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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

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THE
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF GHANA

FIRST MEETING, 2025

Wednesday, 8th January, 2025

The House met at 2:07 p.m.

[THE SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

[PRAYERS]

The Speaker: Hon Members, by the dictates of our rules of procedure, that is the Standing Orders, and also today being the first meeting of the First Session of the Ninth Parliament of the Fourth Republic, we would take the Roll Call. Clerks-at-the-Table, kindly call out the names of the Hon Members of Parliament.

Hon Members, as clearly stated by the Standing Orders, you must indicate your presence in the House. Table Office, kindly do so now.

[ROLL CALL]

The Speaker: Hon Members, we are yet to activate the electronic register, and we would do so very soon. Your biometric register will be in front of you. Please record when you arrive, and that would be activated to always crosscheck the attendance register. I would enforce the attendance at every Sitting so that when we are faced with issues of absence without permission, we would have no challenges again. So, kindly take this exercise seriously.

Hon Members, we now take item numbered 5, Correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*.

**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS AND
THE OFFICIAL REPORT**

The Speaker: We would start with the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 7th January, 2025.

Page 1—Yes, please?

Mr James Agalga: Mr Speaker, thank you. My name is not captured in the *Votes and Proceedings* even though I was present—*[Interruption]*—My name should come—Page 1—Where is it?

The Speaker: Hon Member, we are in the Ninth Parliament.

Mr Agalga: —*[Interruptions]*—Let me make my case.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member?

Mr Agalga: Mr Speaker, I have been in the House for quite some time, and I am used to seeing the names arranged alphabetically. So, going by that precedent, my name ought to come before “Agbana”. “Agalga” should precede “Agbana”.

The Speaker: Hon Member, you are a very experienced Member of Parliament. I mentioned page 1. You have to wait until we get to where your name is, whether it is captured under Members present, absent, or absent without permission, then you can draw my attention to the fact that your name

has been captured on the wrong page, absent, or absent without permission. If you go through the list, you would see that your name is captured on one of the pages. So, it is when I get to that page that you can draw my attention to it. As at now, it is premature. I agree with the reasons for you rising to your feet, but you also know that you have to go through the whole list to see if maybe your name has not been properly captured. So, this is not the time to raise the objection.

Mr Agalga: Mr Speaker, very well.

The Speaker: Hon Members, page 2—yes?

2:37 p.m.

Mr Boamah-Nyarko: My name is properly captured on page 2, item numbered 50 but the Clerks-at-the-Table wrongly pronounced it. The name is Boamah-Nyarko Isaac but it was pronounced “Nyarko Isaac Boamah”. It should be Isaac Boamah-Nyarko and not “Nyarko, Boamah Isaac”. So, the surname is Boamah-Nyarko.

[Pause]

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, we have taken note of that.

Mr Boamah-Nyarko: Most grateful, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Page 3

Mr Mahmoud Issifu: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a similar problem. On the Roll Call, my name was pronounced “Issifu Mahmoud” and that is correct but the record I have before me here interchanges it. It rather indicates Mahmoud Issifu but I prefer it to be Issifu Mahmoud as it was mentioned in the Roll Call read before this House.

The Speaker: Which is your surname?

Mr Issifu: Mr Speaker, Issifu.

The Speaker: Table Office, kindly take note. Usually, it is the surname first. So, if the surname is Issifu, that should come first.

Page 4 —

Mr Simon Kyeremeh Ampaabeng: Mr Speaker, I have a similar issue —

The Speaker: That is page 4?

Mr Ampaabeng: Yes, page 4, item numbered 112. Ampaabeng Kyeremeh is the surname but Simon was made the surname so it reads, “Simon, Ampaabeng Kyeremeh”. It is supposed to be Ampaabeng Kyeremeh Simon.

The Speaker: Hon Member, this is noted.

My attention has just been drawn by the Clerk to Parliament to the fact that you have to approach the Table Office

because the Writ of Elections gave them the indication as to how the names were arranged. So please kindly approach the Table Office after this and make any necessary correction for—sorry?

Mr Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, your advice to him—I was signaling you that it is in order, however, it is an opportunity they may want to have to clear their throats—*[Laughter]*—so maybe we may allow them—Mr Speaker, though they would approach the Table Office, I humbly hold the view that you still give them the chance—*[Interruption]*

Mr Speaker, Mr Kwame Govers Agbodza is still behaving as if he is in opposition. He is heckling. He is now in Government so he should oblige me. I signaled Mr Speaker and he wants me to say for the record. All I am saying is that though they would approach the Table Office, they should at least have the chance to clear their throats. There are more Hon Members who are first timers. If you do not want them to clear throats, while Hon Members are serving at the ministry, they would not have the courage to come into the Chamber. So, they should break the ice today. Mr Speaker, you give them the chance. Today is their day.

Dr Murtala Muhammed Ibrahim: Thank you Mr Speaker.

The Minority Leader is seeking an opportunity to send a signal to the leadership of his party that he has started

work—*[Laughter]*— because the point he is making is absolutely needless.

So, thank you. We have acknowledged the fact that you have started work.

Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, let me speak to corroborate what the respected Minority Leader said. If you check our new Standing Orders, one of the wisdom behind the establishment of a day for backbenchers is to ensure that our Hon Colleagues at the back and those who are coming to this House for the first time would have the opportunity— I know Hon Member for Tamale Central wants to announce that he should be considered for a ministerial position; we have seen him — *[Laughter]*— He should resume his seat.

Mr Speaker, actually not to belabour the matter, what the Hon Minority Leader said is very reasonable and would offer a good opportunity for our Hon Colleagues who are in the House for the first time to break the ice and clear their throats. In any case, they still have more of their Hon Colleagues who are coming into the Chamber for the first time but just to sound a note of caution to my good friend, Mr Ibrahim Murtala Muhammed, I know he either wants to attract the attention of the President to join the Executive or he wants to stage a coup against the Hon Majority Chief Whip. I do not know which one is which. So, Mr Speaker, we should allow our Hon Colleagues to express themselves and break the ice.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Members, I have given you enough time to break the ice, clear your throats, give notice that you are working and also give notice that you would be given ministerial appointment. That is enough. Let us proceed now to page 5.

Page 5...6.

Yes, Page 6?

Mr Habib Iddrisu: Mr Speaker, for your guidance on pages 4 and 5, item numbered 127, the Hon Member for Karaga—I noticed that many of the names have titles attached to them, like Dr Alhaji. In the case of Hon Member for Karaga, I am aware his title is Dr but it is not attached. When you come to page 5, item numbered 197, there is Alhaji attached to the name of the Hon Member for Wenchi. Then item numbered 201, that is my good self, I am also an Alhaji—[*Uproar*—]—so we have to be consistent with this. If titles are to be attached to names, then those titles are attached. But if titles are not supposed to be attached, then we would all know. In the case that some people would have the titles Alhaji or Dr while others in other professional fields also have those qualifications, Mr Speaker, you should guide us on this. Thank you.

Mr Worlase Kpeli: Mr Speaker, may I take the opportunity to draw your attention to item numbered 210. The constituency there is Kwahu Afram Plains North but it is captured Kwahu Afram Plains. Kwahu Afram Plains have

Kwahu Afram Plains North and Kwahu Afram Plains South. May I draw the Speaker's attention to that correction. Thank you.

Page 6, item numbered 210.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member?

2.47 p.m.

Nana Agyei Baffour-Awuah: Mr Speaker, I would like to apologise for not bringing this to your attention earlier. I would plead with you to take you back to page 2, item numbered 38. My name is misarranged; it is rather Baffour-Awuah Nana Agyei and not Awuah Nana Agyei. My surname is the Baffour-Awuah.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: Hon Member?

Mr Mahama Ayariga: Mr Speaker, my name now appears at number 218 as Mahama Ayariga. Mr Speaker, all these years, the *Hansard* and the Votes and Proceedings have captured me as Ayariga Mahama. I actually tried to correct it the first night because I saw it written and I was looking for it but it was not in its usual place. I tried to correct them but I still see it being captured that way.

Mr Speaker: Hon Member?

Dr Abdul Kabiru Tia Mahama: Mr Speaker, I wanted to catch your attention on page 3, unfortunately, it passed. On

page 3, number 81, my name is Mahama Tiah Abdul Kabiru. Mahama is my surname, Tiah is my middle and Abdul Kabiru is my first name. However, the Table Office captured my name as Kabiru Mahama Abdul Tiah which is a totally different rendition and order. The name is Mahama Tiah Abdul Kabiru and I would want the Table Office to capture it as such; Mahama is my surname.

Mr Speaker: I thought we have gone over this matter; I did advise Hon Members to approach the Table Office to cross-check what came from the Electoral Commission. The Writ of Election is the one that arranged your names and the Table Office took advantage of that. So, please, if there is any problem with the order of the arrangement of your names, kindly approach the Table Office after this Sitting. The other comments are well noted and the Table Office would proceed to do the right thing.

Are you done with page 6?

We can now move to page 7.

Yes?

Dr Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare:
Thank you, Mr Speaker.

It is a related matter to what you have just said but the Ghana Medical and Dental Council realised that there are too many “Dr” titles and for the medical doctors, we are now referred to as Dr

(Med) to differentiate the titles. We would also approach the Table Office, I mean the medical doctors here, to add the Dr (Med) so that we differentiate our title from the PhD holders.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: Hon Members, I have heard the Hon Member for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa but the information is not coming from a proper source. He is not the authority to communicate that information to us. So, we have heard you but unfortunately, we cannot take notice of what you shared with us. It must come from the proper source and we would do so.

Page 7?

Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa: I am grateful, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, on page 7, item numbered 5, the Writ of Election from the Electoral Commission, I note that the Table Office did not indicate the date they received it. The Clerk told us that he received a number of writs so they did not arrive the same day from our understanding and I would have thought that, for the record, this being a house of records, the date would have been stated but we do not have that here. He indicated that there were a number of writs from the Electoral Commission on the 7th December, 2024 General Elections but we do not get that sense the way it has been captured at paragraph 5.

Mr Speaker: Hon Member, those details are in the *Official Report. Votes and Proceedings* reflect a summary of what happened that day so you can get the dates— because as you acknowledged, there are a number of writs that were submitted to the Clerk to Parliament. Apart from the general one, we had writs per constituency and they came at different times so we received as at now 274. We are waiting for the rest to complete the number. One came but had an injunction and that was why I added it to the other one that has not reached the office yet so we still have two that are outstanding.

— [Pause]

Well, I remember that one came, he was registered but there was injunction served later on and as a result of that that Hon Member has been registered. So, in terms of writs, only one has not been received by the Clerk to Parliament.

Is there any other concern?

Yes, Minority Leader?

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, on page 7, I just went through the list, we have 275 names captured and I have also realised that Hon Members have taken some time to correct some names. But this is just a humble reminder to my friends on the Majority bench. I can count 61 absentees from your Side; this is just the first day.—

Mr Speaker: Minority Leader, relevance?

2.57 p.m.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Yes, Mr Speaker, I agree. Allow me Mr Speaker. The role of the opposition is to scrutinise and to bring to attention certain key matters that are of concern. I am saying that this is just the first day and this Side — It is your back and not ours. All over you have 61 absentees on day one from the Majority. Day one, 61 absentees. I am just bringing it to your attention so you encourage your Members to come. We are full, Mr Speaker, look behind me, this is a strong Minority. Look behind me, we are solid.

