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

United Nations Institute for Research and Training (UNITAR) – Certificate in Diplomatic Practice

Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat, The Gambia – Certificate in Alternative Dispute  
Resolution

The Gambia Judicial Education Institute – Certificate in Sharia practice

## **MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES**

The Gambia Bar Association  
Called to The Sierra Leone Bar

## **MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATIONS**

Member – Female Lawyers Association of The Gambia  
Gambia Judges' Association

## **AWARDS:**

The Professor E.H. Wright Prize for the best student in the Law of Evidence at the Bar Finals (Oct  
'04)

The Honourable Justice Laura Marcus Jones Prize for the best student in Criminal Procedure at  
the Bar Finals (Oct '04)

The Francis Gabbidon Prize for the best student in the Law of Evidence at the Bar Finals (Oct  
'04)

## **EMPLOYMENT/WORK EXPERIENCE:**

### **JUDGE OF THE COURT OF APPEAL OF THE GAMBIA (JUNE 2021-TO DATE)**

As a Judge of the Court of Appeal, I preside over appeals in a panel of three judges with the jurisdiction to hear and determine appeals from judgments, decrees, and orders of the High Court and decisions of Courts-Martial in the manner provided by law. An appeal lies as of right to the Court of appeal from any judgment, decree, or order of the High Court. To hear and determine any appeal within its jurisdiction, the Court of appeal is vested with the powers of the Court from which the appeal is brought.

### **JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF THE GAMBIA (SEPTEMBER 2016 – JUNE 2021)**

As a Judge of the High Court, which is my primary role, I preside over cases at the High Court's Civil and Land Division without prejudice to any other subject-matter case docket that the Chief Justice may from time to time assign. I conduct the hearing and determination of both civil and criminal cases, interpret and enforce the fundamental rights and freedoms as provided in Chapter IV of the Constitution and deal with the complex and challenging cases at first instance. I am vested with unlimited jurisdiction to hear and determine all criminal and civil matters although I usually try capital offences and critical civil suits. I also hear appeals from courts subordinate to the High Court other than the Cadi courts. I keep apprised of current laws, amendments, rules and regulations by way of a personal subscription at the Government printers. I have attended an array of training seminars both locally and internationally and of recent had the privilege of attending and making a presentation on **‘The Criminal jurisdiction- Coordinating Agencies- the Interagency Task Force Approach’** on behalf of the Honourable Chief Justice at the **Commonwealth Chief Justice Virtual Roundtable**. I attend virtual continuous legal education upon invitations forwarded by a colleague Judge in Ghana or those extended by a law reporting service. I utilise strong leadership skills, expansive legal expertise and conduct necessary research, train and supervise support staff.

### **JUDGE – VIRTUAL PILOT COURT (MAY 2020-DATE)**

The advent of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020 necessitated the use of remote hearings to ensure cases are heard and disposed of urgently where practical and expeditious. As such, in June 2020, the Chief Justice directed the use of suitable technology for the just determination

of proceedings together with the efficient use of available judicial and administrative resources. I am one of two Judges tasked to use modern technological platforms to conduct remote hearings or virtual court proceedings (by video conference, audio link, telephone, email and other comparable means) wherever convenient and appropriate.

**VICE CHAIRPERSON, SUBORDINATE COURTS SUPERVISION AND MONITORING COMMITTEE (NOVEMBER 2020- DATE)**

This committee's terms of reference is for the supervision and monitoring of Magistrates Courts and Tribunals concerning their proper and efficient operation including and not limited to investigate complaints and any other matter referred to it by the Chief Justice.

**MEMBER, PROMOTION COMMITTEE (2020- DATE)**

As a member of this committee, I am tasked with the assessment of officers in the Judiciary (including Magistrates) eligible for promotion.

