

THE MARINA NEWSLETTER



WISHING OUR
ENTIRE MARINA
COMMUNITY

CELEBRATE



EDUCATE



GROW

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

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<https://www.youtube.com/@MarinaInternationalSchool>

Our Mission: Provide a holistic, student-centred education that enables students to reach their full potential and contribute to the progress of The Gambia and the world.

Our Vision: An internationally acclaimed and diverse community of students and staff committed to academic excellence and character development in a safe and caring environment.

Our Motto: Scholarship, Trustworthiness and Service

Our Values : Respect, Achievement, Integrity, Service, Empathy

R.A.I.S.E.

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Dear Parents, Guardians, Students, and Friends of the Marina Family,

I am delighted to welcome you to this latest edition of our newsletter, which captures what has been a particularly rich and celebratory period in the life of our school. The past weeks have provided many opportunities to reflect on who we are and celebrate in style.

One of the most significant highlights was our High School Speech Day, an occasion marked by pride, reflection and aspiration. It was a joy to celebrate the achievements of our students, not only in their academic success but also in their growth as young people of character. Our theme, "Strive for Excellence, Achieve with Integrity," resonated deeply throughout the event. Excellence without integrity is hollow; integrity without striving limits potential. At Marina, we insist on both. I wish to commend both those who won prizes and those who performed, enlivening the event with presentations both thought provoking and polished. We were honoured by the presence of our Guest of Honour, Her Excellency Immaculada Roca i Cortés, Ambassador of the European Union to The Gambia, whose attendance affirmed the importance of education as a bridge between nations and cultures. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to our Guest Speaker, Professor Herbert Robinson, Vice Chancellor of the University of The Gambia, for his thoughtful and inspiring address. His reflections on the wider world of education, the responsibilities of young scholars, and the opportunities available to those who combine ambition with ethical leadership offered our students both



encouragement and challenge in equal measure. We are deeply thankful to both distinguished guests for enriching the occasion.

Beyond Speech Day, our students have continued to represent Marina with pride. We were delighted to have students from both Junior and High School actively involved in celebrations for the Lunar New Year, both here on campus and as representatives of the school at the Chinese Embassy. These experiences not only broaden cultural understanding but also reinforce the international outlook that sits at the heart of our mission.

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Another important moment in our calendar as we commemorated Black History Day in the High School on Thursday, marking one hundred years since this vital observance began, originally in the USA. What started as a dedicated period of recognition has rightly become embedded in the calendars of educational institutions and other organisations across the world. At Marina, we see this not simply as a celebration, but as an opportunity for reflection, dialogue, and learning, with a student-centred focus on our activities this year as we seek to ensure our students' voices are heard. We also held our internal celebration of Gambian Independence Day. As the national holiday itself fell during the mid-term break, it is important to us that our students are given the opportunity to recognise and honour this significant milestone in the nation's history. Education must remain rooted in a sense of place, identity and civic responsibility.



With the fasting begun, I would like to extend my warmest wishes for a peaceful and reflective Lent and Ramadan to all members of our community who will be observing. We look forward to welcoming the entire school community to come together for a community iftar event after the holiday, a moment not only of shared food, but of understanding and fellowship. As always, thank you for your continued partnership and support. It is through our collective commitment, with students, staff and families together, which enables us to continue to build a school defined by aspiration, integrity and community spirit.

Very best wishes,
Jonathan Warner
Director of Schools

SPEECH & PRIZEGIVING DAY- HS

On Friday 30th January 2026, Marina International High School held its yearly Speech and Prize Giving Day which is a significant event in the school calendar celebrating academic excellence and effort across the school community. This year's theme was "Strive for Excellence, Achieve with Integrity" which reflected the values the school continues to instil in its students.

The day started with welcoming remarks from the Principal, Mr Jonathan Warner, who highlighted the importance of perseverance, integrity, and commitment to learning. He encouraged students to take pride in their achievements while continuing to challenge themselves both academically and personally.

Guest speaker, Mr Herbert Robinson, Vice Chancellor of the University of The Gambia spoke about the role of education in shaping responsible and resilient individuals, encouraging students to strive for excellence as they prepare for future academic and professional paths. He emphasised the importance of discipline, ambition and making the most of the opportunities provided during school years.

The ceremony was filled with student performances. Form 1 students performed a recorder ensemble which was followed by the Junior Orchestra. The orchestra performed an original composition by the school's Music Teacher, Mr Ezekiel, showcasing both musical talent and creativity.

