IN THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
ISSUED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO
INQUIRE INTO THE FINANCIAL DEALINGS, ASSETS ETC OF EX-PRESIDENT
YAHYA JAMMEH, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CLOSE ASSOCIATES

DATE: MONDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 12:42PM

SUBJECT MATTER: GENERAL – EURO AFRICAN GROUP AND OTHER COMPANIES

EXPECTED WITNESS: MUHAMED BAZZI

APPEARANCES:

CHAIRMAN TO THE COMMISSION: HONOURABLE SURAHATA B. S. JANNEH
COMMISSIONER: HONOURABLE BAI MASS SAINÉ
COMMISSIONER: HONOURABLE ABIOSSEH GEORGE

SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION: MR. ALHAJI MAMADI KURANG
COUNSEL TO THE COMMISSION: MRS. AMIE N. D. BENSOUDA

TRANScriber: HADDy JAGNE
(WITNESS REMINDED OF HIS OATH)

1. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Chairman, the last time when Mr. Bazzi was here, an application was made on his behalf and we subsequently received information, a copy of a letter which indicates that the application was going to be withdrawn. If we may have that clarified?

2. THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bazzi, are you still being represented by Lawyer Louba Farage?

3. WITNESS: Yes Mr. Commissioner.

4. THE CHAIRMAN: Where is she? I am surprise she’s not here.

5. WITNESS: I came alone today. My lawyer was only here to submit the application but today there is no need. We have withdrawn that application. We have sent another letter.

6. THE CHAIRMAN: Alright. I will tell you why I asked that question. We have the letter here and I am sure you have a copy here of the letter?

7. WITNESS: Yes.

8. THE CHAIRMAN: And I will read it. “We act for the above mentioned person Muhamed Bazzi, that is You. Whom we made an application on instructions for the delivery of part of his testimony in camera. We have received further instructions this morning that is 4th October 2017 and have been asked to immediately inform the Honourable Commission that our client wishes to withdraw his said application and I emphasize what is coming for reasons that he wishes to make orally. In this regard, with the permission of the Commission, we wish to accompany our client for his next session. When we will be able to meet the said application prior to the Commission proceeding with its own testimony”. Now you understand why I asked the question?

9. WITNESS: Yes.

10. THE CHAIRMAN: What do you want now? Are you confirming now that you are withdrawing your application to be heard in camera?
24. WITNESS: Yes, Mr. Commissioner. The reason why I - -.
25. THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry. Let’s put that down first. You have confirmed that you have withdrawn your application to be heard in camera?
26. WITNESS: That’s true Sir.
27. THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to give reasons for that?
28. WITNESS: Yes, we can continue with that.
29. THE CHAIRMAN: It’s up to you. Nobody is forcing you to do anything.
30. WITNESS: No, that is fine. The reason Mr. Commissioner just to explain; I consult with partner and his family friend. We were trying some of the issue we want to discuss and we don’t have nothing to hide. We were trying to show you some Exhibit and prove and we don’t want for the reason we were afraid. We don’t want to make it on camera. But now we believe that the Security with the New Government, we are okay to say whatever we want.
31. THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Counsel, you may proceed.
32. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Thank you Mr. Chairman.
33. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi, when you were here the last time; you were discussing payments that Euro Africa Group on your instructions made into the accounts of the Ex-President specifically his Dalasi Account with the Trust Bank No.11002037701 in his name Jammeh Yahya A.J.J. H.E. Professor and this was his Salary Account according to the evidence of the Trust Bank. And the United States Dollar Account for Dr. Alhaji Yahya Jammeh Foundation 10701930502.
34. Q: Do you have an explanation as to why Euro African Group was paying monies into the Dalasi Account first and the Dollar Account second?
35. A: Yes.
36. WITNESS: I will ask you Madam kindly. If I get some few minutes to explain about all these please. I ask the Commissioner to grant me some few minutes to be able to explain because this is something you need like 4, 5 minutes explanation. So I am asking your permission to give me
That is why you are here to explain if you have.

Now, Mr. I will just like also to ask you that you have submitted a bundle of documents to the Commission?

Yes, that’s right.

When you made the application to be heard in camera which you have now withdrawn. Do you want to have those bundles? Are you going to rely on anything in those bundles?

Yes, I have other copy for you.

You have another copy?

Yes.

Very well. You are here to explain, unless we are taking a break.

I think we can start and continue after the lunch break. We have 15 minutes.

Okay. As you know Commissioner, I was here since 2002 doing some mainly Project on Energy Sector and Petroleum Sector. Which is we came to the petroleum sector at the time they were having some problem and we managed to enter solve those problems. My duty was as a Consular General of The Gambia and Lebanon to bring in investors to the country. When we have done our investment, I was bringing lots of investors into the country; which is some of them multinational investors. I will call part of them like Africell, Comium; this is the part of people I bring into the country to do investment here. I brought in lots of people also. I brought Maersk Line to develop The Gambia Port; that is one of the topic we have to talk about and the reason why I had some problem with the MD. I brought the Dubai Port twice to the Country before and then right last week, they were here. So I was the first one to bring them here. The ex-government they were not able to help, if they had been following those advise at that time, today we would have much better far away where we are today. One of the investor company I brought is called Spectrum; Spectrum is a telecommunication company. They came here, I explain to them that the market has already 3 (Three) companies and the market is too
But he insisted to come. So I introduced him to the government; he meet with the President and at that time the President was mentioning to him - -.

Q: Sorry. Who is him? You are referring to a company called Spectrum.

A: Spectrum is the gentleman called Ali Sharara.

Q: What is the name of Spectrum? Is that the whole name?

A: Yes, that is the telecommunication company name.

Q: What is the full name of the company?

A: Spectrum International, I think. So at that time, Gamcel was not doing well. So the government suggest if they can do partnership with GAMTEL to be able to boost Gamcel again to become number 1 (One), Gamcel, GAMTEL. The President was having concern over that issue. So they agreed with the gentleman. They did a valuation on both sides about Gamcel, GAMTEL which is going to be $70, 000, 000 (Seventy Million Dollars) the valuation at that time for Gamcel, GAMTEL. The gentleman agreed, they signed an agreement with the government to be partners 50/ 50 with the government and he paid $35, 000, 000 (Thirty five Million Dollars) to The Central Bank of The Gambia part of the settlement of the 50% of GAMTEL, Gamcel. All the proof when you need it, it’s there. Mr. Ali Sharara was promised to bring the best management and to do a refurbishment of Gamecel, GAMTEL in 1 year time will become one of the best in West Africa. And he brought management from Germany; he brought the Dutch Telecom to come and manage The GAMTEL, Gamcel plus some other management. Mr. Ali Sharara after 7 months had a problem with the existing management. So it was a big fight for a reason up till today we don’t know. They kick him out of the country after 7 months and they put his people at the NIA with the Dutch Telecom people for nearly 1 to 1½ month. I was having problem because I was the one who brought the Company into the country. Like the others. They wanted to go for arbitration against the government. I begged him, I said ‘This will create for us a problem. Let’s do it in a better way’.