**CHAIRPERSON, RECORDS REVIEW COMMITTEE (JUNE 2020 – October 2020)**

As Chairperson, I headed this committee with terms of reference to revise the First Schedule made under the Disposal of Records Act, 1949, consider and develop a records retention policy for the Judiciary and make appropriate recommendations for the consideration of the Honourable Chief Justice. A detailed report was submitted to the Chief Justice in October 2020 proposing a radical change in the storage and disposition of the records of the Judiciary and a shift in policy in respect of the manual recording of proceedings.

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR PUPILLAGE IN THE JUDICIARY (JANUARY 2019 – DATE)**

In 2019, the Judiciary found itself in position where members of its staff that had successfully completed the Bar Vocational Course and were called to the Bar had to undertake pupillage. Consequently, I was tasked by the Chief Justice to develop a system of pupillage for the Judiciary. As such, I single-handedly drafted the **Pupillage Rules of Certification for the Judiciary, 2019** which provides for the procedure and rules to be applied to persons undergoing pupillage at the Judiciary.

**CHAIRPERSON, TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE JUDICIARY, THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND THE CYRUS VANCE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE (2019 - TO DATE)**

As head of this technical committee, I have made great strides in mobilizing support for capacity building for the Judiciary from the International Centre for Transitional Justice and the Cyrus Vance Centre for International Justice. Training workshops are lined up aimed at mobilizing the Judiciary to support transitional justice and the fight against corruption in The Gambia.

**HEAD, GOVERNING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL EDUCATION (GCLE) (JUNE 2020 – JUNE 2021)**

I was delegated by the Honourable Chief Justice of The Gambia to head this committee in his stead– which is charged with the general supervision of legal education in The Gambia. The GCLE is poised to, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, propose policy objectives/guidelines for legal education in The Gambia, review the current arrangements for legal education and develop a comprehensive strategic framework that encompasses the three phases of legal education in The Gambia, including a system that ensures coordination of all phases to achieve common policy objectives.

**CHAIRPERSON, ENROLMENT COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL LEGAL COUNCIL (MAY 2018- JUNE 2021)**

I head this committee which is responsible for the consideration of applications for enrolment as Legal Practitioners from Pupil Barristers who have completed a year’s pupillage either in private law chambers, the State Law Office or the Judiciary. Pupil Barristers undergo a rigorous interview process to gauge their level of preparedness and to ensure compliance with the Pupillage Rules Order, 2017 and the Pupillage Rules of Certification for The Judiciary, 2019.

**MEMBER, DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL LEGAL COUNCIL (GLC) (DECEMBER 2017 – JUNE 2021)**

As a member of the Disciplinary committee of the GLC, I, together with the Chairman and other distinguished committee members, hear and determine petitions from persons aggrieved by an acts of misconduct allegedly committed by Legal Practitioners and any conduct which, in pursuance of rules made by the GLC, is to be treated as misconduct in a professional respect or any criminal offences as may be prescribed in rules made by the GLC.

**MEMBER, GENERAL LEGAL COUNCIL (GLC) (DECEMBER 2017– JUNE 2021)**

As a member of the General Legal Council, which is the body that is responsible for the legal profession, I am involved in making decisions regulating admission to legal practice, upholding the standards of professional conduct and making provision for legal education in The Gambia. I also worked on producing draft Guidelines for conferment of the rank of Senior Legal Practitioner of The Gambia.

**OVERSEER, GAMBIA LAW SCHOOL (OCTOBER 2017 – AUGUST 2018)**

As overseer of this institution whose function is to provide legal education and training to the public– more particularly persons seeking to become Legal Practitioners, my role included the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the affairs of the School, to ensure the maintenance of efficiency and discipline by all students and administrative staff of the School, conduct examinations approved by the General Legal Council, manage the budget of the School to ensure that its funds are properly expended and accounted for and also to discharge such other duties as the Council may, from time to time, assign. During my tenure at the School, I also spearheaded the digitalisation of its instruction and admission process and facilitated the unprecedented admission of students from Ghana through a fact finding and assessment mission of the school's facilities, lecturers and curriculum by the Registrar of the Ghana School of Law.