You have 61 seats empty, look at all the empty seats, all these seats are for you. Mr Speaker, I am helping them that is all — [Hear! Hear!]

Mr Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I thought the former Majority Leader who has been reduced to Minority Leader would be talking about whether there is a quorum to do Business. We are proudly telling him that even with the 61 Members he claims are absent, we have enough Members to do Business. I can tell you that we are so fortified that we can afford to have 61 Members having a meeting outside while we continue to do Business in this House. That is how solid we are. [Hear! Hear!]

Mr Ahmed Ibrahim: Mr Speaker, I do not know which spirit is worrying the Minority Leader — [laughter]

Mr Speaker, for your information, 28 MPs from the Greater Accra Region are in a meeting now. We have just sent for them to come but the Minority Leader should know that when we were having the roll call, he was not here. So, he is just trying to behave like the Hon Kobina Tahir Hammond—
[Laughter]

The Speaker: Hon Members, it is part of the duty of Leaders to assist the Speaker to maintain law and order in the House. So first-timers, please do not go by these interjections. It is not part of good practice and so what I would do is to start sanctioning the Leaders from the beginning so that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past. I am sure you would support that.

[Hear! Hear!]

Nobody wants to be repeating mistakes, you want to do better than you did yesterday so please let us not continue that.

May we now move to page 8, but there is one issue outstanding. It differs from Parliament to Parliament as to how you want to be referred to. If you want to be called Alhaji, Chief, Sheikh, Dr and then you add any other title, that is what the House would accept but usually it would reflect the culture and practice of the society in which we live. So, in Ghana we are not known to be taking too many titles but at least one is recognised because of the addition it lays to your value so to refer to somebody as Alhaji Habib Iddrisu, that is not too much to ask for.

I would be guided by the decision of the House so that I can direct the Table Office to capture it properly. Do you want us to add Alhaji and Reverend? Alhaji Haruna Iddrisu does not want Alhaji to be added, I am reading his body language. Yes, so do we add Alhaji, Reverend, Apostle, Sheikh, Mallam?

Yes, Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka?

Alhaji Mohammed-Mubarak Muntaka: Thank you, Mr Speaker. You know that some make it part of their names and they even swear affidavits to change and add it as part of their names.

Mr Speaker, for those, I think it would be proper to add it but for those of us who have opted not to necessarily add it, maybe we should leave it as a choice. If the individual wants to add it, then they should indicate that to the Table and we leave out those who do not. This is because if we are not careful, the titles alone would take up additional pages of the *Votes and Proceedings*. I think that in fairness, those who may want to have it— if someone is a Reverend and feels strongly about it and has been adding it to his names, it should be indicated then we refer to the person as such. If someone is a professor and he or she wants it added to their names because it is part of their records, I think it would be fair.

Mr Speaker, as you may know, today, the way we have improved the workings of Parliament, people watch us all over the world and may go to the website of

Parliament to locate all the names. If people have made it as part of their official records and we do not add it and someone goes to the records and sees it is not part of it, that may create problems for individuals. For example, if someone is looking for you, Mr Speaker, I know you were honoured with a PhD but you decided not to add it.

Mr Speaker, I think that we should allow those who may want to add it because they have either added it to their records or they may want it to be part of their names instead of doing it generally to say everyone should be added or taken out. I think this may be a very good suggestion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes? Mr Ayeh Nana Asafo-Adjei?

Nana Asafo-Adjei Ayeh: Thank you Mr Speaker, sorry to bring you back to page 7, item numbered 6—

The Speaker: Are you addressing the issue on the table now? We have not concluded on that issue.

Nana Ayeh: I take a cue from that, thank you Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes, I saw the Hon Member for Wa Central on his feet, yes?

Dr Abdul-Rashid Hassan Pelpuo: Mr Speaker, I imagined we were going to deal with page 8 but as it is I would wait—

The Speaker: Hon Members, I would refer the issue back to you, some may even raise issues of human rights and that is why I say it depends on what you say then we would capture that. So, if you have sworn an oath that you would want to be referred to as Professor, Alhaji, Imam among others, that is you. You would be referred to as such so it is right to say that you would have to officially inform us. What you used in the forms you filed with the Electoral Commission is what is captured on the writ of elections and that is what we would follow here.

You have the opportunity to make the necessary corrections and do them legally so that we can refer to that. Very soon, we would be going paperless and we would not have all these rubbish before us. This is part of pollution of our environment. So, let us move on with the *Votes and Proceedings*.

3:07 p.m.

I will now call the gentleman who wanted to draw our attention to something on page 8. Yes please. Has it been solved?

Nana Ayeh: Yes, it has been solved. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon Members, page 8? Yes please?

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

Mr Speaker, I rise to seek your guidance on this matter. You know that items numbered 5...9 were matters that engaged the House before the substantive Motions were carried. I recall that the Acting Clerk to Parliament, Mr Ebenezer Ahumah Djietror, informed the House that the political parties have informed the House of the names in terms of Leadership that would lead for both Sides, but I see that there is no information regarding them. Especially because when you get to item numbered 25, Mr Afenyo-Markin is ascribed the title Minority Leader, and Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson is also ascribed the title Majority Leader, but there is no information regarding when —

The Speaker: That is item numbered 27, right?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Yes, Mr Speaker. So I think that it should be captured before the issues about the Motions were carried.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Hon Member, we have taken note of your issue, and definitely, the *Hansard* will capture it, but we will consider whether it should be part of the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Yes please?

Alhaji Alhassan Kobina Ghansah: Mr Speaker, if you would permit me to read from page 8, item numbered 10, Motion, the second paragraph: “Moved by the Member-elect for *Ajumako*,” the name of the town is *Ajumako*, and not

what has been captured there. Also, as we are debating, the title of my Hon Leader is Dr, and not Mr.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, thank you very much. But as for the name, we know it is the printer’s devil. We know that it is “*Ajumako*” not “*Ajuamko*”. Please take note of the title of Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson.

Yes, Dr Pelpuo?

Dr Abdul-Rashid Pelpuo: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Still page 8, item numbered 7. The Hon Minority Leader is here, and I assume I heard him say that the Member whose presence here was in contention, was aware of the writ of the Supreme Court and was willing to take the consequences of it, not to say that he was advised. I think that was what came out strongly that he was aware and was willing to bear the consequences and I think it should be properly captured here.

My Minority Leader, I see how you enjoy being the Minority Leader *paa* —
[Laughter]

The Speaker: We will cross -check from the *Official Report* and then do the proper rendition.

Page 9? Page 8? Yes?

Mr Yusif Sulemana: Mr Speaker, still on the same issue. I remember very well that the Minority Leader insisted that the Clerk should give a response to the issue he raised, but it is not captured.

The issue was that, he wanted him to react and I am saying that I expect at least some headline here to state that there was that reaction. So that if it is missing in the *Hansard*, we would be able to trace it.

I have been here for some years now so I have learnt. Alhaji Muntaka is there, the Leaders are there, so we have been guided so I know what I am talking about.

Mr Agbodza: Mr Speaker, sorry for taking you back to page 4 with your indulgence. Item numbered 135. The name reads; Afenyo-Markin Alexander Kwamena. This is the first time I have seen (Osahen). Is that coming from the Electoral Commission. What is the Osahen? Is that the Constituency or a title? I know he is a lawyer; people are adding titles, so what is Osahen? It is the first time I have seen it. There is something here (Osahen), what is this? Is it a new title or EC declared that? Or is it a new title for describing Minority Leaders?

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, when doing the registration, you are supposed to fill in title, whether Dr, Mr, Alhaji, Professor, *et cetera*.

Mr Speaker, if my respected Colleague, the Majority Chief Whip so pleases, I shall produce for the purposes of *Hansard*, the origin of my title Osahen. It is a title conferred on me by my uncle, the Omanhen of Effutu Traditional Council and I am to use it, and I prefer to use that title. So I do not think that you should have any problems

with it at all. It has been conferred on me and yes, I am of that family; he is my uncle and I am letting you know. This was not done in private; it was the Traditional Council that met and officially through custom, it was conferred on me. It is not a chieftaincy title.

Mr Speaker, my Colleagues are asking for the meaning of Osahen. I shall rest my case. I want to be known not as Mr; I want to be known as Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin and that was how I filled in my form. It is my title; just as some people insist on being called Dr, Professor, Alhaji because it is a title that they have earned. In my case, by custom, I have — the spiritual things—

The Speaker: Hon Members, we actually have a lot of work to do today, so please, may we proceed.

Yes?

Mr Samuel Nartey George: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Once again apologies for taking you back to page 3. I just wanted guidance on page 3, item numbered 75. Looking at what was in the Presidential Inauguration document that Parliament prepared, there were 274 Members of Parliament. On the day in question, the member opted to bear the consequences but when Parliament records that Member as present in our record, the legal implication to my unlearned mind is that we are condoning what is supposed to be

an upfront to the court, because with the Presidential one, his name was omitted. It was 274 but here, we have 275.

So, just to get clarity from you on it.

3.17 p.m.

The Speaker: Hon Member, I like the statement you used “your unlearned mind”. Yes, so, leave it for the learned minds to grapple with [*Laughter*]. So we would move on.

Page 9 — Yes?

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Item numbered 15 on page 9, the rendition in line two, after speech reads, “in which he thanked the House for the honour done him”.

Mr Speaker, as an Hon Member said earlier, I have also been in this House for some time and there is a pattern of our language and I think that should read,

“The Rt Hon Speaker took the Chair and delivered his acceptance speech and thanked the House for the honour done him”.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, you are right. The Table will take note of that.

Page 10 — Yes, Mr Haruna Iddrisu?

Mr Haruna Iddrisu: Mr Speaker, page 10, if you may indulge me further so that I run through what I have come across in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

I would first like to observe that in this democratic journey, we do not walk alone. I note that in the entire report, conspicuously lost are the names of the US delegation. The President of the United States, President Joe Biden, sent a very strong delegation to the inauguration led by Ms Shalanda Young, Director of the US Office of Management and Budget; Her Excellency, Ambassador Virginia E. Palmer; Ms Karen Bass, Mayor of Los Angeles; and Ms Frances Z. Brown. However, their names are conspicuously lost in our report. Even as we practice democracy, there is a grandfather of the democracy, and I just thought that the US delegation be rightly acknowledged.

Mr Speaker, also on page 13, item numbered xxxv, H.E. the Vice President, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia was recognised as former President of Ghana, so former Vice-President of Ghana is probably better. He can only be recognised in the role as former Vice-President, H.E. Dr Mahamadu Bawumia.

Mr Speaker, this is a plea to you. It is not for nothing that your good self and others felt that we celebrate our constitutionalism on 7th January. I would want to suggest that the Table, guided by you, provide much more detail. For instance, Alhaji Osman Nuhu Sharubutu, National Sheik Imam, do we want to recognise him just as a religious leader? No! Or the Head of the Catholic Bishops comes in, and he is just recognised as a religious leader? Mr Speaker, 7th January is not an ordinary day for us and it would never be an ordinary one so long as we pursue and consolidate our democracy.

So I would make a plea with you that persons like that be given their proper recognition.

Finally, Mr Speaker, Her Excellency Mrs Konadu Agyemang-Rawlings has been very consistent in supporting you and this House. She was present and I do not see her being recognised for the purposes of the record, and I thought I should draw attention to it. More importantly as I said, it is only prudent that the delegation of the United States is recognised accordingly, thank you.