So they sent their lawyer into the country; renegotiate
with government to get back their money. At that time, I remembered the Minister of Finance was Balla Gaye. And they signed with them to return back their money, the investment they had made $35,000,000 (Thirty-five Million Dollars). Up till today, they only got back refund from that money $5,000,000 (Five Million Dollars). Up till today, the government owe them $30,000,000 (Thirty Million Dollars) and this money was paid officially to The Central Bank of The Gambia.

Q: Was there an agreement - -?

A: Yes.

Q: - - for the government to repay them any money?

A: Yes.

Q: How much did the government agree? Did you see the agreement?

A: The agreement signed by Mr. Sharara’s lawyer that was here with The Minister of Finance. They said ‘They should return back the money that was paid to the Central Bank’.

That was 35,000,000 (Thirty-five Million) and they only paid 5,000,000 (Five Million) out of that money and they never paid the rest of the money. Several times, they were coming and pushing and after 2 years, Mr. Sharara came back to the country based on a new agreement that to be able to do the management of The International Gateway under a company called TEL.

Q: Which year was that?

A: I think it was in 2010, if I am not mistaken. I can get you the exact details. They were here since 2011 or 2010. But I have the date with me. Mr. Sharara came here not because he wanted to do the management of The Gateway, he came here to be able to recover his money; the $30,000,000 (Thirty Million Dollars). They sat with the President; they agreed that during this period the guy was here to be able to get back his money and during that time and they signed the agreement with TEL to do the management of The Gateway. The Gateway; Mr. Sharara was surprised, the President asked Mr. Sharara to give monthly $500,000 (Five hundred thousand Dollars) from his profit to help. Mr. Sharara was against this and we
were having problem between me and him and the President. With the President putting pressure;
if you don’t do this, they will cancel the agreement of The Gateway. So I explained to
Mr. Sharara you have to do this, otherwise both of us will have problems. At least if you start
doing this, still you will be able to recover your money to see how you can get your money back
from the government. After big argument, Mr. Sharara financially was not able to pay that but I
said ‘You have to do it at least to be able to recover back your money’. And the President put
pressure on us. The former President threatened us that if this money is not paid monthly, this
contract will be canceled and they will be kicked out again. So under these circumstances,
Mr. Sharara was forced to do that for the period of almost 2 years paying every month
S500, 000 (Five hundred thousand Dollars). They gave it to me in my Lebanon Account of
Euro African Account and I was giving the Dalasi here equivalent at Trust Bank. After the
20 months was finished, Mr. Sharara complained he cannot pay anymore; the President
threatened -. - The only benefit I was getting was the Dollar from him after 1 or 2 months and I
was getting the Dalasi and paying Dalasi here because foreign exchange was scarce and the
price of the Dollar will start to go up from 28 to 32. So I was taking the Dollar from him; I have
all the evidence and I was giving the Dalasi here. After the 20 months, the President said ‘He
doesn’t want the Dalasi anymore and he wants it in foreign currency, in Dollars’. And this is
where you see Mr. Sharara was also having problem to have the Dollar. I have to take overdraft
from Trust Bank to be able to give him S1, 000, 000 (One Million Dollar) for 2 months and the
rest of 2.5 (Two point five) Million. This continued till I think end of 2013, early of 2014 and
Mr. Sharara at that time he said ‘He will not be able to pay anymore after the 2½
(Two and half) Million because he has to refurbish, to bring in new Switchboard for the
International Gateway in The Gambia’. He spent over 3½ (Three and half) Million and he
bought a new Switchboard to The International Gateway and after he fixed the new
Switchboard at that time, he stopped to pay the President at that time because he was spending
3½ (Three and half) Million on the Switchboard. The President called him and asked again, he
154. needs to give another 5, 000, 000 (Five Million) for The Gateway as a loan for 10 months to be
155. five- five hundred but he needs it in advance. Mr. Sharara explained that he cannot pay
156. anymore because he spent lot of money and he has invested a lot of money. He asked that we
157. should have a meeting with the President to talk about the 30, 000, 000 (Thirty Million) that has
158. taking a long time. Any time they open the subject of the 30, 000, 000 (Thirty Million), the
159. President will open another subject and he will delay and he said ‘Ok. We will see find a
160. solution’. No solution was found. So we had a meeting with the President to talk about the loan,
161. Mr. Sharara said ‘Now finally he cannot take it anymore. He doesn’t have any money to
162. give more than that’. So we went to the Office of the President to talk about this. We had 5
163. minutes meeting with the President, when we opened the subject of the money owed to Mr.
164. Sharara, President asked us to wait in the waiting room because he performing the afternoon
165. prayer. We waited in that room for nearly 2\text{1/2} hours. After that, they sent somebody telling us
166. that the President was busy, he will not be able to see us till the next day. The last time, he
167. refused to see Mr. Sharara and he gave us a termination letter for The Gateway because they
168. refused to pay the money and Mr. Sharara at that time has his people on the ground, the
169. experts. They knew about this letter at night that this letter had been issued to terminate the
170. contract. The same night, they board Air Morocco, all the experts. Mr. Sharara took them out
171. because he was afraid they will be arrested like the first people (Dutch Telecom) when they were
172. here at Spectrum. The next day, they came to collect these people to hand over the Gateway to
173. another different company appointed by the government. They didn’t find anybody from Mr.
174. Sharara’s employees; they all left the country that night. They held me responsibility; they wrote
175. a letter to me to attend the meeting at GAMTEL to hand over and I said ‘I am not an expert. I
176. have nothing to do with TEL. I was just here to guide them. They have money. But I am not
177. responsible for anything’. The President gave me 24 hours, if I don’t bring the password of the
178. Switches, I will be locked up with all my staff and all my businesses will be seized. I had to fly to
179. Lebanon to convince
Mr. Sharara to give me the password and he was refusing. I had to ask some older people like his father and other people to interfere. I said ‘I will lose all my investment. My guys will be in jail. You guys have left the country but I am under big pressure and threat. I need the password of this Switchboard; otherwise really I am in serious problem’. After 2 days of negotiation with Mr. Sharara in Lebanon, he managed to get all the password, passed them on to GAMTEL, Gamcel. At that time before these problems happened, I wrote a letter to the President, you have copy in this file explaining to him all the problem we are facing in the country from Forex problem, from the none payment of NAWEC. We are subsidizing NAWEC, this is supposed to be the government’s job, not our job. Explaining the difficulty we were passing a nice letter to him. I got the letter, we have a copy. This letter I never showed to anyone because it was a disgrace to us. You have a copy of that letter with you that day I decided to leave the country, I only got back after 1½ to 2 years to Gambia. So if I was having any relation with the Ex-President with all these problems I was facing, will not be seen today with what I have explain. This is the little part about TELECOM. I have another problem I will explain that when the country was in need and was in crisis of food shortage in the country in 2009. When the petrol price when up to $150 (One hundred and fifty Dollars) and there was shortage of food and the price of rice went up to more than 100% in the market. The government was looking for buffer stock; for security stock for the people during rainy season. At that time the Minister of Finance at that time was Balla Gaye, he wrote a letter to Trust Bank. I managed to secure them with 1 (one) vessel of rice from an American Company and it was a favour I did for the government. Trust Bank refused to open the LC because they said this was above the Bank facility which was about $8,000,000 (Eight Million Dollars).

