



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

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THE
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF GHANA

FIRST MEETING, 2025

Thursday, 20th February, 2025

The House met at 11.34 a.m.

[MR FIRST DEPUTY SPEAKER IN
THE CHAIR]

PRAYERS

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, there is no communication from His Excellency, the President, and we do not have a formal communication by the Speaker. So let us proceed to take the item numbered 5, Correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*.

**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS AND
THE OFFICIAL REPORT**

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*. We have not taken the *Votes and Proceedings* for Thursday, 6th February, 2025. May we do so now?

Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 6th February, 2025.

Page 1... 9—

Yes, Hon Frank Afriyie?

Mr Frank Afriyie: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

We just got access to this *Votes and Proceedings*; however, checking page 9, the item numbered 8, under Motion, the name of the Majority Chief Whip is wrongly spelt. The spelling of “Nelson” should be checked. It is wrongly spelt.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, you are correct. Table Office, take note.

Yes, Hon Member for Tain?

Mr Adama Sulemana: Mr Speaker, on page 7, the item numbered 4(5), “Ahenkwah, Frederick Yaw (Jaman North)”, he was here yesterday. I was here with him.

Thank you.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: We are considering that of 6th February.

Mr Sulemana: 6th February?

Mr First Deputy Speaker: The *Votes and Proceedings* of 6th February, 2025.

Mr Sulemana: All right, sorry about that.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Page 9?

Dr Clement Abas Apaak — rose —

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Clement Apaak, the *Votes and Proceedings* is on your console.

Page 10...12?

Hon Members, the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 6th February, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, we will then move to the *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, 19th February, 2025.

Page 1...6— Page 7—

Yes, Hon Member for Tain?

Mr Sulemana: Mr Speaker, as I said, the item numbered 4(5) on page 7, “Ahenkwah, Frederick Yaw (Jaman North)” was here yesterday.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Table Office, kindly take note.

Page 8—

Yes, Hon Frank Afriyie?

Mr Afriyie: Mr Speaker, I am grateful, and as always, I seek your guidance. On page 8, the item numbered 7(ii) under Statements, I am not really sure if what is here should stand, but I seek your guidance. If you would permit me, I would read:

“The Hon Member for Berekum West, Mr Dickson Kyere-Duah made a statement on football-related violence, resulting in the stabbing to death of a Kotoko fan, Nana Yaw Frimpong, during a league match between Nsoatreman FC and Asante Kotoko Sporting Club...”

I think that since we are dealing with two football teams, it should be plural, “clubs”, but Mr Speaker, I seek, your guidance.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Table Office, take note.

Page 9...10?

Hon Members, the *Votes and Proceedings* of the 12th Sitting, dated Wednesday, 19th February, 2025, as corrected, is adopted as the true record of proceedings.

11.44 a.m.

Hon Members, we have the *Official Report* of Thursday, 6th February, 2025 —[Pause]

Hon Members, any corrections?

Hon Frank Afriyie?

Mr Afriyie: Mr Speaker, I am grateful. With your indulgence, let me take you to column 30, paragraph 2, and with your leave, I read: “I agree with my Colleagues, the Hon Minority Chief Whip...” I think specific reference was being made to our Leader here so, “I agree with my Colleague” not “Colleagues”. Then column 45, under paragraph 5, “Mr Speaker, let me commend the maker of the Statement who as I listened to Colleagues, is a proud survival...” I think the word here should be “survivor” not “survival”.

Mr Speaker, again, a bit of education here —

Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, I would want to draw my Colleague's attention to something. He should turn to page 2 of the Official Report. Page 2 not column 2.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Do you mean page 2?

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Not column 2. The very cover. When he opens the first page, he would see something written at the top. He could read that—"Correction of errors..." Have you seen that? Just be guided by what is there.

Mr Speaker, for the avoidance of doubt, it says:

"Correction of errors of substance may be made only on the floor of the House with the permission of the Speaker. However, correction of typographical or grammatical errors which Members suggest for the Bound Volumes which will be compiled at the end of the Meeting may be clearly marked in the Daily Report, and the copy containing the corrections submitted at the Editor's Office, Parliament House, not later than four clear days after the publication of the Daily Report."

If the Hon Member who made the contribution has anything of substance to introduce or there was any error which was of substance, then that Hon Member or the person who followed proceedings may with the leave of the Speaker, get that correction done which is a matter of substance. But for errors in grammar

which we all are sinners—typographical errors and all those things, the rule is there to guide. I believe that is what the Hon Member is doing, and I am not trying to take the Hon Member's industry away, but I am just trying to guide the Hon Member.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you. I urge Hon Members to take note.

Mr Afriyie: Mr Speaker, I am properly guided.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Braimah?

Hon Braimah, I thought you were on your feet, but that is all right.

Any further corrections?

Hon Members, the *Official Report* of Thursday, 6th February, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, we have the *Official Report* of Thursday, 11th February, 2025 — *[Pause]*

Hon Laadi Ayamba?

Hajia Laadi Ayii Ayamba: Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, column 56, second line, the word I used was "stereotyping is one of the issues" not "stereotypes". If that could be corrected.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: That is a correction; so accordingly, let all of us be guided by what the Minority Leader said. It is also contained in page 2 of these Official Reports.

Any further corrections?

Hon Members, the *Official Report* of Tuesday, 11th February, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, the next item following the correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report* is Statement.

Hon Minority Chief Whip?

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence.

Mr Speaker, I am aware the House had programmed the Minister for Energy and Green Transition to apprise us following a Statement that was made on the floor of the House. And the earlier consequential directives were that the Energy Commission was supposed to appear. At the Business Committee, that was varied at the instance of the Majority Leader, and we were supposed to have the Minister for Energy and Green Transition here. I cannot see him here, and I have enquired from Leadership, but there is no indication. The House wishes to know what the alternative plans are.

Then again, Leader, you would bear with me that on our Side, we have submitted our names for the composition

of our Committees; both Select and Standing. The delay, obviously, is coming from their Side, and it is becoming unacceptable. I think I see the Deputy Majority Leader looking at me with an assuring gaze. Would he assure this House or could he give any timeline between today and tomorrow, when they could submit their list for us to put finality to this matter? It is denying the House its oversight and it is unacceptable.

Mr Speaker, I would wish Leadership and my Colleagues in the Majority, to speak to the two important things that I raised; the first one is the Committees, and the second one is that the Minister for Energy and Green Transition is nowhere to be found.

11.54 a.m.

There is a practice in this House; is he coming or not? What is the issue? The Majority Side has a responsibility to communicate with us and let us know what the challenge of the Ministry or the Minister is, and for the House to decide whether we would consider that as a good and tenable excuse.

Mr Speaker, they need to say something to these issues I have raised.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Yes, Second Deputy Majority Whip?

Mr Richard Acheampong: Thank you, Mr Speaker for the opportunity.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Minister came to this House. Yesterday, we agreed we would start proceedings by 10 a.m., so,

the Minister was here by 10 a.m. but because the House did not start proceedings by 10 a.m.—Today is also Cabinet Day, so he is attending upon Cabinet.

Mr Speaker, he is attending Cabinet meeting today, and the Minister has promised us that he would make himself available from 1 to 2 p.m., that is if the House is still in session. He would come and brief the House on whatever is happening in his Ministry. Many of the Members saw him; he came this morning, so, the Minority Leader, should not take it as someone is trying to throw dust into the eyes of the public. The Minister was here; I saw him and other Members saw him as well. He has promised to come back and brief the House.

Mr Speaker, with the issue about the composition of the committee, at Conclave, I told my Colleagues that we were almost done. Some issues in respect of other Members came up when we were there. So by tomorrow, we would submit the list to the Clerk, so that the full compilation can be done. Latest by next week Tuesday, we would get the Committees in place, so that they can start work.

So, Minority Chief Whip, rest assured, by next Tuesday, the Committees would be in place so that everything can be sorted out.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, ordinarily, this is a matter that we would

not litigate on, but I would welcome my Colleague, and we can grant him the benefit of the doubt. He just assumed office as a Deputy Whip, so we can understand. However, he should be guided. We are not litigating on whether the Minister was here. The Minister cannot come here and just by word of mouth, say that he is going for Cabinet meeting, no. The practice has been that where the Minister is unable to appear, the Ministry writes officially. That has been the practice; let us not debate this matter.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Chief Whip, I am reliably informed that the sector Minister was here, and in view of the fact that there was a delay, they had put it into writing that he would have to attend Cabinet Meeting. So, I intend to direct that he should be re-scheduled for next week at 11 a.m., and not 10 a.m.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, that is fair. On the matter of the Committees, I think my good Friend needs a good briefing from his boss, the Chief Whip, because two weeks ago—Mr Speaker, you were the one presiding—He carried two fat files that they were done with their Side; that the Committees had been composed. Today, he used the word “almost”. The two do not gel, so please relate. When we were there, we did things properly, and they should probably take a cue from us. Hon Acheampong, take a cue from us. But Mr Speaker, this delay is becoming a concern. When we spoke to Hon Colleagues, almost everyone is concerned as to why we still have not

constituted our Committees. We should not take this matter lightly. Parliament is as good as its Committees. So please, is it the case that the Majority Side is suggesting that they would submit the list tomorrow, and then we can have a Committee on Selection meeting? Hopefully, next Tuesday, we can take the Motion; can they give that indication?

Mr Acheampong: Mr Speaker, my Colleague is not being fair to me, because he is aware, even at Conclave, some issues came up, and we needed to incorporate all those issues. So, just take my word. We would submit the list by close of work, tomorrow. Early next week, the Committee on Selection would meet so that they incorporate everything, and we would get it done. So, they should not worry. We would put the Committees in place, because very soon, the Budget Statement would be read, and we would need the Committees to do those estimates, and also, programme them to do other things. So, they should not worry; we would get the Committees in place.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member knows that we are forming our Government; does he understand? Yes, and it is on record time.

So, Mr Speaker—No, it has effect on the composition of Committees. We cannot put someone as a chairperson and the next day, the person is made a Minister. We would have to come back to amend the report and all that. So please, bear with us. Next week, we would put the Committees in place.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Member for Akim Swedru?

Mr Kennedy Nyarko Osei: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This House is governed by our Standing Orders, and if the very people who pass these Standing Orders do not want to respect it, then I do not know what else we can respect. Order 205(2) is clear on the matter that when this—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, read.

Mr K. N. Osei: Mr Speaker, with your leave, Order 205(2), I read;

“The Committee of Selection shall prepare and report to the House within the first ten sitting days after appointment, the list of Members to compose the Standing and Select Committees of the House.”

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Who is the Chairman of the Committee of Selection?

Mr K. N. Osei: It is Mr Speaker who is the Chairman of the Committee of Selection. Once you are sitting in, I assume that you are the Chairman.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: So, by procedure, what happens if we are unable to comply with the timeline? We seek leave of the Speaker, so, should Mr Speaker seek his own leave?

Mr K. N. Osei: I am drawing your attention that this is our own Standing Orders, so we have to respect it and make sure—I agree with Colleagues; all their submissions are alright, but Mr Speaker, we cannot be delaying on these matters. We need to put closure on it, and there should be a definite date for us to complete this, because it puts Members in suspense. We should be able to conclude this matter. I believe with your good self and how you are deliberate on some matters, you would ensure this is done.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Yes, Hon Nyindam?

Mr Matthew Nyindam: Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: On which of the issues?

Mr Nyindam: On the same issues about the Committees.