The Speaker: Hon Member, you have actually gone beyond the page I mentioned. We were at page 10, and you decided to take us into other pages. Usually, where we sit, we have instructions and the instructions are in writing and therefore, we go by what we are given. You would not be able to identify those present and so, there are officials who do so and submit a list and we go by that list.

I recognise after the ceremony that all the persons you mentioned were present and even many more, but their names were not submitted to me, either as a result of an oversight — the crowd was huge and so, I can only apologise to them. If their names were not mentioned, it was not through any error of me as Speaker, but they were not made available to me. You know how we honour and respect all of them and I am sure that as Elder Statesmen, they understood the situation that confronted us yesterday.

But we have taken note of that and we would do what is proper in the circumstances.

Are we still at page 10? All right, let me listen to the Leader here.

Mr Habib Iddrisu: Mr Speaker, I would limit myself to page 10. The first paragraph reads, “Moved by the Hon Member for Nsawam-Adoagyiri, Mr Frank Annor-Dompreh”, the last letter of “Annor” is “r”, it is supposed to be an “h”.

However, I am just surprised that the former Minority Leader did not also note that the former President, Mr Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo was not also acknowledged as he was talking about the Vice-President, so he should check it properly too.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member, you were saying something.

Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa: Thank you, Rt Hon Speaker. There are a few more corrections on page 10. Item numbered 23 (iv), the indefatigable Chairman of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Mr Johnson Asiedu Nketia, the “Asiedu” has been spelt wrongly, it should be “Asiedu” so if the Table can correct is accordingly.

Mr Speaker, this is an unpardonable one. Your own constituency has been mutilated, “A delegation from Nadowli and Kaleo Constituencies”. It is one constituency. This should read as “The Rt Hon Speaker acknowledged a delegation

from Nadowli/Kaleo Constituency”, not constituencies. They are not two constituencies so the Table Office would have to correct that.

3.27 p.m.

The Speaker: Hon Member, we have taken note of that and Table Office would do the right thing.

Yes?

Mr Emmanuel Akwasi Bedzrah: Mr Speaker, I quite remember you mentioned a delegation from the ECOWAS Parliament led by the Second Deputy Speaker H.E Kubali Adjaratou Traoré but her name was omitted. She was not even accounted for that she was here during your inauguration.

The Speaker: Yes please?

Mr Samuel Nartey George: Mr Speaker, since we are updating the list of people you recognised, we had the leader of the delegation of the Government of Isreal, the Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister, Madam Sharren Haskel so the records should also bear that.

The Speaker: Hon Members, what I would do is submit the whole list to the Table Office so they could capture them correctly. I had a very long list and at that time, I was compelled, because of time constraint to read them together and there was long queue. Even after that, some people approached me to say they did not hear their acknowledgement and

I had to draw their attention to the fact that I had to read them together instead of just one-by-one. You saw the time we took in trying to invite them to congratulate H.E the President. So, you may, with your kind permission, go for that list and capture all as part of the record of this House.

Yes Please?

Alhaji Muntaka: Mr Speaker, suffice it to say that what you just said could have addressed some of the corrections we are going to make. I thought it is important to indicate that at the night of the swearing-in of your good self, the President of the Pan African Parliament was also in the Chamber here. I thought it is important that that is also recognised. That is, H. E. Chief Fortune Charumbira; he was both in the Chamber and also at the inaugural grounds. I am sure that when you provide the full list, all those names would be captured but I thought that in his case, I needed to mention it because he was both in the Chamber and at the inaugural grounds.

The Speaker: Yes please?

Mr Kofi Adams: Mr Speaker, still on page 10, during the first session before the suspension, we had also the General Secretary of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in attendance and you recognised him accordingly but I think that he should be captured.

But following on to page 24, like Mr Sam George, his unlearned mind, he said “the outgoing Vice President, H. E. Dr

Mahamudu Bawumia arrived in the House and took his seat". But Mr Speaker, if you go to the first page, it says "the House met at 12:05 am" meaning by that time, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia was a former Vice President. He was not outgoing but out-gone. So should he be described as out-going because you were acting President then. So, we should capture it appropriately as former Vice President took his seat and it follows same to — well, we have not reached page 10 but as Mr Haruna did, the outgoing President, he was also former President at that point because it was past midnight and he had ceased to be president. So I think the record should capture it appropriately.

The Speaker: Yes?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, we have gone back and forth on this matter of who was present and who was not present. Just to draw Hon Colleagues' attention, if you look at page 10 item 23, what it says is recognition of dignitaries and it goes on to list the dignitaries who were present and I think Colleagues have a few issues with that and I could not have agreed more with Alhaji Muntaka because I recall I heard Mr Speaker mention Speaker Charumbira's name. But if you proceed further to page 12 item 34, it says, "The Speaker invited the following dignitaries to congratulate H. E. the President of the Republic of Ghana." There is a bit of distinction. The latter speaks to an invitation that was extended by the Speaker to the dignitaries who were there to go and congratulate the President, so we should not mix the two; and I think Mr Speaker

has given a directive that we should relate to Table Office if there are more concerns and deal with this matter.

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Member?

Mr Ralph Poku-Adusei: Mr Speaker still on the same page 10, I noticed that item 23, at the conclusion, it says "Sitting Suspended at 2:32 am". On the face of this document is *Votes and Proceedings*; on the same page 10, item 26, we have "Sitting resumed at 10:45 am at the Independence Square, Accra. Rt Hon Speaker in the Chair". My concern is that if Sitting is suspended at 2:32 a.m. and until 10:45 a.m. what has accounted for item 24, 25 and 26 in the *Votes and Proceedings* and that is something I think we should look at.

The Speaker: Hon Member, I think it is a learning process and so you would get to understand as we go along. The arrivals are recognised and people arrived before we resumed. So we suspended at this time and we are to reconvene before we resume sitting and so during that period, the arrivals and some of these dignitaries are being recognised to have arrived at this time. That is what is captured there. So there is no problem with the sequence and the timing but the time that I called the House to Order so that Proceedings would resume, is what is referred to as 10:45 a.m. so there is nothing wrong with it. But as I said, as we go along, there are more of those things that we would all learn together.

Mr Abdul-Fatawu Alhassan: Mr Speaker, I was going to raise something on page 10. The last item numbered 24, the spelling of the former Vice President, I think the name is ‘Mahamudu’ but I see it as ‘Mahamadu’ and that has also been repeated in page 13. I do not know if you can take notice of that as well.

The Speaker: Hon Member, I think you are right. It would be captured properly.

Yes please?

Dr Zanetor Agyeman-Rawlings: Mr Speaker on page 12, Paul Kagame is misspelt.

The Speaker: We are going to page 11 now.

Dr Agyeman-Rawlings: All right.

The Speaker: Please you can go on.

Page 12—

3.37 p.m.

Dr Agyemang-Rawlings: Mr Speaker, on page 12, the item numbered 34 (i) (ii), we have the name H. E. Paul Kigame. The Kigame is misspelt, it should be Kagame.

The Speaker: Yes, you are right.

Table Office, take note.

Mr Bedzrah: Mr Speaker, since this is a House of record, on the same page 12, the item numbered 34 (iii), the name

is supposed to be Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe’. Then the item numbered 34 (xvi), the title is supposed to be H. E. Brigadier General (RTD) Julius Maada Wonie Bio.

Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, thank you.

I have a couple of corrections. The item numbered 34 (iv), the name of the President of Benin, H. E. Patrice Talon; his full name should be H. E. Patrice Guillaume Athanase Talon

The Speaker: Hon Members, I have a problem with what you are adding to the names because those names did not appear on the list I was given. The list I was given is what has been properly captured. Apart from the spelling mistakes like ‘Kigame’, which definitely is wrong, the rest are being added by you. H. E. Faure Gnassingbe’. Also, with H. E. Patrice Talon, that was all that was given. The same goes for H. E. Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, there was no “Wonie” in it. Now, you are adding to it. I do not know whether it is right to do so. If I am to rule on it, I think that will not be right.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I cannot challenge your ruling on this matter but I believe that this being a House of record, normally, you will permit that for instance where an official name of, especially, the Heads of State — they have several names as the official name. So, where for instance, H. E. Faure Gnassingbe’ is given by our officials to you, the official name for him

is that— Essozimna is the middle name. In the same way, H. E. Patrice Talon, the middle name is Guillaume Athanase, you permit that but I am guided if for the sake of the records, you may not allow that.

Let me further move to the item numbered (xiii) H. E. Mahamat Idriss Derby Itno. His Deby is spelt as ‘Deby’, there is no letter ‘r’ in his Deby. There are other names that we may have—

The Speaker: The challenge I have is the source of the information. I do not know where you got the authority to be correcting the names of people on the floor of the House. That is my challenge and that is why I say what we were given and what was pronounced is what should be captured. I do not think you are the authorised representatives to be correcting the names and telling us the official and unofficial names of the dignitaries.

Mr Dafeamekpor: Mr Speaker, I am guided.

It is safe to say that these presidents have their official websites in their respective countries.

The Speaker: I can tell you that our late Professor Kofi Abrefa Busia was known as Joseph Fredrick Busia. You do not know it. That was his name and he changed it to Kofi Abrefa. That was done legally, he swore an affidavit and went through the process to change to his name.

Now, you will come later and say that is not his correct name and be referring to him as Joseph Fredrick. You do not

have that authority. That is why I am saying that you do not have that authority from any of them unless you can show me that this is my authority from this person to change the person’s name. You do not have it and as you said, this is official record. Let us be safe.

Mr Bedzrah: Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, we are guided but, at least, for the title; H. E. Brigadier General Julius Maada Bio, it is not Brigadier, it is Brigadier General. If we are to look at that of H. E. Brigadier General Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, the title is there, Brigadier General. Everybody knows that H. E. Brigadier Maada Bio is not just Brigadier but Brigadier General.

Mr Habib Iddrisu: Mr Speaker, on page 12 the item numbered 34 (xvii), I think the name is the same as the one on page 13 (xxiii).

The Speaker: Hon Members, Brigadier General, is the same as Brigadier. So, people prefer for one to say General. So, we have Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General and we have General. The General is the four starred; Lieutenant General is the three starred; Major General is a two starred; and the Brigadier General is a one star.

I went for an interview to be a military man so I know that. Yes, in 1977. I know many of you were not born. I liked the discipline in the military and so with that admiration I decided to join the military and also to train myself to be strong and not as weak as I am today. But the

university robbed me of that training. So, please, let us take it as it is. We have taken note and we will crosscheck from the document that was given to us and we will do the right thing.

Page 13?

3.4 7 p.m.

Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa: Mr Speaker, still on page 12, if you would indulge me. At the inauguration yesterday, after the Special Guest's Address which has correctly been captured as H.E. Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Adekunle Tinubu's goodwill message, I recall, Mr Speaker, before you invited all the other dignitaries listed here, you invited the former President, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to congratulate H.E. John Dramani Mahama. The former President and his spouse were the first to congratulate the current President. That is conspicuously missing here and what that has led to is that when one goes through the entire *Votes and Proceedings* one would not see the outgone President's name in there as having gone up to congratulate his successor. Mr Speaker, I think that would be a grave error. We need to acknowledge that. You did invite him and he and his spouse were the first to congratulate President Mahama and I am surprised that is not captured and is totally missing in the scheme of things.