Q: Mr. Bazzi, is this connected to this issue of the accounts? What you are now narrating, is it connected to this issue of the monies that were being paid into the account?

A: The money I paid into the account, I explain that the one from Mr. Sharara from TEL. This is another one related. I just want to explain just 2 minutes and I will be finish.
206. THE CHAIRMAN: We will rise. We will be back at **2:30 pm.**

**(PROCEEDING STOOD DOWN AT 1:03PM)**

**(PROCEEDING RECALLED AT 2:51PM)**

207. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Chairman, Honourable Commissioners. I recall the witness please; Mr. Muhamed Bazzi.

208. Q: Mr. Bazzi, you were explaining to the Commission the reasons you said you had for making payments into the *Ex-President's Account* and his *Foundation Account*. Do you have anything else to add to your explanation? We want to give you every opportunity to give what explanation you want to give before we ask you questions. But if you have some other topic not connected, please you can always come back to those issues later. So in relation to the payments into the accounts of Ex-President, could you limit your explanation to those for now? Unless you have something connected with that.

209. WITNESS: When we stopped Madam, I think I was explaining something and we stopped. I will like if possible to continue from where I stopped.

210. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: If it’s in connection with these monies that we ask you questions about.

211. Q: Is it connected?

212. A: Its money connecting but not to this one.

213. Q: Not to this one?

214. A: It’s the same topic because at the same time; the same **Minister**, the same **Former President**. I just want to explain a little bit about that and then I hand over all the documents related to all of those payments because I have them all with me.

215. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: You know we had asked you questions specifically relating to the *Trust Bank*. If you finish your explanation on those payments; do you have the documents?

216. You said you had another bundle which we can tender, have admitted today.

217. A: I have all the documents Madam. I have so many documents to hand over to you
Q: In connection with something else?
A: In relation to the payment that was made by TEL to our Account. In relation to the payment we made at Trust Bank. In relation to the letter being given to the former President and the reply in connection with some other matter.


WITNESS: I was explaining Madam Commissioner before I left, that our Company as Euro African Group as you know our investment; let’s say our strategic investment; we were looking for a long term strategic investment. This is what we do. This is what we think is lasting in everything we do. Like for example; GAM Petroleum, it’s a project that lasts for 50 years. Flour mill is a project that will last for 20 to 25 years. Power station it’s something that will last for 10 to 15 years. All our strategy not only in Gambia, anywhere in invest, we invest in long term strategy because we believe anywhere we go to stay, we work with any government there; Ex-government, Present government, Future government. We are a company that does not interfere in political issue. Our company, our target is business trading. This was our target in Gambia with Euro African Group and other company we have done long term strategy to benefit the people of The Gambia. Rather business people also I wouldn’t say they don’t want to benefit. We are facing some circumstances here in The Gambia; making some things difficult for us as Euro African with the issue of NAWEC, the issue of the rice I was explaining, the issue of investors we used to bring in the country. Those investors at some stage, I stopped to bring any investor because it was embarrassing. This is the question you asked me the other day, what problem do you have with the Ports Manager; I don’t have no problem. My problem was because those people are not interested to develop The Gambia, they were interested to be staying In their chair to benefit what they are benefitting. Because I brought people to the Ports to develop the Ports 10 years ago before the Dubai Port developed Senegal Ports. I brought them to The Gambia. Because of personal interest, the people explain to the President that those
256. companies are bankrupt. They are the biggest in the world today. So even as I said, GAMTEL,
257. Gamcel had the same problem. The management doesn’t want foreign company to come - -.
258. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi.
259. WITNESS: I am just explain to you a little bit about the strategy and about the difficulty we
260. were facing coming to the country. Today, so many investors are watching us and they know we
261. have done a good job.
262. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: At the moment for now, this is an Inquiry and we are inquiring
263. into facts. All you are giving us is your own opinion of people and how they behaved and your
264. own opinion of your contribution to the community. It will be for the Commission to determine
265. whether you contributed and whether ordinary Gambians benefitted from your contribution. But
266. as for now, as the Counsel assisting the Commission. I am only interested in these payments to
267. the Trust Bank. When we finish with it, we move on to other topics. If you have anything to say
268. in relation to those topics, you can say so.
269. WITNESS: Ok.
270. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: But for now, can you confine yourself to the explanation you
271. gave us. So we can ask you questions on it. Otherwise, everything will get confused.
272. WITNESS: I just want to finish the rice issue and then; because it is related to the - -.
273. Q: The rice issue?
274. A: Yes. It is related to Trust Bank and connected together. And then I - -.
275. Q: Is it connected to these 2 (Two) Accounts at the Trust Bank?
276. A: Yes.
277. WITNESS: If you want I can stop and give you the document and then after we continue. It is
278. up to you to decide.
279. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: I have told you what I want to do Mr. Bazzi. If it’s connected to
280. these 2 (two) Accounts, you can continue. If it is not connected, say so. So that we can move on.
281. Q: Is it connected?
A: Not directly.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Thank you. So let’s have the bundle of documents in relation to these 2 (two) Accounts. Then we can then move on. And you will be given every opportunity to give your evidence. You know this is fact finding. We’re just looking to see the facts. So let’s have the documents in connection to these 2 (two) Accounts.

WITNESS: I have made several copies for you. At least to save you some work.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Yes, I did ask you this morning, you said you had another copy that you have.

WITNESS: Yes, I did.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: As you are giving your evidence today, you want to have admitted. Let’s have the one you have admitted.