Mr Speaker, I can see that many a time, even when Statements are made in this House, you struggle because you want to refer some of these Statements to the appropriate Committees, so that we can all look into the recommendations coming up from those Statements. Because these Committees are not in place, sometimes, these Statements are left hanging. I know it is a concern to you. We appreciate the position the Majority finds themselves in; I have been there before and I appreciate it, but Mr

Speaker, it has been long overdue. I listened to the Deputy Whip; he was struggling. The assurances he is giving are not assuring enough.

Mr Speaker, I want you to hold him responsible for what he said. That is where I am coming from. He says by tomorrow, the composition of the Committees would be finalised and by Tuesday, Committees would be in this House.

Mr Speaker, I want to appeal to you to hold him—The Chief Whip just entered and he should not muddy the waters because I know he is preparing to say something.

12.04 p.m.

His Deputy has already assured us that tomorrow, and Monday, the Committees would be formed. So, Mr Speaker, I want to appeal to you to hold him responsible, so that on Tuesday, they do not come back here and give us stories. In any case, Mr Speaker, the appointments are almost done. They are just left with four persons, and I am sure they know themselves by now.

So, Mr Speaker, they should not use that as an excuse. I met a friend and he told me that four will come by Tuesday. Those of them who have not heard their names, should not hope; it is over. So that they can take over some of these Committees, and then God willing, we will all perform our oversight responsibilities properly with the Committees.

Mr Speaker, thank you for indulging me; I am grateful. Mr Speaker, I told you; you see that the Majority Chief Whip wants to muddy the waters. Mr Speaker, do not allow him to muddy the waters.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip?

Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this matter assuringly.

Mr Speaker, I am in my ninth year in this House, and this is one of the periods that we are constituting institutions to enable the organ of Parliament function with alacrity. This is just February, and Committees have been formed; the rest are about to be formed.

Mr Speaker, even you have made referrals to Committees, and those referrals will be attended to and reports will be presented. So, the picture should not be painted that Parliament is incapacitated; it is unable to perform its functions. Mr Speaker, indeed, you know that even Questions are one of the methods by which we exercise oversight.

For next week alone, we have over 18 Questions slated for Ministers to respond to. So, Mr Speaker, I am responding to these matters because Hon Nyindam, the Member of Parliament for Kpandai, made the point that the power of Members to exercise their oversight has been taken away because Committees have not been constituted, but that cannot be the case.

Having said this, Mr Speaker, our Committees, on our Side, the numbers are set. We would submit them to the Clerks-at-the-Table to—*[Interruption]*—Yes, almost set. It is midday; we are set and we will submit it to the Clerks-at-the-Table, and I am sure that the Committee of Selection will meet by tomorrow. The Speaker is the Chair. We would meet by tomorrow or Monday, and by Tuesday, the Report would be laid and taken, and this matter can be put to rest.

I see that any time my Brother realises I am not here, then he goes to town and comes after me; I believe that it should not be so. So, I want to assure them, Mr Speaker, we are in February, and we will constitute our Committees, properly speaking, so that work can be done. We are in February; we are not late at all. In the last Parliament, they constituted their Committees in March. I was here.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, we would draw the curtains on this matter—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Well, Hon Members—Hon Minority Chief Whip, with all due respect, you have raised an issue, it has been deliberated upon, and we have been given some assurance that the Report will be laid on Tuesday, and taken the same day. Let us hold them by their words, hoping that the Report will really be laid on Tuesday, and taken the same day. So—

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, just to add that my Colleague said we have 18 Questions before the House, and this is a House of record; that is not a fact. We do not have Questions admitted yet. He may be referring to a consideration we had at the Business Committee, but that Report is not at Plenary, and it has not been accepted or adopted. So, he should not say that 18 Questions have been adopted or are before the House. They are not. That was what he said.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, with your leave—

Mr Frist Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, with all due respect, I do not want us to belabour this point. You have given us the assurance that Tuesday the Report will be laid and taken; let us not belabour it. On—

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I am not belabouring the point; just to say I said slated. That is the language I used.

Mr First Deputy speaker: On the issue of the Minister for Energy and Green Transition, I would direct the Clerks-at-the-Table to reprogramme the Minister for Energy and Green Transition for next week at 11 a.m.

Hon Members, I am talking about next week, in the sense that after tomorrow, the next available date will be next week. This is a man who wrote to Parliament that he is attending a Cabinet meeting. We do not know the matters that will ensue at Cabinet, so let us give him the benefit of the doubt and programme him for next week, Tuesday.

Thank you very much, Hon Members.

Yes, Hon Minority Leader?

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, this is just to put matters in proper perspective without litigating same. The Minister wrote to us that he would come today. We have just been informed that because of Cabinet commitment, he has left us and says he will come later in the afternoon. Of course, with Cabinet, we cannot be sure, so I agree with them. But, Mr Speaker, just for the record, in going, he only left a message with the Deputy Majority Chief Whip. I do not know whether you received a new letter this morning. So, I just want clarity on whether you have a new letter.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: That he will be here to answer Questions? He was actually here, but we delayed in Sitting, and he had to go for Cabinet meeting, and as a result, I am directing that he be programmed to appear before the House next week Tuesday.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, to assist you, you said he has written a letter; that is why I wanted clarity that the letter was for him to come today. But he has not written a new letter, so I agree with you. Except that I just want to help you in the circumstances because this is a House of record.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, on which matter?

Mr Dafeamekpor: On this matter, Mr Speaker. Indeed, when the Minister came —

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, this matter has been decided, based on which I have even directed that the Minister be programmed to appear next week Tuesday. So, I think that puts the matter to rest.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, it does not. He is urging that he be brought tomorrow, Friday, and I want to give some information. When the Minister came—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, I have given a direction that he be programmed to appear before the House next week. So, my direction is next week Tuesday.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, but let me give some information because I attempted to reach the Minority Leader for us to have an agreement even before coming to you, but he could not answer the call. That is all that I wanted to provide.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Very well.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, that when the Minister came and was about to leave for Cabinet, I actually reached out, so that I could have an understanding with him—*[Interruption]*—No, to him on his phone. He will see my missed call.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Please, address the Chair.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I called him, so that we could have

reached an agreement, then when we come to the Floor, we would have agreed with you as to when the Minister should return next week. So, he was here. I agree that you have already given direction, but this was just to indicate that I attempted to reach the Minority Leader to let him know that these were the circumstances that the Minister found himself in, and would not be able to address the House as scheduled, but I could not get him on the phone.

12.14 p.m.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Yes, we have been informed accordingly by the Hon Majority Deputy Whip.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Thank you very much.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, we have Statements on social justice written by three Hon Members. I would want us to take the three Statements together. One is in the name of Hon Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor, Member of Parliament for Awutu Senya East Constituency, on the occasion of the World Day of Social Justice. We also have a Statement by Hon Alhassan Kobina Ghansah, to mark the World Day of Social Justice and another Statement in the name of Hon Francis Kwabena Berepong Owusu-Akyaw, Member of Parliament for Juaben.

Hon Members, we may be taking these three Statements together but in the meantime, the Hon Minority Leader indicated that there is an escalating

situation of cholera in his constituency and he would want to inform the House.

Hon Minority Leader, you have the floor.

STATEMENT

Update on the Cholera Outbreak in Effutu; the Situation at the Winneba Government Hospital

Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin (NPP —Effutu): Mr Speaker, I again, thank you for the opportunity to bring this matter again to the national space. Yesterday, I visited the Winneba Government Hospital and was involved in a number of public education programmes. The situation at the treatment centre is not good at all. To put it in simple language; water is not flowing in the whole hospital, and the doctors and nurses complained of a shortage of water. So far, although the Minister for Health has visited the Winneba Health Directorate, nothing has been given to them by way of logistical support.

Mr Speaker, yesterday, I had to buy an additional 100 mattresses for them and I have released another GH¢100,000. The situation is really getting out of hand—Yes, I released GH¢100,000 last week and again, another GH¢100,000 has been released. The Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) are in short supply; they do not have it, although the Minister for Health was there. The Regional Directorate is yet to provide logistical support.

Mr Speaker, Winneba is a commercial centre and people come from all over the region and country to trade in there. So, it should not be seen as a Winneba problem. Until recently, cholera was elsewhere and now, it is in Winneba; if it is not properly contained, it may get out of hand and may become a major national health issue. I am using this platform to again, appeal to the Government to intervene. The health professionals are stressed, and people are in distress. They need medication and vaccination. They are exposed; in fact, the male ward of the Winneba Government Hospital has been converted into a cholera treatment centre. They have also set up a tent outside to receive new cases. Children are going through this trauma and the aged are the most affected.

Mr Speaker, it is not a palatable scene. I have uploaded some of the pictures on my social media handle. I did not really capture those on sick beds because it is very pathetic and the Government would have to come in to support them. I am also appealing to agencies in the health sector as well as those in the business of merchandising PPEs to come to the aid of the health facilities in Winneba. It is all they need. It is a humble appeal to the pharmaceutical companies to support those in need because as I said, there are traders from Swedru who come to Winneba. Winneba has two market days: Tuesdays and Fridays. People buy fish from the *nshornaa*, the fishermen are still bringing their catch and the landing beach is yet to be commissioned. So the fish is still exposed and the very people

who are trading are the ones who are selling for us to eat. So those in Kasoa and Mankessim, if care is not taken, we will be telling another story.

It is a very humble appeal and I pray that we move in to intervene. I am appealing to Colleague Members of Parliament who are here. This is not Effutu's problem; it is our problem. When I hear of challenges in their backyard, they know how I come in to support them. We are not launching an appeal for funds, but I am calling on Colleagues to make their small contributions and support Effutu. When Hon Ablakwa had the flood situation in his constituency, I gave him 50,000 for his constituents. It is a matter of public records; he announced it in this Chamber. We all know this, and those of the Members who get challenges in their constituencies, I do not leave them naked.

Charity in times like this is very important, so Hon Majority Members, we on the Left Side are in Opposition but they are in Government —[*Laughter*] — They should donate handsomely to support their Leader's course because the people there are suffering.

Mma nnka d3 ɔy3 Effutu fo hɔn as3m, ɔnny3 Edinafo, ɔnny3 Ejumako fo, ɔnny3 Oguafɔ hɔn problem. Ɔka hwen a, enyiwa pruw nsu nti s3 nd3 ɔy3 Effutu a, ɔkyena ɔbɔkɔ akɔdur Akatsi South.—
[*Laughter*]

Mr Speaker, in other words, I am saying that —

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, do not invite me into the debate —[*Laughter*]

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Not at all. Mr Speaker, what I am trying to say is that no one individual is an island. When rain falls, as Ola Rotimi said in '*The gods are not to blame*', a dozen will not fall on one roof only, it falls on every roof.

12.24 p.m.

So Mr Speaker, it is Effutu, but the nature of the situation is such that it can have a spiral effect in various communities. So, we have to contain it, and I am, hereby, launching a special appeal for my Friends to contribute handsomely because we would never know when an Akatsi trader would come to Effutu, and he or she may go back, and there may be a problem. So, if we contain it and the traders from Akatsi who come to Effutu to trade get into trouble and they are contained, there would not be any spread. So, I am calling on not only my Brothers and Sisters from the Central Region but the entire House. Please come to my aid and come handsomely; we need logistics, medication, mattresses, tents and money to support them. When those who go through the challenge are discharged, the food to eat is even a problem. So, if one has rice, sugar, milk, mosquito nets or anything, please donate them, even liquid soap. We need support for our vulnerable compatriots at *nshornaa*; please, come to the aid of Effutu and please come to their aid through me, and it shall be thankfully received and faithfully applied.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much.

Hon Members, he is just bringing the information to our notice. I intend not to open the floor for comments. Hon Members, the Minister for Health, our Colleague, Mr Kwabena Mintah Akandoh, was in the House to brief us on the situation on cholera and meningitis. The House has taken note of his briefing. If, in between, the situation is escalating in a particular constituency, what we need to do is to, personally, reach out to him and bring to his notice that the situation is particularly escalating in the Effutu Constituency; therefore, there is the need to pay urgent attention to it.

