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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

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THE
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF GHANA

FIRST MEETING, 2025

Friday, 24th January, 2025

The House met at 1.29 p.m.

[THE SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

[PRAYERS]

The Speaker: Hon Members, Parliament is in session and there is a Plenary Sitting. Please, there is some unparliamentary noise coming from one of the committee meetings. It might be from the Appointments Committee. Ag. Clerk, you are directed to inform them to please reduce whatever unparliamentary noise is coming from there because we do not want that to interfere with the Sitting of this Plenary session. This Plenary session is sitting so the Marshals Department is directed to accordingly inform the meeting of the Appointments Committee to bring some order to the meeting. We do not want our Sitting here to be interrupted. Please let us carry the message across.

Yes, Hon Minority Chief Whip, you want to make an intervention?

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity. I rise to speak in support of your directive and observation. As a member of the Appointments Committee, this morning, I struggled to have access

to the venue because of strangers who had come to take over the premises. From the entrance to the new block, it was chaotic to the extent that I had to speak to senior security officials I know in this House.

Mr Speaker, we appreciate that it has been the practice and convention that when such activity is being undertaken, we receive a number of visitors but it appears to be getting out of hand and the Marshals Department should show leadership in this regard. So, Mr Speaker, you are right to have observed it. Even sitting in the Chamber, the decibel of noise coming in here is quite unbearable let alone being at the scene of the event. It is a matter we have to look at not only for this activity but even going into the future, it has to be taken seriously. Leadership, particularly my Hon Colleagues in the Majority whose Hon Members are being vetted should take this matter up. Mr Ricketts-Hagan, please take this matter up and ensure that sanity prevails on the premises.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon Members, this is a serious matter which we should take on board because there must always be law and order wherever Parliament sits. Committee sittings are part of the Sitting of the Parliament of Ghana.

1.39 p.m.

It is part of the Plenary session, and that is why in our revised Standing Orders, we have acknowledged that attendance

at Committee meetings is part of the attendance of the Sittings of Parliament, and they should be captured in the *Votes and Proceedings*. Any Hon Member who attends a Committee sitting should be recognised as having attended a Sitting of Parliament, and therefore, that Hon Member should not be marked as being absent from the Sitting of Parliament.

We have taken due notice of these *Votes and Proceedings* as the official records of the attendance of Hon Members to the Sitting of Parliament. You would recall my ruling in a case involving three Members of Parliament which was usually referred to as the “Hon Adwoa Safo case”; it affected three Hon Members: Mr Kennedy Agyapong, Mr Henry Quartey, and Ms Sarah Adwoa Safo. If you recall, I insisted that the Report of that Committee, the Committee on Privileges, should be brought back to the Floor for the deliberation of the whole House, and that it should not be the case that the law is that the decision of that Committee is final because the vacation of seat by a Member was so serious a matter that it was not to be left to a Committee of Parliament to have the final say.

Those days, I think some key Leaders disagreed with me, but today, I am sure wise counsel would prevail. Today, if we are to apply that rule, this House would not be as it is constituted. So, sometimes, experience, we would always maintain, is the best teacher.

The directive I have given may not be palatable to some people, but please, as much as we encourage the participation of the public in what we do here, the rule is that there must be law and order. The rule and the Standing Orders of the House is what prevails here, and not the caprices of any individual Member, including the Speaker of Parliament. The Speaker is to maintain law and order, and that I swore to do and would continue to do.

Hon Members, we would now take the item numbered 3, Messages from the President. I am informed that some messages from the President have not been captured in the official records, particularly, the message dealing with the nomination of Ministers for parliamentary approval. Since some were taken by my Hon Deputies, I would like to know whether the one dated 21st January, 2025 dealing with the nomination of Ministers for parliamentary approval—A number of our Hon Colleagues were nominated and also some Hon Members were designated as Ministers of State for some sectors and also Regional Ministers. It is dated 21st January, 2025. Table Office, has that been taken? —[Pause]—I have just been told that the one involving three nominees for the position of Regional Ministers and 14 nominees for various sectors was taken. There was a second one that was not taken that has to do with—[Pause]—Well, according to my usher, it has not been given to us yet.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE PRESIDENT

Absence from Ghana

The Speaker: We would take the communication from the President dated 23rd January, 2025. It reads:



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Jubilee House

The President

23rd January, 2025

Rt. Hon. Speaker,

ABSENCE FROM GHANA

In accordance with Article 59 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, I write to formally notify you of my intention to travel outside the country on Saturday, 25th January 2025, for an official working visit to Luanda, Angola. During this trip, I will also attend a High-Level Retreat of Heads of State on AU Institutional Reforms in Nairobi, Kenya.

Additionally, I plan to participate in the Africa Heads of State Energy Summit, scheduled to take place from 27th to 28th January, 2025 in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. I will return to Ghana on Wednesday, 29th January, 2025.

In my absence, the Vice President, Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang, shall, in accordance with Article 60 (8) of the Constitution, act in my stead.


JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA

**THE RT. HON. SPEAKER
OFFICE OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
ACCRA**

cc: The Vice President
Jubilee House
Accra

The Chief of Staff
Jubilee House
Accra

The Speaker: Hon Members, I do not have any formal communication today so we would move to item number 5 on the Order Paper—correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*.

1.49 p.m.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS AND THE OFFICIAL REPORT

The Speaker: Hon Members, we would start with the correction of *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 23rd January, 2025.

Page 1...7 —

Prof Kingsley Nyarko: Mr Speaker, with respect, I would like to seek your guidance on page 7 the item numbered 5 “FORMAL COMMUNICATION BY THE SPEAKER”. With your indulgence I would like to read what is stated there:

“The Rt Hon Speaker informed the House of his receipt of a communication dated 9th January, 2025 from the Independent Member for Kwahu Afram Plains North Constituency, Mr Worlase Kpeli, informing the Speaker and the House of his intention to associate

with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Caucus in the Ninth Parliament for the purpose of transacting business in the House.”

Mr Speaker, under Order 6; on the Interpretation of Caucus, my challenge is the meaning of this letter to you with the intention to transact Business with the NDC. Intention and actualisation, in my respectful view, are different and that is why I am seeking your guidance. Is he now planning to Caucus with the NDC? Because I think that he is not here — either he joins or he does not. With the intention, it appears to me that it is something in process and that would not permit him to be considered as part of the Caucus of the NDC. With respect to your experience, I would like to seek your direction on this matter.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, I just decided to refresh my memory from the contents of the communication to me from Mr Worlase Kpeli, Hon Member of Parliament for Kwahu Afram Plains North and it is dated 9th January, 2025. Maybe, the Table Office did not capture it properly. The Hon Member wrote to me and with your permission, I would read exactly what he communicated.



HON. KPELI WORLASE

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR KWAHU AFRAM PLAINS NORTH

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Your Ref.....

My Ref.....

9th January 2025.

The Rt. Hon Speaker
Office of Parliament
Osu-Accra.

Dear Sir,

DECLARATION TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE NDC CAUCUS

I, Kpeli Worlase, an independent candidate Member of Parliament, for Kwahu Afram Plains North Constituency, do hereby declare that I shall, for the purpose of transacting business in the house associate with the NDC caucus in the ninth Parliament avoidances of doubt. I hereby affirm that I shall cooperate and collaborate with the NDC caucus in the ninth parliament.

Thank you.

Dated this 9th January 2025.

Yours faithfully,

Hon. Kpeli Worlase

(MP, Kwahu Afram Plains North Constituency)

Cc.

Majority Leader.

THE SPEAKER

Declaration to do Business with the NDC Caucus

The Speaker: I think it is the Table Office that did not capture it properly. It is not “intention to associate” but it says that:

“I hereby declare that I shall, for the purpose of transacting business in the House associate with the NDC...”

It is not “intention to associate” so I thank you for drawing our attention for the right rendition to be captured in the *Votes and Proceedings*. It is not an intention; he has declared to associate and so it shall be. Because he does not want it to look like it is a merger. No, he still wants to be an Independent Member but for the purpose of transacting Business in the House, he would associate with the NDC. That is the only Communication that I have which I read to the House.

Please, Table Office, you are directed to capture it properly.

Page 8 —

Mr Philip Fiifi Buckman: Mr Speaker, thank you.

Respectfully, item numbered 6 (2), Mr Fifi Fiavi Kwetey. The Fifi is F-I-I.

Mr Speaker, I am Fiifi so — it was “Fifi” instead of Fiifi.

He spells it F-I-F-I.

The Speaker: His rendition is of Fiifi is F-I-F-I. That is what is stated on the Communication. It is F-I-F-I.

Mr Buckman: Thank you.

The Speaker: It is Fifi and not Fiifi.

Yes, please.

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I can understand my Colleague who is a first-timer but I am rudely surprised that his own General Secretary — Mr Speaker, it is surprising. Are you not surprised yourself? Mr Speaker, I would end it here.

The Speaker: We are still at page 8.

Page 9 —

Yes, Hon Member.

Supt Rtd Peter Lanchene Toobu: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. I seek your guidance on paragraph 10 of page 9. The outgone Hon Majority Leader at the time he spoke on the Floor was also the Hon Minister for Finance and I do not know if the rendition could capture that inclusively.

I am grateful.

The Speaker: I do not have the Official Report but what I do know is that he spoke in his capacity as the outgone Majority Leader. I do not know whether he referred to his position also as Hon Minister for Finance.

1.59 p.m.

If he did then it would be captured but if he did not do that, then they would just use his capacity because he was giving the remarks as the outgoing Majority Leader. If not, we would have to go on to add all the other titles; outgoing Leader of Government Business and current Minister for Finance. So, we would check from the Official Report and effect the proper rendition.

Page 10? — Yes, Mr Fred Kyei Asamoah?

Mr Fred Kyei Asamoah: Mr Speaker, I would like to seek your advice on page 10, item numbered 11; the Hon Minority Leader's remarks as captured under remarks by the Hon Minority Leader. If you refer to page 1, Item numbered 24, the title Osahen has been captured and you realise that as you go through the *Votes and Proceedings*, all the titles as captured for Hon Members are also used. So, I want to know, under item numbered 11, we are missing the Osahen which is supposed to be there as has been captured— if you look at page 9 under Item numbered 10, for the outgone Majority Leader, the title Dr has been captured so I would want your advice on this.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, you are right. The Minority Leader insists that his title should be captured. The title is “Osahen” not “Osahene” so

please — even yesterday he drew our attention to it but he did it in camera. So, it should be captured in the *Votes and Proceedings*. Thank you.

Page 11, yes Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor?

Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, by way of a further guide, does it mean that henceforth, the Hon Minority Leader would be known as Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin instead of prefixing that with “Mr” so that “Mr” would no longer appear? Mr Speaker, that is by way of guidance.

The Speaker: Well, I think he would prefer the “Osahen” to “Mr”.

Mr Dafeamekpor: All right.

The Speaker: He is not available to confirm. Let us leave it as it is now, when he is available, he would confirm whether he still wants the “Mr” and if at the end they put “Osahen” or if he wants it the other way.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Thank you Mr Speaker, I am guided.

The Speaker: Hon Member, do you have his authorisation and mandate?

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, if you may, I think *Hansard* would bear me out that we had an occasion to talk about the same matter at length and the Hon Leader had insisted and confirmed that he wants to be addressed officially as “Osahen”. So,

this is not a matter we should debate about. I recall you were in the Chamber then or you were then lobbying for—

The Speaker: No, he is not contesting that—

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: You were asking whether we should repeat “Mr” together with “Osahen”.

The Speaker: Yes, that was the issue.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, that is not the issue at all. I am only saying that given your guidance, it means going forward we would see, for instance the Hon Minority Leader and Member of Parliament for Effutu, Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo Markin instead of Mr Alexander Kwamena Afenyo Markin (Osahen). That is all I am saying. By Mr Speaker’s directive, it would bring clarity as to how his name would be written. That is all I am saying.

The Speaker: I am sure you all know the peculiar situation of the Minority Leader. You can tell from his name, whether he is from Volta Region or Effutu. I do not know whether many of you know him properly but I know him very well. I know where his mum and dad come from and I know they settled in Winneba, Effutu so once he has been given the title “Osahen” and he prefers we call him by that, let us give it to him. He is not Simpa. If we go by the maternal link, he is Gomoa and if we go paternal, he is Ewe but he decided that the title given him is “Osahen” so he wants that and he represents Effutu.

I should not be telling you your history, I should keep it to myself and I would do that but just because this has been raised, that is why I want clarification.

Page 11...14— Yes Mr Ebenezer Kwaku Addo?

Mr Ebenezer Kwaku Addo: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Page 14, Item numbered 20, Statements. I think yesterday having discussed on the Floor the Statement by the Hon Member, the Second Deputy Speaker indicated that the issue needs to be revisited because of its importance so I believe it should be captured as such.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: I do not know what happened whether it was a directive or just a comment in passing. If it was a directive, then it should be captured. Mr Second Deputy Speaker, please help us.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker (Mr Andrew Amoako Asiamah): Mr Speaker, yesterday we had a Statement and it was to the effect that after the deliberation, people were insisting that the directive should be given but we insisted that since the Committees are not in place, we should hold on till the Committees are in place. So, we would re-visit it the next time the issue is raised. That is how we looked at it so it is not something we captured in such a way that at all cost, we have to re-visit but we said that issue must be re-visited so we can refer it to the appropriate Committee to look into it because of its importance.

Mr Speaker, that is how it was put that way.

The Speaker: Well, then I think the rendition is correct. We would leave it for the future.

Yes, Mr Davis Opoku Ansah?

2.09 p.m.

Mr Davis Opoku Ansah: Mr Speaker, on page 14, paragraph 20, my name Davis Ansah Opoku, there is no “e” but I realised they placed an “e” in the spelling of Davis.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Yes, Table, kindly take note.

Yes, please?

Prof Nyarko: Mr Speaker, with respect, on the issue of the Statement that was made yesterday on the item numbered 20, it is a very critical issue, and I am confused about the explanation we have provided regarding revisiting that same topic. Because of the nature, I would be happy if there could be a definite period within which we would consider this matter. This is because the rate of attrition in our Parliament is not only worrying, but troubling. So, I think that there should be certain definite directives as to when and how this matter should be dealt with.

Mr Speaker, I am not sure you are happy seeing that more than half of freshers in the last Parliament could not

come back, and I think that we need to do more to avert this disaster. It is a disaster because we do not want this trend to continue. I would be happy if this is the right forum or process for us to have a definite way forward on this matter.

The Speaker: Well, Hon members, I think this is one of the items on the agenda for the Ninth Parliament. It has been on for some time now; I recall as far back as the Second Parliament. It is not an easy area to legislate and depending on how you see it, it could also be a blessing to the country because we have many more people coming here to experience and learn what this whole system is about.

So, in the early stages of your growth, you open up for many more people to experience it. As we say, experience is the best —We say, “he who feels it, knows it better”, so when you give them that opportunity to come and feel and experience it, they know it better, they support the advocacy and education, and the people then get to know the system better. So, it is good that, yes, we have this high attrition rate so that many more people may come in.

I know a number of people come in and after the four years; they just opt out. Well, they see that they do not fit in and they go back to continue with their various professions. But they learn a lot and are not misled by others who see it differently, and that helps to build up the culture of multi-party democracy in the country. So, to start with, it is not all bad to have a high attrition rate, but as we go

along, you will see that many more people will fall out because they see that it is not worth it. They can serve their country in other areas than in main line politics and so, that is good for the country; I do not see it as bad.

We still have to invest to educate and build up the culture of multi-party democracy. I think it is alright. Let us encourage it because it is a matter of choice. If you are good, they will retain you; if you are not good, they will eject you and that is also good. It rekindles the competitive spirit and all of you will have to show why you should continue to be here. Yes; so, let us leave it as it. We will definitely come back to it, and we will consult more with stakeholders as to which area to legislate and what to legislate on.

Page 15?

Yes, please?

Mr Kofi Benteh Afful: Mr Speaker, on page 15, at the Business Committee meeting yesterday, Mr Ahmed Ibrahim was present, but his name has not been captured here as part of the Members present.

[Pause]

The Speaker: Hon Member, his name is there. He is the one who presided: “The Hon First Deputy Chief Whip, Mr Ahmed Ibrahim, presided.” Thank you so much.

Page 16?

Hon Members, the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 23rd January, 2025 as corrected is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

We move on to item 6 — Business Statement for the third week. Chairman, Business Committee?

Mr George Kweku Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, I would like to indulge you—

The Speaker: I am sorry, but your Colleague is raising some issue; just a minute. Yes, Hon Leader?

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I have nothing against our respected Deputy Leader presenting the Business Statement. However, I was there, the Meeting was presided over by Mr Ahmed Ibrahim and the Deputy Majority Leader was not there at all. How would he be able to speak to something that he did not witness?