A highlight of the programme was a poetry performance of an original poem called "Everything Stays But Still Changes" by Bubacarr Barry that won a COBIS award. The poem was performed by Vercini Jatta and Ramatoulie Kebbeh, who delivered a powerful and engaging recital.

Another memorable performance was *Afrique Mon Afrique* by David Diop, presented in both French and English by Elsa Dabira and Mariama Jallow. Dressed in traditional attire, the students brought the poem to life and celebrated African identity and heritage.

Throughout the event the Student Council President, Amy Adikwuru, played a key role in confidently introducing performances and offering words of appreciation and thanks at the conclusion of the ceremony.

The Prize Giving ceremony recognised students across Forms 1 to 5 for their dedication and hard work. Awards were presented for Best in Subject and Most Effort in English, Mathematics, French, Sciences, Humanities, ICT, Art, Design and Technology and Physical Education. Awards were also given for Outstanding Checkpoint Results, IGCSE Results and AS Level Results, highlighting exceptional academic achievement, along with other special awards.

The 2026 Speech and Prize Giving Day was a proud moment for the Marina family, celebrating not only academic success but also creativity, effort and integrity. It served as a reminder to all students to continue striving for excellence in all that they do.

Submitted by:

Aisha -Marie Semega Janneh

Communications and Media Club

BLACK HISTORY DAY AT THE HIGHSCHOOL



MARINA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
CELEBRATES

BLACK HISTORY

Recognizing the achievements and enduring contributions of Black leaders throughout history while empowering our students to uphold excellence, leadership, and positive global impact.



WWW.MIS.EDU.GM



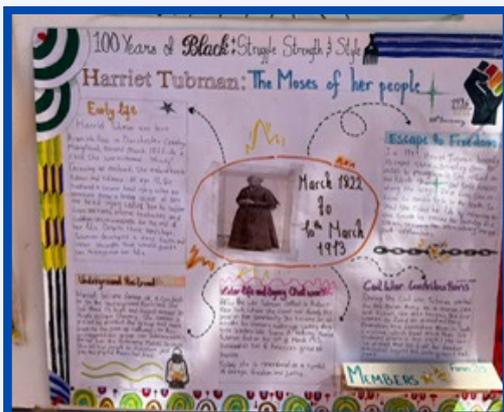
The Humanities Department, under the leadership of Mr. Kehinde, successfully organized a vibrant and impactful Black History Day in celebration of the rich legacy and enduring contributions of Black leaders throughout history.

The event featured engaging student projects highlighting heroes who fought for freedom, a commemorative awareness walk from the traffic lights, and thought-provoking debates aligned with the theme:

“Hundred Years of Celebrating Black History: Gains and Challenges.”

We were honoured to host the Chair of the Education Committee, Ms. Betty Sallah, as our Guest of Honour. Her presence added significance to the occasion and reinforced the importance of historical reflection and continued progress.

Students proudly wore traditional attire, celebrating their cultural identities and demonstrating confidence, unity, and pride in their heritage. The day served not only as a celebration of history but also as a reminder of the responsibility of the next generation to lead with knowledge, courage, and purpose.



SPORTS DAY - EYFS & KEY STAGE 1

Sports Day for our EYFS and KS1 learners was a vibrant, high-energy celebration of movement, teamwork, and healthy competition. The field came alive with colour and excitement as students eagerly participated in a variety of races and athletic activities, demonstrating enthusiasm, determination, and excellent sportsmanship. From sprint races to fun skill-based challenges, each event encouraged confidence, coordination, and resilience in our young learners. The joy on their faces reflected not only the thrill of competition but the pride of accomplishment.

Parents turned out in full force to cheer on their children, creating an atmosphere of encouragement and community spirit. Their presence and support made the day even more special and memorable for our students.

A sincere thank you to all the teachers and staff whose careful planning, coordination, and dedication ensured the smooth and successful execution of this wonderful event. It was truly a day of celebration, teamwork, and shared achievement at Marina.



JS- INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Independence Day at the Junior School was truly an elaborate and vibrant affair. Celebrating The Gambia, and one another, was at the heart of the festivities, as the entire campus came alive in a colourful display of traditional attire representing the diverse ethnic groups of our nation.

Students, parents, teachers, and staff proudly donned their finest traditional wear, creating a beautiful tapestry of culture, unity, and national pride. The celebration featured engaging presentations, cultural showcases, and a delightful spread of traditional cuisine that reflected the richness of Gambian heritage.

Celebrating Independence Day is more than marking a date on the calendar; it is a meaningful opportunity to reflect on our nation's journey, honour the sacrifices that secured our freedom, and reaffirm our shared responsibility in shaping The Gambia's future. It instills in our students a deep appreciation of their identity, history, and civic duty.