Hon Minority Leader, Mr Kwabena Mintah Akandoh, the Minister for Health is our Colleague. I would personally reach out to him; and would plead with you to also personally reach out to him, so that the situation can be addressed. And in view of the fact that he was here to brief the House and Members had the opportunity to contribute and make comments to the issue, today, I intend not to open the floor for comments.

However, there is a special appeal to Members of Parliament. Let us take note of the appeal and support the Minority Leader to address the situation. It is true; you may never know when a trader from your constituency would visit his constituency and go back with the disease. So, the earlier the situation is

addressed in his Constituency, the better it is for all of us.

Hon Members, I thank you very much for your indulgence. Let us move to the Statement on the Social Justice.

Yes, Deputy Majority Leader?

Deputy Majority Leader (Mr George Kweku Ricketts-Hagan): Mr Speaker, you have taken the wind out of our sail, but I think it is just to support what my Hon Brother is saying. The Minister was here on Tuesday as you have rightly said and from all indications, the Ministry of Health is on the ground. There are structures that some of these things could be passed through. The appeal that the Hon Leader is making is a good one. Government is doing what Government is supposed, yet in many places, as it is in Effutu and Cape Coast, people are supporting these things, so I think his appeal is fair.

But I do not think we have to give any indication that the Government is not on top of this issue, but the Government is actually on top. The Minister was here to explain to us exactly what is happening, and I can tell on authority that he is in Central Region, and that the situation is under control. Structures are there and they are in Winneba as well, so my Hon Brother is close to things as we all are, and if it is an appeal for people from the private sector coming to help, that is fair enough, but the Ministry of Health is on the ground; and obviously, issues on cholera are things that are fluid.

The Minister was here on Tuesday, yes, things probably have changed a bit—I can tell Hon Members that, in Cape Coast, they have been given things, so I do not know why—*[Interruption]*—That is what I am saying. We are talking about Central Region here, and we are on one directorate, so I do not know how Cape Coast can get things and Winneba would not get them under the same health directorate.

I want to appeal to my Brother that we should use the structures that the Minister came here to eloquently tell us about what they are doing. The Government is on the ground; the Minister is on the ground, and structures are in place to deal with these things. So, we need to let the structures work and follow the structures. Appeal from the private sector or from other people can support—Because this affects all of us, and as the Minority Leader rightly said, it can be at place A today, but it can be in place B tomorrow, so we all need to be vigilant on this.

But I do not want us to leave here with the impression that the Government is not on the ground, and that the Minister is not in control; the Minister is in absolute control with structures in place to deal with this. If there are some challenges or things have probably happened between the time that he came here to speak and now, I think we need to communicate it to the appropriate channels to deal with it as they are already doing now.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon Deputy Majority Leader.

Hon Members, we have students from some educational institutions visiting the House. They are from the following institutions: National College of Defence Studies, led by General Aryeetey, Commandant and Brigadier General Fred Ntiri (Deputy Commander); Prof. John Akokpari, Dean; they are 44 in number.

[Students from National College of Defence were acknowledged]

We also have Aggie's Preparatory School here with us. They are led by Phoebe Abbew, administrator of the school, and they are from Anyaa Sowutuom, and they are 80 in number.

[Students from Aggie's Preparatory School were acknowledged]

We also have students from Nsawora, Edumafua Community Senior High School (SHS), from Akontombra led by Mr Prince Mattias. They are 90 in number.

[Students from Nsawora Edumafua Community SHS were acknowledged]

Holy Trinity Local School is also here, led by Vivian Boateng, executive manager, and they are from Kwadaso. They are 50 in number.

[Pupils of Holy Trinity Local School were acknowledged]

Hon Members, on behalf of the House and on my own behalf, I wish our students a fruitful visit to the House.

12.34 p.m.

Hon Members, we then proceed to take our joint Statements, starting from Hon Francis Kwabena Berepong Owusu-Akyaw, Member of Parliament for Juabeng. You have the floor.

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, if you may, shall we proceed to take the next Statement?

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, there is a similar Statement, in honour of Mrs Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor. Is the Hon Member present in the House? If you are, then you have the floor.

STATEMENT

World Day of Social Justice

Mrs Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor (NDC — Awutu Senya East): Mr Speaker, I am present. I am honoured to speak on the occasion of the World Day for Social Justice.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to rise and make this Statement on the floor of this august House in commemoration of the World Day of Social Justice. This is a day set aside by the United Nations (UN) for nations to reflect on the fundamental principles of fairness, equity and human dignity in our societies. Social Justice is at the heart of every serious and thriving democracy and for us in Ghana, it must be viewed as an essential pillar in the pursuit of national and inclusive development for all.

In 2007, the UN established the World Day of Social Justice and first observed the day in 2009 to promote social justice by addressing issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment and human rights violations. Since then, the term "Social Justice" has featured prominently in the literature of conversations about justice and sustainable development.

Mr Speaker, this year's celebration is on the theme, "Empowering Inclusion, Bridging Gaps for Social Justice". The theme calls for a need to urgently implement inclusive policies and social protection systems to address various forms of inequalities in the country.

Mr Speaker, the struggle for social justice in Africa and more specifically Ghana, is deeply rooted in history and dates back to the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885. The aftermath of the Berlin Conference saw the partitioning of Africa without recourse to indigenous populations. Subsequently, centuries of oppression through enslavement and colonialism followed with the exploitation of Africa under colonial rule and perpetuating a systemic economic and social injustices that continues to affect the progress of the continent today.

Mr Speaker, the tide began to turn with the dawn of independence movements across Africa. Ghana, under the leadership of Dr Kwame Nkrumah, became the first sub-Saharan African country to achieve independence on 6th March, 1957. This marked a significant step towards emancipation, dismantling oppressive colonial structures and

building a more just and equitable society. Since then, Ghana has made notable progress in areas such as education; the free education for Northern Ghana under Dr Kwame Nkrumah, health care, political participation, and economic empowerment. Yet, the fight for true social justice remains unfinished, as many inequalities persist in our society today.

Mr Speaker, now to the current trends of social justice issues in Ghana—Strides have been made and yet Ghana continues to grapple with serious social justice issues which call for urgent attention and sustained actions to curb rising inequities and inequalities as a result of our difficult economic conditions.

Mr Speaker, permit me to highlight some current issues in the area of social justice.

Democracy and Human Rights Violations

- i) The arrest of Democracy Hub protestors in recent years and my illegal arrest have raised concerns about the shrinking civic space and respect for fundamental freedoms. The right to peaceful assembly and free expression are cornerstones of our democracy and must be upheld at all times.
- ii) The tragic deaths of eight Ghanaians and shooting at me in the 2020 elections due to election-related violence remain

unresolved. Furthermore, similar concerns have arisen in the 2024 elections, where lives were again lost especially in the Awutu Senya East Constituency, specifically, in Kasoa. It is imperative that justice is served for the victims and their families.

- iii) With the rising economic hardships and inequalities—The economic downturn following the 2022 financial crisis pushed more than 800,000 Ghanaians into extreme poverty according to the World Bank Reports in 2023.
- iv) The Domestic Debt Exchange Programme (DDEP) resulted in severe financial losses popularly known as “haircuts” for domestic bondholders, many of whom were pensioners and working-class Ghanaians who relied on these investments for their livelihood.
- v) Unemployment and job scarcity continue to threaten the economic security of millions, particularly the youth. Many highly educated graduates struggle to find decent jobs, contributing to rising frustration and social unrest. This phenomenon has been designated as a national security threat by analysts within civil society and government.
- vi) Lack of access to essential services is also a major issue.

Affordable housing remains out of reach for many ordinary Ghanaians due to skyrocketing rent prices and the absence of comprehensive housing policies.

- vii) Access to quality health care, education, and social welfare is still a major challenge, with inequalities persisting in both urban and rural communities.

Government's Commitment to Social Justice

Mr Speaker, the new administration of H.E. John Dramani Mahama and the Vice President, Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang, sworn into Office on 7th January, 2025, is fully committed to addressing these pressing issues and advancing social justice for all Ghanaians. The Government is determined to implement bold, people-centered policies aimed at creating economic opportunities, reducing inequalities, and promoting fairness in society. Permit me to highlight some of the key interventions the current regime is committed to implementing in the pursuit of social justice for Ghanaians of all facets of life.

Mr Speaker, the 24-Hour Economy policy is a mega transformative policy by the new administration. The President has appointed the distinguished Mr Goosie Tanoh to head the coordination and implementation of the policy from the Office of the President and it is aimed at creating more decent and sustainable jobs by maximising economic productivity

throughout day and night, ensuring expanded employment opportunities for all.

The “Mo Ne Yo” Policy is a social security programme for informal sector workers and it is aimed at ensuring workers in the informal sector have financial security upon reaching the age of 60. This would safeguard the future of millions of Ghanaians engaged in informal employment.

Mr Speaker, I would call on the Minister for Finance and the implementing Ministry responsible for this policy, to move swiftly and set it in motion to secure the future and social security of informal workers in the country.

Mr Speaker, the "No Fees Stress" Policy which is an initiative designed to eliminate financial barriers for first-year tertiary students would ensure that higher education is made more accessible to all, irrespective of one's financial background. There are already indications that this policy would feature in the 2025 Budget and Economic Statement of Government.

Mr Speaker, furthermore, on the issue of social justice, victims of election violence, President John Dramani Mahama has directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to commence investigations into the deaths related to the 2020 and 2024 elections. Those responsible must be held accountable, and the affected families must receive compensation and closure.

12.44 p.m.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion, on this World Day of Social Justice, let us reaffirm our collective responsibility to build a Ghana that is fair, just, and inclusive. A Ghana where no one is left behind due to their socio-economic background, political affiliation, or location. Social justice is not merely an abstract concept; it is a lived reality that determines the quality of life of millions. As representatives of the people, we must ensure that our policies, laws, and governance structures reflect our commitment to fairness, equality, and human dignity. Let us work collectively to bridge the gaps and empower inclusion for a more just and prosperous Ghana.

I thank you Mr Speaker for granting the good people of Awutu Senya East this great opportunity for their voices to be heard on this important day of commemorating the World Day of Social Justice for all.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, I shall proceed to give the floor to Hon Alhassan Kobina Ghansah.

STATEMENT

World Day of Social Justice

Alhaji Alhassan Kobina Ghansah (NDC — Asikuma/Odoben/Brakwa): Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to make this Statement.

The World Day of Social Justice celebrated by many nations worldwide is observed annually on February 20th. The

date was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and first celebrated in 2009. The day aims to promote social justice and address issues such as poverty, exclusion, unemployment, gender inequality and human rights violations. The United Nations emphasises that social justice is essential for achieving peace and security globally.

Mr Speaker, the theme for this year's celebration is "Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps for Social Justice" which emphasises the necessity for inclusive policies and social protection to combat systemic inequalities. The United Nations commitment to social justice is evident through various initiatives including the Social Protection Floor Initiative which aims to ensure basic social guarantees for all individuals.

Mr Speaker, the importance of social justice has been underscored by various international frameworks including the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair globalisation, adopted in 2008. The observance also aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly Goal 1, which involves eradicating poverty in all its forms; Goal 5, that promotes achieving gender inequality and empowering all women and girls in society; Goal 8, which encompasses promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and; Goal 10, which emphasises reducing inequalities within and among countries.