Mr Speaker, I am just bringing this to the notice of the House because we are going to raise issues. Would he be able to defend them because he was not there? All right, Mr Speaker, he may proceed, but he should be ready for our questions.

[Pause]

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member? Actually, I did not hear what you said, so let me hear you and see whether he has made a genuine observation.

Mr Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, I did not even say anything and he just jumped in.

The Speaker: You have not said anything?

Mr Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, before we come to the Business Statement —

The Speaker: What did you say? He did what? He jumped in? *[Laughter]*

Mr Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, I withdraw that.

Mr Speaker, basically, I was just going to seek your indulgence to guide me to apply to vary the Business of the day by going to the commencement of Public Business and get the Chairman of the Appointments Committee to lay the Fifth Report. Afterwards, then we take the Business Statement for the third week, so that the Chairman of the Appointments Committee would come back to take the Motion numbered 10.

Mr Speaker, this was the request I was trying to make when my Hon Friend came in, not jumped in— *[Laughter]*

The Speaker: Yes, please.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I see the First Deputy Speaker rightly seated, and I have no objection to the humble application made by the Deputy Majority Leader.

The Speaker: The word used by the Standing Orders is “interrupt”; he interrupted you.

Mr Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, I am guided.

The Speaker: Not jumped in.

Yes, Hon Members, the request is for us to vary the order of Business. Once there is no objection, I will proceed to do so and we would move straight to the Commencement of Public Business.

Hon Members, the item numbered 8— Presentation of Papers. The following Papers are to be presented. The item numbered 8(a) by the Chairman of the Committee.

PAPER

By the Chairman of the Committee —

Fifth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President’s Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

The Speaker: Hon Members, the item numbered 8(b) is not ready.

Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, that is so. Mr Speaker, may I pray you to direct the Clerks-at-the-Table to distribute the Report as presently laid to Members, so that they can have—

The Speaker: I have done that already.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Very well, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: Do we go back to the item numbered 6?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, that is so; the Business Statement.

The Speaker: Hon Members, we allow the Chairman of the Appointments Committee to go and continue with his Business, then we would go back to the item numbered 6 — Business Statement for the Third Week.

Yes, since the Chairman of the Business Committee is not available, can any Member of the Business Committee present the Report to the House?

Business Committee?

Mr Ricketts-Hagan: Mr Speaker, the Business Statement for the third week, ending Friday, 31st January, 2025. Mr Speaker, the Committee met on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025—

The Speaker: Just a minute; your Colleagues are raising an issue. Yes, please, what is it?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Could he, please, take his seat. Mr Speaker, if I would refresh the memory of this House, we would recall that per your wisdom and guidance, we had

constituted the Committee of Selection, the Business Committee, and the Appointments Committee for very obvious reasons.

Mr Speaker, I looked at the membership of the Business Committee and I did not see Mr Ricketts-Hagan as a member, so I am unable to accede to his request to present the Report.

2.19 p.m.

In any case, he was not present at the meeting; the meeting was chaired by Mr Ahmed Ibrahim. I want my Colleagues to understand that I am not being a litigant here. He was not there; I was there.

Mr Speaker, if it is the case—The request of the Rt Hon Speaker was ‘Can any Member of the Business Committee present the Report?’. I am a proud Member of the Business Committee—*[Hear! Hear!]*—I will present the Report for them—**[Some Hon Members: No!]**—Mr Speaker, if it pleases you, let me present the Report for the Government Side. I have seen the Hon Minority Leader smile at me, but the Hon Leader was not there. Mr Ayariga, the respected Majority Leader, was not there either. My good friend, Mr Dafeamekpor, was also not there. Does the other Side want to present their Business Statement or not?—**[Some Hon Members: Yes]**—Yes, so it has to be presented by a member of the Committee, and the proud Minority Chief Whip is here to present the Report for them.

Mr Speaker, I do not know how they would present the Report now. Your directive was crystal clear; a member of the Business Committee should do the needful by presenting the Report. Do they not want to listen to me? I am the only one here—[*Interruption*]
—Would they not allow me?—[**Some Hon Members:** No]
—Let us see how they would present the Report—[*Pause*]

The Speaker: Yes, please?

Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr Speaker, I am wondering the basis for which the Minority Chief Whip is raising an issue on this matter. May I humbly refer the House to Order 216(1), which reads:

“The Business Committee comprises the Leader of Government Business as Chairperson, the Minority Leader as the Ranking Member, the Chief Whips and not more than eleven other Members”.

Mr Speaker, your directive was that, in the absence of the Leader, any Member—The Hon Minority Chief has not determined that the Deputy Majority Leader is not a Member of the Committee. In any case, we have had Deputy Majority Leaders present Business Statements on this Floor. I believe that I am here as the Whip; the Majority Leader is confidently represented, and we are available to deal with this Business, so I believe that we should make progress in this matter.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: I can only refer to the Standing Orders in guiding Members or do you want to say something before I do that?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, we would defer to you for guidance; however, my Colleague quoted Order 216 and he is right; statutory representation is captured there. But let us put matters in context here: was he at the meeting? In the face of the transition, he was not there. The meeting was chaired by the former First Deputy Majority Whip, Mr Ahmed Ibrahim; can the Deputy Majority Leader defend what is reflected in the Report?

Mr Speaker, I would be magnanimous and charitable.

The Speaker: Hon Members, please, there is no issue to split hairs over. The Standing Order 96—Presentation of Papers, generally:

“A Paper may be presented to the House only by the Speaker, the chairperson of a Committee, a Member, a Minister or a Head of an Independent Constitutional Body”.

Are we together? Have you heard what I read? So clearly —

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, with respect, in this House, we have always been guided by you—[**The Speaker:** Yes]
—And we would take a cue from you on any day. However, if you would recall, the three Committees

that were prior formed were formed by a Motion which was adopted by this House. In proper context and, in the face of the Motion that was prior formed, three of them are strangers when it comes to the membership of the Business Committee, unless we vary the earlier Motion that was taken. Let us go by the rules.

The Speaker: I do not know why you interrupted my ruling. I have not ruled yet, and I have not guided you—**[Mr Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, apologies]—I am just reading Order 96, and I was trying to explain to Members that Order 96 talks about a chairperson of a Committee, a Member, a Minister or a Head of an Independent Constitutional Body. These are mandated by our rules to be the only people who can present a Paper to the House, so the issue raised by the Minority Chief Whip is in the right direction—*[Hear! Hear!]*—The only thing that could have persuaded me is if the Deputy Majority Leader had sought my leave and also mentioned that he had the authority of the Chairman of the Committee to do so on his behalf, then he would have been acting as an attorney of the Chairman, and I would have permitted him, but he did not do that.

So, not being a Member of the Committee and worse of all, not being present at the meeting of the Committee, he is not in the position to present the Paper for and on behalf of the Business Committee. I think that the objection is upheld—*[Hear! Hear!]*—So, we would call on a Member of the Committee or

any of those identified by the Standing Orders to do so. It does not necessarily mean that the Member must be in Government; the system we are running in Ghana allows so many formations. You can have a minority party in government because—

Hon Member, I can identify the person who was—*[Laughter]*

2.29 p.m.

Yes, you can have a minority government, where the people decide to elect your flagbearer as president, but disagrees with the parliamentary candidates, and opt for the majority to be in opposition; you can have that. You can also have an independent presidential candidate, being the president of Ghana. Yes, that is the choice of the people, and it is allowed by our Constitution.

So in such a situation, you cannot be talking about the government until he decides to constitute his government; and he can decide to constitute his government as independent presidential candidate, now president of the country, by choosing his ministers from the political parties. Definitely, they have to come from the political parties, or outside political parties; but by our Constitution now, majority should be from Parliament and they have to be from political parties.

So you can have all sort of government formations, using the 1992 Constitution, and so, when we were crafting the rules, we took all those

things into consideration and that is why even now, we try to respond to the winner takes all situation in the country, by allowing people whose party is not in power, to even chair Select Committees; that is in the new Standing Orders. So that it is not like, because you have won, every power is given to you. There would be power sharing in the House, so that we can hold the House as an institution, a family, and as a body, to work in the national interest, not in the interest of parties. So I think that is right; and that is why I gave the option, that any member of the Committee, the chair not being present, could present the report of the Committee. I so rule.

Yes, Hon Majority Leader?

Hon Majority Leader (Mr Mahama Ayariga): Mr Speaker, the Minority Chief Whip raises a further question, about even the capacity of the Leader of Government Business, being able to present the report of the Business Committee, if that person has not been captured in a report, laid and adopted in this House, as a member of the Business Committee.

So far as he is concerned, and I listened to him carefully, following the re-constitution of the Front Bench of this Side of the House, and the coming into office of a new Leader of Government Business, once he was not captured in the earlier report on Committees, which was laid and adopted in this House, it appears to me that his contention is that even that person is strictly speaking, not a

member of the Business Committee and can therefore not present the report.

But Mr Speaker, I would like you to rule, taking into consideration, Order 216(1), which says;

The Business Committee comprises the Leader of Government Business as Chairperson, the Minority Leader as the Ranking Member, the Chief Whips and not more than eleven other Members.

Mr Speaker, this is a Committee in which the officials are identified by their offices, and not as individuals. So to read this Standing Order, to be amendable by the report of a Committee, adopted by this House, appears to me to be what he is seeking to do. Can we say, today, that Dr Ato Forson, remains the chairperson of the Business Committee in the face of Order 216(1)? Can we say that Mr Agbodza, remains a member of the Business Committee in the face of Order 216(1)? Because it is one of the few Committees, where membership is statutory and identified by office; so whoever occupies that office, automatically becomes the person, that should be on the Committee.

And I believe that those who framed this, did not intend, that anytime there is a change in that office holder, then we hold a meeting, appoint new members, representing those offices, then we present the report, debate and adopt the report, among others. I believe that anybody who steps in those offices, automatically becomes the members of

that Committee, and can carry out the functions of that office.

So Mr Speaker, I invite you to consider that and give guidance. This is the first time it is happening; I believe this is a novel situation, you are the custodian and the interpreter of the rules, and the person who ensures that it is enforced. So Mr Speaker, I invite you to give us some guidance on this matter.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member for Asawase?

Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka: Mr Speaker, I respectfully disagree with the Majority Leader.

Mr Speaker, when you were doing the report, you had their names, before designation. Supposing it was the Committee on Intelligence, where each member has to swear, would he say that, by change of name, the Leader of Government Business should not be sworn in? You have to swear the oath.

Mr Speaker, yes, I agree that we are masters of our own rules; and for convenience, we can stand down most of the Orders and just take the amendments at a shot. But to assume that you could just walk in, and carry on — Mr Speaker, even though it is not explicitly stated in our rules, in my view, we would be setting a bad precedence.

Mr Speaker, like I said, when the report was being taken, it was Dr Ato Cassiel Ato Baah Forson, Majority Leader; Mr Governs Kwame Agbodza,

Majority Chief Whip. So now, if Mr Mahama Ayariga becomes the Majority Leader, it is a simple process that we need to go back and change. Because if there was supposed to be a swearing in, he would have had to take the oath; he would not just walk into it. Yes, it is not explicit, but I think that looking at our Standing Orders and our practice, this would be the neatest way to do it, rather than to assume that you would just walk in.

Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afeny-Markin): Mr Speaker, first of all, my understanding of the practice of this House, is that, when you make a determination on a matter, a member who is aggrieved, may have to come back to you formally. As far as I am concerned, the application by my Colleague, Mr Annoh-Dompreh, was upheld by you. Be that as it may, since the Leader of Government Business wants to introduce us to some jurisprudence, which in my view, is good for our purpose, because this is a Chamber of debates.

Safe that, his continuous exercise of this right, would lead to the delay of Government Business and we would support him if he wants to delay Government Business; I cautioned him yesterday. Because there are great lawyers and debaters here, who would join him, in this exercise, which may take the whole day. So when Government Business delays, he should not blame the Minority. Because around this time, they should have finished their thing, and then moved on.

2.39 p.m.

Mr Speaker, Alhaji Mubarak Muntaka, took the wind out of my sail, when in his second point, talked about suspension of our rules. The rules recognised situations where we would have such lacuna, and therefore, provided for in Order 3, Suspension of Standing Orders;

With your leave, Mr Speaker, I quote:

- “(1) Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, a Motion for the suspension of an order or a part of an order may be moved without notice with the leave of the House.
- (2) Where the Order or a part of the Order is to be suspended, reasons must be stated prior to the suspension by the mover of the Motion.
- (3) The Speaker shall suspend the Order pursuant to the leave of the House.

So, reading Order 3(1)(2) and (3) together, my humble view, and I respectfully submit in all modesty that the respected Majority Leader, should have come under this to move the House to suspend the rules. We have done this before in the Ministerial nominations that we received. I stood here and moved it on your behalf when we received the first one. We are aware that Mr Speaker may be out of the jurisdiction, we are aware that

Parliament may be going on orientation and all, therefore, should we receive any other communication from the President, we should waive the requirement that Mr Speaker would have to read and refer. It came under Order 3 to mean that all things that would be done must be presumed to be regular. Therefore, we would proceed to vet. This we did. So, the right way to go was to pray, with our leave, for this rule to be suspended.

But, put that aside, the respected Majority Leader has introduced a new argument which with all due respect, I disagree with him. He can never be wrong but I disagree with him. He places some interpretation on Order 216 to say that— at the risk of being repetitive, I shall read it one more time.

- (1) The Business Committee comprises the Leader of Government Business as Chairperson, the Minority Leader as the Ranking Member, the Chief Whips and not more than eleven other Members.

To him, the extent that he has assumed the black chair, the rule of automaticity triggers. Well, I would agree with him that when procedure and prudence clash, prudence must supersede but it does not operate in this context, with the greatest respect because here, we have laid down the procedure, a known one, and that is why you can find solace in Order 3. Therefore, his argument that these provisions are there so there is no requirement for a Motion to be moved; and, that is why, Mr Speaker, rightly supported the respected Minority Chief

Whip. That we enacted a process. It is the reason the letter from his General Secretary did not just get to Mr Speaker's office but a certain procedure was followed. Mr Speaker, read it and if you pay attention to the language of Mr Speaker, when he finished, he now invited the Leaders to initiate the process, whereupon his predecessor came to the dispatch box, read his final message to the House and ushered him in and we congratulated him.

Sir, if this your jurisprudence persists, Government Business would suffer. Do the needful because today is Friday. When we were on this Side, on a Friday like this, you would be saying that you want to go to the Mosque. I do not know what has changed.

Mr Speaker yesterday, I told the Majority Leader that the day that rumour brought it up that he was going to assume the black chair on his Side, one of my researchers told me that she has followed this legislator and his passion for the law is so great that I should get my team to prepare for some legal exercise. It is good but not when your back — look at all these empty seats — *[Laughter]* — just look behind you. So, if you know—Mr Speaker, you remember when I was the Leader of Government Business on occasions where I try to push a certain agenda, you would tell me that look behind you.

Mr Speaker, see how posterity — just look behind you. I am not doing Government Business — *[Interruption]* — I do not have Government Business. I am opposition leader. My business is at

large. Look behind you. You want to pass Alhaji Muntaka today. Alhaji Muntaka, let your Majority Leader know that we agreed to vet you today because of certain exigencies and he is delaying this House and your Members would not keep quiet. They still think that they are in opposition. He should look behind him, how empty the seats are and direct the Majority Chief Whip, Mr Dafeamekpor to get out of the seat. His place is not where he is. This is not the time to be seated in his seat comfortably. Where is Mr Richard Acheampong?

An Hon Member: Ms Doyoe?

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: I would not talk about Ms Doyoe. The two young men are new. They are supposed to start whipping the Members in because even if we are to take the Report, you do not have the numbers and we are going to insist on it. So, end it here, seek the leave, present the Business Committee Report, let us have some discussions on it, Mr Speaker would allow you to adopt it and make sure this Chamber is filled with your Members, then we can do Government Business.

Mr Speaker, I rest my case.

Mr Ayariga: Mr Speaker, I raised the issue in all sincerity, just a matter of jurisprudential interest not because I really want to delay anything but I noticed that we have not really been confronted with a situation like this before and I think that at a more convenient time, we should revisit this.

Going under Order 3 to seek your leave and the leave of the House to bypass any of the Orders and do Business in this House is not a difficult thing to do but this is a matter that Mr Speaker should think about and at a convenient date, give us some indications because your rulings also constitute part of the rules and the Orders of this House and they guide in the implementation of those Orders.

Mr Speaker, having said that, I would seek your leave under Order 3 for us to proceed to have my good self to present the Business Statement for the consideration of the House for adoption to guide Business next week.