Ms Shirley Kyei: Mr Speaker, item numbered 34 (xvii), the name of the Head of State of Guinea Bissau has been

repeated at item numbered 34 (xxiii) so one of them would need to be expunged.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: You are right. Our attention was drawn to that early on.

Hon Member, what is your issue?

Mr Ablakwa: Mr Speaker, a very important matter. The outgone President's acknowledgement and going up to congratulate President Mahama on your invitation — We were all there. That is missing.

[Interruptions]—

If we are going to document other presidents going to congratulate President Mahama, why would we leave out our former President? I do not get it. He is certainly not my best friend but, at least, for the records let us do the right thing.

[Pause] —

The Speaker: Hon Members, this matter is not open for debate. It is a matter of record so let us leave it at that. I am here and I know what happened. We all know the protocol and that is what is being followed here. It is true that we must acknowledge that in our records. His name must appear in the *Votes and Proceedings* as having taken the opportunity to come and congratulate the President.

Any other matter?

Mr Peter Kwasi Nortsu-Kotoe: Mr Speaker, page 13, item numbered xxi; H.E. Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo is not the President of the Republic of Congo. The President of the Republic of Congo is H.E. Denis Sassou Nguesso; that correction should be made. If you go to page 12 (viii), the correct name there is DR Congo; that correction should be made.

Thank you.

The Speaker: It is DR Congo. It is the Democratic Republic of Congo; that should be noted.

Hon Members, page 14 —

Mr John Darko: Mr Speaker, with respect, on page 13 (xxxiv), the name of the former President John Agyekum Kufour is spelt wrongly. Kufuor is supposed to be K-U-F-U-O-R for the former President Kufuor; but here, we spelt it K-U-F-O-U-R.

The Speaker: Yes, Table Office, the ‘U’ comes before the ‘O’.

Thank you.

Page 14. Yes, any—

Mr Ablakwa: Mr Speaker, page 13— I was trying to catch your attention.

The presidents of a number of countries have been repeated and we would want to draw the attention of the Table Office. I have heard one being

mentioned, but there are more than that; there are about three of them. If the Table Office can take note — that will also affect the numbering; the numbering will change.

Mr Speaker, we need your guidance, there are number of them who went up to congratulate the President with their spouses, that has not been captured here. I do not know if you would want us to leave out their spouses.

Mr Speaker, that is for your guidance.

Mr Speaker, on page 14, since you mentioned page 14, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, the second entry, ‘foreign’, has been captured wrongly; it has been misspelt. The ‘n’ at the end of the word “foreign” is not there.

Mr Speaker, the former President of Germany, a category was created at page 13 for former Presidents. I thought that that is the proper placement so the Table Office can look at that.

I am grateful, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon Members, I thought we solved this. I said I was going to submit a list to the Table Office to capture it as it was presented to me. I went sequentially according to what I was given. As to the number of people who broke protocol and came up to congratulate His Excellency, they were so numerous that we cannot capture all of them. I mentioned names but people came with delegations and we did not

want to cause any scene, so we allowed them if not, you would have seen some struggles around there. Everybody was trying to come, even their children, to congratulate His Excellency the President. So please, we would do the proper thing by submitting that list to the Table Office to be captured.

We will proceed.

Dr Kwame Ohene Frimpong: Mr Speaker, page 14 (xli), I am reiterating from the senior Member, Mr Okudzeto Ablakwa. Inasmuch as the foreign is spelt wrongly, the main concern is that H.E. Diego Martenez Belio is actually the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Global Affairs, and not Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Speaker: We will crosscheck from the list that was submitted.

Thank you.

Dr Frimpong: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Yes, page 14?

Mr Yakubu Mohammed: Mr Speaker, on page 14, item numbered 35, I have realised that it reads, “moved by Hon Majority Leader and Member for Ajumaku/Enyan/Essiam”. I seek your guidance; I thought it should be “Member of Parliament for Ajumaku/Enyan/Essiam”. I need your guidance on that.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Table Office, the Hon Member insists you complete it. Member of Parliament for Ajumaku/Enyan/Essiam.

Yes, Hon Member?

Mr Emmanuel Tobbin: Mr Speaker, page 14, our Hon Majority Leader, Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson. The ‘Dr’ was omitted.

Also, my able Hon Minority Leader has also indicated to us that it is not Mr Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin but rather he would prefer to be called Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon Members, we had given forms to all of you to indicate your full particulars, the details. And in that form, what we have for the Minority Leader is what has been captured in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

He has put there Osahen; it is not Osahene. It is a different pronunciation; it is Osahen. There is no “e”. The gentleman is from Effutu. It is for him to decide whether he is an Anlo man or — not Fante. Fante is a general description of so many tribes in the Central and Western Regions; his tribe is there.

Mr Ahmed Ibrahim: Mr Speaker, if care is not taken in this House, somebody will come and fill a form that his wife calls him “my love” and then that will be

added to his name. Somebody's wife will call him “my king” and then that will become his title. Mr Speaker, we have official titles which are recognised officially. It is for this very reason that even the word ‘honourable’ became a subject for ruling in our law court.

If the Hon Minority Leader can explain— Mr Speaker, simply because, this is an august House so if we are giving warrior titles to Hon Members, is that the precedent we should set? If the Hon Minority Leader can explain the meaning of that title — Because the literal meaning of Osahen is a warrior or a war leader. Is the Hon Minority Leader going to turn this “micro-minority” into a war group? Mr Speaker, I do not think we should go further with this.

Mr Speaker, I do not think we should go further with this.

3.57 p.m.

Dr Abdul Kabiru Tiah Mahama:
Mr Speaker, thank you.

I would want to seek your guidance on this as part of the general issues that we are discussing in relation to the attendance list. I am making this point because words in their format carry some special meanings, sometimes for emphasis. If you look at pages 12 and 13, you would see that some of the names are italicised. Names of some of the Leaders who were invited have been italicised

while others are of normal font. So, I am seeking your guidance to know whether it was a mistake or they were for some special purposes or they were intending to serve purposes of the italics. If the italics—*[Interruption]*— Please, can Hon Members allow me speak? The font sizes in here are different. I know what I am talking about so kindly allow me.

Those that have been italicised or with small size fonts — Can we change them for all to look the same or can we get the explanation of the purpose for which the italics is supposed to serve? This is the guidance I am seeking from you. So, if these words are not supposed to carry any special effect, then I would suggest that we keep them in the same font. Consistency is important.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: Hon Members, this is definitely a secretarial mistake; it would be corrected. But let it be known to all Hon Members that as part of the duties of the Speaker, he is to protect the “micro-minority”. —*[Laughter]*

[Hon Members of the Minority side chanting in disagreement]

Hon Members, it is also part of my duty. *[Uproar]*. Hon Members, may we have some calm. The Minority Leader is on his feet, let us listen to him. Hon Members rose up in support of him, so let us listen to him.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, with respect, I shall in response to what you just said about your duty to protect the “micro-minority”—The rules of this House provide for the Minority and the Majority. We do not have any micro-minority.

Mr Speaker, the Minority Caucus hereby protest the description given to us by Mr Speaker. —[*Inaudible*]— This practice of the Majority turning on their microphones when we are on our feet is not acceptable. We are democrats; they put off my microphone. Listen to me!

Mr Speaker, we find this unacceptable. The Minority seconded your proposal and the Motion for your election. When the so-called Majority was even conspiring against you, we protested and stopped them from that conspiracy. It was us, the Minority of conscience—this Minority is the conscience of this House. Today, the so-called Majority could not get its Hon Members to come the House. Sixty-one of them are absent.

Mr Speaker, we do not accept the description, “micro-minority”. We are Minority. *Simplicità!* Please kindly describe us as such. We are the Minority and not micro-minority. I so submit. — [*Uproar*]

The Speaker: Hon Members, please this is not subject to debate. Sit down! The Minority Leader on behalf of the Minority Caucus has objected to my describing their Caucus as a micro-minority caucus and that this is a term that is unknown to the rules of the House. He is totally right. [*Hear!Hear!*]

Hon Members, I would say that he misled me. Because he has used the term micro-minority—

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, you know—I know you miss your days as —

The Speaker: Hon Members, the objection is to the fact that it should not be formally so recognised by the records of Parliament. I agree with the Minority Leader. So, it should not be used by the Rt Hon Speaker but it can be used by the Leaders —[*Uproar*]

4.07 p.m.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, we are getting the impression—the Minority Caucus is getting the impression that Mr Speaker may be assisting the Majority. Because you seem to be debating for them.

We are the official Minority, there cannot be any other description and it should not be used by anybody on the floor of this House. They cannot use the term “micro-minority”, not only Mr Speaker. From today, no one should ever use that term in this House.

The Speaker: Hon Members, the Hon Minority Leader is saying that I should not protect them. Is that what I am to understand? [**Some Hon Members:** No!]

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, we are saying that protect the Minority. We are — [*Laughter*] — Do you see your man? Mr Speaker, do you see what you are doing to us? We protected you. When they were conspiring, we protected you so protect us. We are the Minority and

we protected you. In fact, but for us you would not be the Speaker. [**Some Hon Members:** Eii!] Yes! It is because of our protection that is why the then President-elect had to issue a statement. Yes, we protected Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon Members, please, let me hear from the Minority so that I would not be seen to be denying you your right to be heard.

Yes, please?

Mr Agbodza: Mr Speaker, I come under Order 123 (2) (a) and (b) of the Standing Orders. The preamble of my – this is just on a lighter note. Just a few weeks ago —[*Interruption*]— hold on, my Hon Good Friend was protesting heavily for being referred to as the Minority Leader.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: But I was not the Minority Leader.

Mr Agbodza: You were not. But today are you the Minority Leader?

Mr Speaker, Order 123 (2) (a) and (b) says that:

2) A Member shall not

(a) use offensive, abusive, insulting, blasphemous or unbecoming words on a Member or any other person; or

(b) impute improper motives, or impugn the integrity of a Member or any other person

My Hon Colleague suggested that the Majority was conspiring against you. Mr Speaker, I have it on record when the Hon Minority Leader at political functions was describing you in words that can never be used on this Floor and said that the greatest injustice to Parliament was to elect you as the Speaker. He said that on political platforms. Today, I thank God that the Hon Minority Leader is now pretending he loves you more than the people who you actually belong to [**Some Hon Member:** Oh!] we can tell you this. Mr Speaker, I know you have got the tapes and the videos. But, what I would say is that for the fact that he described us as conspiring against you he must actually withdraw that part of his statement now and apologise to us [*Uproar*].

Mr Speaker, he described us as the so-called Majority, he should look at them and look at us, is it a so-called Majority? Would he describe this as a so-called Majority? This is a proper Majority. Their size looks like that of my district assembly; do they like that one? Mr Speaker, he must necessarily withdraw. This Side did not and would never conspire to do anything against you. The last group of people who would undermine you would not be this Side. If there are other people who would do it, we can guarantee you that you would get our support today and tomorrow because you are doing the right thing. He must withdraw.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I am grateful that you recognised me. I just want to share a few words. [**Some Hon Members:** Sit down]

Is Mr Agbodza telling me to sit down? Can he tell me to sit down? He is a joke. —[*Interruption*]— He cannot tell me to sit down, in this House it is the rules that we use. They cannot tell me to sit down, they must get the attention of the Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for recognising me. First of all, the Order my Hon Colleague quoted, if you read further, in subclause 3, the inherent condition is stated there. It will lie in the mouth of the Speaker to determine if indeed those words were used. I hope he recognises that.