This is reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (U.D.H.R), adopted in 1948, which outlines fundamental

human rights that promotes dignity, equality and fairness for all. Ghana as an active member of the United Nations embraces this day to reinforce its commitment to social justice within the context of its socio-economic challenges and development aspiration. Social justice in Ghana has made considerable strides in its commitment to human rights and social equity particularly, in recent decades.

Mr Speaker, Ghana faces significant challenges in achieving full social justice for all of its citizens. Issues like poverty, gender inequality, youth unemployment and access to education remain critical concerns. For instance, rural communities often experience limited access to essential services such as healthcare, education and clean water. In response to these challenges, Ghana has implemented several social policies and programmes aimed at improving the welfare of its citizens. These include the National Social Protection Policy which aims to reduce poverty and inequality through various safety nets such as the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme.

Mr Speaker, let me reiterate that some organisations in Ghana such as the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC), Action Aid Ghana, Ghana Bar Association, Ghana Journalist Association and Ghana

Trade Union Congress are supporting the agenda to achieve this success.

On this day, the Ghanaian Government, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international organisations, highlights its commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and also serve as an opportunity to remind citizens, policy makers and global stakeholders that, the fight for social justice is an ongoing process that requires collective action.

Mr Speaker, there are some other challenges in addressing some of these social justices and the Government, civil society and individuals must work together to promote social justice and human rights for all. However, this requires a multifaceted approach that includes promoting inclusive and equitable economic growth; strengthening social protection systems; advancing human rights and the rule of law; empowering marginalised and vulnerable populations in society.

12.54 p.m.

Mr Speaker, despite these efforts, social injustice remains a significant challenge in Ghana and some parts of the world. The country continues to grapple with issues such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment which disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. The recent plan by President Donald Trump of the United States of America (USA) to take over the Palestinian settlement in the Gaza Strip

is unfortunately, a clear indication of the non-existence of social justice.

Mr Speaker, I call on the United Nations (UN) to seriously consider and address these issues. Pope Paul VI once positively declared that, “development is the new name for peace” emphasising that “excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among people arouse, tensions and conflicts and are a danger to peace”. This is at the heart of social justice across the nations of this world which must be observed.

Mr Speaker, World Day of Social Justice 2025, represents a crucial opportunity for nations like Ghana to reaffirm their commitment to social equity by focusing on increasing and bridging gaps in society, both globally and locally.

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

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Hon Member.

Hon Members, is Hon Francis Kwabena Berepong Owusu-Akyaw now in the House?

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, if it pleases you, Hon Acquah would do so on his behalf because some emergencies have kept him outside of the Chamber.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Very well. This is a World Social Justice Day, so I would permit that.

STATEMENT

World Social Justice Day

Mr Alexander Akwasi Acquah on behalf of Mr Francis Kwabena Berepong Owusu-Akyaw (NPP — Juaben): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity to read this Statement on behalf of my Colleague who is not available.

Mr Speaker, distinguished Members of the House, it is an honour to stand before you today on the occasion of World Social Justice Day. A day that reminds us of our duty to build a fair and just society where all citizens have equal opportunities, irrespective of their background. Social justice is the foundation of national development, peace, and stability. It is about ensuring that every Ghanaian, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social economic status, or physical ability, can enjoy the fundamental rights enshrined in our 1992 Constitution.

Mr Speaker, permit me to recall the words spoken on the floor of this House by the former President, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, during his first Message on the State of the Nation to Parliament. Our esteemed former President stated,

“If our plans to revive the economy are to have any chance of success, we must at the same time, invest in our young people. My Government believes that education holds the key.”

“Equal access to educational opportunities is, in the long run, the principal instrument for achieving social justice. The present imbalance in volume and quality of educational facilities available to urban as against the rural population is creating the social divide which our Government would act decisively in reverse”.

Mr Speaker, these words were true 24 years ago and they are even more relevant today. It is without doubt that education remains a powerful tool for promoting social justice, and our 1992 Constitution guarantees the rights under Article 25(1), which states that:

“All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities...”

The landmark case of the Federation of Youth Association of Ghana (FEDYAG) v Public Universities of Ghana and Ors highlighted the need for public institutions to uphold fairness in admission and access to education. The ruling reinforced that public education must be accessible to all regardless of their social status.

Mr Speaker, beyond education, the Constitution of Ghana is also clear in its commitment to social justice with respect to guaranteeing human rights. Specifically, Article 12(1) of the 1992 Constitution provides that the fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in chapter 5—[Pause]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, continue. Hon Member for Juaben, you can sit by him, but let him continue.

Mr Acquah: Mr Speaker, education, the Constitution of Ghana is also clear—[Pause]

Mr Speaker, I crave your indulgence, once the maker of the Statement is in, I seek your leave to let him continue.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: The leave is hereby granted.

Mr Francis Kwabena Berepong Owusu-Akyaw (NPP — Juaben): Mr Speaker, thank you—[Pause]

Mr Speaker, beyond education, the Constitution of Ghana is also clear in its commitment to social justice with respect to guaranteeing human rights. Specifically, Article 12(1) of the 1992 Constitution provides that the fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in Chapter 5 shall be respected and upheld by the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary, and all other organs of Government and its agencies. That instructs every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed or gender to be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of individuals, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.

Mr Speaker, social justice also extends to economic rights and fair labour practices. Article 24(1) of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the right to work under satisfactory, safe, and healthy conditions, while directing the state to take measures to ensure an economic system that provides equal opportunities for all.

Mr Speaker, access to justice and due process is a cornerstone for social justice. The Constitution, under Article 19 and 296, guarantees the right to a fair trial and due process ensuring that no one is deprived of justice due to their economic or social status.

In the case of *Tsatsu Tsikata v The Republic* (2008) SCGLR 16, the Supreme Court reinforced the principles of fair trial and due process, reminding us that justice must not only be done, but must be seen to be done.

Mr Speaker, as we observe Social Justice Day, let us recommit ourselves to policies and legislative reforms that uphold these constitutional principles. We must strengthen equality before the law in all state actions, promote inclusive economic growth, and ensure that no Ghanaian is left behind. Social justice is not just a legal obligation, but a moral duty that defines the character of our dear nation.

Mr Speaker, may God bless Ghana, and may justice and fairness be the foundation of our development.

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity.

1.04 p.m.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much. Hon Members, the three Statements have been taken jointly, I would now open the floor for comments subject to Order 93 (5).

Yes, Hon Fiifi Buckman?

Mr Philip Fiifi Buckman (NDC — Kwesimintsim): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would want to commend the makers of the Statement, the three Hon Members.

Mr Speaker, there was this young girl who was met by a priest and the question to the girl was, are you a Christian, Muslim or Hindu? What the little girl said was, I am hungry. Poverty knows no religion, political or party affiliation. It is in this vein that I respectfully commend the makers of the Statements that with a collective effort, as a people, we would all have to stand up against social injustices.

Mr Speaker, respectfully, if we talk about fairness which is imbued in social justice, it is a behaviour without discrimination—not discriminating against any person because the person is either black, white or of any religious affiliation. Respectfully, justice is giving fair treatment to every person. If we look at the framers of our Constitution, looking at Chapter 5 and 6 of the 1992 Constitution, it is all meant to ensure that human dignity is protected and uplifted. I would want to join the world in celebrating the social justice day.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about social justice, we are looking at not discriminating against persons. We are looking at access to basic needs by persons living in the State, we are looking at access to education, job opportunities, financial resources, every person should have access to the right to financial resources. Access to public

schools and I want to commend all of us—They cannot intimidate me.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, address the chair.

Mr Buckman: I want to commend all of us for whatever we are doing to ensure that we protect and lift the image of our human race as a people. Respectfully, when the Minority Leader raised the issue of cholera, he informed the House about the strides he is making to ensure that his people are protected from that diseased and I would want to offer him a little advice and support that it all boils down to education. If we educate our people as to how to go about making sure that sanitation is right, we would ensure that it is eradicated.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, conclude.

Mr Buckman: Respectfully, I had same experience in my Constituency, Kwesimintsim, when about eight people died but for the swift attention of the doctors and medical caregivers over there, we would have lost more. I went there, we educated the people to ensure that they wash their hands, eat food that is hot, and disinfect those areas where the people are.

So, I would want to advise my Hon Minority Leader that it is not about beds or the rights, it is about cleanliness.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, your time is up.

Mr Buckman: Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the Statement made by our Hon Members.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member for Mpraeso, you have the floor.

Mr Davis Ansah Opoku (NPP — Mpraeso): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to commend the makers of the Statement. Indeed, today, 20th February, marks the day for social justice and if you look at the theme for the day, “empowering inclusion, bridging gaps for social justice.”

Mr Speaker, this emphasises the importance for inclusive policies and social protections in addressing systematic challenges that we are faced with as a people. Mr Speaker, at the heart of this celebration, are issues related to employment. If we have witnessed or lived through unemployment before, we would realise that it is a major social issue that is worthy of highlighting. The theme, bridging the gap for social justice brings to bear an issue that is currently ongoing in our country.

Mr Speaker, it has to do with persons who have been gainfully employed but today for some reasons are being asked to go home. This, I would not blame the current administration for this, this has been with us for many years. In 2017, I suffered same, I had the opportunity to work at National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) and within my own government, I was being denied the access to work. So, today, these young men and women who have been laid off

and asked to go, I wonder if they are going to go through the very situation that I went through in 2017? That today, the very reasons we celebrate this remarkable day, we seem to be widening the very gaps we should be closing.

1.14 p.m.

Mr Speaker, that is why I joined the Minority Leader's appeal to H. E. President John Dramani Mahama that the era of tit-for-tat, and the era of this is New Patriotic Party (NPP) Government, so we are going to work with NPP Members, and this is National Democratic Congress (NDC) Government, so we are going to work with NDC members has to come to an end—*[Interruption]*—That practice ought to come to an end, Mr Speaker, and what a day. I was thinking that one of the topics for discussion would be resetting Ghana: Bridging the Gap through Social Justice. So that in the spirit of resetting Ghana, we are urging H. E. the President not to look at the period for which these young men and women were employed.

Today, they are being asked to go home, and we wonder, as they go to sit in their various homes, what really are they going to eat? How are they going to take care of their families? We should not allow partisanship to drive these young men and women home. Mr Speaker, when it happened under the NPP, it was wrong, and it is important to make the point very clear, but this time—

Mr Dafeamekpor — *rose* —

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, are you rising on point of order?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, that is so.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member for Mpraeso—Let me listen to your point of order.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I rise pursuant to Order 122(1)(a) and react in respect of the comments from the Member of Parliament for Mpraeso to remind him that his comments are not supposed to degenerate into a debate, and Mr Speaker, the matters—Three days ago, on this Floor, similar comments from a Colleague degenerated into a debate, and you ruled that this matter of termination of employment and all that should—It became a subject of a substantive statement from the Minority Leader, and it attracted relevant comments from Members, and it was put to rest, so the subsequent directive was that he, with the Majority Leader, would engage the Chief of Staff on this matter. So, reopening those wounds, Mr Speaker, would attract, certainly, a debate from our Side, and I do not think that that is the path that he should take. That is a beaten path, so he should depart from it.

I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, I think I have listened to the Member with rapt attention.

Hon Members, the Statement on the Floor is about social justice, and social justice is irrespective of the political party that you belong to, and the Hon Member, in making his submission, indicated clearly what he suffered in 2017. Hon Members, I do not think the way he is putting this particular Statement is supposed to attract a debate, so Hon Majority Chief Whip, I beg to differ.

Hon Member, proceed and conclude.
[Hear! Hear!]