Mr Speaker: Hon Members just for your guidance, the Speaker is the Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee and he is also the Chairman of the Committee of Selection. There is good reason for that because he is given the power to interpret and enforce the rules. Earlier, I drew your attention to the various types of permutations that we could have as governance in this country. This Order 216 refers to leader of Government Business. The leader of Government Business does not necessarily mean the Majority Leader and I am sure you can recollect why. Now, we use leader of Government Business; well, that decision is actually not taken by Parliament.

2.49 p.m.

The Government decides who leads Government Business in Parliament. So, we can have a Majority Leader and

a different person being the Leader for Government Business. We are not referring to the individual but rather the position. There is a good reason in the ordinary committees, Members are not called upon to swear an oath when committees are constituted. But if we would realise, in the same Standing Orders, there are some committees that Members are called upon to swear an oath because of the mandate of the committee.

In the case of the Business Committee, Members are not called upon to swear an oath. This Order 216 is referring to the position; so, whoever occupies that position becomes the Chairperson. It is ex-officio position. And so, by the virtue of the fact that Mr Mahama Ayariga is now the occupant of that position, even though, I have not been given any evidence from the Government, I will take it as that because the Government has not objected to him being so, he is the Hon Leader of Government Business and so he chairs the Committee.

Now, the other issue is if the person is not present at the meeting of the Committee, could the person present the Report of the Committee? And my ruling from earlier shows that, yes, the person could present the Report because it could be done through the authority of the Chairperson. So, I was drawing your attention to the fact that because of the failure of the Hon Deputy Majority Leader to seek my leave, and to inform us that he has been authorised or mandated by the Chairperson of the Committee to do so for and on his

behalf, he is not properly clothed to present the Report and that is why I call on any Hon Member of the Committee present to do so. This should be sufficient guide to the House. We do not need to amend any Report. We just need to go by this. And I think we should take it as sufficient guidance. If in the course of the application of the rules, there is any other problem, we will definitely handle it when we get there. But in the meantime, I will permit the Hon Leader of Government Business to present the Report; we can go through it together.

There has been a delegation waiting for me for over 30 minutes, but since we are interested in jurisprudence—it is good for edification, particularly, of a new Parliament. That is why I permitted it. But I will hand over to the Second Deputy Speaker to take the Chair.

2.58 p.m.— [MR SECOND DEPUTY SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Leader of the House?

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Majority Leader/Leader of Government Business (Mr Mahama Ayariga): Mr Speaker, thank you. This is the Report of the Business Committee on the Business of the House for the Third Week ending Friday, 31st January, 2025.

Mr Speaker, the Committee met and it was agreed that there may be Formal Communications by the Rt Hon Speaker; that Hon Ministers of State

may be permitted to make Statements on Government policies pursuant to the Standing Orders; that Hon Members may make Statements pursuant to Order 93; that we also will urge the Committee of Selection to expedite the process of the composition of the various Committees so that business can commence with dispatch in the various Committees. Papers may be laid during the week in accordance with Order 97; Motions may be debated and their consequential Resolutions taken; and we propose to have a joint Caucus meeting on Tuesday, 28th January, 2025, to discuss pertinent issues of concern to Hon Members.

Mr Speaker, in accordance with Order 216(2) and subject to Order 67 of the Standing Orders, the Committee submits its Report to this House for adoption and approval.

Tuesday, 28th January, 2025

Roll Call

National Pledge

Statements

Presentation of Papers

(#) Sixth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

Motions

(#) That this honourable House adopts the Sixth Report of the

Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

Committee sittings

Wednesday, 29th January, 2025

Roll Call

Statements

Presentation of Papers

(a) Seventh Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

(b) Second Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of other Standing and Select Committees.

Motions

(a) That this honourable House adopts the Seventh Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

(b) That this honourable House adopts the Second Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of other Standing and Select Committees.

(c) That this honourable House approves the membership of a

Committee to advise the Speaker on the appointment of four other members of the Parliamentary Service Board.

Committee sittings

Thursday, 30th January, 2025

Roll Call

Statements

Presentation of Papers

(a) Eighth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

(b) Report of Leadership on the constitution of the membership of the Pan- African Parliament.

(c) Report of Leadership on the constitution of the membership of the ECOWAS Parliament.

Motions

(a) That this honourable House adopts the Eighth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

(b) That this honourable House adopts the Report of Leadership on the constitution of the membership of the Pan-African Parliament.

Consequential Resolution

- (c) That this honourable House adopts the Report of Leadership on the constitution of the membership of the ECOWAS Parliament.

Consequential Resolution

Committee sittings

Friday, 31st January, 2025

Roll Call

Statements

Presentation of Papers

Motions

Committee sittings

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Business Statement for the ensuing week has been read to us by the Leader of Government Business. It is now before the House for consideration. If there is anything an Hon Member will like to raise in respect to the Business of the House, the Floor is open now.

Yes, Hon Minority Leader?

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

The Hon Majority Leader and Leader of Government Business has rightly presented to us the Business for

the ensuing week. We are grateful to him for honouring this duty.

Mr Speaker, however, you may recall that his predecessor, Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson, assured the House last week that the issue of violence related to the Ablekuma North parliamentary elections will be taken up. This Side of the House had raised a serious protest on the way and manner the Electoral Commission (EC) was being pounded by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Greater Accra Regional office. In fact, the NDC Regional office, led by its Regional Organiser, led some party members to attack the EC Collation Centre. The EC issued a public statement to condemn the act and pleaded with the police to intervene and protect them. This was the basis of the protest we raised.

Mr Speaker, when the Business of the House is read, it is the responsibility of any Hon Member of this House to raise a matter of national interest for the Hon Leader of Government Business to ferry same to the Government for address. It was on this basis that Dr Forson assured the House that he would take steps to address the matter.

2.59 p.m.

Mr Speaker, as we speak, the Electoral Commission (EC) has not received the necessary protection from the Elections Security Task Force to enable it conclude the coalition and final declaration of the Ablekuma North parliamentary elections.

Mr Speaker, the EC complained of threats to the lives of its staff and the destruction of its properties. I would want my respected Hon Colleague who has just been made a Majority Leader, to take steps in ensuring that Dr George Akuffo Dampare, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) who is the Head of the Elections Security Task Force is able to provide sufficient security to enable the EC to undertake its constitutional mandate.

Mr Speaker, we raise this as a serious democratic matter because it is a blot on our otherwise peaceful democracy. This is supposed to be a 276 Member-Chamber and we are 275. The people of Ablekuma North need a representation and Government must take steps in ensuring that the EC declares the results.

[Some Hon Members of the Minority rose and sang while displaying placards]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Order! Order!

[Some Hon Members of the Minority Side shouted: “no Ablekuma, no Government Business”]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Business Statement as presented to us is hereby adopted.

Yes, Leader, any directive? We have adopted the Business Statement—
[Uproar]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: The Hon Member for the Bosome Freho Constituency—

[Some Hon Members of the Minority Side continued to sing while displaying placards]

3.09 p.m.

[Several Hon Members from the Minority chant “No way! No way!”]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, I suspend Sitting for 30 minutes.

3.15 — *Sitting suspended.*

4.10 p.m. — *Sitting resumed.*

[MR SECOND DEPUTY SPEAKER
IN THE CHAIR]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, Leadership has met and we have taken into consideration all the issues so let me invite the Hon Majority Leader and the Hon Minority Leader to confirm the discussion we have had so we can move on smoothly.

Hon Minority Leader.

Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin): Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, as you rightly said, we have had some engagement on the way forward in this Chamber and we have agreed that the outstanding Business for today must be taken. In view of the assurances that the matters in issue would be ferried to the appropriate quarters, all in the name of democracy for the right thing to be done, Mr

Speaker, that said, I want to assure you, the Chair, and my respected Colleagues to your right that for the rest of the day, we would discharge our democratic duty in this Chamber by supporting Government Business.

I shall conclude, however, by expressing a displeasure on a matter that nearly marred the beauty of our engagement as a Parliament. Mr Speaker, this is a House of brains; a House where we apply knowledge to resolve issues. We do not use brawl to resolve issues. My respected Colleague, Mr Ernest Henry Norgbey, Hon Member of Parliament for Ashaiman, sought permission from his Leaders and I am happy that the respected Hon Majority Leader said no to his request that, “Leader allow us to beat them”. Who are you going to beat? —*[Interruption]*

Mr Speaker, never ever — I want my respected Colleague, Mr Norgbey, to know that never ever should it be that he would open his mouth to say that he would beat somebody in this House. He is gaining notoriety for this. We are all brothers and sisters in this Chamber. When we are unhappy about something, we express that displeasure but we would not attack anybody. We are law-abiding. So, I would plead with my respected friend, Mr Norgbey, that in future, when there are such things, he should be mindful of his utterances. I would not accept it but today because of my engagement with my respected Colleague, who is also my Senior — the Majority Leader remains my Senior and I respect him and the Chair. Our Side would respect their Side all in the interest of Ghana. But this issue of threat, never again should it happen.

Thank you.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Leader.

Majority Leader (Mr Mahama Ayariga): Mr Speaker, thank you very much. My Colleagues on the other Side, the Leadership and our Side have had some discussions and we have been briefed adequately about the concerns that have agitated friends on the other Side. I have committed myself to following up on those issues and I would report back to my friend opposite in due course. I believe that with that understanding, we should proceed to deal with the item numbered 10 on the Order Paper but then, we would want to combine two Reports; that is the fifth and sixth. So we crave your indulgence to suspend the applicable Standing Orders so that he can lay and take the procedural Motions captured in the Addendum Order Paper which is procedural Motion numbered 2 on the Order Paper. But before then, be permitted to lay the Report numbered 6 under item numbered 1 of the Order Paper Addendum.

Mr Speaker, I so move.

Mr Ernest Henry Norgbey —
rose—

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Very well.

No. I am not giving you the floor.

Some Hon Members: Sit down! Sit down! *[Uproar]*

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Order! Order! Hon Members, let me invite you to page 2, item numbered 9 — Motion by the Chairman — Hon Member, first and foremost turn to the Addendum Paper.

The Chairman of the Committee may do the presentation of item numbered 1 on the Addendum Paper.

PAPER

By the Chairman of the Committee

Sixth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Report has been duly laid and the Report is to be distributed to Hon Members.

Yes, we would take item numbered 2 on the Addendum Order Paper together with the item numbered 9 on the main Order Paper.

4.20 p.m.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing Order 104(1)

Chairman of the Committee (Mr Bernard Ahiafor): I beg to *move*

That notwithstanding the provision of Oder 104(1) of the Standing Orders which requires that a Motion shall not

be debated until at least two Sitting days have elapsed after the notice to move the Motion is given, the motion of the adoption of the Fifth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nomination for Appointment as Minister be now moved today.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Motion listed 9 in the Order Paper has been moved by the Chairman of the Committee. Now we are looking for someone to second.

First Deputy Minority Whip (Alhaji Habib Iddrisu): Mr Speaker, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the First Deputy Minority Chief Whip has seconded the Motion.

Question moved and Motion agreed to.

Resolved accordingly.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Now we take Motion numbered 10 on today's Order Paper.

Yes, Chairman of the Committee?

Fifth Report on His Excellency the President's Ministerial Nominations

Mr Ahiafor: Mr Speaker, I beg to *move*

That this honorable House adopts the Fifth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Motions have been moved; is there any seconder? Are you seconding it?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: I wish to second it; however, there is a matter we have to raise. I think we have peace, and we are all right with that. With the Report, many of our Colleagues—*[Interruption]*—Hon Chairman, before you do that—Many of our Colleagues do not have copies of the Report. I want to plead with the Hon Chairman—*[Interruption]*—No, if it is loaded, we have not been told. It is just I, senior.

Mr speaker, in my other world when I was there, I go down to the printing room to facilitate it—*[Interruption]*—It is a fact. I want to plead with our Colleagues. We have first time Members of Parliament (MPs) who want to clear their throat. The Hon Member at the back there has whispered into my ear that he wants to clear his throat. They do not have copies.

Mr Speaker, today is Friday, and we want to help and leave the Chamber as soon as possible. We do not have copies of the Report; the Hon Chairman should signal the Clerks to make copies. This is an important Business, and we have no objection. Indeed, they do not have copies—*[Interruption]*—I am speaking for the Majority Side; they are now sharing.

Mr Speaker, this is just to draw their attention; there is a way the Hon Majority Chief Whip—If I may get the attention of the Hon Majority Chief

Whip. He is yet to be baptised; I have not baptised him. He should go down to the printing room. Without the Reports, we would not second the Motion and they would not speak in support, so he should go down to the printing room and get us copies of the Report. The Hon Majority Leader is seated—These are the things he should do to enable the Leader of the House to function; he is not doing it. Please, get us copies of the Reports.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, please these are very important matters. The Reports have been procured and distributed. Additionally, now, we have gone digital, so the Reports have been uploaded—*[Interruption]*—And every Member—Even the Order Paper is displayed, so this attempt to say that Reports are not available is not fair; the Reports are here.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, please—

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, for the records, I am an environmentalist, and I would have wished that we have soft copies of these Reports. The ICT had given a prior notification that the Reports would be uploaded. All of us, for the benefit of the doubt, look on your screen and check if the Report has been uploaded; the Report has not been uploaded. We want to help them pass the nominees. You are not helping yourselves. The Majority Chief Whip is helping the Hon Majority Leader. The Hon Majority Chief Whip is always seated—*[Interruption]*—It is not there, so get us copies. The Majority

Chief Whip is becoming an armchair Whip.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, are you seconding the Motion?

Yes, Okaikwei Central?

Alhaji Habib Iddrisu: Mr Speaker, I think the Minority Chief Whip has given the indication. Until there is a clear indication from our back that they have the Report, we are not seconding the Motion, and it must be on record that there is nothing on our screens; there is no Report on our screens, so it is not accurate when the Majority Chief Whip says that we have the Report. What we have here is just the Order Paper, the Business Statement and nothing more. So, to what are we supporting the Motion? We do not have copies of the Report.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: I believe we have enough Reports now.

Yes, Hon Member for Okaikwei Central?

Mr Patrick Yaw Boamah (NPP — Okaikwei Central): I beg to second the Motion for the adoption of the Report of the Appointments Committee on the President's Appointment of the following: Mr Ali Adolf as the Minister-designate for the Northern Region, Mr John Kwadwo Gyapong for the Oti Region, Mr James Gunu for the Volta Region, and Ms Rita Akosua Awatey for the Eastern Region.

Mr Speaker—

Mr Ahiafor: Mr Speaker, I believe when the procedure is set down, we need to follow the procedure. I have move the Motion and I present the Committee's Report before they come in to second and then support the adoption of the Report. So, may I be permitted to present the Report?

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Go ahead; I thought you have done that.

Mr Ahiafor: Very well.

Mr Speaker, with the permission, I shall present the Report, and I urge the *Hansard* to capture the entire Report.

Fifth Report of the Appointments Committee On His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers

1.0 Introduction

On Thursday, 16th January, 2025, H.E. the President, John Dramani Mahama, pursuant to Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution, communicated to Parliament the nomination of the following:

- i. Mr Ali Adolf G. John as Minister-designate for the Northern Region;
- ii. Mr John Kwadwo Gyapong as Minister-designate for the Oti Region;

- iii. Mr James Gunu as Minister-designate for the Volta Region;
- iv. Ms Rita Akosua Awatey as Minister-designate for the Eastern Region; and
- v. Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka as Minister-designate for the Interior.

The Rt Hon Speaker, in accordance with Order 217 of the Standing Orders of Parliament, referred the nominees to the Appointments Committee for consideration and report.

2.0 Reference Documents

The Committee referred to the under-listed documents during the consideration of the nominees:

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- ii. The Standing Orders of Parliament; and
- iii. The Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of the nominees.

3.0 Consideration of the Referral

Pursuant to Standing Order 217(10), the names of the nominees were published in the newspapers for the attention of the public. The publication also requested memoranda from the public regarding the nominees. The Committee subsequently sought and obtained Confidential Reports on the nominees from the Ghana Police

Service and the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB). The Committee also requested that the nominees submit tax status reports from the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

The Committee held a public hearing on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025, to consider the nominations. The nominees subscribed to the Oath of a Witness before the Committee and answered questions from Hon Members. The nominees were asked questions relating to their curriculum vitae, eligibility, competencies, issues of national concern, and those pertaining to the offices to which they have been nominated.

The Committee, after its deliberations, reports on the nominees as follows:

MR ALI ADOLF G. JOHN

MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE NORTHERN REGION

4.0 Background

Mr Ali Adolf G. John was born in 1965 in Bimbilla in the Northern Region of Ghana. He completed his primary education in 1977, and middle school education in 1981, both at the Central Primary and Middle School in Bimbilla. He proceeded to the St Joseph Technical Institute in Saboba for his secondary education from 1981 to 1984.