Q: Is it a duplicate of the one you sent in?

A: Yes, this is 4 (four) copies.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: You sent in documents. Let me show you.

Q: But these are the same copies?

A: Those are all related to the payment of the money that went to the account; our account and the same money paid to the other account.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Alright. Thank you Mr. Bazzi. These are all duplicates of the same thing. We already have the other copies. So we don’t need the duplicates. But what I would like you to do is tell us one by one what documents are in these folders so that it would be captured.

WITNESS: Ok.

Q: What do we have?

A: What we have here; the first set, we made a table for you.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Ok. Let me just try and help you along.

Q: You have the top pages your written explanation?
308. A: Exactly.
309. Q: And you have attached to it a table showing the payments?
310. A: This table showing all the payment that we received and we paid for all the time the
311. Company was existing.
312. Q: The payment was received where; specifically in which account?
313. A: Received in our account from TEL to Euro African Group Account in Fransabank.
314. We have all the slips.
315. Q: In Fransabank, in which country?
316. A: Lebanon. We have all the slip of every payment and we have the Bank Statement of
317. that and at the same time, you have the Trust Bank Account that is showing where the payment
318. went. And you have the Bank Statement of both bank; Trust Bank and - -.
319. Q: And then you have the letters you are referring to?
320. A: You have the letter that of March 15th 2010; one of the first letter writing about the
321. financial problem with NAWEC, the President. You have other letter also, the one that I wrote
322. and there is another one for the - -.
323. Q: What is the date of that letter?
324. A: The first one written to NAWEC that was in March 15th 2010 and you have another one
325. December 14th 2011 and you have 3rd of May 2012 and 17th September 2012. And we have the
326. last one 2013, the one addressed to the President explaining all the problems we are facing and
327. the problem in the country and the currency and the problem with NAWEC and the reply from
328. him.
329. Q: Dated 7th May 2013?
330. A: Exactly. Our letter 3rd of May and the letter we received 7th of May.
331. MRS.A. BESOUDA: Can you collect the document? Mr. Chairman, may I apply to
332. have the folder produced by this witness as explanation for payments made into the Account of
333. the Ex-President.
Then return these folders to him.

Documents tendered by Muhamed Bazzi to the Commission in connection with transfers from the Dalasi and Dollar Accounts in Trust Bank belonging to EAGLE and correspondence between the Office of the President and Muhamed Bazzi in a bundle. Admitted, marked MS59.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Bazzi, I have some questions regarding the documents that you have produced. I would like you to clarify some things on this document and some things you had previously said. You told this Commission that EAGLE had paid Jammeh Foundation $1,000,000 (One Million Dollars) to build a mosque.

Q: Where was that $1,000,000 (One Million Dollars) paid?

A: That $1,000,000 (One Million Dollars) was paid to buy materials like the marble, windows, doors. All these things, we supplied. So we spent on that mosque is a little bit over the 1,000,000 (One Million). But we supplied the materials from marble to all windows, everything and the workmanship, the engineering - -.

Q: During which period?

A: It took more than 3 to 4 years. From 2012 to 2015.

Q: But when I asked you about the payments, the $1,000,000 (One Million Dollars) that was paid into the Jammeh Foundation for Peace Account; the first Million Dollars, you said ‘It was to support him in the mosque’. You want to change that?

A: No, I am sorry I misunderstood what you were saying. I was telling you about a lot of other Projects we were participating. I was calling them.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: It’s okay. Don’t tell me what you are telling me. Let’s just get on Mr. Bazzi. You’ve said you gave him materials. Looking at these Statements and even your own summary; I note that from the 30th June 2011 to the 29th September 2011, you paid $2,000,000 (Two Million Dollars) into the Dalasi Account the equivalent of $2,000,000 (Two Million Dollars) into the Dalasi Account of the Ex-President without having received any
money at all from TEL according to your own summary.

Q: Why would you pay $2,000,000 (Two Million Dollars) according to the story you told this Commission into the President’s Account, the Ex-President’s Account without receiving any money from TEL?

WITNESS: Can you tell me the date again please?

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: You can look at this table that you summarized for the Commission from 30th June 2011, you paid 14,750,000 (Fourteen Million Seven Hundred and Fifty thousand) which you say was equivalent to 500,000 (Five hundred thousand). You paid the same to for July, August and in September you paid 15,000,000 (Fifteen Million) all equivalent to 500,000 (Five hundred thousand); making it 2,000,000 (Two Million). But the first payment you received from TEL was in October, 3rd October 1,100,000 (One Million One hundred thousand).

WITNESS: That is true. Because some time as I explained to you, Mr. Sharara was having some financial difficulty and he doesn’t even want to participate after long argument about this which was coming from him. So we were to solve this problem. We were paying in advance and he gave us letters but we reconciled every 1 or 2 months with him - -.

Q: You were so generous you paid 2,000,000 (Two Million) on his behalf and even when he was paying back, he paid you 1.1 (One point one) Million only?

A: He was paying what he was able to pay. But I know he will pay. But if you check downwards, he was paying currently. Before we were giving him and what I said earlier, the reason we are paying the Dalasi because the Dollar was of shortage. So that was the only help he was getting. We gave the Dalasi, we received Dollar equivalent. So that is the only thing help he was getting. The first 2,3 months, he was having problem.

Q: Why should TEL have problems when they had the Gateway and they were making money, they were paying into the Gateway Account in Gambia. Why would they have problem?

A: Well this is personally from Mr. Ali himself that is why he was having problem. Because
386. this money was coming from Mr. Ali directly not from - -.
387. Q: How do you know that?
388. A: Because that was the difficulty he was facing, the financial difficulty in Lebanon. I know
389. when I use to meet him, I used to put pressure on him always. But he always delays to pay but at
390. the end, I know he will pay.
391. Q: Were you in anyway a partner to Ali Sharara in this Gateway?
392. A: I have never been in partner with Mr. Sharara. Not in TEL, not in Spectrum. None of
393. those. All the investors I bring to this country, I bring in good will and everybody knows me for
394. that. I have my dignity and I am proud. I don’t do partner with anybody, I just do a favour for
395. them and for the country. The only reason I was helping him to fight for him because I know the
396. guy lost lot of money as I was the one who brought him to this country. So my responsibility was
397. to help him to recovery and this is the reason why I was paying in advance sometimes for him, I
398. don’t want him to have a problem. I wanted him to recover his money.
399. Q: You referred to ‘A Nuha’; do you mean Nuha Touray?
400. A: He was working at the President’s Office, yes.
401. Q: Mr. Bazzi, do you have anything; whether by email correspondence or any other
402. document dated during this period which is 2011 to 2013 supporting the story you have told this
403. Commission that these monies were being paid on behalf of Mr. Ali Sharara?
404. WITNESS: If you need support about the story, which is 100% true; themselves TEL they
405. are ready to send their lawyer here to tell you that with their document that this is true.
406. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Well, I would like to see such a lawyer.
407. Q: Do you realise that what you are telling this Commission? What was this money intended
408. for? Was it an incentive to the President for giving him the opportunity to manage the Gateway?
409. A: This is between Mr. Sharara and the President.
410. Q: No, Mr. Bazzi. It’s between you, Mr. Ali Sharara and the President according to the
411. story you told this Commission?
A: Yes, I was the intermediary inside to avoid - - . Because the relation between Mr. Sharara and the President was not in a good relation because they were having problems--.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi, my question is a straight forward one.