Mr D. A. Opoku: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and admittedly, I —

Mr Speaker, so my plea on this day is that, as we reflect on the day, there is the need to ensure fairness; there is a need to ensure equity, and there is a need to ensure inclusive development, and in doing this, at the heart of it is how people get to, for want of a word, “chop”, and how their families are able to survive, and that is why I will not generate a debate. In fact, I use my case as an example, and the difficulties that I went through, even during an NPP government. It is not proper; it was not proper yesterday, and it is not proper today, and it should not be proper tomorrow.

In fact, one of these young ladies who have been laid off in one of the agencies called me three days today. On *TikTok*, she was very active campaigning for H. E. John Dramani Mahama. Most of these people who have been laid off—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, conclude.

Mr D. A. Opoku: We do not even know the political affiliation of most of the people who have been laid off, so on this day, Mr Speaker, I appeal to the President, and I appeal to the Chief of Staff that in the spirit of social inclusion—[*Interruption*]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Order!

Mr D. A. Opoku: That in the spirit of social inclusion, they should revise their stance on this mass dismissal. It would not help Ghana. It continues to set a very bad precedent, and it is important that, as a people, we come to the realisation that tit-for-tat has no way. It would not help anybody, and we need to change our ways and ensure that the young people—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon Member. Your time is up—

Mr D. A. Opoku: We need to change our ways and ensure that the young people are gainfully employed.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Yusif Sulemana?

Alhaji Yusif Sulemana (NDC — Bole Bamboi): Mr Speaker, I am very grateful for the opportunity to contribute to these Statements. First of all, let me thank the makers of these Statements: The World Day of Social Justice, with the theme: Empowering, Inclusion, Bridging Gaps for Social Justice— What an important topic!

Mr Speaker, what are we talking about? We are talking about equal rights; we are talking about equal opportunity, and we are calling for equal treatment. Mr Speaker, the issues to look out for here, among others, include economic inequality, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor and racial injustice. Why should somebody's colour deny him some opportunities? These are the issues that we try to address when we talk about social justice.

Mr Speaker, we are talking about gender injustice. Why should somebody's gender be a hindrance to the person's development and progress? So, this subject is a subject that should bother all of us. It is a subject that we need to attach seriousness to.

Mr Speaker, we are talking about disability injustice. Look at some of our buildings. When somebody is incapacitated or when somebody is suffering from some kind of disability, even having access to some offices becomes a problem. These are the things that we should advert our minds to.

Mr Speaker, very soon, we are told that the Budget would be read in this House. We need to interrogate the Budget, and we need to look at the pro-poor programmes in the Budget. Let us look at those pro-poor programmes and see how these programmes will better the lives of the people. It takes the two Sides to look at the Budget to ensure that whatever that we roll out there brings about some development and some progress in the lives of our people.

Mr Speaker, we are talking about bridging the gap between the poor and the rich. We should be interested in coming up with policies that will give support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), so that they would be able to build upon their economic status and when we do that, we would not even be interested in rolling out grants to them. What we need to do is to create an environment where we can give support to these SMEs, so that they can stand on their own.

Mr Speaker, let it be known to all of us here that we have passed a law, the Affirmative Action Law. This is the time to implement it.

1.24 p.m.

If we do that it would go a long way to help us in fighting these social injustices that we see especially when it has to do with gender; girls and women.

Mr Speaker, let me call our religious organisations to show interest in helping us fight this canker. All of us here either attend a mosque or church and the leaders of these religious organisations need to show interest in our welfare. In doing so, we would be making headway in the fight against injustice.

Mr Speaker, I want to join my Colleague—He is saying that I should call him my Brother and I call him OPK. I remember very well that he complained to me that he had this kind of experience which is very unfortunate. I agree with him that that is not the way to go, and as a nation, we must look out for what is in

the interest of all of us, but to do that, we must correct the wrongs. We must all agree to correct the wrongs, and if we do not correct them, these issues will continue to be with us.

Mr Speaker, we have laws in this country and the laws are clear. The law says that if an institution wants to recruit, it must advertise, and if it advertises, that is social justice and giving equal opportunities to everybody. If there are no advertisements, some people are denied access, and that is injustice. So if we do not advertise and some people are recruited and someone draws our attention that it is because we had not advertised, then we have infringed on the rights of others. The right thing must be done. It is not tit-for-tat; it is correcting the wrong.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, conclude.

Alhaji Sulemana: So, if one has a situation where in this country people are recruited to the services: Police, and Immigration among others without advertisement for several years, and when we talk, we are told that they did an advertisement some years back and are dealing with the backlog. I think that we should correct these issues and move ahead, but I agree with him that we cannot continue on that path.

With this, I would want to thank the makers once again and thank you, Mr Speaker. I also thank all those who have contributed to these Statements. Let me also thank the Minority Leader for trying to heckle me, but I think I have made my point.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, you have the floor.

Nana Agyei Baffuor Awuah (NPP — Manhyia South): Mr Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, I would like to commend the maker of the Statement. The issue of social injustice is so true with us in particular given our diversity; religious, tribal, and so on. When we swear, very respectfully, to pursue the development of this country, we swear to commit to the development of the diverse groups of people who find themselves in this country. So, this Statement, in as much it is true in terms of the globe in general, it is also true with the Republic of Ghana.

Mr Speaker, historically, there was a deliberate effort to ensure that there was unity in this country and no discrimination so that regardless of where one comes from or the religious group one belongs to, one was not discriminated against. It does appear that the advent of multiparty democracy, partisanship seems to have taken the front burner, and in our day-to-day lives, it appears that people are being discriminated against on grounds of partisanship.

Mr Speaker, when one complains, the response is that it happened during a previous administration so it is good that it is happening today. Very soon, our people are going to gang up against us if we are not careful. The truth of the matter is that the opportunities available to people in this country are not—The

quantity is far less than the people in this country. So the only way that we can satisfy our people is to create a merit-based society; a society where people would qualify because they are competent; a society where people would qualify not because they belong to a certain tribe or political party, or go to a certain church.

Mr Speaker, increasingly, our people are taking refuge in collecting certificates because they cannot see their way clearly in this country. That is the truth. They get one master's degree today and chase another master's degree tomorrow. They sit in organisations and do not know whether they can rise to the positions of chief executives or to the positions of directors because they do not belong to one political party or the other. Increasingly, we are building a society that is governed by incompetence rather than competence. Party cards have become certificates of qualification.

This is what today this Statement should call on us to eschew because we are sinking as a country as a result of that practice. We need to change, and irrespective of where we belong, we must begin to create opportunities for our people based on merit. It must be based on merit. It must start somewhere. We did it yesterday and it was wrong, but let us begin from somewhere. We need to change and this is not—We have all sinned. An eye for an eye will make the whole world go blind. Our society is sinking because of partisanship.

So, Mr Speaker, we need to begin to evaluate our society and make amends.

From the Judiciary, to state-owned agencies and to everywhere, we must begin to review what we have done in the past and ensure we chart a new course so that increasingly, people would have hope that when they go to school and work hard, there is hope that one day, they can become chief executives of state-owned institutions without belonging to any political party.

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for this opportunity.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Sandaare?

Dr Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare (NDC — Daffiama/Bussie/Issa): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. At the very moment that we are contributing to this Statement, there is a child somewhere in one community who is wondering where the next meal would come from while another child somewhere in the city has taken breakfast and lunch and has added a snack.

Mr Speaker, as we speak, there is a pregnant mother somewhere in this country who is about to die because there is probably no doctor or midwife to attend to her. While in another health facility, there are a number of doctor specialists and midwives who are probably relaxing and waiting for a client to come.

Mr Speaker, Junior High School (JHS) 3 students are preparing for their examinations. Somewhere in Ghana, there are children in JHS 3, who have no

teachers to teach them, while in another part of this country, there are a lot of teachers in the same class teaching students and they have to write the same exams in June this year. Mr Speaker, this is social injustice. The issue of social justice has nothing to do with which party one belongs to or whether something happened in one government and therefore, should happen in another government. No, it is about addressing inequalities.

1.34 p.m.

It is about ensuring that there are equal opportunities for every child everywhere to have a right to quality basic education. That a patient everywhere in this country has the right to quality health care. These are the issues that confront our society in this country and those are the issues we must address. That everybody everywhere has equal opportunities and equal treatment. Chapter 6 of our Constitution has given us the foundation to address this issue of social injustice. Therefore, as we contribute and debate, let us see how we bridge the gap of social injustice in this country where the rich is getting richer and the poor is getting poorer. How do we bridge this gap?

Mr Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Let us reflect on how we would ensure that there is social justice in this country.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Hon Member. Yes, Hon Member, you have the floor.

Ms Millicent Amankwah Yeboah (NDC — Sunyani West): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this occasion of the World Day for Justice. I would add my voice to what my Colleagues have said. The Hon Member spoke about some challenges women face in relation to this injustice. Again, when my other Colleague was speaking, he also spoke about a child who was asked a question. This equally shows that injustice affects mostly the women. When one reads through the Statement that was made by the Hon Member for Awutu Senya East, the strength of the Statement was relevant and timely.

Mr Speaker, the Statement spoke about fairness, inclusion, and equity in Ghana. It equally spoke about the historical background and context in relation to the Berlin Conference and also that of Dr Kwame Nkrumah. So, it tells us about the past and the present and the need for us to forge on to make sure that injustice is put to a stop. Again, there was a clear identification of the social injustice, that is, the economic hardship, election violence, human rights violation, and others that deny us this opportunity. It clearly also came about with a policy proposal and Government's commitments such as the 24-Hour Economy, among others.

Mr Speaker, it is very important for us to look at some areas that we need to improve. Many of the Hon Members spoke about partisanship. We should be very objective when issues like these are brought up for discussions. I would like

to add up some areas of consideration in relation to this day of celebration for the social justice. These areas are human rights violation and civil rights.

Mr Speaker, we were here in the year 2023 when there was an arrest of the—as the Hon Member for Awutu Senya East mentioned—democracy hub protesters against the Government. This hinders the growth of social justice.

Again, reference is made in the context of the arrest of Ahmed Suale in 2019. This also comes in the context of our press freedom as a nation. I cannot talk about this issue without the gender inequality and women rights. In Africa and Ghana inclusive, one would find out that in some rural areas, out of five people, one of them is still into the child marriage. Again, even not looking far from Parliament, women representation in Parliament is poor. We have barely 14.5 per cent, and this also hinders the growth of the country. If one looks at the Rwandan Parliament, they have over 53 or 54 per cent of women. No wonder there is growth in their economy. If we need to encourage ourselves and look for the benefits and the betterment of the country, we should be very deliberate in helping leadership and encouraging women in leadership. Again, with the gender issues and human rights, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) annually reports of thousands of these issues, and it is something we need to pay much attention to.

Mr Speaker, in trying to conclude, I would speak on access to health care and

education. We have some policies like the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) but it lacks funds and this affects the low-income earners. That is one thing we need to look at and make sure that we try to help ourselves within that policy. Again, on the part of education, there is a shortage of teachers in the rural areas and this does not help the growth of the economy.

Mr Speaker, on housing and land issues, when we look at the prices of rent even in Accra and the land issues even in Kasoa—Land litigation is everywhere. We should tackle matters of discrimination of the marginalised people and people with disability so that we can get access for them. I think with this and many more, we would have a better position when it comes to social justice.

Mr Speaker, thank you. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, you have the floor. Hon Member, if you do not intend to comment, why are you on your feet to catch the eye of the Speaker?

Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko (NPP — Effia): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. May I have your permission to yield to my Colleague from Akwatia?

Mr First Deputy Speaker: No, you do not have the permission.

Mr Boamah-Nyarko: That is fine. Then I will proceed.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Order! Hon Members, take it clearly. When you want to contribute, then you get on your feet. You do not get on your feet to catch the eye of the Speaker, and after recognising you, you say you want to yield to another Member. It does not happen in any Parliament. Therefore, if you are not ready to comment on the Statement, you must not be on your feet. Hon Members, democracy must be guided.