**LECTURER, GAMBIA LAW SCHOOL (OCTOBER 2016 - TO DATE)**

As Lecturer of the Advocacy Skills Course, my task involves exposing students to the basic concepts and skills in advocacy. Consequently, the students are exposed to the development of advocacy skills as a professional area of knowledge and practice on which they are subsequently examined in the Bar Final Examinations; the successful completion of which is a precursor to being called to the Gambia Bar.

**CHAIRPERSON, COMPLAINTS REVIEW BOARD (NOVEMBER 2016 - TO DATE)**

The Board is a quasi-judicial body created by statute to wit, the Gambia Public Procurement Act, 2014, with jurisdiction to review decisions made by procuring organizations at any stage of the procurement proceedings. A bidder who claims to have suffered, or who is likely to suffer loss or injury due to a breach of a duty imposed on the procuring organization by the procurement laws

is entitled to seek a review. As Chairperson of the Board, I am tasked with presiding over meetings of the Board, hearings, supervising the management and operations of the Board and rendering decisions after due consultation with the other esteemed members.

**HEAD OF LITIGATION, SOLIE LAW CHAMBERS (SEPTEMBER 2012 – SEPTEMBER 2016)**

As Head of Litigation at Solie Law Chambers, I reported to the Managing Partner. I was tasked with overseeing the Litigation Unit and the supervision of junior counsel in Chambers in litigation matters. I was also charged with the delivery of professional legal services to the Chambers' clients consisting of commercial banks and State-Owned Enterprises. My Responsibilities included litigation in commercial, civil and family matters. I was also responsible for retained client liaison, updating them on the status of their cases etc. I took up a few criminal matters but mainly on pro-bono basis.

**LEGAL PRACTITIONER, SOLIE LAW CHAMBERS (JANUARY 2010- SEPTEMBER 2012)**

As Counsel in chambers, I was charged with mainly drafting processes and writing briefs of argument under the direct supervision of the Managing Partner.

**JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF THE GAMBIA (JULY 2009-DECEMBER 2009)**

Elevated to the position of Judge of The High Court.

**HONOURABLE MASTER AND REGISTRAR OF THE HIGH COURT OF THE GAMBIA (MARCH 2008- JUNE 2009)**

My responsibilities included handling pre-trial motions and matters of administrative nature. As Master and Registrar, I would also preside over cases in the Subordinate Courts in the stead of Principal Magistrates that were on administrative leave. Responsibilities also included overseeing the Sheriff's Division of The High Court pending the appointment of a substantive holder to that position.

**SHERIFF OF THE GAMBIA (AUGUST 2007- MARCH 2009)**

As Sheriff, I was responsible for the execution of all judgments and orders of both inferior and superior courts of The Gambia. I was also responsible for the supervision of all the process servers in the said courts.

### **MAGISTRATE OF THE FIRST CLASS (AUGUST 2004- AUGUST 2007)**

In a span of three years I presided over Magistrates' Courts in three out of four of the territorial jurisdictions within the Greater Banjul area namely Kanifing, Banjul and Bundung. During this time, I presided over both civil and criminal matters. My jurisdiction in criminal matters extended to all criminal offences save treason. My jurisdiction in civil matters was limited to claims up to D1, 000,000.00 (One Million Gambian Dalasi).

### **CHAIRPERSON OF THE CHILDREN'S COURT (2005-2006)**

I was appointed the first Chairperson of The Kanifing Children's Court, which was set-up in the year 2005 and which at that time was centralized in the Kanifing Municipality. As Chair of a newly established Court devoid of rules of procedure, I improvised the rules used by the subordinate courts to meet the justice of all the criminal and civil matters that I presided over which exclusively related to children and their welfare. I also presided over adoption, fostering and paternity matters.

### **ITC SKILLS**

Highly literate

### **LANGUAGES**

English, Wolof (mother tongue)

### **INTERESTS**

Legal research and new technologies

### **REFEREES:**

Hon. Justice Dr. Aderemi Renner-Thomas (RTD)

Former Chief Justice of Sierra Leone and former Justice of The Supreme Court of The Gambia

Freetown, Sierra Leone

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