Q: What was the purpose of this money; was it just an incentive to the President?

A: The President asked Mr. Sharara to give him 500,000 (Five hundred thousand) every month.

Q: For what?

A: From his own profit or loan or whatever from the Gateway.

Q: So it was an incentive or it was his share?

A: Not share, no. Mr. Sharara didn’t want to pay this, he was having a big problem to pay this. But I convinced him - - .

Q: So what did you consider this money to be; you as an intermediary? You called yourself an intermediary.

A: I consider Madam this money because Mr. Sharara had a big problem and he had financial problem because of the $30,000,000 (Thirty Million Dollars) he has at the Central Bank. And I said to him ‘To be patient’, the President was threatening us. Let’s pay this money just to make sure that you are able to get your money.

Q: So what is this money? What did you consider you were paying for?

A: Well this was what Mr. Sharara was giving the President from his own money, his own share, his own profit. I don’t know. But what was being given to him - - .

Q: But you advise him to do it? He said you advised him to do it.

A: I advised him because he was under threat. If he doesn’t do so, the contract will not work.

Q: So it was a bribe?

A: It was not a bribe.

Q: It was an incentive?

A: That was not an incentive that they call this money.
Q: Was extortion? What was it?
A: The money like I said; he was given this money to recover his money. They said

“Sometimes you give money, to recover your debt”. So this money was being given to recover his debt.

Q: Mr. Bazzi, how much exactly did Mr. Sharara agree with the President that he was going to pay?
A: What they paid the all total payment is about $10,000,000 (Ten Million Dollars).

Q: How much did they agree before you started paying? What was the agreement?
A: The agreement was 500,000 (Five hundred thousand) a month.

Q: Until when? For so long as the Gateway contract continued?
A: That was supposed to be for 2 years or 20 months, something like that. But after some time, Mr. Sharara refused to pay anymore because he was having problem.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Yes, you have told us that.

WITNESS: I explain to you that he was having problem because he was not being able to recover his money and the President was just delaying him on that issue. Just one thing to explain why Mr. Sharara also stopped to pay; because he invested on Switchboard for the International Gateway.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: You have said so Three point something Million, you have said so. Now looking at both the Statement you have provided, there is no consistency between the payments into your account and the payment into the President’s Account and the figures also are not the same entirely; the same.

WITNESS: I explain to you that Mr. Sharara was not paying. We reconcile that every 2 months; what we have paid, he will pay and sometimes he was delaying on payment because he was having some financial issue. But he was paying little bit late all the time. Explaining and apologizing for that. But at the end, he paid everything.

Q: But the total amounts were still not the same; the total amount paid into your account and
the total amount paid in the Dalasi account don’t tally, they are not the same?

A: It’s the same. I want to explain something; for 2 months you didn’t the 500,000 (Five hundred thousand) going to the Dalasi Account. But if you notice in the Statement, there were withdrawals of the same amount in cash. So sometimes they were demanding not to be on the account, they demand to take it in cash.

Q: How do we know Mr. Bazzi that the money paid into your Account in Lebanon was not intended for Euro African Group; was not the share of Euro African Group in this transaction?

A: Euro African Group doesn’t have any share; not in TEL, not anywhere.

Q: How do we know it is not meant for you (Euro African Group)?

A: I showed you the Statement that we received the money in our Account in Beirut, the same money was paid here to the President’s Account and you asked for the proof and I explain; if you need the Lawyer of TEL, he is ready to come to come you the proof and say that is exactly what I have done.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Then certainly if TEL wishes to come, I think they are important witness. If they wish to come, they should come.

WITNESS: They will come for 2 (two) issues.

MRS.A. BENOSUDA: If they are important as witness.

WITNESS: They are asking for help when they come and one of the reason is to explain about this, the other reason they are asking is for the Commission to help them recover their money from the Central bank, $30,000,000 (Thirty Million Dollars).

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Unfortunately, it is not the Commission’s mandate to help anybody to recover money. Mr. Bazzi, you are here to answer questions please. TEL will speak for itself, I am sure in due course. Unless you are also representing TEL.

WITNESS: No, the Lawyer will come. The one representing TEL and they will come and meet with the Minister of Justice and Finance to talk about the other matters. But I was thinking that sometimes people complain to the Commission, they have the right to do that if they have
490. some claim.

491. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Unless you are representing TEL; TEL should speak for itself.

492. Q: Are you representing TEL?

493. A: I am not representing TEL here.

494. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Alright. Thank you. We had asked you when you were here the last time to provide all payments received by the Shareholders and Directors of Euro African Group. This has not been provided. Could you please note? We need it by - -

497. WITNESS: I will. But I want to explain to you; we didn’t provide any Dividend, the reason is the financial problem.

499. MRS.A. BENSOUDA: You had said that before.

500. WITNESS: And one thing I learnt when you just ask me. Mr. Amadou Samba because of our financial problem in 2010, he resigned from Euro African as Director because he saw a problem with - - - NAWEC and the - - - (SIC) And he thinks that the Company was not doing well and he withdrew his guaranty from the banks like Eco Bank, GT Bank, Standard Chartered. He was a partner with us and we did a joint guaranty for the importation of fuel.

505. Because he was not happy about the Company going on with NAWEC and he said ‘This will be running down’. He withdrew as a Director from the Company since late 2010 and withdrew his guaranty from all the 3 (three) Banks he used to be part - -.

508. Q: But he did not sell his shares?

509. A: He was asking us to buy him out.

510. Q: Did he sell his shares?

511. WITNESS: I am explaining to you Madam.

512. MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi, you will answer the question first and then you can explain.

514. A: No, Mr. Samba didn’t sell. He asked us to buy him out of the Company. But the reason the Company was losing money, I said ‘The Company doesn’t have value and we are losing
money to buy you out’.

Q: But he remains a shareholder of 45% of Euro African Group?
A: Yes.