Prof Ayensu-Danquah, you have the floor.

Prof Grace Ayensu-Danquah (NDC — Essikadu-Ketan): Mr Speaker, thank you, for allowing me to speak on this issue of social justice. Ghana, like most countries, faces a lot of systemic injustices, and I would like to use this opportunity to discuss the issue of persons with disability in Ghana. The Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) and Article 29 of the 1992 Constitution ensure that persons with disability have access to non-discrimination, education, employment, housing, and also accessibility to public transport and public buildings.

Mr Speaker, as we can tell today, in Ghana, persons with disability face a lot of systemic inequalities. Many buildings and services remain inaccessible to persons with disability. When one looks at public transportation—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Members on their feet, kindly resume your seats.

1.44 p.m.

Prof Ayensu-Danquah: When we look at public transportation, persons with disability do not have equal access to transportation. When one comes to the Essikadu-Ketan Constituency and goes to Kojokrom, Kansawrodo, or Ntankoful, persons with disability do not have equal access to public transportation.

Mr Speaker, I recommend that we look into accessibility of public transport and specifically, public housing for our persons with disability in Ghana.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to comment on this. I also thank my fellow Colleague, for bringing up this very important issue to the fore, and I hope that we would take a very good look at social justice for all Ghanaians.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you, Hon Member.

Hon Member for Akwatia, you have the floor. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Mr Ernest Kumi (NPP — Akwatia): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Let me also commend the makers of the Statements for bringing this subject matter to bear.

Mr Speaker, this is a topic that requires attention and action. It would interest all of us to know that the Constitution and other laws alike, especially other international instruments, guarantees this right to us as a people. But, historically, most people have suffered social injustice, not because

they do not have the protective right, but because politicians over the period have become culprits and victims of this social injustice.

Mr Speaker, today, I am happy that this discussion is being had in this Parliament this passionately. Just last week, a simple request for procedural fairness from the Minority Leader on behalf of a former Minister of this Republic degenerated into a debate on this Floor. As I sat in my chair, I asked myself, for how long would we keep doing this to ourselves? Because, today, it could be happening to me, but tomorrow, it could be someone else. As we keep arguing along the way, I asked myself that if the Constitution guarantees that we need to be, at least, fair to one another, why can we not allow that and ask for a simple procedural fairness to happen?

Other contributors have spoken already on other things that do happen to us as politicians. The protocol conundrum that we, politicians, keep giving to people is also increasingly becoming a challenge to us in this country. To quote the Hon Dr Benjamin Kunbuor, who had said previously in other public domains that, until one is injected by an incompetent doctor or nurse for them to die, that is when they will know that we need to begin to advocate for fairness, equal opportunity and access for people—[*Hear! Hear!*]

Mr Speaker, just this morning, I was asked by a journalist within the precinct of this Parliament that he wanted to know if we are waiting or how long we would

wait until when a president wins an election in this country and the opponent goes to court just to challenge that person unfairly and to just deny that person that right that is due him.

Mr Speaker, in order not to sound prejudicial, I refuse to comment on the matter, but I want all of us to take note—[*Uproar*]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Order! Order!

Mr Kumi: Mr Speaker, I want all of us to take note that this discussion that we are having here should not be one that we just have today and let it slide. It should bring to fore meaningful thoughts and discussions, where citizens, policy makers and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) would all come together to advance social justice in this country, and especially to me, as the Member of Parliament (MP) for Akwatia, in this country. [*Hear! Hear!*]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Order! Order!

Hon Members, you need not be on your feet before you say, “Hear! Hear!”; you can do so while sitting.

Leadership?

Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin): Mr Speaker, today appears to be a day for the first timers. Clearly, what it means is that this Chamber has a great future, where we have first timers and some senior Members making Statements and listening to contributions.

Mr Speaker, before I get into my own contribution, I want to remind Colleagues that we need to exercise. When we stand, we have to stand upright and make our Statement; people are always bending. Does it mean they cannot stand on their waists? No, they need to stand. Whether you are a lady or gentleman, stand firm. If there is a problem, let us exercise. We have to exercise, so that when we are on our feet, we are able to stand very firm and upright—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, the Statement before us is on social justice.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: That is true. Mr Speaker, good health would contribute to—Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Members who made these Statements drew our attention to a number of issues affecting society. I would want to adopt the three Statements from the Members as though same were coming from me and rely on all of them for records. Except to say that, I do not want this House to be drawn into the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. That conflict has its own history, and we need to be very cautious in drawing that conflict into our discussion on the floor of the House. It is for this reason that I believe that although Hon Ghansah's Statement was well-intended, the way it came up created a certain impression. I just want the records to reflect that this House is not taking sides in that conflict. We only pray that there would be justice for all in that enclave.

Mr Speaker, each day in my prayer, I pray for peace in the Middle East, guided by St. Francis of Assisi's prayer. Being a Catholic, I always rely on that important prayer by St. Francis, where he calls for the Lord to make us an instrument of his peace. So, our prayer is that wherever there is injustice, the Lord Almighty Himself would lead the discussions that would lead to peace, so that there would be fairness for all.

Mr Speaker, the first maker of the Statement, the respected Member, Mrs Phillis Naa Koryoo Okunor of Awutu Senya East, shared her own experiences. We need to take steps as a people to address the way we do politics in this country. Some of us do not tell our stories, but we all know the things we go through sometimes: the attacks, unfair treatments, the way we are manhandled and all. But it appears that sometimes when injustice benefits somebody, the person is in a hurry to go to church to thank God and sees same as blessings.

1.54 p.m.

But when the next day, he is at the receiving end, we would see the person crying for people to save him. For how long should that continue in our country? I have had my own experience in Winneba in 2012. It took the Lord's intervention for me to be here. Somebody came close range to me with a pistol all because I was campaigning. I was lucky that he could not shoot. I do not know the mystery and the miracle behind it; it was at a close range. I went through other situations that time would not permit me to recount. People are

suffering injustice. Sometimes, even our Judiciary, with the way our judges approach cases that come before them.

For my years at the Bar, I know that when there is an application pending before a court, a court of justice will always deal with that interlocutory matter before coming to the substantive matter and ensure that there is fairness. For my years of practice, I know that when there is an application before a Superior Court raising issues of bias, the court below would at least wait for the supervisory jurisdiction which is being invoked to be considered and determined, before dealing with the matter before him, all in the interest of fairness and justice. Are we experiencing that in all situations? I beg to say, no.

Mr Speaker, if we are calling for a fair society, then it should not be—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, with all due respect, that is not automatic. Looking at the practice and procedure, and Constitutional Instrument (C.I.) 47 you have a right to put in an application for stay of proceedings, pending the determination of the matter at the court above.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Rightly so, Mr Speaker. Not to disagree with you, but the example that I am citing also has in it an application for stay of proceedings, and in the light of an application for stay of proceedings, a judge goes ahead to say that a counsel should move his main application. The judge also goes ahead to determine the matter when there is an application for

stay of proceedings pending. So, Mr Speaker, I would want to strongly make this point, and I regret that this is coming at the time that I find myself in the Minority Frontbench. It is very regrettable because some people may see my views as being too rich, but it is the reality of the day. As a country, we must not repeat that vicious cycle of “You did it to me; I will do it to you.”

Mr Speaker, yesterday, I said something in an interview that sometimes, the political class forgets that when an election is won, the mandate is for them to develop the nation and not to go after opponents. But since 1992, it appears we have not learnt lessons from this. I recall when former President John Agyekum Kufuor won the elections, we heard comments on the streets of Accra, I was a young student then, that “*Oh NDC, omo emba biom. NDC party no agu*”. But, eight years down the line, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) was back. When we had 169 seats in Parliament, there were similar comments and we know the story today. So, I am saying that some of the injustices that Ghanaians experienced because of political affiliations must end. I am not here to pick and choose.

Mr Speaker, former President, Prof John Evans Atta-Mills of blessed memory, made an effort on this imbalance and I remember it. Mr Speaker, let me share this. I was into transport business and I had a lot of trucks plying Awaso to Takoradi and I was a known New Patriotic Party (NPP) person. When NPP lost, some people made it a point to stop my trucks. One of

the shareholders of my company was close to the government of the day. He tells me that he managed to inform the then President and Vice President and immediately, they gave instructions that, that was not right for the country. A person had taken a loan to buy trucks, is doing his business, and because he is an NPP member they should stop his business? Mr Speaker, that effort was made; I remember, and I will state it for public record.

But would extremists allow moderates and centrists in our political space to do their work to help with justice and fairness in society? We the voices of reason must prevail on those hardliners to understand that destroying an opponent is not the way to go. Why should somebody be afraid of a change in power? Is it because of fear of injustice? In the business community, sometimes I look at some businesses, and because I am in the private sector, I know about this. A lot of the Ghanaian businesses are tagged NPP or NDC but we have these foreign entities owned by Indians, Israelites, Syrians, British and Americans. Their businesses remain untouched whether it is NPP or NDC. They are foreigners, so when they make their profit, they move their money out, but when the Ghanaian makes his profit, it remains here.

A Ghanaian businessman is often tagged—*[Interruption]*

Mr Philip Fiifi Buckman: Like Mr Paa Kwesi Nduom.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, my respected Member for Kwesimintsim who is now learning the rules must learn to be quiet.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member for Kwesimintsim.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: He is gaining notoriety for this. He should stop it. He wears sunglasses in this Chamber. We do not wear sunglasses in the Chamber of Parliament. That was not part of the orientation. Mr Speaker has cautioned him but he is still shouting.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member for Kwesimintsim, if you do not want to be withdrawn from the Chamber, let your conduct be orderly.

Osahen Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, local businessmen are always in fear. Their businesses are always being targets of injustice and political attacks whereas foreign businesses—Mr Speaker, you would find their embassies moving to promote their businesses while our local businesses will be suffering. Why should there be a society like this?

Mr Speaker, the makers of the Statement talk about economic rights and that our citizens have a right to be employed and I dare emphasise that these are far right;

2.04 p.m.

Economic rights are far rights. A right that when you have the qualification, you stand an equal chance of being considered as a far right. We

have heard that, in 2017, there were comments by some political leaders on our Side, and we would be very honest with the facts here. We would not pretend or be hypothetical. Facts are facts. If we want to address these matters for proper steps tomorrow, we need to speak to the issue.

But Mr Speaker, the issue about Hon Osafo-Maafa that people refer to, I must say that, indeed, when he made those Statements, nothing of the sort happened, and I would want Hon Members who have contrary views to make those available. At least, the mass dismissals we are experiencing—

Mr Boamah — *rose* —

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, at your back, Hon Patrick Yaw Boamah is on his feet—

Osafo Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, that is always a right to be exercised, and a discretion for you to enforce, so I yield to you. What is your pleasure?

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much.

The Hon Member is on his feet.

Osafo Afenyo-Markin: That is fair.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Are you on point of order?

Mr Boamah: Mr Speaker, rightly so.

Mr Speaker, point of information on Standing Order 93(5), whether it is still being enforced. That is all I want to know from you.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, it is strictly being enforced.

Osafo Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, in the said situation, we did not see the mass dismissal we are seeing today. But granted that it even happened, as a nation, do we need it? The situation we find ourselves in as a country requires that all of us, especially those who are moving from left of centre, right of centre, and believe that the country must move in a certain path must be loud in their views because four years is not far from today. Twenty years is not far from today, and thirty years is not far from today.

Mr Speaker, I am not here to talk politics; I am here to address a situation that is confronting us as a nation, and we are the people's representative. Granted that, yesterday—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, you know the rules that you have to address the Chair.