In pursuit of higher education, Mr John attended the then Tamale Polytechnic from 1987 to 1989. He later

advanced his studies at the University of Education, Kumasi Campus, where he earned a Bachelor of Education in 2013 and a Masters in Technology in 2014.

Mr John began his professional journey at the Saboba L/A Primary School as a classroom teacher from 1985 to 1987, and then at the St Joseph Technical Institute in Saboba as the Sports Master from 1993 to 1999. He subsequently became the Head of the Building and Construction Department, and later served as the Senior House Master from 2001 to 2005. He was then appointed the Desk Officer at the Saboba District Education Office for the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) from 2005 to 2006. Between 2006 and 2008, he worked as a Circuit Supervisor in the Chereponi District of the Ghana Education Service (GES).

Mr John's political roles began in 1992 when he served as the Financial Secretary of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) for the Saboba Constituency, a position he held until 1996. From 1996 to 2000, he served as the NDC Organiser for the Saboba Constituency. His political journey continued as the Constituency Secretary for the NDC from 2000 to 2004, during which he also became a member of the NDC National Youth Working Committee. He went on to become chairman of the NDC in the Saboba Constituency from 2004 to 2008.

In addition to his political roles, Mr John served as the elected Assembly Member for the Kpalba Electoral Area

from 1998 to 2002. From 2008 to 2016, he served as the District Chief Executive for the Saboba District. His political influence grew further when he was appointed the Acting Northern Regional Chairman of the NDC from 9th September to 24th November, 2022. Since then, he has served as the substantive Northern Regional Chairman of the NDC in the Region.

Mr John aspires to be part of a new generation of African leaders committed to serving their people with integrity and accountability. His personal interests include reading newspapers and listening to gospel music.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE NOMINEE AND HIS RESPONSES

4.1 Addressing the Issue of *Kayayei* (Head Porters) and Rural-Urban Migration

When asked about his policies to address the challenges faced by the *kayayei* (female head porters) and associated issues such as teenage pregnancy and rural-urban migration, the Nominee emphasised the need for comprehensive and sustainable solutions. He acknowledged the numerous challenges faced by the *kayayei* and underscored the pressing need to implement policies that address the root causes of their migration to urban areas.

The Nominee proposed the establishment of apprenticeship programmes in the Northern Region, which will focus on skills such as

hairdressing, dressmaking, and petty trading. These training centres will aim to attract youth who have migrated to urban areas like Accra to return to their communities. It will offer them opportunities to acquire valuable skills and improve their livelihoods. He emphasised that locating these training centres in the Northern Region, instead of urban centres, would help tackle the root causes of migration while fostering development within the Region.

To ensure inclusivity, the Nominee proposed extending these apprenticeship programmes to include males, thereby providing equal access to skills training and job opportunities. He stressed that the provision of proper training is crucial to equipping the *kayayei* with the necessary skills to excel in their respective trades. To support the initiative, he plans to motivate and incentivise ‘master trainers’ to encourage and guide trainees effectively.

The Nominee also highlighted the importance of implementing robust monitoring mechanisms to ensure the success of the apprenticeship programmes. He stated that these measures will include preventing trainees from abandoning the programme and returning to urban areas like Accra without completing their training. It will also include preventing the misuse of the resources provided such as tools and equipment. Regarding the sustainability of the initiative, the Nominee assured the Committee that the existing training centres and hostels established by the previous Government in Accra will not

be closed down. Instead, he proposed reviewing and refining these policies to align with national interests while prioritising the long-term development of the Northern Region. He reaffirmed his commitment to creating a brighter future for the youth in the Region by providing training, job opportunities, and fostering economic growth.

Ultimately, the Nominee’s vision is to make the Northern Region an attractive and prosperous place for the youth to live and work, thereby reducing the incentive for rural-urban migration and addressing the challenges associated with it.

4.2 Initiatives to Improve the Economy and Alleviate Poverty among the Youth of the Northern Region

When asked about his initiatives to improve the economy and alleviate poverty among the youth in the Northern Region, the Nominee stated that the NDC has outlined specific strategies aimed at addressing these challenges. A key component of the plan is the establishment of mechanised agricultural centres, as promised in the NDC Manifesto. These centres will provide training and resources to empower the youth to engage in mechanised agriculture, with the overarching goal of transforming the Northern Region into Ghana’s food basket.

The Nominee emphasised that attracting investment into the agricultural sector is critical for the success of poverty

alleviation efforts. To this end, he assured the Committee that all districts in the Region will be encouraged to adopt mechanised agriculture. This approach is expected to enhance agricultural productivity, bolster food security, and create sustainable employment opportunities for the youth. By promoting mechanised agriculture, the Government aims to reduce poverty and improve the living standards of the youth in the Northern Region.

4.3 Enhancing Irrigation for Farms in the Northern Region

When the Nominee was asked about his plans to enhance irrigation for farms, he lamented the absence of irrigation dams along the Oti River and expressed his commitment to addressing this gap by prioritising the construction of irrigation dams. He highlighted that access to reliable water for irrigation is a critical factor in ensuring the success of farms in the Northern Region.

The Nominee explained that the current inadequate irrigation infrastructure poses significant challenges, including crop failures and reduced agricultural productivity. To tackle this issue, the construction of irrigation dams along the Oti River will provide a sustainable water source, enabling farmers to cultivate their land throughout the year, regardless of rainfall patterns. This initiative is expected to improve crop yields, enhance food security, and increase the income levels of farmers in the Region.

Additionally, the Nominee noted that developing irrigation infrastructure will reduce the Region's reliance on rainfed agriculture, mitigating the risks associated with climate change. This will ensure that farmers have a stable and reliable source of water for their crops, safeguarding their livelihoods and fostering agricultural resilience.

Through strategic investment in irrigation infrastructure, the Nominee aims to transform the Northern Region into a reliable food basket for Ghana, driving agricultural growth and economic development.

4.4 Addressing Post-Harvest Losses

When asked about his plans to address the issue of post-harvest losses, the Nominee highlighted the importance of a multifaceted approach, with reliable transportation as a critical component. He stated that mitigating post-harvest losses would require close collaboration with the Hon Minister for Transport to establish an efficient and well-maintained transportation network capable of swiftly conveying agricultural produce from farms to markets and storage facilities.

To achieve this, the Nominee outlined plans to engage in lobbying efforts to secure investments in the Region's transportation infrastructure. This will involve working with key stakeholders, including Government agencies, private sector entities, and local communities to identify priority areas for transportation upgrades. A primary focus will be on improving the

condition and accessibility of rural roads, which are often in poor condition and become impassable during the rainy season.

By upgrading these roads, farmers will be able to transport their produce to markets more efficiently, reducing the risk of spoilage and losses. Additionally, improved transportation infrastructure will enhance the overall efficiency of the agricultural supply chain, creating a more reliable and sustainable system for farmers and buyers alike.

The Nominee assured the Committee that his efforts to improve transportation services and infrastructure will significantly reduce post-harvest losses, thereby boosting agricultural productivity and contributing to economic growth in the Region.

4.5 Addressing Witch Camps in the Northern Region

When questioned about the phenomenon of witch camps in the Northern Region, the Nominee acknowledged the pressing nature of this human rights concern. He noted that these camps, where individuals who are often elderly persons, accused of witchcraft are detained and subjected to inhumane treatment, represent a serious violation of human dignity and justice. The Nominee underscored the urgency of addressing this issue, given its disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, particularly the elderly.

To tackle this complex challenge, the Nominee outlined plans to adopt a collaborative and culturally sensitive approach. He proposed partnering with traditional rulers, community leaders, and other stakeholders to engage in dialogue aimed at disbanding the camps and reintegrating accused individuals into their families and communities. This process, he emphasised, will require a nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics underpinning witchcraft accusations, including poverty, lack of education, and entrenched superstitions.

The Nominee also highlighted the need for a comprehensive support system for victims of witchcraft accusations. This would include counselling, medical care, and economic empowerment programmes to help victims rebuild their lives and regain their dignity. Such measures, he explained, will promote a culture of tolerance and understanding within affected communities, while addressing the root causes of the problem.

In summary, the Nominee reiterated his commitment to creating a society where the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected and protected, regardless of their age, gender, or social status. His ultimate goal is to eliminate the practice of witch camps and foster an environment of inclusion and humanity in the Northern Region.

4.6 Promoting Peace and Harmony among Tribes in the Northern Region

The Nominee assured the Committee of his commitment to promoting peace and harmony among all tribes in the Northern Region, recognising this as a pressing concern. The Region is home to a rich diversity of tribes, which include the Dagombas, Nanumbas, Basares, and Konkombas, each with its unique culture and traditions. He stated the importance of fostering unity and inclusivity in such a culturally diverse Region.

To address concerns about potential favouritism towards specific tribes, the Nominee highlighted two key strategies. Firstly, he pledged to acknowledge and celebrate the cultural diversity of the Region while expressing his unwavering commitment to preserving and promoting the traditions of all tribes. He plans to achieve this through active engagement with leaders of respective tribes and their communities, listening to their concerns, and addressing their unique needs.

Secondly, the Nominee outlined concrete steps to promote inter-tribal understanding and cooperation. These steps would include initiatives such as cultural exchange programmes, joint economic development projects, and the establishment of conflict resolution mechanisms. By fostering greater understanding and collaboration among the tribes, the Nominee seeks to create an environment of peace and harmony that promotes inclusivity, equity, and cultural preservation.

The Nominee's vision is to build a Northern Region where all tribes coexist in mutual respect, contributing to the Region's development and cultural richness.

4.7 Addressing Social Amenity Challenges in the Northern Region

When asked about the challenges faced by the Northern Region in terms of social amenities, the Nominee expressed his awareness of the numerous issues plaguing the area. He highlighted the deplorable state of roads, schools, and homes, as well as the lack of potable water and adequate health facilities, emphasising his determination to tackle these pressing concerns.

To address these challenges, the Nominee outlined plans to lobby for the establishment of health facilities and boreholes, alongside the construction of new schools to enhance education infrastructure. He assured the Committee that his commitment is not rooted in empty campaign promises or sloganeering but reflects a genuine resolve to drive meaningful and sustainable change in the Region.

The Nominee intends to work closely with DCEs, empower them to address security challenges and foster a sense of safety and stability within their communities. Recognising the pivotal role of traditional leaders in maintaining social cohesion, he plans to engage with chiefs to prioritise peace and security in the Region.

His ultimate goal is to live among the people to better understand their needs and aspirations, working tirelessly to improve their lives and restore their dignity and hope. The Nominee envisions creating a brighter future for the people of the Northern Region, ensuring a legacy of progress and stability for generations to come while dispelling any perceptions of combative governance.

4.8 Addressing Delayed Regional Projects

Reports by *JoyNews* allegedly attributed to the Nominee, highlighted his criticism of projects initiated by the previous Government, where he mentioned that sod-cutting ceremonies were held but the projects did not start or were not completed. In his explanation, the Nominee cited the delayed Yendi Water Project and the Savelugu-Walewale Road as notable examples of such projects that have yet to show visible progress in the Northern Region.

The Nominee underscored the urgent need to address the Yendi Water Project which is a long-standing issue for the community, where many residents still lack access to clean and safe water. He stressed the importance of prioritising this essential project to ensure that the people of Yendi can finally access this basic necessity, which is fundamental to improving their quality of life.

He also expressed concern over the incomplete Savelugu-Walewale Road, a

critical project intended to enhance connectivity and facilitate trade within the Region. Despite the sod-cutting ceremony led by the former Vice President to mark the commencement of Phase I, the project has made little progress. The Nominee highlighted the importance of sustained commitment, funding, and follow-through to ensure the timely completion of such projects and their effective utilisation.

The Nominee emphasised that addressing these stalled projects is essential for meeting the needs of the affected communities and ensuring that public resources are utilised efficiently. He assured the Committee of his dedication to advocating for the completion of these projects to foster development and improve the livelihoods of people in the Northern Region.

4.9 Bridging the Perceived Gap between District Chief Executives (DCEs) and Members of Parliament (MPs)

The Nominee was asked about the perceived gap between DCEs and MPs in the Northern Region and how he intends to address this long-standing issue. He acknowledged that this divide, often referred to as a “cold war,” has created inefficiencies in governance and hindered the effective utilisation of resources, including the MPs’ share of the Common Fund.

To bridge this gap, the Nominee pledged to take proactive measures aimed at fostering collaboration and

transparency between DCEs and MPs. He highlighted that the mismanagement and inefficiencies associated with the MPs' share of the Common Fund have often deprived beneficiaries of their entitlements, further deepening mistrust and disconnection between these key stakeholders. The Nominee committed to ensuring that the Fund is utilised efficiently, avoiding delays and ensuring that benefits reach the intended recipients.

The Nominee's strategy is grounded in proactive issue resolution, preventing problems from escalating into confusion or conflict. He emphasised that the existing divide between DCEs and MPs is counterproductive and undermines governance in the Region. By addressing the root causes of this mistrust and ensuring better coordination, the Nominee aims to create a more collaborative environment where DCEs and MPs can work together effectively for the benefit of their communities.

The Nominee mentioned that his ultimate goal is to foster unity and shared purpose among these leaders to enhance development outcomes and improve the overall governance framework in the Northern Region.

4.10 Addressing the Water Crisis in the Northern Region

In response to the issue of water crisis in the Northern Region, the Nominee expressed his commitment to collaborate with the Minister for Works, Housing and Water Resources to provide sustainable solutions for the

Region. This partnership aims to develop effective strategies to improve the availability of water and tackle the unique challenges faced by communities in the area.

The Nominee acknowledged that water scarcity is a critical issue in the Northern Region and pledged to find innovative solutions to ensure that all communities have reliable access to clean, potable water. He emphasised that access to water is essential not only for health and well-being but also for economic development across the Region.

Furthermore, the Nominee plans to leverage assurances made by President Mahama during his campaign, specifically regarding the Tamale water problem. He reiterated the President's commitment to addressing the issue once he assumes office, adding that this initiative will be a priority under his leadership.

By addressing water scarcity comprehensively, the Nominee aims to enhance the quality of life for residents in the Northern Region and drive broader economic and social progress.

4.11 Addressing Chieftaincy Disputes in the Northern Region

Responding to the issue of chieftaincy disputes in the Northern Region, the Nominee outlined his strategic approach to resolving such conflicts, which have historically led to violence and instability in the Region. He emphasised that his roadmap is centred on promoting peace, security, and proactive conflict resolution.

The Nominee acknowledged the critical role of ensuring that DCEs are proactive in addressing potential security threats before they escalate into full-blown disputes. He prioritised the swift resolution of all chieftaincy-related conflicts, recognising that prolonged disputes not only further fuel tensions but also hinder the Region's overall development.

To change the perception of the Northern Region as a combative area, the Nominee emphasised the importance of fostering a culture of coexistence and peace among its diverse communities. Drawing from his personal experience of living among the Nanumbas, Dagombas, and other tribes in the Region, he plans to work closely with traditional chiefs to build strong relationships and promote mutual understanding.

In addition, the Nominee committed to supporting the Regional House of Chiefs, the National House of Chiefs, and other institutions that play pivotal roles in resolving chieftaincy disputes. By providing the necessary resources and collaborating with these institutions, he aims to create a more peaceful and stable environment in the Northern Region.

The Nominee's vision is to transform the Region into a model of peaceful coexistence, where diverse communities work together to achieve sustained development.

5.0 Recommendation

The Committee unanimously recommends to the House, by **CONSENSUS**, the approval of the nomination of **MR ALI ADOLF G. JOHN** as Minister for the Northern Region.

6.0 MR JOHN KWADWO GYAPONG

MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE OTI REGION

6.1 Background

Mr John Kwadwo Gyapong was born on 22nd December, 1950 at Kadjebi in the Oti Region of Ghana. He began his education at Kadjebi Secondary School where he obtained his GCE Ordinary Level Certificate from 1964 to 1969. He then pursued his GCE Advanced Level at Kpando Secondary School from 1970 to 1972. Mr Gyapong continued his academic journey at the University of Cape Coast, earning a degree in Bachelor of Science in Education from 1974 to 1977.

Mr Gyapong's professional career commenced with his national service at Kadjebi Secondary School from 1978 to 1979. He subsequently became a science tutor in the same school from 1980 to 1982. He later joined Mawuli Secondary School in Ho as a science master, serving from 1982 to 1984. Mr Gyapong ventured into the private sector, becoming the Managing Director of Okusukese Company Limited in 1985, a role he continues to hold to this

day. Between 1985 and 1988, he also served as the Managing Director of Paymaster Banker to Banker Company.