Going beyond that, I am in my fourth term in this House —[*Interruption*]— Mr Speaker, would they listen to me? This is the first time, and I am saying this in context, if they pay attention, they would get the context in which I am speaking to, this is the first time that a President-elect has to issue a statement more or less whipping them to nominate Mr Speaker for the position of Speakership? Why? That is very revealing. It was because there were things happening at your backyard and the President-elect picked the due intelligence and that is why he had to come up with that statement. This has never happened. So, for the Hon Leader to say that all was not well behind you, the evidence is all over. In fact, it took the support and the consent of the Minority for us to elect the Speaker.

Mr Speaker, on both Sides, if there is any side that you should be careful of it should be the Majority. You should be

very careful of the Majority. They were the people planning for you not to be elected. [**Some Hon Members:** Oh!] Do not miss the point, it took our blessings for Mr Speaker to be elected. — [*Uproar*]— So, stop boasting.

Back to the point. Order 123 should be quoted in whole. My Hon Good Friend, Mr Agbodza should quote Order 123 in whole. Order 123 subclause 3 is clear and we do not need to belabour the point or mess it up. Mr Speaker, I thank you.

4.17 p.m.

Dr Ibrahim Murtala Muhammed: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a House of record, one does not need to quote any Order of the Standing Orders to buttress the point that a statement that should be made on the Floor, more so from a Leader, should be a statement that is anchored on facts and not on conjecture. Kids are watching us, the entire globe is watching us and most importantly, this is the Second Sitting of the Ninth Parliament. If we have a Leader of the House who would make statements that are absolutely conjecturing, it is scandalous to say the least. But, Mr Speaker, this argument is occasioned by the fact that someone wanted to be called a particular name or added a title which is unknown to the rules and proceedings of this House. I wanted your guidance; if anybody decides that he wants a particular name or title to be added to his name – everybody knows that I do not want to be identified as Honourable, I want to be identified as comrade.

In the Sixth Parliament, I rose here and I said that I did not want to be addressed as Honourable and the then Rt Hon Speaker told me that the identification of Members was Honourable. I remember you called and advised me and made the same point after Sitting that the title, “Honourable” is a title given to those who are Members of Parliament or Ministers of State at the time when they are actively performing the function. If someone decides that they want to be identified as a warrior — maybe, perhaps, we should have been informed that that warrior title and actions to support that name was prepared to be unleashed on Parliament and the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, we are still aware that in this House, when we were electing you, they commandeered armed military men into this Chamber in violation of the principles of democratic governance. — *[Uproar]*

— *[Minority Members rose]*

I would be heard anyway. It was an attack on the sanctity — I would make that point anyway. It was an attack on the sanctity of Parliament; it was an attack on the Constitution of Ghana. There is a difference between Parliament and the Executive. Maybe somebody did — *[inaudible]*— **[An Hon Member:** Sit down! He should retract that]

— *[The Speaker gavels]*

Mr Speaker, perhaps, they ought to be informed that Parliament and the legislative—

— *[The Speaker gavels]*

The Speaker: Hon Members, please kindly resume your seats. I think we have tested the waters enough. Today is the first sitting of the First Session or even the First Meeting of the First Session of the Ninth Parliament of the Fourth Republic. What happened yesterday was the First Meeting. When you look at the Standing Orders, it says that House first meet and, in that Meeting, the first person to preside over that Meeting is the Clerk to Parliament. That Meeting is not yet properly constituted Parliament; you are Members of Parliament-elect and when you graciously elect a Speaker, he comes in as a Speaker-elect until sworn in by a person by virtue of that condition is present on the Floor of the House just for a ceremony and that is the Chief Justice then the person becomes Speaker then the Speaker then swears you in. Our Standing Orders refer to that as when Parliament first meet. If you go through the Standing Orders, you would see that it describes today as the First Sitting and that is what we have.

The second point is that during the era of the military regime, at the time, the Head of State was General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong. He said that as for rumours, he has no problems with rumours. The problem he has is the mongering — the mongering of the rumours. Why? Is it one person mongering the rumours — *[Laughter]* — all of you are mongering the rumours. So a decree was passed against rumour mongering. We are not going to do that in democratic Ghana. So, as you monger your rumours, be sure that the Rt Hon Speaker would take them with a pinch of

salt. I know that the term I used was not taken kindly by the Minority Caucus and so I acknowledge that. So, I have decided that it would not be used officially — *[Uproar]*

The Rt Hon Speaker would not use the term “Micro-Minority” at all in reference to the Minority Caucus. I recall in the First Parliament of the Fourth Republic, the Caucus I belonged to at that time was referred to as Populous Majority and it was used. Maybe because it was edifying, it was accepted. Today, we would not use a term that is not edifying. I would not use it. — *[Uproar]*— I say, I would not use it. The Minority Caucus — *[Uproar]*—

Hon Members, you do not catch the eye of the Speaker by begging the Speaker. Please, do not beg me. Do the proper thing and you would catch my eye. Please, but let me give my ruling. Please, that is what I am doing. That is why I started by saying the testing of the waters is enough. We have all tested the waters; the Majority, Minority and the Speaker and that is enough. We would leave it here. We have a lot of work to do today. We have had pre-Sitting meetings. The Minority Leader was not present at the pre-Sitting meeting so his representative was the Minority Chief Whip and we discussed a number of issues which we would convey to the House because it is the House that is to take the decisions. There are key decisions we are to take today so do not let us use the whole day in correcting *Votes and Proceedings*.

Please, this is the end of the exchanges and I would proceed to let us end the correction of *Votes and Proceedings*.

4.27 p.m.

Hon Member, I just used a phrase and that phrase was explicit enough. If you conspired at all, you conspired in favour of me; that I know.

You do not just conspire against, you also conspire for, yes. So, the word conspiracy is not all negative; there are positive things about conspiracy. So please, I did state clearly that you did not conspire against me. So, we would proceed to do what is right, please.

Hon Members, in the absence of any further corrections, the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 7th January, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, let us now take the item numbered 6 —Statements.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Determination of the Formula for the Composition of Membership of Committees, Parliamentary Delegations and other Parliamentary Groups and Associations.

The Speaker: Hon Members, at this Sitting, we are expected to as a House, appoint and compose some Committees and usually, the process is started by the Leaders of the House. The first Committee that is to be appointed by the House is the Committee of Selection, which by our Standing Orders, is chaired

by the Speaker. I specifically refer to Standing Order 205, rule 1. It says;

“The Committee of Selection shall comprise the Speaker as Chairperson and not more than 17 Members of Parliament”

There is some error in what you have, it is not 14, but rather 17 Members of Parliament. That was the final decision taken by the House. It is 17, and so, using the usual communication channels, I got in touch with the Leaders of the two Caucuses and they made proposals which would form the basis for the House to appoint the Members of the Committee. We are still talking about Majority and Minority Caucuses because by our rules, we have made provision for a third caucus, and that is the Independent Caucus. However, we decided that to constitute a third force, that is the Independent Caucus, we need to have seven Independent Members in Parliament. As at now, we have four, so they have not met the threshold of seven.

My instructions are to the four Independent Members that they have the option to decide which of the Caucuses to officially transact Business with in the House; they have that option. That is usually done officially in writing to the Speaker of Parliament, and I would make it known to the House and it would be captured by the official records of the House. So, as at now, we have only two Caucuses, the Majority and the Minority Caucuses. What I propose is to give the opportunity to the Leaders to give an indication as to the composition of the

Membership of the Committee of Selection, and then I would proceed to suspend Sitting. The Committee would meet, submit a Report to this House, and this House would take a decision as to the Membership of the Committee of Selection.

After that, the Committee would have to immediately convey, discuss and submit to the House for approval, the membership of two key Committees; the Business Committee and the Appointment Committee. The Business Committee because they have for now, the duty to start scheduling the Business of this House after the Business has been admitted by the Speaker. Then also, the Appointments Committee.

These are three key Committees that we have to set up today before we decide, and I would be making a proposal to you for us to take a bit of rest to allow the authorised officials to put in place the proper arrangement on the floor of the House. Where you are sitting today are just borrowed seats, the next time you come, you would see that your constituency and name would be on a different seat which is the properly allocated seat for you. We have to do all these within a very short period of time so that we can now position ourselves properly to transact Parliamentary Business and also, official Government Business.

That is why I am pleading with you to let us focus on this important Business. The less the jabs and jokes, I think we would continue as we go along, but this

Statement by the Speaker

is one family. We may come from different mothers, but this is one family, and as the father of the family, I have to treat all of you equally. You know that as a father, when you see that one child is stronger than the other, definitely, you have to always go to the side of the weaker one; that is natural, and it is not only natural— Kindly read the literature, it is accepted globally that part of the duties of a Speaker is to protect the Minority; that is why I accepted—

Hon Members, I would be applying the rules rigorously. That is why I accepted his position about the use of the word, which is what he objected to. I accept that. This is how we do Business, we do not fight here, we may lose our tempers, but we are members of the same family and we should continue that way.

4:37p.m.

Mr Ablakwa —*rose*—

The Speaker: Yes, so, Leadership can you give us an indication? Is the Speaker out of Order? Please, just a minute. The House is such that you have to give people the opportunity to be heard.

Yes, Mr Ablakwa?

Mr Ablakwa: I am grateful Mr Speaker for the opportunity and I would never ever contemplate you being out of Order. I just wanted to seek your guidance under Standing Order 217(2), because of the indication you have given about the crucial Committees that have to be set out, the Business Committee and the Appointments Committee.

Under our new Standing Orders, the Appointments Committee has changed and it now has Members from other Committees, the relevant subject matter Committees and if I may read with your permission, Standing Order 217(2)

The leadership and two other Members of the relevant subject-matter Standing or Select Committee shall join the Members of the Appointments Committee to consider persons nominated by the President for appointment as Chief Justice and Justices of the Supreme Court, Ministers of State, Deputy Ministers, the Administrator of the District Assemblies' Common Fund, the Special Prosecutor and other persons specified under the Constitution or any other enactment.

So, Mr Speaker, in that context I was wondering if we could probably task the Committee to broaden its scope to look at the other Committees as well because of the indication you gave that they would be focusing on two Committees that is why, because it appears we have a conundrum with the new Standing Orders.

The Speaker: There is no conundrum. Please, I chaired the Standing Orders Committee and I was there throughout with the lawyers and we discussed this thing thoroughly. That has been factored into what I just communicated but we have expanded the Appointments Committee and as and when necessary, you bring in the Leadership of the other Select Committees. So, we factored that into what we were going to do. There is no problem at all with that. So, Leaders,

let us hear you. Let me listen to the former Chair.

Mr Kwame Anyimadu-Antwi: Thank you Mr Speaker. Since this is my first time getting up, may I congratulate you on your election. Mr Speaker, you just referred us to Standing Order 205 and you corrected the 14 Members of Parliament stated to 17. Mr Speaker, even though I was a Member of the Standing Orders Committee, in all honesty, I do not have the recollection as you have and since you chaired that, I do not have any reason to doubt whatever you have said, but my question is that, how do we go ahead if we should find these mistakes. We are just privileged to have you in the Chair. You that chaired the Standing Orders Committee to be in the Chair otherwise this may end up in controversy, so I seek your direction Mr Speaker, as to how we would go about it going forward if we should encounter such typos.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh —*rose*—

The Speaker: Yes, do you want to respond to him? Alright.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I thank you. I tried to catch your attention earlier because my Colleague would bear me out that we are privileged to have sat in a number of Meetings that are relevant to the discussion before the House even before my Friend Mr Ablakwa raised the same matter. Let me say that, maybe it is

by providence that our Colleagues are also kept in Leadership.