Osafo Afenyo-Markin: Very well, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, granted that, even yesterday it happened and I did not see reason to address it, it does not stop me from addressing it today, all for the good of our collective tomorrow.

Mr Speaker, that said, the respected Colleague who is a medical doctor, Dr Sandaare, made a contribution and talked about healthcare. We stay in Accra, and we think Accra has everything and Ghana is a happy home. Mr Speaker, it is not. The poverty out there—I travel through the countryside and I still see *atakpame* buildings, mud houses. I went to my village, our village, you and I have a village, Nyekonakpoe. I was there on New Year after visiting Tsiamé. I went to the village where I grew up, visited the family, and I saw poverty: no hospital and no water.

In my own Constituency, there are places that you see poverty. What he said is true. Today, though there is health insurance because they cannot afford, they still resort to the traditional midwives, and they die and attribute it to some other causes and they bury them quietly. This is not the promises that are enshrined in the Constitution. The promises that are enshrined in the Constitution include equal opportunity, justice, fairness, and it is for us as a political class to enforce these promises. We should not pay lip service to these promises. It is a Ghanaian dream; a dream that the forebearers envisage and our duty, as the Ninth Parliament, is to lead in the process.

So, if today is a commemorative day for social justice, this country must take it seriously. The Hon Member for Awutu Senya East, where once upon a time I was a presiding Member, has told us in clear terms that many people are going through challenges. But she was quick to

assure us that this Government is ready to put in place some policies to address these concerns. And, in fact, Mr Speaker, what she has said has become part of public record. She has spoken as a Member of the Majority party and for and on behalf of Government; when it comes to accountability, we are going to associate ourselves with the Statement, and then through the Committee on Assurances see to the implementation of these promises.

Mr Speaker, it is the duty of Hon Koryoo Okunor because she has made a very profound Statement in very veritable words, and she has given assurances that this Government is going to ensure that certain steps are taken in addressing social injustice. We look forward to that.

Mr Speaker, without more, let me thank all the makers of the Statement and thank the various contributors, especially the first timers. The first timers of this Parliament have shown promise, and I have seen a lot of determination on both Sides, seeing their *curricula vitae* (CVs). And when they are on their feet, it is as though they have done two or three times; their confidence level is very high. We commend them, and they should continue with their research. This is the time for them to be doing more Statements and be filing more Questions. Let us get the national issues on the front burner. It does not matter your party, and let us hold the feet of Government to the fire, not in the negative sense, but in the positive sense, all for the good of the people.

Mr Speaker, without more, let me thank you for this treasured space. *[Hear! Hear!]*

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Minority Leader. Hon Majority Chief Whip, you have the floor.

Majority Chief Whip (Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor): Mr Speaker, what else can I say than to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the joint Statements.

Mr Speaker, it is joint because one is from the Minority Side, and two are from our Side in commemoration of today.

2.14 p.m.

Mr Speaker, the United Nations organisation has a whole commission on social justice. It is such an important concept in our modern governance anywhere and somebody may ask, what does social justice mean?

Mr Speaker, it means the opportunity to have equal rights; economic, political, religious, cultural, under law. It therefore becomes a barometer by which every government or every nation's governance structure, and systems are measured. And leaving the generals to the specifics, of course we will measure our governance structure back home by invoking these very indices.

Mr Speaker, yours truly, at variance with social justice, my residential home under construction was pulled down by operatives of government. There was no social justice, no court order, and no

court process. Somebody just exercised Executive power of state arbitrarily.

Mr Speaker, my own uncle, the venerable Kodjo Hodari-Okae, was unfairly dismissed and terminated from Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), and he proceeded to court. He obtained judgment. It took so long for the judgment debt to be paid to him. That was not social justice. That was not.

Mr Speaker, there are Members on this Side, whose homes were raided by operatives of the State just a couple of months ago, without recourse to law. That was not social justice.

Mr Speaker, social justice must resonate in everything that we do as a people and as a State. It is the only way we can ensure fairness.

Mr Speaker, exactly eight years ago, 10th February, 2017 or thereabout, the then newly appointed and confirmed Minister for Health, the Hon Kwaku Agyeman-Manu, wrote and terminated the appointment of 8,634 nurses and other health personnel, recruited into the Ghana Health Service without recourse to even the time of recruitment. I have the letter and I can show it to you. 10th February, 2017, that was not social justice. It was not.

As we speak, those employees whose employment and socioeconomic benefits are consequent upon those employments that were suspended, remain in suspension. As we speak, they are sitting at home. They are grieving. That was no social justice. So, I agree with you,

Minority Leader. I am saying so. But I did not hear your high heaven cries in 2017. He was a formidable Member of this House. So, I agree that there must be a convergent zone. In plain language, there must be a convergent zone where we must do the appropriate things—

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, do not engage the Member on the Floor.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, indeed, in April 2017, recruits that were undergoing training in the Assin Fosu Ghana Immigration Training School, who had started training in November of the previous year, were not graduated. They were asked to go home. They have not returned, as we speak.

Mr Speaker, let me take the House a bit back into time. In 2001, the most common cliché on the streets of Accra and by extension in Ghana was “proceed on leave”. Yes, 2001. Many public servants who had served within the public service, some for 20, 15, or 10 years prior were simply asked to proceed on leave, just to go home without recourse to laid down procedure. That was no social justice— *[Uproar]*.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Order!

Mr Dafeamekpor: So, Mr Speaker, I believe that today is such an auspicious day that going forward, we must have recourse to standards, basic requirements, procedures, so that when Ghanaians of all shades of life, tribal and cultural origin, religious coloration, are qualified, they should find space in the

public sector and contribute their quota without any recourse to—Mr Speaker, I shudder to say it, but to political consideration. I am very happy that my brother touched on the issue of judicial tardiness in terms of matters before the courts. Mr Speaker, you being our senior at the bar, when a matter is before the courts, whoever the plaintiff is, is immaterial. The same alacrity, zeal and speed that is brought to bear in dealing with all other matters must be exercised fairly in respect of all the cases before the courts.

So, yes, social justice—Today we speak in commemoration of that. But, Mr Speaker, in closing this matter, I urge you to give some general direction that as a nation and as a people, we should be guided by it. That is what ensures fairness and not because of the length of my name, for instance, which summarily will point to where I originate from this country, but given the even playing field so we can exhibit our qualities as Ghanaians. My Brother, the Minority Chief Whip, speaks impeccable Ewe, because he grew up among Ewes and attended Bishop Herman College and I got the opportunity to join him in the University of Cape Coast, so, my Fante is pristine and today we are here.

2.24p.m.

Mr Speaker, that is the social cohesion that we have enjoyed and it has benefited us. So, today, you may see us, but like the elders would say, we are like two cockerels. We may be fighting, but we watch our eyes, we cannot punch our eyes because we are brothers to the core.

We may have our political dispensations, but by all means, let us be guided by simple standards so that every government has the power to exercise the Executive power of state. So by all means recruit. But I will love that we would be guided. There is always space in the public sector.

So, Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity and I thank the makers. This is a major reminder to all of us that we must always think of the people and do what will be of social benefit; socio-economic, political, and cultural benefit to them. So, whatever social intervention programmes that we implement as a people, as a Government, it must go to benefit the people.

I thank you for the opportunity and I thank the makers of the Statements.
[Hear! Hear!]

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon Members.

I wish to add my voice to this very important Statements ably made on social justice to mark the World Social Justice Day.

Hon Members, social justice is a foundation for national development, peace, and stability. It is about ensuring that everybody, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, economic status, physical ability, is treated equally. Social justice is a guide against all forms of discrimination. Hon Members, it is said that justice must not only be done, but it must manifest and undoubtedly be seen to be done.

It is therefore the responsibility of all of us to work together to ensure that social justice prevails in the country.

I once again thank the makers of the Statements.

Hon Members, we have another Statement in honour of Dr Abdul Kabiru Tiah Mahama, Member of Parliament for Walewale Constituency on, “The Imposition of Curfew on Walewale and Security Personnel Brutalities of Residents”.

Is the Hon Member around?

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, he is here.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Very well. Hon Member, you have the floor.

STATEMENT

The Imposition of Curfew on Walewale and Security Personnel Brutalities of Residents.

Dr Abdul Kabiru Tiah Mahama (NPP — Walewale): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity.

Mr Speaker, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to make this Statement on the rather unfortunate developments in the Walewale Constituency; the skirmishes that have led to the needless loss of lives; the acts of lawlessness by the security personnel; and the subsequent imposition of curfew on Walewale and its environs. But before I proceed, I want to convey my sincerest

condolences to the families of the several innocent lives that have been lost due to the unfortunate developments.

Mr Speaker, the people of Walewale and its environs are now living in pain, apprehension and fear. Therefore, the right decisions must be taken at the right time. So, I do not take the opportunity offered me lightly.

Mr Speaker, it is a notorious fact that criminal activities on the highway between Bolgatanga and Tamale, which passes through Walewale is now a subject of national security. Before that, it was the Bolgantaga-Bawku-Pulmakom Road. Our inability as a country to deal with the situation has emboldened criminals to attack, maim and kill innocent people and travellers.

Mr Speaker there is a near perfect correlation between attacks on the Bolga-Bawku-Pulmakom Road and the Bolgatanga-Walewale-Tamale Road. We must not mince words in condemning these attacks. We must also be swift in dealing with them because our indolence has created and will create more vulnerabilities like Walewale for these criminals to exploit.

Recent Developments in Walewale.

Mr Speaker, the recent chaos in Walewale started on the 14th January, 2025 when a stationary vehicle caught fire.

Mr First Deputy Speaker: Second Deputy Speaker should take the Chair.

[2.29 P.M. — SECOND DEPUTY SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Yes, Dr Mahama, you may continue.

Dr Mahama: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

The military went on rampage and brutalised several people who were leisurely sitting at a popular NDC base. While the frustration of the security personnel is understandable, the professionalism required of them was betrayed. They were utterly careless and a minute of due diligence could have saved the situation. Mr Speaker, even though the military apologised for that unfortunate incident, the encroachment of the civilian space by the military is a recipe for disaster if it is not curtailed.

Mr Speaker, the first recent reprisal attack of a vehicle occurred on the 10th February, 2025 around Wulugu on the Bolga-Walewale road where a vehicle was allegedly set ablaze. The second attack occurred on the 12th February, 2025 in the Walewale township and the most recent occurred on the 14th February, 2025. As I stated, all these had corresponding attacks on the Bolgantaga-Bawuku-Pulmakom Road. The reaction of the military to these last two incidences, in the case of the Walewale Constituency, was to beat up anyone in sight on the main highway. Innocent residents of Kukua, Loagri, Walewale, Gbimsi and Wulugu, all communities along the highway, were mercilessly beaten resulting in the loss of one life. Two journalists were also assaulted.

Mr Speaker, the actions of the military are as distasteful as the attacks of travelers by the criminals. By their action, the military is complimenting the criminal adventure of the bandits on the highway and must be investigated and the perpetrators brought to book.

Mr Speaker, these recent reprisal attacks have caused the Minister for the Interior to impose a curfew on Walewale and its environs. This decision is heavy-handed and the first of its kind to be imposed on a community that is relatively peaceful without prejudice to the activities of bandits within the area. There is no conflict in Walewale or its environs; there is no factional war or fight within the Constituency with which it will escalate. It does not make sense to punish residents in those communities because most of them are just victims. What is even more surprising is that all the attacks that occur on the Walewale road occurs during the day time, outside the curfew hours.

Proposal to Ensuring Peace and Stability.