At Marina International School, such celebrations align closely with our vision of nurturing globally minded, confident, and responsible learners. By embracing our national heritage while fostering respect for diversity and unity, we empower our students to become principled leaders who value community, cultural identity, and service. As The Gambia marked 61 years of independence, the atmosphere at Marina was filled with pride, reflection, and purpose – a true testament to education that connects heritage with leadership for tomorrow.



EYFS- INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating The Gambia's 61st Independence Day in EYFS!

Our EYFS section hosted an amazing day of color, joy, and learning as we marked The Gambia's 61st Independence Anniversary. The children shone brightly, proudly guiding everyone through a vibrant timeline of Gambian history from our roots to today. What a fantastic way to honor our nation's journey!



MARINA CELEBRATES THE LUNAR NEW YEAR

The Chinese Spring Festival, also known as the Lunar New Year, is the most important traditional holiday in China as marks the beginning of the new lunar calendar year and is a time for gratitude, family reunions and hope for prosperity and happiness.

During the festival, people enjoy festive meals, cultural performances, traditional music. Celebrating the Spring Festival at the Chinese Embassy in Gambia with four brilliant students from Junior school: Lian, Olivia, Abigail and Dalanda as they performed the “Peach Blossom” dance. The dance portrays them dressed in beautiful Hanfu, joyfully playing in a garden during the warm spring season when flowers are in full bloom. This visit, facilitated by Mrs. Wang Ying, Vice-President of the Chinese Residents Association of the Gambia through our alumna, Adam Chingling Wang highlights the strong friendship and cultural exchange between China and The Gambia; The China-Gambia Friendship. It brings people together to share traditions, promote mutual understanding, and strengthen diplomatic ties.

Submitted by Adam Chinling Wang
Alumna



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Ida Persson is a Gambian lawyer and transitional justice expert with more than a decade of legal and programme management experience. From 2018 to 2021, she served UNDP in The Gambia as a Transitional Justice & Human Rights Specialist and from 2021 to 2023, as Programme Specialist & Head of Governance. Today, she serves as Special Adviser to the Honorable Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Republic of The Gambia on transitional justice, and heads the Secretariat to the Steering Committee on the Implementation of the TRRC Recommendations (the Post - TRRC Unit). Since the onset of the transitional justice process in The Gambia, Ida provided strong strategic direction to the UN on transitional justice, produced research papers and analyses, and even contributed to the revision of the UN Secretary General's Guidance Note on Transitional Justice.



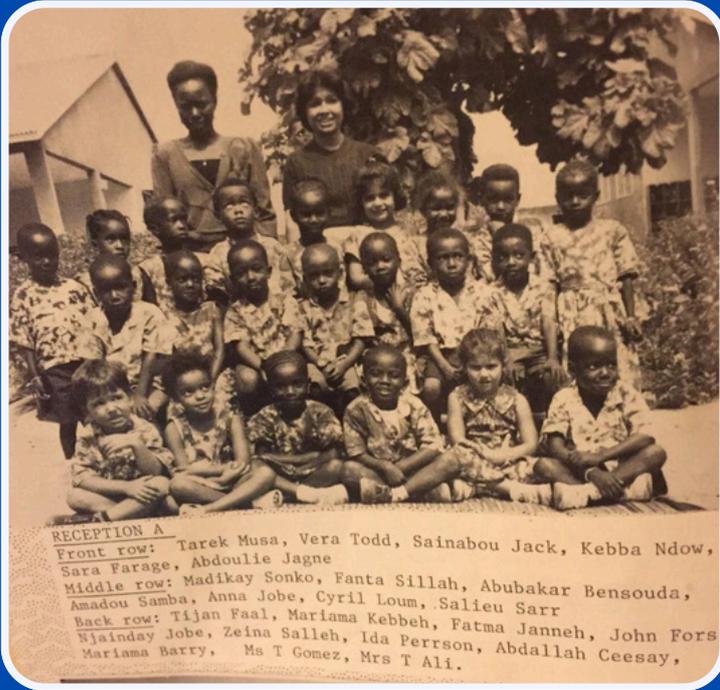
Ida Persson

local governance, rule of law, security sector reform, human rights, accountability/anti-corruption frameworks, peacebuilding and social cohesion, women and youth political inclusion, gender justice, parliamentary development, and CSO participation in democratic processes. Ida has also over the years, provided extensive technical and advisory assistance to the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC), the Ministry of Justice, Police, CSOs, the media, and health and social workers in The Gambia. Ida has worked with several other organizations on transitional justice, human rights, rule of law and justice issues, including Democracy International, UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). She holds a license to practice law in The Gambia,