In addition to his private sector engagements, Mr Gyapong represented farmers in the Volta Region as a member of the Consultative Assembly from 1990 to 1991. He further deepened his commitment to rural development by founding and serving as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Rural Action for the Poor, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), from 1996 to date. He is also the CEO of the Rural Action Transport Society Limited and Managing Director of Kwapeadu Company Limited, and has held these positions since 2010.

Mr Gyapong's political career began with his election as the Member of Parliament for the Akan Constituency, serving two consecutive terms from 1993 to 2000. After losing his bid for a third term, he made a successful comeback, representing the Constituency in the Fourth Parliament from 2005 to 2008. During his time in Parliament, Mr Gyapong served on numerous committees, including Lands and Forestry; Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs; Public Accounts, and Constitutional and Legal Affairs. He also served as the Ranking Member of the Privileges Committee.

In the realm of party politics, Mr Gyapong has held various leadership positions in the National Democratic Congress (NDC). He served as the Regional Youth Organiser for Volta Region from 1992 to 1998 and the

Regional Director of Elections from 2010 to 2012. He was the Chairman for the Akan Constituency for two consecutive terms, spanning from 1992 to 1998. From 2014 to 2019, he served as the Volta Regional Chairman of the NDC and subsequently became the Oti Regional Chairman of the Party in 2019.

Mr Gyapong is a seasoned leader with over three decades of experience in politics, governance, and business development. He has expertise in communication, public relations, and international relations, with a strong track record in diplomacy and results-driven leadership.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE NOMINEE AND HIS RESPONSES

6.2 Role of the Regional Minister

In response to a question about the role of a Regional Minister, the Nominee explained that the Regional Minister serves as the President's representative in the Region. The responsibilities of the Regional Minister include coordinating and directing the administrative machinery within the Region. Additionally, the Regional Minister supervises the performance of District Chief Executives (DCEs) and provides reports on their activities to the President.

6.3 Youth Empowerment through Agro-Processing

Addressing the subject of youth empowerment, the Nominee pledged to engage stakeholders in establishing

processing factories for key crops produced in the Region, including cocoa, ginger, cassava, and yam. He expressed confidence that these initiatives will significantly boost the Region's economy by creating employment opportunities for the youth and fostering economic growth.

6.4 Uplifting Agriculture in the Region

In response to a question on measures to enhance agriculture in the Region, the Minister-designate assured the Committee of his plans to introduce scientific farming methods. This, he said would include leveraging the Oti River and the Volta Lake for irrigation purposes to boost agricultural productivity. He indicated that these measures will encourage the youth to take up farming, ultimately increasing the Region's economic fortunes.

The Nominee further emphasised his intention to collaborate with strategic partners to establish an industry for processing cocoa grown in the Region. He highlighted that this initiative will create increased job opportunities, thereby reducing rural-urban migration and fostering sustainable development in the Region.

6.5 Enhancing the Financial Capacity of MMDAs

On the subject of building the financial capacity of Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to promote local economic development, the Nominee stated his

intention to collaborate with development partners to secure financial support for the Assemblies. Additionally, he pledged to educate the public on the importance of paying taxes, fees, and property rates, emphasising that this is crucial for generating revenue to fund local development initiatives.

The Nominee acknowledged the reluctance of many residents to pay property rates, attributing it to the perceived lack of quality services from the Assemblies. He assured the Committee that he would work towards improving the efficiency and accountability of the MMDAs to build public trust and enhance compliance with tax obligations.

6.6 Addressing the Conflict in Nkwanta

When the conflict in Nkwanta came up at the vetting, the Nominee indicated that he would consult the Regional Coordinating Council, the Regional Security Council, chiefs and stakeholders on the way forward for Nkwanta. He intends to set up a Conflict Resolution Committee to initiate dialogue with stakeholders to mitigate the situation.

6.7 Improving Connectivity in the Oti Region

When asked about his plans to connect the regional capital to other parts of the Region and alleviate the pressure on the ferry, the Nominee proposed the construction of a bridge

over the Oti River between Dambai and Krachi as a sustainable solution. He lamented the challenges faced by the people in the Oti Region when the pontoon boat breaks down, making travels difficult and disrupting economic activities.

On road infrastructure, the Nominee expressed his intention to collaborate closely with the Minister for Roads and Highways to improve the Region's road network. He emphasised that better connectivity would enhance mobility, facilitate trade, and improve the overall quality of life for residents in the Oti Region.

6.8 Managing the Cultural Diversity of the Region

In response to how he intends to manage the cultural diversity of the Oti Region, the Nominee stated that he would prioritise frequent engagements with residents through town hall meetings at the district level. He emphasised the importance of dialogue and education in fostering peace and unity among the diverse communities in the Region.

The Nominee highlighted that by promoting the value of harmony and collaboration, development would be enhanced, and conflict would be rendered unattractive. He is confident that these initiatives would create a peaceful and cohesive environment conducive to the Region's growth.

6.9 Youth Development

Addressing the matter of youth development, the Nominee acknowledged that the Regional Minister does not have a dedicated budget for such initiatives. Consequently, he emphasised the need to advise all District Assemblies to prioritise and take proactive measures in building the capacity of the youth. He stressed that empowering the youth should be considered a critical component of the Assemblies' development agenda.

6.10 Legacy and Vision for the Oti Region

The Nominee outlined his vision for the Oti Region focusing on its development and the improvement of key sectors such as education, health, and road infrastructure. He expressed his hope that the promise made by the former President to construct a bridge over the Oti River to connect Dambai and Krachi would be revisited and realised.

Additionally, the Nominee called on the private sector to invest in transportation to enhance connectivity within the Region. He emphasised that increased accessibility will boost business activities, attract investment, and contribute significantly to the socio-economic growth of the Oti Region.

6.11 Recommendation

The Committee recommends to the House by **CONSENSUS** the approval of the nomination of **MR JOHN KWADWO GYAPONG** as the Oti Regional Minister.

7.0 MR JAMES GUNU

MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE VOLTA REGION

7.1 Background

Mr James Gunu was born on 21st September, 1972. He began his primary education in Okajakrom, Xikpo, Nkomya Tepo, and Ntunda between 1979 and 1988 before attending Supom L/A Middle School in Afram Plains, where he obtained his Middle School Leaving Certificate in 1990. He furthered his education at the Kpando Technical Institute and Takoradi Business Technical College, acquiring certificates in Block Laying & Concreting Craft (1994) and Advanced Block Laying & Concreting (1997). He also obtained Part One and Part Two Construction Certificates from the Takoradi Business Technical College and Takoradi Polytechnic in 1996 and 1998, respectively.

Furthering his education, Mr Gunu earned a Diploma in Journalism from the Correspondence School of Journalism, Kumasi, in 2003. He pursued a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies (Journalism) at the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ), graduating in 2016. He later earned a Master of Arts in Development Communication in 2018, also from GIJ, and a Master of Arts in Local Government Administration and Organisation from the Institute of Local Government Studies in 2019.

The Nominee has undertaken various professional training programmes, earning

certificates in Project Management (2011) and Corporate Governance (2012) from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA). He holds an International Senior Executive Certificate in Governance and Political Leadership from the Graduate School of Governance and Leadership (GSGL). In 2015, he obtained certificates in Effective Public Speaking and Communication Strategy and Advanced Public Relations from the GIJ. Additionally, he earned a Certificate in Management Skills Enrichment for Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in 2015, and a Certificate in Political Leadership and Party Organisation from the Ghana Institute of Social Democracy in 2018.

Mr Gunu did his national service at the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (1999–2000) and Ahamansu Roman Catholic Junior High School (1994–1995). He worked as a freelance journalist from 2000 to 2010 and later served as Manager of Glory Oil Fuel Station in Sokode-Lokoe from 2010 to 2013. He also held the role of District Chief Executive (DCE) for Akatsi.

The Nominee has held numerous leadership and political positions, including Chairman of the Project Planning Committee for the National Service Personnel Association (1998–1999), Chairman of the Civic Education Club at the National Commission on Civic Education (1997–1998), Secretary of TEIN at Takoradi Polytechnic (2001–2002), and President of the Volta Region Students Association (VORSA)

(1998–1999). Politically, he served as NDC Branch Chairman in Takoradi (2000–2003), and as Effia Kwesimintsim Constituency Treasurer (2003–2007). He was a member of the Akatsi South and North Campaign Team in 2012 and a founding member of Friends of Doe Adjaho (2010–2012). In 2018, he was elected Volta Regional Secretary of the NDC.

Mr Gunu has also participated in notable international conferences, including the World Water Week Celebration in Stockholm, Sweden (2013), and the Africa Water Week Celebration in Dakar, Senegal (2014). Locally, he has attended the Ninth and Tenth Annual Internal Audit Forums in Accra.

The Nominee is married and enjoys reading, sports, and tourism.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE NOMINEE AND HIS RESPONSES

7.2 Alleged Politically-motivated Attack on an Honourable Member of Parliament

In response to an allegation regarding a politically-motivated attack on an Hon Member of Parliament in the Region, the Nominee stated that he was not aware of the specific incident or record being referred to and could not recall any details related to the matter.

7.3 Ensuring Safety and Security in the Region

The Committee sought assurance from the Nominee regarding the safety

and security of the Region. In his response, the Nominee acknowledged that ensuring safety was a primary responsibility, both in his capacity as Regional Minister and as Chairperson of the Regional Security Council (REGSEC). He assured the Committee of his commitment to collaborate with traditional leaders, Assembly Members, District Chief Executives, and Members of Parliament to establish early warning systems aimed at addressing safety concerns and maintaining peace in the Region. The Nominee emphasised that sustainable development cannot thrive in areas that lack peace and security.

7.4 Protecting the Region's Coastal Belt and Addressing Tidal Waves

In response to a question about his plans to protect the Region's coastal belt, the Nominee stated that if confirmed, he would take on that responsibility and address the issue as the Regional Minister. He assured the Committee of his commitment to working closely with relevant sector ministers, particularly the Ministry of Works, Housing, and Water Resources, to develop effective and sustainable solutions for the protection of the coastal belt.

Additionally, when the Committee enquired about his strategies for addressing the tidal waves that have significantly impacted many coastal communities in the Region, the Nominee reaffirmed his dedication to collaborate with sector Ministers. He emphasised the importance of safeguarding both the coastal belt and

the affected communities to prevent further destruction and ensure the safety and livelihoods of the residents.

7.5 Promoting Tourism in the Region

When asked about plans to promote tourism in the Volta Region, the Nominee highlighted the vast tourism potential of the Region, citing attractions such as the Wli Waterfalls, Ave-Dakpa Crocodile Resort, Tafi Atome Monkey Sanctuary, and the Region's scenic topography. He affirmed his commitment to leveraging these assets to boost tourism in the Region.

The Nominee noted that it is a fortunate coincidence that the Minister for Tourism, Creative Arts, and Culture is from the Volta Region, and he described her as being noticeably passionate about tourism. He pledged to work closely with her, emphasising that her deep connection to the Region would make her willing to assist in implementing measures to enhance tourism.

Additionally, the Nominee expressed his intention to liaise with the Ministry of Roads and Highways to address the poor road networks that lead to these tourist sites, recognising that improved accessibility is key to promoting tourism. He assured the Committee that he would collaborate with the Regional Coordinating Council and relevant Ministries to develop and execute comprehensive strategies aimed at making the Volta Region a premier tourist destination.

7.6 Boosting Internally-Generated Funds (IGFs) in District Assemblies

In response to a question on plans to enhance IGF in District Assemblies (DAs) within the Region, the Nominee emphasised the pivotal role of DAs as the shock absorbers for local governance, particularly in the realms of political and economic activities, as well as participatory democracy.

He asserted the need to strengthen the capacity of DAs in programme planning, budgeting, and implementation to enable them to optimise revenue generation. The Nominee further highlighted the importance of District Chief Executives (DCEs) adopting strategic and innovative approaches, which would empower them to think outside the box and enhance revenue collection effectively.

To ensure sustainable IGF improvement, the Nominee proposed the creation of comprehensive revenue registers to identify and task people to all potential revenue-generating areas. By systematically tapping into these resources, he believes the Assemblies can significantly increase their financial capacity to meet the development needs of their respective districts.

7.7 Addressing Complaints on Fund Management between DCEs and MPs

When questioned about addressing persistent complaints and fund management issues between DCEs and MPs, the Nominee emphasised the

importance of fostering dialogue and collaboration between the two parties.

He proposed engaging both DCEs and MPs in constructive discussions to highlight the shared goal of driving development for the benefit of their constituents. By facilitating these engagements, the Nominee believes that both parties would come to understand that they are working towards the same objectives, ultimately promoting mutual respect and cooperation.

This approach, according to the Nominee, would help resolve conflicts, align their efforts, and ensure efficient and harmonious fund management, which is critical for delivering on development goals at the local level.

7.8 Burning of NDC Office in Ho Central

When questioned about the burning of an NDC office in Ho Central which is allegedly linked to the dissatisfaction over ministerial appointments in the current Government, the Nominee acknowledged his awareness of the incident. He informed the Committee that the matter was under investigation by the relevant authorities.

The Nominee assured the Committee of his commitment to reviewing the investigative report once it is completed, and promised to take appropriate action based on its findings to address the issue and prevent similar incidents in the future.

7.9 Plans to Support Tomato Farmers in the Region

In response to enquiries about his plans to assist tomato farmers in preserving their produce and achieving profitability, the Nominee highlighted his commitment to addressing the challenges faced by these farmers. He pledged to collaborate with the relevant sector Ministers and engage MPs to attract investors to the Region.

The Nominee emphasised the need to integrate the 24-Hour Economy Policy into the Region to create more job opportunities for the youth and put measures in place to support especially, tomato farmers in the Region. He acknowledged the current inadequacies in market access and processing facilities, which result in farmers selling their produce at low prices, often to their disadvantage.

To mitigate these challenges, the Nominee proposed initiatives to enhance market conditions, procure processing infrastructure, and provide farmers with the necessary tools to maximise their investments and ensure long-term profitability.

7.10 Resignation from NDC Volta Regional Secretary Position

In response to a query about when he will resign from his position as the NDC Regional Secretary, the Nominee clarified that it is part of a transition process. He assured the Committee that if approved, he would fully focus on his role as the Regional Minister and work

for the benefit of all residents in the Region, regardless of political affiliations.

7.11 Representation of the Region in National Appointments

The Committee enquired about the number of MPs from the Region's 18 constituencies, who have been nominated by the President for positions in his Administration. The Nominee stated that as appointments and nominations are still ongoing, he could not provide an exact figure at the moment. However, he highlighted some of the nominations, mentioning Mr Kwame Govers Agbodza as the new Hon Minister for Roads and Highways, among others. He expressed optimism that the Region would receive adequate representation in the NDC Government.

7.12 Collaboration to Improve Regional Road Infrastructure

When asked about plans to collaborate with the Minister for Roads and Highways to improve the road network in the Region, the Nominee expressed confidence in the Minister's commitment to road infrastructure development. He highlighted the Minister's proven passion for advancing road projects and noted that being a native of the Region, it is expected that the Minister would be deliberate and proactive in prioritising the improvement of road infrastructure in the Volta Region. The Nominee assured the Committee of his readiness to work closely with the Minister to ensure significant progress in addressing the Region's road network challenges.

8.0 Recommendation

The Committee recommends to the House by **CONSENSUS**, the approval of the nomination of **MR JAMES GUNU** as the Volta Regional Minister.

9.0 MS RITA AKOSUA AWATEY

MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR THE EASTERN REGION

9.1 Background

Ms Rita Akosua Awatey was born in Ghana and has built a distinguished career in education, leadership, and public service. She had her secondary school education at Yilo Krobo Secondary Commercial School, where she obtained her GCE 'O' Level Certificate in 1988. She then attended the Presbyterian Training College, earning a 3-year post-secondary teaching certificate in 1994. Continuing her education, she obtained a Diploma in Home Science in 2002 and later a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Psychology from the University of Ghana in 2015. In 2020, Ms Awatey earned a Master of Philosophy in Leadership from the University of Professional Studies, Accra. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Migration Studies at the University of Ghana, with expected graduation in 2028.

Ms Awatey has an extensive background in teaching, having served as a tutor at various schools, including SRA Presby Junior High School (1995–2000), St. Peters Catholic Junior High School (2002–2007), and Yilo Krobo

Senior High School (2010–2017). In addition to her teaching career, she is the Director of LARIT School and serves as the Executive Director of the African Women's Forum, a role that demonstrates her commitment to empowering women and promoting gender equality.