Q: Are you saying Mr. Samba did not receive any monies from Euro African Group?
A: Since 2009 no. In 2016, yes. We will start to give Dividend now when the account is out.

But before those years, no. When we have a problem with him, we don’t.

Q: What about between 2004 and 2009? The Company was incorporated in 2004 and before the Company was incorporated, you were already enjoying Exclusivity to bring in fuel into the country. Under which company did you start bringing fuel into the country?
A: Was Euro African Madam. I will like - -.

Q: Euro African Group?
A: Yes.

Q: What year did you start bringing in fuel exclusively for The Gambia?
A: The fuel, I think 2005 or 2006. But I will check that for you.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: It cannot be 2006 because you have provided a letter from the Minister of Finance indicating that you had been enjoying that facility for 4 years and that letter was dated in 2006.

WITNESS: I want Madam if possible to bring the professional people at that time working about this fuel issue. Because we solve a problem - -.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi, when I am talking, you stop talking and you listen to me. You are here to help us.

WITNESS: Exactly.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: We are not here to help you. Listen to my question.

WITNESS: No, (no). But you should allow me also to explain. People need to know exactly the true story. You ask me short questions to answer. I need to explain to you.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Answer the question first and then if you have an explanation,
nobody will stop you. But you have to answer my questions, not go off on a tangent.

Q: I want to know when you actually started enjoying an exclusivity over fuel. Because you have provided a letter from the Minister of Finance; signed by Mr. M.G. Balla Gaye, dated in 2006. Which indicates that you had for the past 4 years been bringing in fuel for the country?

A: 4 years from 2006, I was not in the country at that time.

Q: You came to The Gambia in 2000?

A: We started our first project in 2002. That project ended end of 2003. That’s the only first Generator Energy Project we did for NAWEC. We were not into fuel at that time.

Q: You started your first project in 2002?


WITNESS: I will get you all the documents required about when we started the fuel importation. That should not be a problem. We have all the documents for that.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Please do. Because it is important that the story is clear and the letter I am talking about is the letter dated 5th September 2006. You produced it to this Commission and it’s addressed to you; Mr. Muhamed Bazzi, Managing Director Euro African Group Limited and it’s entitled Extension of Contract for 5 years (January 2007 to December 2011) for Euro African Group Limited. To exclusively import Petroleum products into The Gambia. And it says “The Gambia government is satisfied with the implementation of the current Contract which provides Euro African Group Limited the exclusivity to import light fuel, petrol, gasoil, jet and kerosene into The Gambia. The contract has been satisfactorily executed for the last 4 years with regular and timely petroleum supplies and no shortages and the oil marketing companies have been provided favourable credit terms for the supplies given to them”. So this is dated 5th September 2006 and it’s talking about ‘Satisfactory execution of a contract for the previous 4 years’.

Q: So I will ask you; when did you start you said with Euro African?

WITNESS: With Euro African?
Q: 2000 and?


Q: Before 2004; were you supplying fuel before 2004?

A: There was this misunderstanding. The light fuel was later but what we were supplying earlier was heavy fuel for NAWEC, it was not the light fuel. I can get you both.

Q: So you were supplying fuel even if it was for NAWEC?

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Now this letter talks about Exclusivity. We will look into it.

Q: But under which company were you supplying fuel?

A: I will check for you if it was Euro African or other. No problem on both.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Chairman, those are the questions I have for Mr. Bazzi in relation to these monies. If the Commission may have other questions.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Definitely. Mr. Bazzi, what is your understanding of a Monopoly?

WITNESS: I explained the last time Mr. Commissioner. Monopoly is when you are the only one importing and pricing, you are controlling the importation and the selling of the price. But in our case, we are just a government agent. Government s the one who determines the price according to the World Market and I have a sample of the price structure, every month, the Ministry of Finance giving a price structure. They are the one who determine the price, the selling price on the pump and the retail and they have the importer margin. What we have in only the importer margin - -. And this importer margin sometimes we give discount from that. So our margin is determined by the Ministry of Finance every month. So we are not monopoly. This is the misunderstanding many people have. And I want to explain about the petroleum importation.

I think the letter - -.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: It’s ok. We will come there. Let’s take it one by one.

The Ministry of Finance that granted you the exclusivity referred to you as a monopoly in some of their correspondence. Are you aware that they called you a monopoly? In their eyes, you were
a monopoly.

WITNESS: Well if they had done a mistake, that’s not our problem. I just want to explain one thing about the Ministry of Finance and the importation of fuel into this country.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Let’s talk about the monopoly. It’s probably their problem but it could also be your understanding.

WITNESS: We consider we never had a monopoly.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: In your understanding of monopoly, you were not a Monopoly?

WITNESS: Not a monopoly.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: A monopoly has 4 characteristics. The first one is;

1. **There were barriers to entry into the market.**

Do you agree there were barriers to the entry? You were the only ones who could?

2. **You determine how much you brought.**

3. **You had competitive advantage with regard to the product information.**

The last one;

4. **Setting the price.**

Was the missing characteristic and that one was taken care of by your compensation from the Ministry. You couldn’t set the price but you ensured you got paid for that loss of opportunity to set the price. So I ask you again, are you aware that you were a monopoly?

WITNESS: Not at all. We never had the monopoly because - -. Can I explain just 2 minutes about something from the Ministry of Finance?

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Fine.

WITNESS: Thank you Commissioner. The Gambia was having a big problem and I am sure you were aware very well because you are in that sector as a Banker at that time. Every month they used to have a shortage; a queue of cars at the station. They used to have a problem because every time they have a trump oil deal or something, they used to lose few Millions of Dollars
every month. No Forex for the petroleum, shortage and - - -. We came in and solved all these
problems. We never asked government, we accepted to take the currency loss. We accepted to
take the Dalasi. We gave credit to all the companies. So that was a dreaming scenario for The
Gambian Government. We came and solved that problem and we didn’t determine the price.
They were the ones that determined the price. Please this is something very important, you should
bring in Professional people who were at the Ministry of Finance at that time. Somebody like
Bammy Jagne or Balla Gaye to explain to you what the difficulty used to be to import fuel to
this Country and when we came, how we solved that problem.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Yes. What you’ve cited were the benefits of you being a
Monopoly. You came in; they blocked everyone else and gave you full exclusivity.