Mr Speaker, while appealing for the review of the curfew on Walewale, let me put on record that it is the principle that matters. The Constituents that I represent on this matter are mixed in tribe. Arguably, many of them are not Mamprusis. So, it is important we live above politics and tribes on this matter. Respectfully, I appeal that Government lifts the curfew to bring life to normalcy in Walewale.

2.34 p.m.

Mr Speaker, I have few suggestions that I think the Government should consider in the interim while the relevant authorities deal with the underlying cause of the conflict.

1. The Minister for the Interior should enhance the patrols and escort for travellers in the affected routes. I understand that vehicles are attacked under military or police escort in some of these areas, but this has never happened in the case of Walewale, and I believe it is workable.
2. The police intelligence units must be deployed to affected areas to identify perpetrators akin to the approach they use in arresting armed robbers.
3. Lastly, Mr Speaker, the Police Service should enhance community engagement to elicit community support towards fighting the activities of these criminals.

Mr Speaker, as a call for direction, I wish to appeal to you to direct that a full-scale investigation be carried out to delve into the death of two persons in the hands of the security in the last two weeks. This will bring justice to the families of the deceased. I make this application considerate of the fact that the police are already investigating the attack and murder of innocent travellers through the Bolgatanga-Walewale-Tamale route.

Mr Speaker, I thank you once again for the opportunity to make this Statement, and I will kindly urge you to consider this application as duly submitted.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, let me be frank with you. This particular Statement went through a lot of discussion before its admittance and therefore, we are going to be very circumspect in the comments. So, the Statement has been made and has been captured, but I will only restrict comments to the Leadership. So, Leadership, I will let you make your comments, but you are also advised to be guided, please.

Yes, Minority Chief Whip?

Minority Chief Whip (Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh): Mr Speaker, let me thank you and the First Deputy Speaker. As you rightly observed, this morning, we had to engage extensively to come to some good conclusion on the same matter.

I show complete solidarity with our Colleague and his Constituents. It is quite unfortunate. We have heard in the media space, a reportage on this same matter, and I am happy that Parliament has found space for it to be entertained. We have read reports of some excess actions staged on the part of the military and some security agencies, allegedly.

Mr Speaker, first of all, I think the national security outfit would have to upgrade their surveillance, patrol, and activities in these areas aforementioned.

It is equally important that we comment more responsibly on this subject matter, so that the matter does not get out of hand and is controlled to a good conclusion.

Mr Speaker, I have a lot of confidence in our Minister, our own Colleague, Alhaji Muntaka, who has shown promise in such subject matters. The House must show leadership though. It is quite unfortunate that we do not have our Committee on Defence and Interior constituted. We also do not have our Committee on Security and Intelligence constituted. So, in the absence of that, what do we do, so that we can still navigate properly, be security conscious, and not allow the matter to degenerate?

Mr Speaker, I dare suggest that it is important Parliament does not rest on its oars. We need to go in; we are the representative of the people. Regardless of the fact that we have security experts in these matters, we must also bring our experience to bear and help the security outfits to navigate properly.

To that end, I wish to suggest that, Mr Speaker, you give some consequential directives. This matter is raging day by day. My fear is that until something is done collectively from the outfit of Parliament and the outfit of our security agencies, it may degenerate. We may come back to talk about this same matter and lament about it. So, probably, we can have a Closed Sitting, and because the military has also been mentioned in the same matter, it is no more of an internal security concern. We can bring the Minister for the Interior and the Minister for Defence on the same platform to carry us along.

Mr Speaker, it should not be a one-off event. We have to sustain a monitoring effort. In the next month or two, there should be a regular briefing on the same subject matter and it is important that security agencies and Parliament collaborate. It is unfortunate the needless loss of lives in these areas.

The maker of the Statement, Dr Mahama, posits that the imposition of curfew—I am not a security expert, but he gives a certain background, which comes to support his conclusion that the imposition of curfew at Walewale is suspect, and therefore, it has to be reviewed. I cannot sit here and draw judgment. He is the Member of Parliament from that area, and I am sure he has good reasons to say what he said.

But be it as it may, I think we should, as a matter of urgency, programme the Minister for Defence and the Minister for the Interior to appear before this House for us to get some briefing. This House will also be positioned, and the Member of Parliament can make the necessary inputs to help navigate the situation. We cannot wait until it gets out of hand. We can only thank God that the matter has not degenerated so badly. But it is urgent, and if we do not do anything about it, more lives will be lost and economic activity will be brought to an abrupt end, which will not benefit us, as a country.

So, Mr Speaker, without more, I would only want to suggest that you give us some directives and ensure that we get the two Ministers, both Interior and Defence, to attend upon this House at a Closed Sitting, mainly because of the

subject matter, for us to engage appropriately on the same subject matter.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much.

Majority Leadership?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, let me seek your leave to defer to Hon Toobu on this matter. I thank you.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Peter Toobu, I hope you take into consideration the earlier caution. So, the floor is yours now.

Supt Rtd Peter Lanchene Toobu (NDC — Wa West): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. Let me thank the Leadership for yielding to me to make very important comments, as I feel very strongly about the Statement that has just been delivered by my Brother, the Hon MP for Walewale, Dr Mahama.

Mr Speaker, as to whether the issue in Walewale is of pure criminal nature or it is a spill over of the Bawku Conflict, we will leave that one to the security agencies to investigate. But come what may, the loss of every single life in this country on matters of conflict is so needless, to say the least. The issue between Walewale and Bolgatanga, or Tamale and Bolgatanga is taking a different dimension. He has made some important recommendations that the Police Intelligence Department should do better by deploying more. He also

requested that the curfew that is imposed should be looked at very carefully.

Whatever it is, Mr Speaker, as cautious as we want to be, Plato had it right when he said “the greatest form of injustice is pretended justice”. When we know what is right and we all close our eyes to the truth and go around talking over years about what the problem is and not willing to nip it in the bud, these are some of the things that will happen. I want to believe that the suggestions made by the Hon Minority Chief Whip, Mr Annoh-Dompreh, that we should allow the Minister for Defence and the Minister for the Interior in a Closed Sitting for them to give us update as to what is happening in Northern Ghana, particularly, in relation to the Bawku area that is now gradually becoming — including the Walewale area. This is a matter of worry to all of us. But I also want to recommend that apart from the Minister for Defence and the Minister for the Interior, we should get the two chairmen of the two regional security councils involved. The chairman of the Upper East Regional Security Council and the chairman of the Northeast Regional Security Council for them to come and brief this House on what is actually going on. How can we come together as a nation to ensure that this matter is nipped in the bud? Pretended justice is the greatest form of injustice and as cautious as I am, Mr Speaker, I want to draw the curtains here and I am so grateful for the opportunity. Thank you so much.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon Members, I think the request that we

invite the Minister for the Interior and that of the Minister for Defence, I will leave it with the Business Committee to schedule him somewhere next week to come and brief us. I know next week the President of the Republic will be here.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, just for clarity, his prayer was for the Ministers of Defence and Interior, so it will be both of them.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Because I heard you say one.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: No, no, I said Ministers for Defence and Interior. So, please schedule them to come. If the matter is so sensitive that we have to have them in Closed Sitting, we will do that. I will leave it with the Business Committee but meanwhile, let me urge the Hon Member to also have personal discussions with the Minister for the Interior and Minister for Defence. Some of these things, at times, we handle it personally, as you are actually responsible for the people of Walewale. Please have a personal and direct discussion with the Ministers. It is also very important while we invite them to come and brief the House. Yes?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, we are trying to help you to navigate. I would have wished—Because of the nature of the subject matter and the fact that it is having a spill over in adjoining constituencies, Mr Speaker, his Constituency is just one of the constituencies affected. I am also aware

he has already engaged our Colleague, Alhaji Muntaka, on the subject matter. I would have wished that we give them next week, Wednesday. So that instead of, with respect, giving it to the Business Committee, I would have wished that a directive come from you that next week, Wednesday or Thursday—I am aware H. E. the President will be here on Thursday. So, we can probably be working towards Wednesday. Mr Speaker if it finds favour with you—

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: I would not mind doing that, but I—Yes?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, the Business Committee met today and has planned for next week already, but this coming under Statements, it can be accommodated under briefing. So, let me humbly suggest that we relate this matter to the two Ministers and gather their convenience. It has to be a convert convenience. So, once they confirm that, then we can accommodate them anytime next week when that is convenient for them. So, my Brother, be assured that as soon as their convenience is all right, because we want them to be here—We do not want excuses. So, when both of them can come, then we can arrange them to appear and brief the House.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I am in total agreement with my Colleague, except to say that this is the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, and the practice has been that we often give them dates where they have difficulty, the Ministers get back to us to say that the date is not convenient, and I think if we go by that practice, instead of—With

respect to my Colleague, saying that at their convenience, we as Parliament should be giving them a date and then to hear from their Side. I think if we approach it in that manner, it is of best practice, and that has been the practice over the years.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I could pray you that they should appear tomorrow, Friday, because of the urgent nature of the matter, but I want to avoid that, yet, be able to get them to come timeously to brief the House. That is why I am praying, my Brother, that let me engage formally and see the nature of their schedules for next week, because we are not bringing one. We are bringing both of them. So, please, let us—We would accommodate them next week.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: It is not a good practise, with respect. It is not a good practise when we as Parliament will have to expect a date from the Ministers. We have to give them a date, and then they respond. Mr Speaker, with respect.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Very well. Hon Minority Chief Whip, at times, it also become a bit of a worry. If you schedule a Minister, who probably might have also done his own schedules some way, and therefore, you will be expecting the person and he will not be available. So, as much as we will not bring Parliament to its lowest level, that we will ask some people to dictate to us. But at times, it is also better to negotiate and see the programme of the Minister. So, Hon Majority Chief Whip, we would leave it with you, quickly get back, to us

tomorrow, and based on that, we can tell the House when the Ministers will be available.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Indeed, Mr Speaker, we will do that. I am certain that by tomorrow during presentation of Business Statement, this matter would be properly clarified, as to when they can come next week. So, I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: You see, the Executive must respect the Chief Whip. This is the Majority Chief Whip. It is important the Ministers respect him, and we are helping him to be respected. The Ministers would not sit at the comfort of their offices and say that they would come next week, as and when they have time. No, the Majority Chief Whip should give them time and tell them that Parliament needs them. Yes, we must give the Majority Chief Whip the power. We have to support him to succeed. He is the Majority Chief Whip. The Ministers should respect him. So, the Majority Chief Whip should do something, please.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I agree with my Brother. So, we will convey the strong sentiments of the House and the request that both Ministers appear jointly to brief the—The requirement of joint briefing, is why it is pretty difficult to give assurance today as to next week. But I can give the assurance by tomorrow during Business Statement that I have conferred with them. Both of them have put their heads together and they will appear on so and so day. So, that is settled.

Mr Speaker, relatedly, the Hon Member for Nkwanta South also presented a Statement in respect of some conflict situations in his area and that day, his prayer was that it will be referred to a Committee for them to look into it. The referral was not done. So, we are praying that if that can be consequentially done so that the appropriate Committee—

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Very well. Let us take it so.

Mr Dafeamekpor: It was made on 5th February, 2025, in respect of Nkwanta South. Which is also on conflict situation.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Very well, Hon Members, I think we will bring the curtains down for the day. So, Leadership, if you would not mind, may you move for the adjournment of the House.

2.55 p.m.

Majority Chief Whip (Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor): Mr Speaker, thank you.

In the absence of any further Business, I move that the House be adjourned for today.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Minority Leadership?

Minority Chief Whip (Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh): I am hesitant to second the Motion. But for some good reason, I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Second Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, the Motion to adjourn the House has been moved and seconded.

Question put and Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The House was accordingly adjourned at 2.55 p.m. till Friday, 21st February, 2025, at 10.00 a.m.