With regard to political leadership, Ms Awatey has played several roles. She served as the chairperson of the Social Services subcommittee in the Yilo Krobo Municipal Assembly and also served as an Assembly Member of the same Assembly. She has also been a Board Member of Kloagogo Senior High School, a Presiding Member of the Yilo Krobo Municipal Assembly, and a Women's Caucus Representative of the National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana (NALAG). Ms Awatey has been actively involved with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) Party, serving as a co-opted member of the Yilo Krobo Constituency Executive and as the Women Organiser for the Constituency. Currently, she holds the position of Deputy Eastern Regional Women Organiser of the NDC, a role she has held since 2022.

Ms Awatey has participated in several conferences and international engagements, highlighting her interest in governance, climate change, and women's empowerment. In 2012, she attended the Audit Report Implementation Committee for Local Government Management Staff conferences in Accra. In 2013, she served as a speaker at the Women's Political Participation and Conflict

Prevention during Elections Conference in Bujumbura, Burundi. Additionally, she attended the Climate Change for African Leaders Conference in Berlin, Germany, and the Annual Climate Change World Summit in Agadir, Morocco, both in 2017.

Ms Awatey's rich professional background and commitment to leadership, education, and gender equality make her a highly capable and dedicated public servant.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE NOMINEE AND HER RESPONSES

9.2 Balancing PhD Studies and Ministerial Responsibilities

When asked how she plans to balance her ongoing PhD studies in Migration Studies at the University of Ghana with the responsibilities of being a Regional Minister, the Nominee emphasised her proven ability to manage multiple commitments effectively. She noted that throughout her academic and professional journey, she has successfully pursued her educational goals alongside her career responsibilities.

The Nominee explained that the PhD programme she is enrolled in is a hybrid format, which means that it does not require her constant physical presence on campus. She noted that this flexible structure will allow her to dedicate ample time to her ministerial duties while meeting the academic requirements of her programme. She also assured the Committee that with commitment, time management, and

dedication, she will successfully juggle both roles, fulfil her duties as a Regional Minister, and complete her PhD by the expected year of 2028.

9.3 Collaboration with Members of Parliament (MPs) and Stakeholders

When asked how she plans to collaborate successfully with all MPs in the Eastern Region to ensure equitable access to opportunities for all, the Nominee expressed her unwavering commitment to serving the people of the Eastern Region to the best of her abilities, regardless of political affiliations.

She emphasised the importance of fostering collaboration with all MPs and key stakeholders in the Region to drive development that benefits both the local population and visitors. By prioritising inclusivity and open dialogue, she intends to build strong partnerships that will help address the Region's challenges and unlock its full potential for growth and prosperity.

9.4 Enhancing Revenue Generation for Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs)

When asked about her plans to enhance revenue generation for the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to enhance their effectiveness in discharging their duties, the Nominee highlighted the importance of capacity building. She emphasised her intention to organise training programmes and workshops on best practices to equip MMDAs with the necessary skills to improve revenue collection.

The Minister-designate also underscored the need to explore innovative opportunities for increasing Internally-Generated Funds (IGFs) for the MMDAs. By enhancing their capabilities beyond current levels, she believes the MMDAs will be better positioned to mobilise resources effectively, ensuring improved service delivery and development in their respective jurisdictions.

9.5 Addressing Chieftaincy Disputes in the Eastern Region

When asked how she intends to address the chieftaincy disputes in the Eastern Region if approved, the Minister-designate emphasised the importance of engagement and dialogue. She stated that she would work closely with traditional leaders and all relevant stakeholders to delve deeper into the root causes of these disputes.

The Nominee also highlighted her intention to introduce training programmes on conflict resolution, which she believes would educate traditional leaders and other parties involved on the detrimental effects such disputes have on regional development. She expressed confidence that these proactive measures would foster peace and unity, creating a more stable and conducive environment for growth and progress.

9.6 Protecting River Bodies in the Eastern Region

When asked about her plans to protect river bodies in the Eastern Region from encroachment and pollution,

the Minister-designate stressed the importance of collaboration and enforcement. She stated her intention to engage chiefs and all relevant stakeholders to identify and implement effective strategies to safeguard these vital resources.

She emphasised the need for strict enforcement of existing laws on illegal mining, noting that such measures would serve as a deterrent to individuals who engage in activities that harm the environment. According to the Nominee, with consistent enforcement of existing laws and community involvement, these harmful activities could gradually be reduced, ensuring the protection and sustainability of the Region's water bodies.

9.7 Regulating Sand Winning Activities in the Eastern Region

When asked about her plans to regulate sand winning activities in the Eastern Region, the Nominee highlighted the need for collaboration with chiefs and all relevant stakeholders. She stated that through joint efforts, the enforcement of rules governing sand winning activities could be strengthened, and perpetrators could be appropriately sanctioned.

She further stated that regulating these activities and ensuring strict adherence to the laws would help protect the Region's lands from further degradation. Additionally, she expressed her commitment to exploring sustainable ways to rehabilitate degraded lands, making them arable and productive once again.

9.8 Promoting Tourism in the Eastern Region

When asked about her plans to enhance tourism in the Eastern Region, the Nominee highlighted the importance of improving existing tourist sites to make them more appealing to both Ghanaians and international visitors. She emphasised that the Region's beautiful topography provides a unique opportunity to develop and expand the tourism sector.

The Nominee stated her commitment to collaborating with MMDAs in the Region to explore and identify additional potential tourist attractions. She further expressed her intention to attract investors to develop these sites to meet international standards, thereby transforming the Eastern Region into the premier tourism destination in Ghana.

According to her, these efforts would not only boost the Region's economy but also create jobs for its residents. She envisions the Eastern Region becoming a globally recognised tourism hub, which would bring significant economic benefits to the Region and the country as a whole.

9.9 Reducing Crime Rates in the Eastern Region

When the Nominee was asked about her plans to reduce crime rates in the Eastern Region, she assured the Committee of her commitment to working closely with the Eastern Regional Security Council (REGSEC). She

emphasised the importance of assessing and addressing the specific resource needs of the security agencies to help enhance their operational effectiveness.

The Nominee expressed that equipping the security services with adequate resources, such as logistics and personnel, would significantly reduce crime in the Region. Additionally, she highlighted the need for proactive measures, including intelligence-led policing and community engagement, to create a safe and secure environment for both residents and visitors.

She emphasised that a safer region would not only enhance the well-being of its inhabitants but also boost tourism and attract investments, further contributing to the development of the Region.

9.10 Addressing Post-Harvest Losses for Farmers

When asked about her plans to help farmers reduce their losses during harvest seasons, the Minister-designate identified poor road networks as one of the major challenges that affects farmers in the Eastern Region. She emphasised that the inability to transport farm produce timeously from farms to markets contributes significantly to post-harvest losses.

The Nominee reiterated her commitment to collaborating closely with the Minister for Roads and Highways to ensure the construction and maintenance of good road networks that connect farming communities to

urban centers. She highlighted that improved road infrastructure would enable the swift transportation of farm produce to markets, minimising spoilage and increasing profitability for farmers.

The Nominee also acknowledged that reducing post-harvest losses would not only benefit farmers, but also boost food security and economic activities in the Region, contributing to its overall development.

9.11 Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation in Schools

When the Minister-designate was asked about her plans to protect children in the Eastern Region from sexual exploitation in schools, she affirmed that the Ghana Education Service (GES) has established regulations and policies to safeguard children.

She assured the Committee that if confirmed, she would actively monitor cases of sexual exploitation and ensure that incidents are addressed promptly and decisively. The Nominee emphasised her commitment to working closely with GES and other relevant stakeholders to enforce strict adherence to these regulations.

Furthermore, she pledged to ensure that perpetrators of such acts are subjected to severe punishments to serve as a strong deterrent to others. The Minister-designate also highlighted the importance of raising awareness among school authorities, teachers, and caregivers to foster a safe and supportive environment for all children in schools.

9.12 Status of Nominee's School in the Region

When the Committee enquired about the current status of the school owned by the Minister-designate in the Region, she stated that the school currently serves over 674 pupils. She highlighted her passion for providing quality education to children, which drives her commitment to the institution's success.

The Minister-designate stated that she offers full scholarships to a quarter of the pupils enrolled in the school as part of her dedication to supporting underprivileged children in the Region. She reiterated that all taxes are paid promptly, and that the school strictly adheres to rules and regulations that governs educational institutions. This, she emphasised, reflects her commitment to compliance and her role as a responsible proprietor.

9.13 Preventing Market Fires and Enhancing Market Infrastructure

When questioned about the recurring issue of market fires, the Nominee expressed deep concern about their devastating impact on traders and the local economy. She assured the Committee of her unwavering commitment to collaborating with relevant agencies to implement proactive measures aimed at preventing such incidents. This includes enforcing strict safety protocols and enhancing fire response systems within markets.

The Nominee further highlighted the importance of improving market

infrastructure to address the root causes of such disasters. She emphasised her intention, if approved, to seek the assistance of developers and key stakeholders to modernise market facilities. She noted that this modernisation effort would incorporate fire-resistant designs, safety features, and appropriate mechanisms to safeguard lives and property, thereby ensuring a more secure and resilient trading environment.

9.14 Fostering Collaboration between Members of Parliament (MPs) and Municipal Chief Executives (MCEs)

The Nominee emphasised the critical need for fostering a strong and collaborative relationship between MPs and Municipal Chief Executives (MCEs) to ensure effective administration within the Region. She assured the Committee that if approved, she would institute quarterly meetings involving MPs and MCEs.

These meetings, she explained, would serve as a platform to encourage dialogue, address mutual concerns, and build a harmonious working relationship between the two parties. This collaborative approach, she asserted, would ultimately enhance governance, promote transparency, and facilitate sustainable regional development.

9.15 Prioritising Women Empowerment

The Nominee underscored the critical role of women empowerment in driving a country's development,

emphasising that empowered women create positive ripple effects in their families and communities. She assured the Committee that if approved, she would actively collaborate with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and Ministry of Finance, to prioritise initiatives that support women.

The Nominee specifically highlighted the establishment of the Women's Development Bank as a priority. She pledged to advocate for women's access to financial resources and opportunities, particularly in the Eastern Region, to enhance their economic empowerment and enable them to make meaningful contributions to national development.

9.16 Addressing Transportation Challenges in the Afram Plains

The Committee urged the Nominee to address the transportation challenges in the Afram Plains enclave by prioritising the acquisition of a new ferry. They emphasised that the current ferry is weak and unreliable, hindering residents' ability to travel and engage in economic activities. A new and efficient ferry, the Committee noted, would significantly enhance connectivity, boost trade, and alleviate the struggles faced by the people in the area.

The Nominee acknowledged these concerns and highlighted the broader transportation challenges across the Region, including poor road networks and substandard road conditions. She noted that these issues contribute significantly to post-harvest losses,

given the Region's vast farmlands and agricultural productivity.

She therefore assured the Committee that if approved, she would collaborate with the Minister for Transport to address these challenges. Her efforts would focus on securing a new ferry for the Afram Plains and improving road infrastructure across the Region. She emphasised that the aim of these measures is to facilitate the efficient transportation of goods, reduce post-harvest losses, and support the Region's economic and agricultural growth.

9.17 Addressing Encroachment of Cocoa Farm Lands by Illegal Miners

The Nominee expressed a deep concern over the encroachment on cocoa farm lands, which are also rich in mineral reserves, by illegal miners. She emphasised that the illegal mining in the area has resulted in the conversion of farmlands into mining sites, thereby posing a significant threat to cocoa production and the livelihoods of farmers.

She assured the Committee that if approved, she would prioritise extensive stakeholder engagements to address this pressing issue. These engagements would involve farmers, traditional leaders, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to collectively discourage the conversion of farmlands into mining sites. Additionally, the Nominee pledged to promote initiatives aimed at replanting cocoa to sustain the livelihoods of farmers, protect agricultural lands, and

safeguard the nation's cocoa industry for future generations.

9.18 Enhancing Security Infrastructure and Community Engagement

The Nominee emphasised the importance of assessing the status of police stations and other security agencies within the Region to strengthen their capacity in addressing security challenges effectively. She assured the Committee that if approved, she would collaborate with MPs from the Region and other key stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of these institutions and identify areas that require improvement.

The Nominee further highlighted her plan to introduce security education programmes across the Region following the assessment. These programmes would focus on sensitising communities about safety measures, fostering stronger collaboration between residents and security agencies, and creating a unified front to tackle security threats. She expressed confidence that these initiatives would significantly enhance security and contribute to the Region's overall safety and stability.

9.19 Addressing Land Acquisition and Registration Challenges

When questioned about her approach to tackling the challenges surrounding land acquisition and registration in the Region, the Nominee outlined her plans to engage traditional leaders and the Minister for Lands and

Natural Resources. She emphasised the importance of collaboration in addressing the complexities associated with land acquisition and ensuring equitable and transparent processes.

The Nominee assured the Committee that if approved, she would organise forums on land documentation in partnership with the Department of Works. These forums, she noted, would educate the public on proper land documentation procedures, promote transparency, and streamline the land acquisition and ownership system. She expressed her commitment to fostering a more accessible and efficient process that benefits the people of the Region while addressing potential disputes related to land ownership.

10.0 Recommendation

The Committee recommends to the of the nomination of **MS RITA AKOSUA AWATEY** as the Eastern Regional Minister.

11.0 Conclusion and General Recommendation

In accordance with the provisions of Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution and Standing Order 217, the Committee deliberated on the four ministerial nominations submitted by H.E. the President. The nominees demonstrated competence, extensive knowledge, and exceptional skill in addressing matters pertinent to their respective Ministries. The Committee, therefore, recommends to the House, by **CONSENSUS**, the

adoption of its report and the approval of the following nominees:

- i. Mr Ali Adolf G. John as the Minister for Northern Region.
- ii. Mr John Kwadwo Gyapong as the Minister for Oti Region.
- iii. Mr James Gunu as the Minister for Volta Region.
- iv. Ms Rita Akosua Awatey as the Minister for Eastern Region.

Respectfully submitted.

4.30 p.m.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing Order 104(1)

Chairman of the Committee (Mr Bernard Ahiafor): I beg to move

That notwithstanding the provision of Order 104(1) of the Standing Orders which requires that a Motion shall not be debated until at least two Sitting days have elapsed after the notice to move the Motion is given, the motion for the adoption of the Fifth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nomination for Appointment as Ministers be now moved today.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Motion has been moved by the Chairman of the Committee. Now we are looking for someone to second.

First Deputy Minority Whip (Alhaji Habib Iddrisu): Mr Speaker, I second the Motion.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the First Deputy Minority Whip has seconded the Motion.

Question moved and Motion agreed to.

Resolved accordingly.

Mr Bernard Ahiafor (Chairman of the Committee): Mr Speaker, I beg to move:

That this Honourable House adopts the Sixth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointments as Ministers.

I urge the *Hansard* to capture the entire Report as having been read by me.

Sixth Report of the Appointments Committee On His Excellency the President's Nomination for Appointment as Minister

1.0 Introduction

On Thursday, 16th January, 2025, H.E. the President, John Dramani Mahama, pursuant to Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution, communicated to Parliament the nomination of Hon Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka as Minister-designate for the Interior.

The Rt Hon Speaker, in accordance with Order 217 of the Standing Orders

of Parliament, referred the Nominee to the Appointments Committee for consideration and report.

2.0 Reference Documents

The Committee referred to the underlisted documents during the consideration of the Nominee:

- i. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana;
- ii. The Standing Orders of Parliament; and
- iii. The Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the Nominee

3.0 Consideration of the Referral

Pursuant to Standing Order 217(10), the name of the Nominee was published in newspapers for the attention of the public. The publication also requested memoranda from the public regarding the Nominee. The Committee subsequently sought and obtained Confidential Reports on the Nominee from the Ghana Police Service and the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB). The Committee also requested that the Nominee submit tax status reports from the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA).

The Committee held a public hearing on Friday, 24th January, 2025, to consider the nomination. The Nominee subscribed to the Oath of a Witness and answered questions from Hon Members. The Nominee was asked questions relating to his curriculum vitae, eligibility, competencies, issues of

national concern, and those pertaining to the office to which he has been nominated.

The Committee, after its deliberations, reports on the Nominee as follows:

4.0 ALHAJI MOHAMMED-MUBARAK MUNTAKA

MINISTER-DESIGNATE FOR MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR

4.1 Background

Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka was born on 17th October, 1971 in Kumasi, in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. His parents hailed from Kumbungu, a town in the Northern Region of Ghana. He began his early education at Aboabo M/A Primary School in Kumasi and continued to Central International School, Kumasi, from 1983 to 1987, where he obtained the Middle School Leaving Certificate. He pursued secondary education at Tamale Secondary School from 1987 to 1992, where he completed the GCE Ordinary Level, before proceeding to the then Technology Secondary School for the GCE Advanced Level.