Mr Speaker, ever since we adopted the new Standing Orders, we realised that per our numbers Minority then in the Eighth Parliament, there was the need to relate to you and I must commend you highly how you have guided us. Myself and the then Minority Chief Whip, Mr Agbodza, took it upon ourselves to get stuff and concerns sanitised, so back and forth there were instances that we added a number of memberships to the already agreed Members of the various Committees just to get the balancing right. Back and forth, you guided us, we came on the Floor, this Motion was moved and adopted. And so you realised that even the printed Standing Orders, there are a number of mistakes in it that had to be corrected so if you pick the *Hansard*, today at Conclave I indicated to the Acting Clerk, run this thing together with the Chief Whips because we were present and we recall exactly what happen and *Hansard* would bear us out.

We have to do this and solve this out otherwise we cannot constitute the Committees. And firstly, Mr Speaker, as you rightly directed, we have to deal with the Committee of Selection. Now, we have at least agreed with the ratio of composition of the Committees for the Ninth Parliament. Myself and the Majority Chief Whip have agreed on the ratio.

What is critical is that, the Committee of Selection chaired by the Speaker have to be constituted. Once that is constituted,

then we look at other critical Committees that needs to be constituted once there is the Appointments Committee and the Business Committee.

The only challenge we have is to deal with the mistakes that have already been recorded and the Standing Orders have been printed. My Senior Colleague rightly observed and together with the Acting Clerk and the Whips, we can sit and address all these concerns and get these key critical Committees constituted and then Mr Ablakwa also mentioned about the subject matter Committee membership who have to be co-opted to join the Appointments Committee. That is why in the wisdom of The Speaker, you can say that I am taking the wind out of your sail, you would grant us a week of break, when we come back then we would not have a problem which subject-matter Committee is to be co-opted to the Appointments Committee. So I think the matters are clear, we have a defined and clarity on how we should approach this matter and Majority Chief would bear me out. So, first thing first, let us deal with the Committee of Selection, Mr Speaker, as you directed, we suspend Sitting, go and handle and constitute the Business Committee and the Appointments Committee and we get it approved and we can proceed and subsequently we can constitute all the other Committees.

But essentially the ratio has been agreed, everybody knows, the Majority Chief Whip knows, should I mention it? I would not mention it. You know it.

Speak to your Chief Whip and he would direct you.

Mr Speaker, I think we are clear and we can proceed.

The Speaker: Hon Members, we really took time to discuss this in Conclave and then all the issues you are raising were considered. But because as a House we would be able to generate a lot of interest of our people in what we do. We are going through this process for the first time for people to hear and get to know how we do our Business. That is why I am allowing you to make inputs. It is very important not only for our edification and education but for advocacy purposes. Our people have to go with us and understand what we do and so we are going to do this because this is the first we got printed copies of the Standing Orders of the House and definitely there are some errors. These are to be corrected through administrative instructions because you have the official records in the *Hansard* which they are going to go through in detail now and edit the errors and make sure that the decisions that were taken by the House are truly captured in the Standing Orders.

With that, we discuss with the Clerk and the staff at the Table. That will be done. The first thing we have to do now is to put in place this composition of the Committee of Selection as the Minority Chief Whip just stated.

4.47 p.m.

As the Minority Chief Whip just stated, he together with his colleague, the Majority Chief Whip agreed on the formula and the formula as we have now is 183 versus 88, that is what was used in the composition and that is what we would go with. If there are changes in the future, that would be factored into, that is what is done in our practice and procedure. So please let us listen to them to give us an indication of the membership of the Committee so that we can meet and report back to the House.

Yes, Hon Suhuyini?

Mr Sayibu Suhuyini Alhassan: Mr Speaker, thank you. I also wish to seek further clarification based on what you just said in relation to the numbers in the House, you earlier made a point that the only way an Independent Member can join a caucus is by writing to the Speaker and as things stand now, you do not seem to have that indication. Just a while ago, you made a point about the composition, 183 to 86 — all right, I wanted to drop four because they are contentious.

Mr Speaker, the point I seek to get clarification from you is, what would happen after the indication of the Independent Members to you as to the caucus they want to work with? Will that inform the formula that would be used to compose these committees? Thank you.

The Speaker: Yes, please?

Mr Agbodza: Mr Speaker, I just noticed that he has asked a question and

I do not know if you would want to respond to that first and thank you for the opportunity for us to do this now.

Yes, indeed, four colleagues of ours who are in this House as Independent Members of Parliament communicated to join our caucus in doing business on the Floor. When we met you at conclave, you guided us that it was a communication to our caucus but for the records to be clear in Parliament that communication needs to come to you officially. Unfortunately, when we left the Conclave, we came to the Floor. So indeed, we are going to communicate to our four colleagues — to be honest, Mr Speaker, they sit with us already so we shall guide them as to how to send that communication to you. But at this moment, we are only working with the numbers we have so I agree with you, Mr Speaker, these Committees we are forming today might change after the official communication to you but what we are working with right now is approximately three quarters.

Mr Speaker, for instance, we have 17 members for the Committee of Selection. Our understanding is that you are part of the 17 and if that is the case, then our caucus would have 11 members that is if we are to add you. If you are not part of it, Mr Speaker, then we would be 12 but —

The Speaker: I am not part of your caucus.

Mr Agbodza: All right, so I will give you names of 12 members from our Side and they will give us five members.

[Uproar] Colleagues, we are not debating the statistics, we have worked it out already. The only thing I said was that if Mr Speaker is part of the 17, then we have 11, if he is not, then we have 12. It is as simple as that. So if it pleases you —

The Speaker: Hon Majority Chief Whip, take it completely out of your mind, Mr Speaker is not a Member of Parliament. Your Caucus is made up of Members of Parliament, Mr Speaker is the Speaker, he is not a Deputy Speaker. There is vast difference so, I cannot be a member of your Caucus even though I am a member of your party but, when it comes to the performance of my functions here, it is clearly cut out for me and I know what to do.

We agreed that the Speaker is not part of the 17, the 17 is for the Members of Parliament. We agreed and you submitted your list and the Minority submitted their list, that is the specific names. So, we have that already and that is what we are going by unless you people have changed your positions. Please you may continue, you have not finished. Please let him conclude.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, just to draw his attention that — I think early on, based on the information that was before us, we came up with a certain ratio. However, granted that all the Independent Members are given to their Side, Mr Speaker, if you do the arithmetic, our Side would come up to 32 per cent so the numbers that we used earlier has a bit of error in it.

Mr Speaker, if you may indulge the two of us, we would have to look at the report. The Clerk has generated a report —

The Speaker: Hon Members, this process is step-by-step. You have not reached where you are now. I have not received any such communication. He has informed us that the communication is to the Leaders of the Majority Caucus. You came to me with a formula and you composed the Committee of Selection and that is what I am going by. Until I receive communication from them individually not collectively because they would be held responsible, it would be put on their records. So nobody is going to do anything for and on their behalf, they would have to communicate individually to the Speaker.

You know in the case of the Second Deputy Speaker, he did that in the Eighth Parliament and it was read to Members here. Please let us follow that and now we are going to compose Committee of Selection, let us do that now.

Mr Agbodza: Mr Speaker, you are very right. I just cross-checked from the Committee of Selection we had the last time, the 17 excluded you, so if it pleases you, I would go ahead to mention the names of the proposed Colleagues that would form this Committee.

Once that is done and we go to the meeting then we can come back with the appropriate one that Colleagues would approve.

4. 57 p.m.

With our Side, we have the Majority Leader, Mr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson as a member, myself, Mr Govers Kwame Agbodza, Ms Comfort Doyoe Cudjoe, Mr Ebenezer Okletey Terlabi, Mr Isaac Ashai Odamtten, Mr Emmanuel Kwadwo Agyekum, Dr Clement Abas Apaak, Mr Shaibu Mahama, Prof Dr Grace Ayensu-Danquah, Ms Rachel Amma Owusuah, Mr Richard Kuurre and Ms Jean-Marie Formadi; making it 12 Members.

Mr Speaker, those are the names from our Side.

The Speaker: Yes please?

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, on our Side, we have these names as proposed. We have Mr Mustapha Ussif, Ms Patricia Appiagyei, the Deputy Minority Leader; Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh, Alhaji Habib Iddrisu and Mr Kwaku Asante-Boateng; the five of us.

The Speaker: Yes, Deputy Majority Leader?

Mr Buah: Mr Speaker, just to add that we would confer with Colleagues as you have said, that when the Independent Members bring their letters to your attention, we would work with them to agree on what the due percentage would be and we would work with that on that number. This is to make sure that is noted for the record.

The Speaker: We have that covered under Order 205(3) it says,

“(3) The Committee of Selection may review the composition of Committees where necessary and report to the House”

So that is covered. May I now, with your indulgence direct that the Members so declared be adopted by the House as the membership of the Committee of Selection. Do I have that from Members consensus — so decided by the House?

Hon Members, I now direct that the Committee of Selection should immediately proceed to the conference hall of the Speaker for a meeting on the next item and with that I proceed to suspend Sitting.

Sorry?

Mr Patrick Boamah: Mr Speaker, may I humbly refer you to Standing Order 67(1) and in particular, 67 deals with the Order of Business. I realised we have gone through a lot today but I just want to find out from you. I have seen my Colleague from Bolgatanga East, he has been seated in the Chamber the whole day. Hon Member for Bawku has been in the Chamber the whole day as well as the Hon Member for Banda. Mr Speaker, I would like to find out, Order 67(1)(1) whether you have received any communication from the President because I can see some itchiness on the Members that I have mentioned—*[Laughter]*—whether you have received an official communication, a green letter from the Office of the President?

The Speaker: Actually, I have not received any green letter from the Office

of the President. I have communication from H. E. the President; that communication is not on a green paper but I decide; if you read your Orders properly, when to communicate such information to the House. That lies in the bosom of the Speaker and that is permitted by the Standing Orders. What we do is to try to get things in order so that you can now strictly follow what is stated in Standing Order 67(1).

So, please I proceed to suspend Sitting. When we come back you can continue with your— or there is no motive here?

Mr Alhassan Sayibu Suhiyini: Mr Speaker, I think Mr Patrick Boamah is impugning improper motives to you. He is making the assumption that you have the ability to hoard letters that are sent to you from the Presidency and I think that you have demonstrated enough credibility and integrity for an old Member of this House to suggest that when you have letters from the Presidency, you would not share it until you are asked by a Member of this House. He must show remorse and apologise to you for such a suggestion.

The Speaker: The last time I heard the word hoard was during the Revolution. —[*Laughter*]— This is the second time I am hearing it. Please, may we suspend— I am just proceeding to suspend, in consultation with Members, one hour suspension of the House would be sufficient for us to do our work and to report back to us.

Members, is that accepted?

[**Some Hon Members:** Yes]

Mr Speaker: Hon Members, the House is accordingly suspended for one hour.