She also has strong experience leading teams in strategic planning and managing core governance and peacebuilding programmes. As a programme management specialist, she has managed or overseen projects on transitional justice, elections,

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

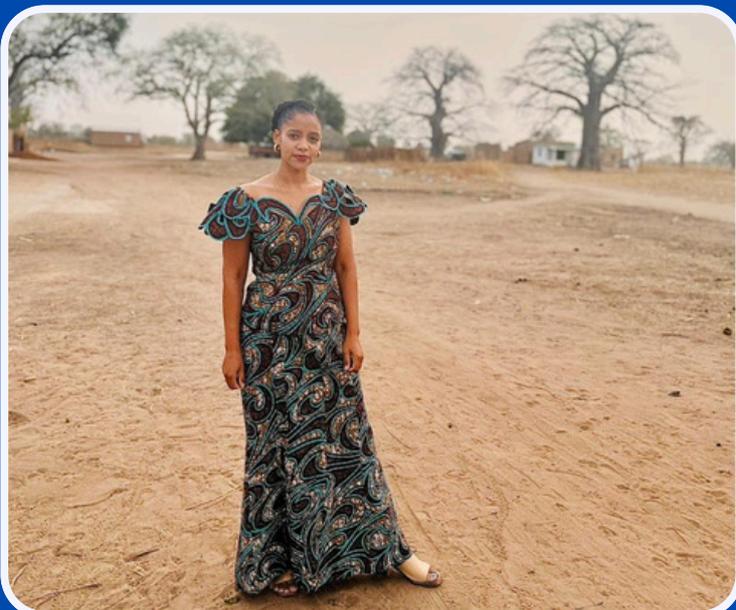


RECEPTION A
Front row: Tarek Musa, Vera Todd, Sainabou Jack, Kebba Ndow, Sara Farage, Abdoulie Jagne
Middle row: Madikay Sonko, Fanta Sillah, Abubakar Bensouda, Amadou Samba, Anna Jobe, Cyril Loum, Salieu Sarr
Back row: Tijan Faal, Mariama Kebbeh, Fatma Janneh, John Fors Njaiunday Jobe, Zeina Salleh, Ida Perrson, Abdallah Ceessay, Mariama Barry, Ms T Gomez, Mrs T Ali.

an L.L.M. in Public International Law from Leiden University, and a B.A. in International Relations and Communications from Hult International Business School. She speaks English, Wolof, Swedish and some French. In 2026, she was awarded the “Women of the Year Award” by SheAwards, The Gambia.

Fun Fact: She was in Yellow House! Her favorite teacher was her English teacher and home room teacher, Ms. Ferrier.

Her favourite Marina Moments were Fashion shows and Valentine Dances.



Coming up...

- The whole campus will be engaged in exams, from mid year to mocks, we wish everyone goodluck!
- Marina is proud to host the Cambridge PDQ

Focus on Assessment/ Progress - these courses are designed for teachers who have experience in teaching the specific Cambridge syllabus and are interested in developing their understanding of the assessment of the syllabus in greater depth.

Our Enrichment Professional Development is perfect for teachers and school leaders who want to transform their approach to teaching. Each course focuses on a specific skill or concept in teaching and learning.

11 - 12 April 2026

[Cambridge IGCSE and O level French \(0520\) | Focus on Assessment | Banjul, Gambia](#)

[Cambridge IGCSE™ and O level Additional Mathematics \(0606\) | Focus on Assessment | Banjul, Gambia](#)

[Cambridge Primary Science \(0097\) | Focus on Progress | Banjul, Gambia](#)

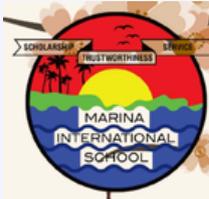
[Developing Your Leadership with Cambridge \(DYLC\) | Enrichment | Banjul, Gambia](#)

Director's Update.....Every 2 weeks on our Youtube Channel, we've got a new one up!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

“I trained 4 years to run 9 seconds, and people give up when they don't see results in 2 months.”

- Usain Bolt



Wishing the entire Marina Community

HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR

May this year be filled with
joy, prosperity, and great
new opportunities.



Wishing our entire Marina community a time of reflection, growth, and renewal during this blessed

LENTEN SEASON



Ramadan
M U B A R A K

Wishing the entire Marina Community a blessed season of fasting, prayer, and reflection that brings peace, strength, and spiritual growth.