In 1996, Alhaji Muntaka enrolled at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics in 2000. He furthered his education at KNUST by obtaining a Master's Degree in Development Policy and Planning from 2002 to 2004. Over the years, he

has acquired numerous distinguished certificates and awards from prestigious institutions, including the Harvard Kennedy School in Boston, USA, where he completed programmes such as Executive Certificate in Public Leadership, Senior Managers in Government, and Mastering Negotiation. He also undertook specialised training in global health leadership, public speaking, and change management, enriching his expertise in governance and leadership.

Alhaji Muntaka began his professional career as the Director of Mubzee Business Centre in Kumasi, a position he held from 1995. Between 2002 and 2005, he served as the Head of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation at Adwumapa Buyers Ltd, a licensed cocoa buying firm in Kumasi. His dedication to public service led to his election as the Member of Parliament (MP) for the Asawase Constituency in May 2005, a position he has held to date.

During his parliamentary career, Alhaji Muntaka has served in various capacities, including as a member of the Special Budget Committee from 2005 to 2008 and as a member of the Appointments Committee from 2005 until February 2023. He also contributed significantly as a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Mines and Energy and as Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Health from 2010 to 2013.

Alhaji Muntaka held key leadership positions in Parliament, serving as Majority Chief Whip from 2013 to 2017

and Minority Chief Whip from 2017 to February 2023. In February 2009, he was appointed the Minister for Youth and Sports, a position he held until June 2009. Internationally, he has represented Ghana as a member of the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa, since 2012. Since 2021, he has served as the Chairperson of the Committee on Finance and Monetary Affairs of the Pan-African Parliament.

Currently, Alhaji Muntaka continues to serve as the MP for Asawase Constituency in the Ashanti Region. His leadership, expertise, and commitment to public service have significantly contributed to the socioeconomic development of his constituency and the nation at large.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE NOMINEE AND HIS RESPONSES

4.2 Review of Security Services Recruitment Done by the Previous Administration

When asked by the Committee about his plans for the newly recruited men and women in the security services during the tenure of the previous administration, the Nominee stated that he was not fully aware of the details of the recruitment process. However, he emphasised that governance is a continuous process, and there would be no issue if the new administration chose to review the recruitment procedures to ensure due diligence was followed. He assured the Committee that any such reviews would be conducted transparently, and in the best interest of

the nation, prioritising fairness and integrity in the process.

4.3 Quota System of Recruitment

The Committee sought the Nominee's opinion on the recruitment process into the security services, particularly, the practice of allocating quotas across regions. The Nominee explained that the Ministry relies on professionals and experts in the field to determine the most effective recruitment strategies. He assured the Committee that he would collaborate with the relevant councils and boards to review the quota system, addressing any evident lapses to ensure it serves the best interests of the nation. The Nominee emphasised that recruitment into the security services is a matter of serious importance for Ghanaians, so the required standards and meritocratic principles must be adhered to.

4.4 Enhancing Professionalism in the Security Agencies

The Committee enquired about the Nominee's plans to ensure that the professionalism of the Ghana Police Service which is commended internationally, is maintained. This was raised in the context of complaints from citizens regarding harassment by the Police. The Nominee acknowledged the commendable professionalism of the agencies but admitted that there is room for improvement. He identified the implementation of body cameras as one of the key measures to enhance professionalism and address issues of harassment. He informed the

Committee that 800 body cameras have already been procured, with plans underway to procure an additional 3,800 to strengthen accountability and transparency within the security agencies.

4.5 Addressing Promotions and Postings in Security Agencies

The Nominee, in response to concerns raised about the promotion process within the various agencies under the Ministry of the Interior, acknowledged that it has been a significant issue for many officers. He clarified that the law requires an officer to remain in a particular position for at least four years; a stipulation often misunderstood as a maximum limit. He assured the Committee of his commitment to collaborating with the heads of the agencies to review the promotion laws where necessary, aiming to address the concerns fairly.

Furthermore, the Nominee emphasised the importance of educating officers on the promotion process to eliminate misunderstandings and ensure it is based on merit, fairness, and equity.

The Committee also highlighted the need to ensure compliance with transfers or postings among officers. It urged the Nominee to prioritise this issue, as adherence to transfer directives would not only create opportunities for younger officers to rise through the ranks, but also provide personnel with broader experience across various regions. The Nominee agreed and committed to working on a transparent

and equitable system for both promotions and postings.

4.6 Measures to Address Small Arms Proliferation

The Committee raised concerns about the alarming statistics that one in six Ghanaians possess small arms, leading to a question to the Nominee about his plans to address the issue. In response, the Nominee outlined a comprehensive strategy to tackle this challenge. He proposed the creation of a robust database of licensed small arms owners, leveraging on information technology to monitor and track these weapons effectively. This initiative would include implementing surveillance systems at entry points and borders to detect and minimise the illegal importation of arms. Additionally, the Nominee emphasised the importance of utilising technology to monitor the usage of licensed weapons, ensuring tighter control and regulation.

When questioned about launching a programme to recover small arms already in circulation, the Nominee affirmed his commitment to addressing the issue. He explained that if approved, he would collaborate with experts and stakeholders to design an amnesty programme aimed at retrieving illegal weapons. The programme would include incentives such as cash or other rewards to encourage individuals to voluntarily surrender their illegal firearms. He assured the Committee that this approach would make the recovery process both attractive and effective in

reducing the proliferation of small arms in Ghana.

4.7 Addressing Perceptions of Transfers as Punishment

The Committee raised concerns regarding the perception within the security services that transfers are often used as a form of punishment. The Nominee acknowledged this issue and emphasised the need to establish a fair, transparent, and merit-based system for promotions and transfers to eliminate these negative perceptions.

He further noted that discontent often arises from issues such as promotion in grade and promotion in service, particularly when junior officers are promoted over their senior counterparts. To address these challenges, the Nominee assured the Committee that if approved, he would collaborate with experts to review the existing laws and policies governing promotions and transfers. This review would aim to create a structured approach that prioritises fairness, equity, and professionalism, ensuring that the morale and trust of officers in the system are upheld.

4.8 Ensuring Non-Partisanship within the Security Services

The Committee enquired about the Nominee's plans to address perceptions of partisanship within the security services. In response, the Nominee assured the Committee of his unwavering commitment to upholding the principle of impartiality. He

emphasised the need for the security services to remain neutral and professional, ensuring that justice is served equitably, without regard to political affiliations or party loyalties.

The Nominee further reiterated his dedication to holding individuals involved in election malpractices accountable under the law. He stressed that promoting fairness and professionalism within the security services is essential to fostering public trust and confidence in their neutrality. He assured the Committee this would be a top priority if his nomination were approved.

4.9 Collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs

The Committee sought the Nominee's plans for resolving tribal and chieftaincy disputes, which have often led to instability in various communities across the country. In his response, the Nominee assured the Committee of his dedication to addressing these issues. He emphasised that if approved, he would work in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, Chieftaincy, and Religious Affairs to develop long-term solutions.

The Nominee highlighted his commitment to supporting the National House of Chiefs in the creation of a comprehensive succession plan. This plan would provide clear and structured guidelines for chieftaincy successions, aiming to reduce disputes over titles and minimise tribal conflicts. By establishing a structured framework for

succession and promoting dialogue among stakeholders, the Nominee expressed confidence in his ability to enhance peace and stability in communities affected by such disputes.

4.10 Leadership in the Agencies under the Ministry of the Interior

The Committee enquired about the Nominee's stance on whether the heads of the security agencies under the Ministry should be retained or replaced. In his response, the Nominee emphasised the need for a performance-based approach. He stated that if approved, he would undertake a comprehensive assessment of the current heads of the security agencies to evaluate their performance, effectiveness, and alignment with the Ministry's objectives.

The Nominee assured the Committee that any decision to maintain or replace these leaders would be made with utmost fairness and based on merit. He pledged to prioritise the needs of the Ministry and the nation's security, advising the President accordingly to ensure that leadership within the security agencies remains competent and capable of addressing the country's security challenges.

4.11 Brutality of Citizens in Police Custody

The Committee sought the Nominee's plans to tackle the issue of police brutality, particularly concerning incidents such as deaths in police cells. In his response, the Nominee stressed the importance of accountability and

transparency within the Police Service. He emphasised that if approved, he would work collaboratively with the heads of security agencies to implement the installation of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras in police stations and cells.

The Nominee highlighted that the deployment of CCTV cameras would act as a deterrent against misconduct, as the footage could serve as evidence in cases of alleged abuses or brutalities. He assured the Committee that this initiative would contribute to effective monitoring of police operations, significantly reducing instances of brutality while safeguarding the human rights and safety of individuals in police custody.

4.12 Welfare Issues of the Security Agencies

The Committee enquired about the Nominee's plans to improve the welfare and support of security personnel. In his response, the Nominee acknowledged the existence of a welfare fund for the Ghana Police Service and assured the Committee of his commitment to establishing similar welfare funds for other security agencies.

He emphasised his intention to collaborate with stakeholders and interested parties to contribute to these funds, aiming to enhance the welfare of security officers across the board. Additionally, the Nominee proposed an annual programme to encourage voluntary donations of money and resources from stakeholders to further

support the security agencies and ensure their operational effectiveness.

Regarding pensions and retirement benefits, the Nominee assured the Committee that he would advocate for the extension of the CAP 30 Pension Scheme to include all security officers. This, he explained, would ensure that security personnel receive adequate retirement benefits in recognition of their dedication and service to the country.

4.13 Stakeholder Engagements to Repose Trust in the Security Agencies in Ghana

The Committee enquired about the Nominee's plans to improve public engagement with the security agencies and foster stronger relationships between citizens and these institutions. In response, the Nominee emphasised the critical importance of educating the public about the roles and functions of the security agencies, noting that building trust and cooperation between citizens and security personnel requires effective stakeholder engagement.

The Nominee acknowledged that public education and outreach efforts can be costly but assured the Committee that if approved, he would collaborate with relevant stakeholders to implement community-based solutions. These initiatives would prioritise cost-effective strategies to bridge the gap between the public and the security services.

He explained that these efforts would aim to create a greater

understanding of the work of security agencies while fostering mutual trust and cooperation. The Nominee also assured the Committee that the outreach programmes would be accessible to all communities, ensuring inclusivity and broad participation in strengthening the relationship between citizens and security agencies.

4.14 Plans to Reform the Ghana Prisons Service

The Nominee highlighted the existence of the Prison Reform Strategy within the Prisons Service but lamented that these strategies have not been effectively implemented. He assured the Committee of his commitment to ensuring the full implementation of the reform strategy.

He also referenced the Manifesto of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which proposes changing the name of the Prisons Service to "Correctional Service" as part of efforts to transform public perception of the institution. Drawing inspiration from Kenya, the Nominee proposed adopting a public-private partnership (PPP) model to implement programmes and projects aimed at reforming and transforming the Ghana Prisons Service. He acknowledged the contributions of organisations such as The Church of Pentecost, which has been instrumental in supporting the Prisons Service with projects and programmes.

The Nominee expressed deep concern about the inadequate funding allocated for feeding inmates, citing the

current GH¢1.80 per inmate as insufficient. He called for an upward review of this allocation to address the feeding challenges faced by the prisons.

He further assured the Committee of his intention to implement a plan to separate remand prisoners from convicted inmates. This initiative, he explained, would allow for better management of prisoners and ensure proper identification and distinction among inmates.

Acknowledging the proximity of the High Court in Nsawam to the Nsawam Prison, the Nominee noted the cost-saving benefits of this arrangement in terms of prisoner transportation. He proposed replicating this model in other prisons with large inmate population, such as the Ankaful Prison, by collaborating with the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General.

Additionally, the Nominee pledged to collaborate with the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General to implement the "Justice for All" Initiative. This programme involves sending judges to prisons to address remand cases, thereby helping to decongest the facilities. The Nominee underscored the importance of this Initiative in ensuring timely justice and reducing overcrowding in Ghana prisons.

4.15 Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Released Prisoners

The Nominee outlined plans to collaborate with various stakeholders to address the stigma and challenges faced

by former inmates upon their reintegration into society. He explained to the Committee that his Ministry would adopt a multisectoral approach, working closely with institutions such as the National Media Commission (NMC) and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). This collaboration aims to sensitise the public and encourage acceptance of ex-inmates back to their families and into their communities, thereby reducing societal stigma.

The Nominee further highlighted his commitment to rehabilitation by proposing the establishment of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions within the prisons. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, these institutions would equip inmates with the requisite skills and vocational training to enable them engage in meaningful work upon their release. By providing inmates with the tools to become self-reliant and productive members of society, this initiative would help reduce recidivism and ease the transition back into their communities.

The Nominee emphasised that this dual approach of public sensitisation and skill development would significantly reduce the trauma experienced by released inmates and contribute to building a more inclusive and supportive society.

4.16 Accommodation for Prison Officers

The Nominee acknowledged the critical need for adequate housing for

prison officers and assured the Committee of his commitment to addressing this issue. He emphasised that decent accommodation is essential for improving the welfare, morale, and overall performance of prison staff, as it directly impacts their well-being and ability to serve effectively.

The Nominee stated that if approved, he would collaborate with relevant authorities, including the Ministry of Works, Housing and Water Resources, to explore innovative solutions for providing decent housing for prison officers. He highlighted the potential for leveraging public-private partnerships to accelerate the construction and provision of accommodation facilities.

Additionally, the Nominee assured the Committee that he would prioritise this issue within the broader agenda of reforming and modernising the Ghana Prisons Service, ensuring that officers are provided with a conducive environment to enhance their dedication and productivity.

4.17 Welfare of Officers of the Ghana National Fire Service

The Nominee expressed deep concern over the long-standing neglect of the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), in terms of modern equipment and resources. He highlighted the disturbing fact that no new fire tenders have been procured for the service in over a decade, significantly hampering its ability to respond effectively to emergencies.

To address this pressing issue, the Nominee assured the Committee that if approved, he would prioritise the revitalisation of the GNFS. He emphasised the need to procure modern fire tenders and equipment to enhance the operational capacity of the Service. He also noted the importance of equipping fire stations with advanced tools and resources to improve efficiency, and ensure the safety of personnel and citizens.

The Nominee further stated that he would collaborate with development partners, local authorities, and stakeholders to secure funding and resources for the Service. By addressing these challenges, he aims to restore the effectiveness and reliability of the GNFS, ensuring that it is adequately prepared to handle emergencies across the country.

5.0 Conclusion and General Recommendation

In accordance with the provisions of Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution and Standing Order 217, the Committee deliberated on the ministerial nomination submitted by H.E. the President. The Nominee demonstrated competence, extensive knowledge, and exceptional skill in addressing matters pertinent to his respective Ministry.

The Committee, therefore, recommends to the House, by **CONSENSUS**, the adoption of its report and the approval of **ALHAJI MOHAMMED-MUBARAK MUNTAKA** as Minister for the Interior.

Respectfully submitted.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker:
Thank you very much, Hon Chairman. Let us now invite Mr Patrick Yaw Boamah to second the Motion.

Mr Patrick Yaw Boamah (NPP — Okaikwei Central): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to second the Fifth and Sixth Reports of the Appointments Committee.

Mr Speaker, since they are consensus Reports, I would make a few comments on our Colleague, Hon Member of Parliament for Asawase, who is the Minister-designate for the Ministry of the Interior. We all know the role of the Minister for the Interior as being the chief custodian of our internal security; underneath there are a lot of security agencies that he controls including the Narcotics Control Commission.

Mr Speaker, he answered questions satisfactorily on narcotics and the Legislative Instrument (L.I.) that he is supposed to bring to the House for approval for the implementation of narcotics or medicinal cannabis under the Narcotics Control Commission Act, 2020 (Act 1019).

Mr Speaker, secondly, our Colleague also distinguished himself when asked questions about security around Bawku, the proliferation of small arms, promotions into the security services and some other related activities of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO).

We believe that as a House, we have worked with Alhaji Mohammed Mubarak Muntaka, Member of Parliament for Asawase; we know of his competence, and his passion for the job as a Member of Parliament, both within and outside, and we have no doubt about that. On our Side, we thank the President for nominating him to serve in his Cabinet and we wish him the very best.

Mr Speaker, on the Fifth Report, I was just watching television in the cafeteria and I saw the Minister-designate for the Volta Region with the President at Ho and here we are debating a consensus Report on him. I do not know in which capacity he is there, maybe he knows that he has got the numbers on his Side to approve him —[*Laughter*] I also saw Mr Kpodo, the ‘former prime minister for the Western Togoland’ —[*Laughter*] That is just by the way.