5:08 p.m. — *Sitting suspended.*

8.04 p.m.— *Sitting resumed*

The Speaker: Hon Members, welcome back from the suspension.

We will move to the item numbered 7. We did the item numbered 7(a) before we suspended Sitting and so, we would move to the item numbered 7(b).

PAPER

By the Majority Leader on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee—

Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of the Appointments and Business Committees.

The Speaker: Hon Members, the Report is accordingly presented to the House and it is for distribution to all Hon Members of Parliament.

Table, see to it that Hon Members get copies. There is an indication that Hon Members, even though, not all but— Ushers, please, distribute the rest of the copies to Hon Members. In the meantime, we may proceed to the item numbered 10. I again mandate the Hon Majority Leader to move the Motion.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Order 104(1)

Majority Leader (Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson): Mr Speaker, I beg to move:

That notwithstanding the provision of Order 104(1) of the Standing Orders which requires that a motion shall not be debated until at least two sitting days have elapsed after the notice to move the motion is given, the motion for the adoption of the Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of the Appointments and Business Committees may be *moved* today.

Minority Chief Whip (Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh): Mr Speaker, I beg to second the Motion moved, except to add that I wonder why the Hon Majority Leader, without any disrespect to him, who is not a member of the Selection Committee and was not at the meeting—I have not seen him the whole of today. He just walked in.

Mr Speaker, it is without any prejudice and without any disrespect, why must it be him who has to move the Motion?

Mr Speaker, your good friend the Hon Minority Leader has been here the whole of today; I have also been here the whole of today; and Mr Kwame Agbodza has also been here all of today. The Hon Majority Leader just walked in.

Mr Speaker, I am not challenging your powers and I know you have the

right to select anyone but we have been here all of today and we understand these matters—he has not been here. I do not know if he is still lobbying and — *[Inaudible]*— but he has not been here. He is not a member of the Committee of Selection. Why is he in a hurry to move this Motion?

Dr Forson: Mr Speaker, I can understand Mr Annoh-Dompreh.

I can understand him because he is one-day old in opposition and he is trying to experiment how opposition looks like. I am sure he wants to communicate to his constituents that he is now the opposition Chief Whip. I welcome him to the club.

Mr Speaker, I was asked by your good self to move the Motion on your behalf. You are the Chairperson of the Committee of Selection. I am only a member of the Committee and you have the right to ask any of the members of the Committee to move a Motion on your behalf.

Mr Speaker, I am only doing what you have asked me to do and rightly so, I urge him to second the Motion for us to make progress.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: I heard him second the Motion.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I am convinced that he is working on other matters in our collective interest. So, to that end, I will rather suspend my commentaries and second the Motion.

The Speaker: Hon Members, the horse bolted before his submission.

From the onset, he could have, as I mandated the Hon Majority Leader to move the Motion, raise the issue that he raised after seconding the Motion. But since he did not do that and seconded the Motion and now proceeded to say what he said, it was too late in the day and the matter became not relevant after the secondment of the Motion.

Hon Members, we would proceed as I put the question,

Question put and Motion agreed to.

Resolved accordingly.

The Speaker: We would now move to the item numbered 11 on the Order Paper.

Yes, Hon Majority Leader?

The horse has not come back. I can give you the opportunity if you would want to talk.

MOTION

Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of the Appointments and Business Committees.

Majority Leader (Dr Cassiel Ato Baah Forson): Mr Speaker, I beg to move:

That this honourable House adopts the Report of the Committee of Selection on the Composition of

the Appointments and Business Committees.

Mr Speaker, in doing so, I would present the Committee's Report.

1.0 Introduction

In accordance with Article 103 of the 1992 Constitution and Order 204 and 205 of the Standing Orders of the House, the Committee of Selection was appointed on Wednesday, 8th January, 2025 to compose the Standing, Select and other Committees of the House.

The Committee met and composed the membership of the Appointments and Business Committees in accordance with Orders 216 and 217 respectively and the practice of the House. The Committee also recomposed the membership of the Committee of Selection pursuant to Order 205 (3) of the Standing Orders of the House.

2.0 Deliberations

In its deliberations, the Committee was guided by the formula adopted by the House for the composition of the Membership of Committees.

The Committee was also guided by Article 103 (5) of the 1992 Constitution and Order 154 of the Standing Orders of the House and ensured that the composition of the Committees as much as possible reflected the different shades of opinion in Parliament.

The Committee also considered inputs from the Leadership of the two

Caucuses in the composition of the Committees as part of the conventions of the House.

3.0 Recommendations

The Committee recommends as follows:

- i. THAT considering the urgent need to facilitate the business of the House and that of Government, the Committee in the meantime composes the membership of the Business Committee and Appointments Committee to the House for approval.
- ii. THAT per the approved ratio of 183:88 and the Conventions and Practices of the House, fifteen (15)
- iii. Members of the Business Committee works out to ten (10)

Members for the Majority Caucus and five (5) for the Minority Caucus. In respect of the Appointments Committee, the Eleven (11) Members of the Committee works out to seven (7) Members for Majority Caucus and four (4) for the Minority Caucus.

- iv. THAT cognisant of Order 217 (2), which requires that additional members from relevant Committees would join the Members of the Appointments Committee in the performance of its duties, the Committee resolved that it would, as soon as practicable, submit the membership of the rest of the Committees for the approval of the House.
- v. THAT the composition of the three Committees are captured in Tables 1, 2 and 3 below:

TABLE 1: Business Committee

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION
1	HON. CASSIEL ATO BAAH FORSON	CHAIRMAN
2	HON. EMMANUEL ARMAH-KOFI BUAH	VICE CHAIRPERSON
3	HON. KWAME GOVERNS AGBODZA	MEMBER
4	HON. AHMED IBRAHIM	MEMBER
5	HON. ZANETOR AGYEMAN-RAWLINGS	MEMBER
6	HON. MOHAMMED ADAMU RAMADAN	MEMBER
7	HON. THOMAS WINSUM ANABAH	MEMBER
8	HON. HAMZA ADAM (DR)	MEMBER
9	HON. FRED KWESI AGBENYO	MEMBER
10	HON. KOFI BENTEH AFFUL	MEMBER
11	HON. ALEXANDER K. AFENYO-MARKIN	RANKING MEMBER
12	HON. FRANK ANNOH-DOMPREEH	DEP. RANKING MEMBER
13	HON. YAW OSEI ADUTWUM (DR)	MEMBER
14	HON. MAVIS NKANSAH-BOADU	MEMBER
15	HON SAMMY AWUKU	MEMBER

TABLE 2 Appointments Committee

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION
1	HON. BERNARD AHIAFOR	CHAIRMAN
2	HON. EMMANUEL ARMAH-KOFI BUAH	VICE CHAIRPERSON
3	HON. KWAME GOVERNS AGBODZA	MEMBER
4	HON. MAHAMA AYARIGA	MEMBER
5	HON. AGNES NAA MOMO LARTEY	MEMBER
6	HON. SHAIBU MAHAMA	MEMBER

7	HON. ALHASSAN UMAR	MEMBER
8	HON. ALEXANDER K. AFENYO-MARKIN	RANKING MEMBER
9	HON. PATRICIA APPIAGYEI	DEP. RANKING
10	HON. FRANK ANNOH-DOMPREEH	MEMBER
11	HON. PATRICK YAW BOAMAH	MEMBER

TABLE 3 Committee of Selection

NO.	NAME	DESIGNATION
1	RT HON SPEAKER	CHAIRMAN
2	HON CASSIEL ATO BAAH FORSON	MEMBER
3	HON KWAME GOVERNS AGBODZA	MEMBER
4	HON COMFORT DOYOE CUDJOE	MEMBER
5	HON EBENEZER OKLEYTEY TERLABI	MEMBER
6	HON ISAAC ASHAI ODAMTTEN	MEMBER
7	HON EMMANUEL KWADWO AGYEKUM	MEMBER
8	HON CLEMENT ABAS APAAK (DR)	MEMBER
9	HON NTEBE AYO WILLIAM	MEMBER
10	HON GRACE AYENSU-DANQUAH	MEMBER
11	HON RACHEL OWUSUAH	MEMBER
12	HON RICHARD KUUIRE	MEMBER
13	HON. JEAN-MARIE FORMADI	MEMBER
14	HON PATRICIA APPIAGYEI	MEMBER
15	HON FRANK ANNOH-DOMPREEH	MEMBER
16	HON HABIB IDDRISU (ALHAJI)	MEMBER
17	HON MUSTAPHA USSIF	MEMBER
18	HON KWAKU ASANTE BOATENG	MEMBER

4.0 Conclusion

The Committee respectfully recommends to the House to adopt this report and approve the Membership of Appointments and Business Committees as composed and the re-composition of the Committee of Selection based on the approved ratio of 183:88.

Respectfully submitted.

8.14 p.m.

The Speaker: Hon Members, any seconder?

Minority Leader (Mr Alexander Afenyo-Markin): Mr Speaker, the Hon Majority Leader cannot move a Motion and expect this House to second for us to make progress when there are fundamental matters including issue of quorum.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Majority Leader should know that there are new Hon Members of this House. This morning I checked and drew his attention that there are a lot of empty seats in this Chamber. He knows that Hon Members are here and he as the Leader of the House has the duty to ensure that matters of welfare are attended to.

The Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, you are a leader. The issue you just mentioned was discussed at Conclave so it is not for you to raise it now.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, I am guided by your good counsel.

Mr Speaker, the appeal is not coming from behind me, it is coming from the other Side so I spoke for the silent Majority. The appeal is not coming from the new Hon Members. Are the new Hon Members not interested? [**Some Hon Members:** No]

Mr Speaker, I beg to second the Motion.

The Speaker: Hon Members, Motion moved and seconded.

Question proposed.

Minority Chief Whip (Mr Annoh-Dompheh): Mr Speaker, let me start off by commending your good self for the prompt response for this matter to be dealt with. I can only commend you for the good leadership shown.

I would also want to commend my good friend, Mr Agbodza, the Hon Chief Whip who has been very instrumental in ensuring that the composition of these three critical Committees is done.

The Report goes ahead to capture the reason we should compose these Committees: The Selection Committee, Business Committee and the Appointment Committee.

Again, the Report goes ahead to talk about the ratio and this comes clear—in times past, Hon Whips have come under a lot of pressure; when these Committees are composed then we become the punching bag and it becomes an issue in this House. Thankfully, the Report has laid bare the fact that the Committee of

Selection is chaired by the Rt Hon Speaker. The membership has been shown and this is just the beginning; there are more Committees to be composed so we have to appeal to our Hon Colleagues that it is too early in the day. We are yet to compose all the Committees; this is just three out of the lot and they are to set the tone for all the other Committees to be composed and for work to begin. There is no cause for worry. If they do not see their name among any of these Committees, there are other Committees that we are going to compose and their names will certainly find expression, bearing in mind the fact that the Standing Orders make it clear that every Hon Member should belong to at least one Select and one Standing Committee.

Mr Speaker, it is also particularly because the Hon Whips are also working on other matters that we consider very important hence this matter cannot be left as outstanding; matters on office allocation which is very critical, and where Hon Members will lay their heads. The Hon Minority Leader was trying to give a signal but surprisingly Hon Colleagues were not yielding to it but it is so important.

Hon Majority Leader, we would expect you to show leadership in these matters. Our Backbenchers and our Hon Members need a place to lay their heads.