WITNESS: There was no one. They were all marketing companies. They were looking for
the government to give them supply every month; that was the problem. I didn’t wanted to take
the risk and do the importation because the problem was not Forex. There were so many
problems involved. Plus the storage facility as you know, the stock was only for 15 or 20 days.
The Shell Depot was built 60 years ago. Before we came, there was opportunity for all the Oil
Marketers to go and built Depot.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: That is outcome. You are talking about outcome. What
we are saying is ‘The Status of Play’. At the time you were granted Exclusivity, other people
were denied the opportunity to enter the market. That’s a fact. You didn’t set price but you asked
for a Premium in return. So it helps to set the stage of your coming into the market as a
Monopoly or as Sole Importer. In any market, you have Monopoly, a Few Players, Oligopoly
or Competition, Absent competition, Absent a Few Players. There was a Monopoly.

WITNESS: This is from your point of view, I respect that. You can take it that way but we
take it differently. And just one additional issue to answer the question. SHELL was here,
TOTAL was here; all those companies were here dnd the government was asking all of them to
build a Depot because they were having big problem with the existing Depot. Before we
came in, nobody had taken that opportunity, nobody was willing to finance. We were the only ones who came and took the opportunity. We took the risk because even for Finance to take that project, the country did not even accept, it was at risk financing as you know. But we took that risk. We brought financing from foreign banks and TOTAL International to build that Depot. That also shows that our good will. The risk that other companies were here for 50 years, they never took that initiative and the government needed that Depot very badly. We were the only ones who were able to do it.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: So that was your ability and your financial muscle as a result of the preferential status you enjoyed?

WITNESS: Exactly the - -.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Now let’s move on how you were able to keep that Sole importer status. And I am going to ask you a very direct question.

WITNESS: Sorry, can you repeat what you said?

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: The benefits you’ve cited were a result of your financial Muscle; your ability to build a Depot. The fact that when you acted as a Monopoly or as an Exclusive importer, you were able to guaranty supply at the right time. So those were the benefits, the outcome of the preferential status you enjoyed. Now, you enjoyed it for a few years. My question is a very direct question. Did you pay anything by way of service, by way of incentive to retain the Sole importer status?

WITNESS: Not at all. Because we were doing something good for the country and for the people which nobody was able to do it. So why should you pay, you should get thanks for the service we have done.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: The answer is ‘No’, you didn’t pay?

WITNESS: Not at all, no.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Mr. Bazzi, the amount that was going into the Ex-President’s Account on a monthly basis; the last time you came here, you said you were not
aware. Eventually, we found out that you authorised those monthly payments. So Mr. Bazzi,
what exactly were those payments for?

WITNESS: When you asked me the last time, if you are aware about these payments. Believe me I swear, I have an oath here. I was not aware because in our Book there was exchange. Even our Director, My Director; Fadi and Others were not aware about this because the Book was exchanged. It was money we paid into our account and here we paid. I even signed that paper personally that is not from the letter head of the Company. Because even our Directors, they don’t know. I consider it as an exchange deal; we get Dollar, we pay Dalasi.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: It’s possible that you were not aware. But the facts are, you authorised the payments?

WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Yes or No?

WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: You authorised? So you might have authorised and forgotten. But when you authorise something not to be aware, it’s a bit strange.

WITNESS: It’s what?

COMMISSIONER SAINE: After authorizing the payments and then submitting that you were not aware. You could have authorized and forgotten but not being aware of something you authorised? Let’s decide the point. Right now what I want to know is the exact purpose for that? We did asked you; were you servicing anything, any facility that you were made to pay on behalf of someone? You said ‘No’. These funds, they were meant for something and it is still unclear after the long testimony, what exactly the funds were for. Can you help us understand in one simple statement what you were paying for, for 18 months?

WITNESS: These payments were made from a Company called TEL, from the Chairman of the Company to this Account. It was after based on lot of argument and problem and threats.

And I explained the problem of the guy and the reason this guy came and the reason he paid this
money every month and the reason when the guy stopped payment, he was being kicked out again.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Ok. You were paying on behalf of TEL? And you were not a partner to TEL?

WITNESS: Not at all.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Not in anyway?

WITNESS: Not in anyway.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: You were paying out of goodwill?

WITNESS: I was paying out of goodwill to receive them also in my Account. I was not paying them for free.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: So they were reimbursing you?

WITNESS: Was an exchange, yes.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: While you were paying here, they were reimbursing you?

WITNESS: Yes. Sometimes I pay 1 or 2 months. But we also do reconcile and we take all what we pay.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: And according to the Terms of Engagement with TEL.

When TEL was setup, the Ex-President asked for $500, 000 (Five hundred thousand Dollars), yes?

WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: In exchange for what service?

WITNESS: He asked this from Ali Sharara’s share or profit and Mr. Ali refused. And as I said, it was a long argument, long problem, long issue. But the guy doesn’t even want to do it.

The reason why he did was he had other issues to be able solve them. That is why he entered into this to pay this amount to be able to solve the other problem he has.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Why did he refuse and you agreed to pay?
Because I told him if you refuse and they kick him out again, he will not be able to get his first money. That was the intention. I said ‘we also have been threatened from the man’ because you know the man was like, he cannot be able to defend what he said for me and him. You bring this guy ‘I need this and this’. So the reason, if we don’t do this; he will be able to claim his money.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Ok. The amount is a large amount for you to have agreed, it means you probably believe it was a rightful compensation for something. Is this compensation in anyway linked to your retention of the Sole importers status. Yes or No?

WITNESS: No, not at all.

COMMISSIONER SAINÉ: Thank you Mr. Bazzi.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bazzi, I just want to make one thing clear. Earlier on, you said the Commission should call this witness or that witness. You see this Commission calls only witnesses they consider helpful. But if you think that you ought to call witnesses, it’s open to you. Nobody is stopping you from calling witnesses or binging in any documents in your defense. I just want you to take note of that. We are not stopping you at all.

WITNESS: Thank you Commissioner. I appreciate. Because some of these issues, you need the people who were there at that time to explain to the Commission exactly what was happening. So then you will understand. Because some of the issue now is rumors; people talking, people just hearing something. (SIC) But if the right people explain it here to you what happened at that time, then you will understand what I was saying is correct. That is the reason we’re asking people to be here.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have told you the position here.

WITNESS: I understand and I appreciate.

THE CHAIRMAN: So don’t have the impression that you are being shut out by anybody. It’s up to you.

WITNESS: Thank you Commissioner.
MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Sorry Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask Mr. Bazzi one question. You have alluded to difficulties the country had and how you were trying to help the Country. You had made several statements about the difficulties and how you were trying to help the country.

Q: You were taking fuel from TOTAL; is that not so? They were supplying you fuel and you were in turn supplying - -.

A: TOTAL International.

Q: TOTAL International, isn’t it? And they also had a subsidiary here; TOTAL Gambia?

A: But that has nothing to do with it. It’s completely different.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Yes please, just answer my question. Then you can add.