Mr Speaker, they answered questions that affects all four regions. Challenges that regional ministers face are the fact that they do not have budgetary allocation and always rely on allocations made to them from the Office of the President. They also face challenges with their Metropolitan Municipal District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) who feel independent in the performance of their duties and the challenges the Members of Parliament face with MMDCEs who are under their watch and control.

They answered questions on regional security, chieftaincy issues,

land disputes and what have you. They also talked about their determination to see to the cultivation of local raw materials to support local industries. We urge the regional ministers to walk the talk and ensure that they perform in accordance with the functions that they have been bestowed upon by various legislations and the Constitution of this country.

4.40 p.m.

Mr Speaker, not to belabour the point, I wish all the regional minister nominees, the very best, and success in their respective regions.

Mr Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity.

Question proposed.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, because today is Friday, we would restrict ourselves to two contributors from each Side, and then we come to Leadership. Even with the two, we have to work around five minutes; once you get the opportunity, your contribution should be around five minutes. So two from each Sides.

The Majority Side has already given their list to me, but from the Minority Side, I would start from the Hon Member for Kwabre East.

Mr Akwasi Gyamfi Onyina-Acheampong (NPP—Kwabre East): Mr Speaker, I rise to speak on the sixth report of the Appointments Committee, on His Excellency the President’s

nomination for appointment as the Minister-designate for the Ministry of the Interior.

Mr Speaker, Alhaji Muntaka has been a darling, and an asset in this House, for his constituents, and in Ashanti Region as a whole. He is my neighbour; he borders the Kwabre East. We have seen from his records in this House, that he has excelled himself. Even in the Ashanti Region, where we see that he is in the den of lions; where he is in the midst of opposition Members of Parliament (MPs); Alhaji Muntaka has excelled in everything that he did, and has been a beacon of light and hope for the opposition, and for his compatriots.

I would particularly encourage the Hon Minister-designate to focus on the security service. I think a lot have been said on the new recruits that went through the previous Government; and a lot of people are sitting on tenterhooks, as to their fate. As of now, they are in training. As we know, Government is a continuing business, I would like the Hon Minister-designate, when in office, to assure these people, that they are all Ghanaians, and they all deserve to be employed into the forces as well.

Mr Speaker, on the subject of prison reforms, a lot of people, when they return from prison, turn to be more hardened than they were before they went into prison. This happens because the rehabilitation process in the prison is not adequate so you see that 80 per cent of people return, and go right back to prison again. So I would like to implore

and plead with the Hon Minister-designate, that when he is confirmed, he should ensure that the rehabilitation process that goes into prisons, are well thought through and done.

Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Hon Minister-designate, once again, for his nomination; and I know fairly well that this House would endorse and confirm him as the next Minister for the Ministry of the Interior.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon Member for Kwabre East. Let me invite Hajia Laadi Ayii Ayamba; please you would speak around five minutes.

Hajia Laadi Ayii Ayamba (NDC—Pusiga): Thank you, Mr Speaker, I would try as much as I can.

Mr Speaker, let me thank His Excellency the President, for the nominations that he has made to our regions, and to the Ministry of the Interior. I congratulate those Ministers who have been nominated, and would like to just delve a bit into that of Northern Region, because of the issues there. I listened to him carefully, the issue of *kayaye*, which I have always cherished and talked about came up, his response was excellent, and I just want to urge him to ensure we have jobs in our various regions, to enable the youths, especially the girl child, to stay back in the Northern Region or whichever part they come from, and work, rather than come to Accra. And that we do not in anyway, wish that they

come down to Accra, thinking that because there are a few hotels built, they should leave home, and come here to carry goods. It is better they work at home; so he should be firm on this.

Mr Speaker, the issue of witchcrafts; I have been to most of those camps when I was the chairperson for the Committee on Gender, Children and Social Welfare. Mr Speaker, it is not the best at all for the old women; people who cannot simply do anything for themselves. He should try as much as he can, to work with the chiefs and elders, queen mothers and other traditional rulers to support them. Because those accused of witchcraft, find it difficult to go back to where they were brought from, to those camps.

Mr Speaker, with chieftaincy problems, he said he would dialogue with them and collaborate with them among others. It is becoming an eyesore; and it is really pathetic. it is quite worrying when you sit and listen to these things, this was not how it was. Let us understand one another so that we can live together.

Mr Speaker, we then had a lady from the Eastern Region; I congratulate her directly because she is one of us, and I just want to say that she should work hard. She should not relent on her efforts. She should study and ensure that she works as expected; and should not disappoint H. E. President John Dramani Mahama, in the policies that are being put in place. She should work and should not let it be said that it is because they have given it to a woman

— It hurts to hear and see that. She should work as much as she can, and even work better than the men. I am sorry I am not against any man.

Mr Speaker, now I wish to talk a little about Alhaji Mubarak Muntaka. Congratulations, my dear Brother. He has worked hard and he deserves it. His leadership roles have spelt it all out. I have been in this House with him for not less than 12 years, and I know how hard he has worked. I know how he has exhibited his skills. I recall while we were in opposition he led us to ensure that the Speaker of Parliament came from our party. He should continue fighting hard, he should ensure not to think or sideline people; but he should do the right thing. It is a very sensitive area that if one is not careful, people would begin zooming in, talking and saying whatever and I think he knows better. He should ensure he works hard and display his leadership skills more and do the needful.

Mr Speaker, the Police Service has always been out there; yet we are always having issues. I would be grateful if they dialogue and work as team members to uplift their name.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity and I wish Alhaji Muntaka very well.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Let me now give the opportunity to the Hon Member for Ahafo Ano North.

Yes, Hon Member for Ahafo Ano North?

Mr Eric Nana Agyemang-Prempeh (NPP—Ahafo Ano North):

Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity and I would like to use this to congratulate Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka on his appointment. Mr Speaker, I know Alhaji Muntaka as a very hardworking personality. His human relations to everybody is very good; we know how he relates with everybody no matter the political class one belongs to and I wish him well.

Mr Speaker, I want to draw Alhaji Muntaka's attention to Act 927 which states among other things, that there shall be a National Disaster Management Fund (NADMO). I am drawing his attention to NADMO for his staff to get to disaster scenes, though they are sometimes attacked, and prevented from carrying out their normal duties, because in carrying out their response activities, in doing need assessment, some people think after the need assessment, there would be no relief items and therefore, they prevent them from doing so. But that is not the fault of NADMO staff.

4.50 p.m.

It is as a result of financial problems, the late release of funds to NADMO that is why those things happen. So, I want to draw his attention to the Act, it talks about the source of funding to the National Disaster Fund and that is through the three per cent of the District Assemblies Common Fund. So, I am appealing to him to ensure that NADMO staff carry out their preventive

and reactive responsibilities without any hindrance.

Mr Speaker, the mid-country Immigration training institution in Ghana for Ghana Immigration Service is situated at Tepa in my constituency. The traditional authorities have released a big land to the National Immigration Service. I want to appeal to the Hon Minister-designate to help Ghana Immigration Service to secure funds to fence and protect the land from encroachment. With this, I am done.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker:
Thank you Hon Member.

Now we turn to Ms Zuwera Ibrahimah, the Hon Member for Salaga South. You have five minutes.

Ms Zuwera Mohammed Ibrahimah (NDC— Salaga South): Thank Mr Speaker for the opportunity to contribute to the Motion considering the President's nominee for four Regional Minister positions and one for the Ministry of the Interior. The Northern Regional Minister-designate, Mr Adolf Ali, attended the vetting and acquitted himself creditably. Mr Ali demonstrated his deep knowledge about the Northern Region and the intricacies of balancing politics, religion, chieftaincy and tribes and clans and gave the Committee the assurance that he was going to deploy his well-known and well-attested diplomatic skills to ensure that conflict in any part of the region would be eliminated.

Mr Speaker, for those of us who know Adolph at close range, we take his word, we know how serious-minded he is and we know that he has the capability to deliver on his mandate. I can only wish him well.

Mr Speaker, on the Interior Minister-designate, our leader, Alhaji Muntaka Mubarak equally acquitted himself very well before the Appointments Committee and in addition to giving us responses that address a lot of technical issues within the Interior Ministry, he also spiced up his responses with a lot of anecdotes that really brought home governance to the barest minimum to the understanding of the ordinary Ghanaian. For those of us in this House, Alhaji Muntaka demonstrated his leadership skills. He never went through the Chamber without stopping by us at the Back Bench to check on how we were doing. He actually had the habit of always entering the Chamber through the Back Bench. He would spend not less than three to four minutes talking to us, peppering us up and encouraging us. For those of us who had the opportunity of serving with him on the Appointments Committee, Alhaji Muntaka mentored us and guided us. He told us the appropriateness of some questions.

I, for example, as a Member of the then Appointments Committee was told by the Hon Minister-designate not to ask the then Minister-designate for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, Ms Hawa Koomson a question. He told me the same thing when Mr Nitiwul appeared before the Committee and

when I asked why? He reminded me that Ms Hawa Koomson, I should remember that she was from my constituency and Mr Nitiwul was my neighbour and he could create confusion for me when I got on his wrong side. This is leadership and today, we can attest to how invaluable those advices were.

Mr Speaker, for everyone who attended or watched Alhaji Muntaka's vetting, there was one phrase that run through and I tried to count the number of times until I lost count. At every turn, he referred to the national interest. Everything for him is about the national interest and I remember as new entrants to this House, he reminded us to be guided by the national interest and today, it runs through almost all his responses. Indeed, the Hon Minority Leader, Mr Afenyo-Markin had occasion to commend him for his sincerity and truthfulness. Alhaji Muntaka showcased great knowledge in his Ministry. A Ministry that carries all the security agencies of this country, from the Police to the Ghana National Fire Service, the Prisons Service and the Immigration Service. He told us that he was going to ensure that these agencies were properly retooled and I am sure that any Member of Parliament (MP) who heard Alhaji Muntaka would be relieved because he assured us that he is going to take off the burden of these agencies running to MPs to seek support and resources for their agencies.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate all nominated Ministers and wish them all the best and to the Alhaji Muntaka, I say "*Moongode ma Allah. Allah ye sa Kabirii*"

Mr Second Deputy Speaker:

Thank you very much. Now we turn to the Leadership.

Mr Habib Iddrisu (NPP— amale South): Mr Speaker, on the part of leadership, I would yield to Mr Nyindam, except to add that under Order 63(1), the last comment, of our sister, she properly interpreted for Hansard if you look at Order 63(1). So, I yield to Mr Nyindam.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Mr Nyindam?

Mr Matthew Nyindam (NPP— Kpandai): Thank you Mr Speaker and thank you Leadership for the opportunity given to me to speak on their behalf. Let me use this opportunity to congratulate my boss Alhaji Muntaka and let me place on record that he is the longest serving Chief Whip in Ghana's Parliament and it is not for nothing that he was vetted this morning; the House has to suspend its rules and approve him the same day. It shows that he has demonstrated leadership as a Chief Whip and those of us who happened to also serve with him as Whips are very proud of him.

5.00 p.m.

Like others have said, he is going to a Ministry that has almost all security agencies under him. I know he has what it takes to shepherd and provide Ghanaians security, both day and night. We know he is capable, and this is what we expect of him.

Mr Speaker, concerning small arms in the hands of individuals, I want the Hon Minister-designate to take this issue very seriously. If we take a look at the previous elections and the just ended elections, we will realise that even when men in uniform were not wielding arms, most of our foot soldiers who attacked places were carrying arms. This is a very dangerous thing, so he must look at it because it is a recipe for disaster.

One other thing I expected to hear from my Hon Chief Whip has to do with Hon Members of Parliament. It is true that we have police guards; every Member of Parliament is entitled to a police guard now. But, unfortunately, in the night, it is a different thing altogether, so I want the Hon Minister-designate to take a look at that issue because Hon Members' houses are the first to be attacked. I do not want to remind this House about the sad issue that happened to a Colleague of ours here, who, unfortunately, lost his life in his home. So, I want to encourage him to look at it very well and to see how best he can support security in that regard.

Mr Speaker, I would like to also use the opportunity to congratulate the Regional Minister-designates: the Oti Regional Minister-designate, the Northern Regional Minister-designate, the Eastern Regional Minister-designate, and the Volta Regional Minister-designate. Also, I want to urge the Northern Regional Minister-designate, especially, to take note of the witchcraft accusations, just like my Colleague said, which is a serious issue in the northern part of Ghana, especially the Northern Region, where, unfortunately, people have been moved away from their

traditional homes and families have been brutalised because they are suspected of being a witch or wizard. The situation needs much attention.

I would also urge the Oti Regional Minister-designate to take a critical look at the conflict in Nkwanta South. It is a very devastating issue, and I will urge him not to sit down but, he should try as much as possible to take a look at that conflict to bring peace to Nkwanta. So, that the people in Nkwanta and its environs, including the Oti Region, can enjoy some kind of peace.

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to congratulate the nominees.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Now, we will move to the Majority Leadership.

First Deputy Whip (Ms Comfort Doyoe Cudjoe): Mr Speaker, I would like to add my voice to the Motion to approve the nominees appointed by H. E. John Dramani Mahama.

Mr Speaker, I will start with my boss, Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka. In fact, I have worked with him and I have never regretted. This is because when I first came to this Chamber, he called me and advised me to sit in the Chamber for, at least, two hours to learn. He said the Chamber itself is a university of its own, so I will learn a lot if I could sit for just two hours in this Chamber because issues ranging from archaeology to zoology passes through this Chamber. I took his advice and ensured that I spent two hours in this Chamber every day.

Mr Speaker, he has been sent to the Ministry of the Interior. There is something that is missing and I do not know how we will correct it. We have villages that do not have access to communication and network. So, when they apply for employment, even when replies are sent to them to attend training or camps, they do not get access to the information. Such villages exist, especially when one gets to Ada, there is no network. It is the same for a lot of the villages and my island communities. A lot of them love to be in these security services, but because there is no access to network, they are cut off. Hon Minister-designate, let us find a way so that everybody in Ghana will enjoy our security services.

Mr Speaker, one thing that baffles me a lot is that whenever they are recruiting, even though there are general duties because some of them are just going to arrest thieves; yet, they are asked to present good grades in mathematics. If they are going to arrest thieves, what has that got to do with mathematics? *[Laughter]*—

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: They will do calculations—*[Laughter]*

Ms Cudjoe: This is because when they come across thieves, they would not need to work any mathematics before they arrest the them. Those who are strong to arrest the thieves—When one goes to the bungalows and they hear that there are robbers, they all hide in their rooms until the robbers leave before they will come out with their dogs and ask where the thieves or robbers are. By that time, the robbers would have left.

Let us recruit those who can arrest them and stop disturbing them with mathematics, so that they can do the work for us. Some of these things are real, but we do not want to accept it.

Mr Speaker, the rest of the Ministers are capable, so, together as a House, let us approve all of them so that they can serve the nation.

Thank you, for the opportunity, Mr Speaker. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Question put and Motion agreed to.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: That this honourable House has approved His Excellency the President's nominations of Mr Ali Adolf John as Minister-designate for the Northern Region; Mr John Kwadwo Gyapong as Minister-designate for the Oti Region; Mr James Gunu as the Minister-designate for the Volta Region; Ms Rita Akosua Awatey as Minister-designate for the Eastern Region, and Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka as the Minister-designate for the Ministry of the Interior— [*Hear! Hear!*]

Hon Members, on behalf of the House, let me extend our congratulatory message to all the Hon Ministers-designate to the regions and as well as our own, Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka. Alhaji Muntaka, we wish you well.

Leadership? Yes, Hon Chairman of the Committee?

5.10 p.m.

Mr Ahiafor: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to congratulate the approved Ministers. On their behalf, I thank the Committee and the entire House for approving them unanimously.

Mr Speaker, I am so grateful for the opportunity.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon Chairman of the Appointments Committee.

Leadership, any indication?

Hon Leader of the House, if you would indulge me, I understand today is World Education Day, so we can take that Statement. We have so many Statements, but we could take that one only; it is a Statement that commemorates the Day. So, if you would permit me, I— [*Pause*]—

Very well, Hon Members, I think the pleasure of the House is to adjourn the Sitting. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Hon Members, so we would adjourn the House to Tuesday, 28th January, 2025, at 12 noon. Hon Members, once again, I would like to thank you for your cooperation despite the hitches. The House stands adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

The House was adjourned at 5.13 p.m. till Tuesday, 28th January, 2025, at 12 noon.

Editor's Note

This *Official Report* was corrected by the House on 23rd January, 2025, as follows:

Column 102, under
Recommendation, it should read
“The Committee recommends to the
House by consensus, the nomination
of MS RITA AKOSUA AWATEY
as the Eastern Regional Minister”