The Hon Majority Chief Whip should look into my eyes and let me tell him something. He can pretend to focus on his phone but he cannot pretend not to listen on this matter.

He is the Hon Chief Whip of the Majority— Government Chief Whip, what is he doing? We want to remind him — he has not yet joined the Executive; intel tells us he is going but he has not yet gone. He should do his work well before he leaves.

Mr Ahmed Ibrahim has suddenly gone quiet but his Hon Members need his attention and support. Hon Members are coming from all over the place and they do not have a place to lay their heads. Hon Majority Leader do something before you depart.

Mr Speaker, I can only appeal to my Hon Colleagues; this is their fundamental duty and they cannot renege on it.

Before we give approval to this Report, it would not be out of place nor excessive on my part to make a humble appeal to our respected Hon Majority Leader to show some indication as to what the plan is.

The Speaker: Hon Members, we would have a closed-sitting when we finish this matter. I thought that it would be proper to finish this and if you agree we adjourn to tomorrow and then we could have some closed-sitting and some of these issues could be detailed out to the attention of Hon Members.

I am equally concerned about the matters you are raising.

Mr Annoh-Dompreh: Mr Speaker, I thank you for listening and paying attention and also giving some very good consequential directives and I see the

Hon Majority Leader giving a signal. I hope this is a positive signal.

The Speaker: I told you we would be having a closed-sitting so if you are going to make contributions it must be on the Motion and not any other Business.

Yes Mr Ablakwa?

8.25 p.m.

Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa (NDC — North Tongu): Rt Hon Speaker, I rise to contribute to the Motion and before my brief contribution, I would want to draw attention to an error that needs correction at page 2, item number 3.0(ii). That per the approved ratio of 183:88 and the Conventions and Practices of the House, “Eleven” in words and then “15” is what has been provided as a figure in bracket, so it is not consistent. The “eleven” in words should be changed to fifteen. Because I can see from page 3 that, it is a 15-Member Committee. So, what is correct here is what is in bracket which is the figure “15”. But the words “eleven” ought to be corrected.

Mr Speaker, having identified that, I would like to commend your distinguished self and the Members of the Leadership and Selection Committee for the great job and expedition with which they have discharged their duties.

Mr Speaker, as a House, when it comes to composition of these Committees, we are always particular about Article 103(5) of the Constitution which provides that, “the composition of

the committees shall, as much as possible, reflect the different shades of opinion in Parliament.”

Mr Speaker, that has always been the litmus test. Going through the Membership, I see that the Rt Hon Speaker and our Leaders have really done a great job to comply with that Constitutional Provision. I see gender balance, seniority, fresh Members of Parliament (MPs) are also being given the opportunity on both sides of the House and those who are not too senior who are in the middle belt have also been given a fair opportunity.

I also see regional balance; there has been a conscious effort to make sure that all our 16 regions are well represented. So, unlike the last time when we came to consider this and the House took issue with gender representation. This time round, we see that all the different shades of the House as the Constitution enjoins us to do has been followed.

Mr Speaker, I just want to commend you and to say that this is a very refreshing start and we can see that when the other Standing and Select Committees come to be populated, that would be the same spirit moving forward.

Mr Speaker, we commend you and the Leadership for an excellent job done and with that, I support the Motion.

The Speaker: I wanted to hear from the Minority side before the Majority Leader winds up. Majority Leader you have the opportunity to wind up.

Deputy Minority Leader (Ms Patricia Appiagyei): Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, as much as it has been recognised by the Mr Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa about the balance of the—particularly mentioning gender balance, I regret to mention that we on the Minority side do not even have—We on the Minority Side, did not perform well by not producing too many women. But on the Side of the Majority, I acknowledge that we have as many as 31 women.

Mr Speaker, I regret to mention that if we talk about gender balance, I expect and would like to appeal that on their Side, they have to produce more women for each of the Committees than the one-one we see at the moment. I only recommend and also commend the Rt Hon Speaker, for the Committee that he chairs; he has about four women on it and it is well appreciated. But on the other Committees, one-one is not good enough to cause the gender balance that we require.

Mr Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: Yes—

Dr Forson: Mr Speaker, thank you once again.

I just want to bring this to your attention—

The Speaker: Just a minute. Because you are going to wind up—

Mr Annor Dompreh: Mr Speaker, thank you for indulging me.

If I may take Hon Members to Page 3 of the Report, under Business Committee, item 6; “Hon Mohammed Adamu Ramadan” and not “Ramadam”. I think it is a very serious error which needs to be corrected.

The Speaker: How is it spelt? Is it not Ramadan? The spelling ends with an “n” not an “m”.

Please, Hon Member, yes—

Ms Korkor Laurette Asante (NPP — Atiwa West): Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity.

I would just like to second the statement that the Hon Deputy Minority Leader made about gender balance, especially—

The Speaker: Hon Member, do you want to support it?

Ms Asante: Yes, I would like to support her statement in this August House. [*Uproar*]

Mr Speaker, I am still on the Floor.

The Speaker: Hon Member, you may proceed. [*Hear!Hear!*]

Ms Asante: Thank you Mr Speaker.

What I was going to say when I was rudely interrupted is that—[*Uproar*—is that I would like to also contribute to the

statement made by the Hon Deputy Minority Leader.

The Speaker: Hon Members, please—Order! Order!

Ms Asante: Mr Speaker, may I continue please? I withdraw that phrase that I used. But as I was saying—

The Speaker: Hon Members, please let us have some order.

Ms Asante: Mr Speaker, I would like to continue. What I was about to say is that, I would like to contribute to the Hon Deputy Minority Leader's statement on gender balance. I recognise what the Leader said—

[Some Hon Members chant sit down]

8.34 p.m.

The Speaker: Hon Members, please. Hon Lady, did I hear you use the word 'rudely'?

Ms Asante: Mr Speaker, I withdraw that and I apologise. *[Uproar]*

The Speaker: Hon Members, she has withdrawn the word 'rudely'. Hon Members, please let us encourage the new ones *[Pause]* particularly, our Hon Ladies. Our Hon Ladies will get double protection from me **[Some Hon Members: Eii!]**. I am going to discriminate positively. Hon Lady, you may wind up.

Ms Asante: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

I want to contribute to the statement on gender made by the Hon Deputy Minority Leader. I would hope and I am pleading with this august House and my Hon Colleagues, that we take some affirmative steps towards gender balance on the committees and any other representation of MPs here not just committees but anything in the future. Because we all know that the female species, when it comes to the political space, are an endangered species. I am sure Mr Speaker and my Hon Colleagues would agree with me therefore, I am wholeheartedly supporting and contributing to what the Hon Deputy Minority Leader spoke on gender. Also, that my Hon Colleagues of the male species from both Majority and Minority Side would also support us in making sure that we have gender balance on all the committees.

Thank you so much Mr Speaker. —
[Hear! Hear!]

The Speaker: Yes, Hon Majority Leader? —*[Pause]* — Hon Minority Leader?

Minority Leader (Mr Alexander Afenyo-Markin): Mr Speaker, thank you for the dispensation given me to make this important point on this Report. Mr Ablakwa, although I disagree with him on a number of matters, has done something exceptional. I would want to use that industry of his to make this point and underscore the point that every committee is important and this goes to our first-timers. Mr Speaker, until the time he took over the Committee on Assurances, little was known of the Committee. When we came in 2013, it was one of the committees that we saw

as the Siberia committees. It took the industry of an MP to make Public Accounts Committee relevant and to become a committee for all Members to get closer to, that was done. And he, when he had the opportunity of chairing the Committee on Assurances, also brought it to the limelight.

I say this to encourage all Hon Colleagues, especially the first-timers. Outside of Parliament, they may know about a few committees and carry the impression that these are the only “functional” committees. A committee is as good as its Members and how its leadership will approach its work. So, Mr Speaker, I am humbly pleading with Hon Members that the most difficult task for the Hon Whips comes when they have to constitute committees. People would have their *curriculum vitae* (CV) and may say that they want to be on a particular committee but, it is important that I make this point so that Hon Colleagues would not feel that because they did not have – *[Interruption]* – Mr Speaker, I want my Hon Colleagues to listen.

It is important that Hon Colleagues appreciate the fact that whether they are first, second or third-timers, they have to ensure that whatever is at stake is brought to the fore at any committee they get to serve on. We should not be thinking about only the Finance Committee as though if a person is not a Member of the Finance Committee their world comes to an end in the Parliament. The Committee on Judiciary has been dormant but it is one committee that if Hon Members properly examine their role and mandate in the Standing Orders, they can make as efficient and effective as any other committee, and sell themselves to their constituents and

endear themselves to the people of Ghana. That is the point I want to put across before my respectful Colleague, the Hon Majority Leader takes up the Floor to wind up.

Thank you.

Dr Forson: Mr Speaker, as you are aware, I could not attend the Committee of Selection meeting but, I have noticed something that I believe I need to bring to the attention of the House and your good self as the chair. If we are to look at page 2, paragraph 3.0 item ii, the approval ratio of 183:88. This would mean that we have omitted the four Independent Members of Parliament. There is the need for us to make that point and note that in the subsequent committees we would have to reflect this in the ratios so that the ratios would change depending on where they are doing business. Currently, we have received letters from all four of them that they are doing – *[Interruption]* Yes, I have received letters. **[An Hon Member:** Including] Including which one? So, should they write to the Speaker?

8.44 p.m.

Mr Speaker, we would wait for them to communicate to you but my attention has been drawn—

Mr Speaker, we would wait for them to officially write to you and then we can make that— Mr Speaker, so far it is only the Member of Parliament for Gomaa Central who has written to us but the rest are yet to write officially to confirm their positions.

Mr Speaker, in view of that, I think we can now put the question and adopt the Report of the Committee of Selection.

Mr Speaker, I so move.

[Uproar] —

Question put and Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: Hon Members, I received a verbal request to allow senior Members to at least bully the first-timers for three months —*[Laughter]*— and I rejected it. *[Hear! Hear!]*

I rejected it. So, I would not allow any senior Member of Parliament to — the word they used was “bully”, to bully any first-timer.

Hon Members, may we now adjourn and have a closed Sitting that I referred to earlier or do we have the closed Sitting after we adjourn?

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, in view of the fact the His Excellency may be ferrying some communication to you, I humbly hold the view that you allow us the Committee to be properly constituted so that in the event that any communication is ferried to you — why are you nodding? Because it serves your interest —

The Speaker: Hon Minority Leader, we have constituted the Committee.

Mr Afenyo-Markin: Mr Speaker, I am making a consequential point.

The Speaker: You have four years to debate matters here. Do not worry at all. You have four good years and I would give you ample time because of what we have done in this House. We have increased the hours that we are going to engage each other in debate here. The Standing Orders captures that clearly. Instead of us sitting for four hours, we have increased it to five hours. That is the general rule and if you want us to sit for 10 hours, we are also by our own rules permitted to do so. So, this first day that you would want to continue to say everything is not possible. Let us stick to the Standing Orders and the Order Paper today and then we can have an adjournment till tomorrow. Do not worry.

Hon Members, can we reconstitute the House into a closed Sitting?

I direct that the House reconstitutes itself into a closed Sitting for us to discuss urgent matters particularly with regard to the new first-timers that we have and other matters.

8.50 p.m. — [The House constituted into a closed Sitting]

ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8.50 p.m. till 9th January, 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