Q: They had a subsidiary here; TOTAL. Didn’t they?

A: That’s true.

Q: It was owned by them?

A: It’s two completely different.

Q: It was owned by them? Just like GLOBAL now has a subsidiary in Gambia. TOTAL Gambia was a subsidiary of TOTAL International, wasn’t it? If you don’t know, say you don’t know.

A: I know that one which is when we used to deal with TOTAL Geneva, we told them about TOTAL here. They said normally the station or what they call the downstream that belongs to Paris Management, the fuel selling is Geneva. It’s completely two different parts.

Q: TOTAL Gambia was part of the TOTAL Group. Wasn’t it?

A: That’s true.

Q: In all these different contracts that you were given by the Ministry of Finance. Was it tendered? Was there any international tender to companies?

WITNESS: Before we came in?

Q: Was it tendered?
A: Yes, at one time it was tendered and we win that tender.

Q: Which time was it tendered? Which time is that?

A: I think it was around 2005.

Q: 2005?

A: Yes.

Q: It was tendered for the supply of fuel to Gambia?

A: And we were the winner of that tender.

Q: It was tendered that time?

A: Yes. I will check exactly when. It was tendered. That is the only tender when we started.

Q: That was the only tender?

A: Yes.

Q: After that, there was no tender subsequently until the Exclusivity ended in 2014?

A: After that, because they were so happy with the arrangement we have made and it was directly given to us. Every year, they use to - -.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: No, it is not for you to say whether they were happy or they were not happy. We will find out from everyone. Just answer our question so this process doesn’t get prolonged. You understand.

Q: There was no tender from 2005 until 2014?

A: That’s right.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Alright. Thank you. All I can is, I don’t know who was happy.

But the fuel situation in Gambia has never being solved during this period. For ordinary people, we don’t feel any difference. Mr. Chairman, that’s all I have for the witness.

WITNESS: Can I answer you for the last comment you made?

MS. A. BENSOUDA: - - - to be answered. I am just telling you - -.

WITNESS: Because the statement you are giving, is a wrong statement.

MS. A. BENSOUDA: Mr. Bazzi, as a citizen of The Gambia, I am just making the
statement on my own behalf; that for us, nothing has changed.

WITNESS: No, a lot has been changed. When people used to suffer, parking at the station for a day or 2 days to fill their cars. Since we came in, there is not even a 1 day shortage. That is a lot of difference that you never experience any shortage anymore in the country. That has made a lot of difference.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Thank you Mr. Bazzi. You will come back on the other-- because we have a lot of information from you. We are still waiting for information from you. We are analyzing all the documents. And we will call other witnesses. So please be on standby, we will call you again.

WITNESS: I have other documents for you the last time you ask me.

Q: Are they related to these transactions or what or they are related to something else?

A: Related to the ferry at the Port, related to the Navy Land.

MRS.A. BENSOUDA: Yes, I would like you to come back on Wednesday morning on those other issues.

WITNESS: Ok.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Including the ferry and including BarryJally.

WITNESS: And sorry Madam. Just for Euro African, I didn’t finish it.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: No, we cannot finish Euro African today. There is a lot for Euro African. You will be invited back.

WITNESS: I still have a lot to say and to give some documents also.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Sorry. I didn’t hear that.

WITNESS: I have a lot of documents and lots of issues to discuss on Euro African also.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Well you mean to help the Commission with?

WITNESS: Yes.

MRS. A. BENSOUDA: Because we are not calling you for a discussion. But if you have any documents that will help this Commission in its investigations of the Exclusivity in particular
828. that Euro African Group enjoyed on the directives of the President from early 2000 to 2014;
829. Which is a long time. We will be happy to have them.
830. WITNESS: I will Madam. I just need you to as the Commissioner said, some people from 
831. Finance who were working during that difficult period to come and be a witness. What we have 
832. achieved and what this Petroleum Exclusivity have done to the country. I would like all 
833. these for the people and public to hear it and to see it.
834. THE CHAIRMAN: That’s what I said; I said you can call your witness.
835. WITNESS: Ok. I will. Am I allowed to - -.
836. THE CHAIRMAN: That witness is going to be your witness to be examined by your 
837. Lawyer or yourself and to be cross examined by Counsel.
838. WITNESS: That is fine.
839. THE CHAIRMAN: Very well. So long as you understand it that way. Now, you will 
840. wait for Commissioner Saine for further questions.
841. COMMISSIONER SAINE: You mentioned there was a Special Allowance?
842. WITNESS: For who?
843. COMMISSIONER SAINE: You remembered the words ‘Special Allowance’?
844. WITNESS: No, not at all.
845. COMMISSIONER SAINE: You mean you didn’t mention ‘Special Allowance’;
846. 500, 000 (Five hundred thousand) per month?
847. WITNESS: The one from TEL to His Excellency?
848. COMMISSIONER SAINE: You called it ‘Special Allowance’.
849. WITNESS: I have called it so many names but it was - -.
850. COMMISSIONER SAINE: I want to know exactly what you called it? I may have missed 
851. that part.
852. WITNESS: I cannot call it anything. He was asking at the time Mr. Ali Sharara, he needs to 
853. take 500, 000 (Five hundred thousand) from his own money, from his profits.
COMMISSIONER SAINE: So you are withdrawing that you didn’t say ‘Special Allowance’?

WITNESS: You and I were arguing what we should call it, the word we should use. And we have said so many words. Not allowance, taking loan; whatever you want to call it, you can call it. And I am sure to solve it.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: No (no), I don’t have to call it any name. I want you to tell me what you called it because that is what I heard. Either you said it or you didn’t say it.

WITNESS: I didn’t say it.

COMMISSIONER SAINE: Thank you.

MRS.A.BENSOUDA: Wednesday at 10 am.

THE CHAIRMAN: You said you didn’t call it ‘Allowance’, fair enough. But what would you called it?

WITNESS: This is the argument again Commissioner.

THE CHAIRMAN: I said what would you call it?

WITNESS: This was determined from Mr. Sharara to be given from him as part of the profit for free of charge or anything that you would want to called it. The Lawyer of Mr. Sharara will answer you on that. If you allow me to call the lawyer anytime week next or after that to come and give his evidence.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did we ask you to call?

WITNESS: The Lawyer of TEL he is ready to testify in front of the Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN: Please don’t keep telling me that. I have already made it clear that you can call any witness. But that’s up to you.

WITNESS: It’s done Sir. Consider it done Sir. Thank you very much for your approval.

THE CHAIRMAN: You may leave.

WITNESS: Thank you Sir.
(PROCEEDING ENDS AT 3:54PM)