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30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2025

## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

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OFFICIAL REPORT

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THE  
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF GHANA

FIRST MEETING, 2025

Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

*The House met at 1.23 p.m.*

[THE SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

[PRAYERS]

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, we will take the item numbered 5 — Correction of *Votes and Proceedings* and the *Official Report*.

**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS AND  
THE OFFICIAL REPORT**

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, we will start with the Corrections of *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2025.

Page 1...9—

Is it page 8 or 9?

Yes, please?

**Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, on page 8, I recall, yesterday, when the Leader of the House presented a Statement calling for a pension scheme for Members of Parliament (MPs) as rightly captured, there was a consequential directive that some Committees be formed, and that finds expression in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

However, I recall it was agreed that it should be appreciated, as a matter of fact, that the Whips be part of any Committee to advise on pension for Members. I find my name there, but, unfortunately, I do not see the name of my Colleague, the Majority Chief Whip. The name of Mr Rockson-Nelson Etse Kwami Dafeamekpor is conspicuously missing, and the Table could take notice of that—  
[Pause]

**The Speaker:** Yes, I was not presiding at that time, but I am sure you have all heard the Minority Chief Whip. Is that the case that the Whips were to be added?

Yes, Majority Leader?

**Mr Mahama Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, yes, when we constituted the Committee, the Whips gave an indication that they ought to be part of it, and we agreed, so I think that we can add their names.

**The Speaker:** That will take the number to 10.

**Mr Ayariga:** That is so, Mr Speaker, but I do not foresee situations where they have to vote or there would be controversies. I think that the matters that they would deal with are matters that there are consensus on, so I doubt there would be problem if we have an even number.

**The Speaker:** Well, I have some knowledge about these things, and in some instances, they will have to take a decision as to whether to include one item or the other because they differ from

one country to country. I know about the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Kenya, and I have seen those in other countries like India, and they differ. So, there will be instances where they would need to vote. For example, if you are looking at the quantum of contribution by beneficiaries—If we look at the issue of inclusion of spouse, they differ, and I think you should take that into consideration. I am aware a team was already working on this.

1:33 p.m.

In fact, in the Eighth Parliament, I facilitated their travels to these jurisdictions to learn from them and to get copies of some of their Acts or legislations to guide them in crafting our own. But if you insist, I would just leave it to the Table Office to include the name of the Hon Majority Chief Whip.

Yes, Majority Leader?

**Mr Mahama Ayariga:** Indeed, Mr Speaker, in that Parliament, Mr Kpodo used to handle a lot of issues relating to the welfare and emoluments of Members of Parliament. We actually toyed with the idea of having Mr Kpodo as a member of the Committee. Our rules permit you, Mr Speaker, to include non-members to serve on Committees, so we could draw from the extensive knowledge and appreciation of Mr Kpodo on welfare issues to guide the Committee. If we have to make the membership of the committee 11, then I would urge that, as we add the two Whips, we rope in Mr Kpodo to help the Committee to work on the issues that we are assigning to them, so that we can have an 11-member Committee.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Hon Member?

**Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, I would rather suggest, with respect to the Leader of the House, that the two Leaders engage further on the same matter because, yesterday, we came to some agreement, and there was an afterthought. We felt there were a number of our Hon Colleagues who also have some privilege knowledge in the subject matter we were discussing. So, it was an afterthought. We thought they should rather feature on the membership.

Mr Speaker, more to the point as was raised—With respect, I believe that a Committee should do some initial works and bring its recommendations to Plenary for adoption or otherwise. So, the question of votes may not necessarily come up at that level. Probably, Mr Speaker, you are very experienced in these matters, especially on this subject matter. You spoke to how you have supported us in visiting other jurisdictions to borrow into what was happening. Maybe, subject to further discussions from the two Leaders in consultation with you, we can adopt this now, pending a conclusive decision with the two Leaders and, of course, with your blessings, Mr Speaker—So, we do not belabour the point.

**The Speaker:** Yes, let me hear from Prof Nyarko.

**Prof Kingsley Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, thanks for the opportunity, and since our Leaders in the House have spoken, I need not add more. However, with guidance from you, looking at the composition of

the Committee, if the Leaders, after they confer or in their deliberation, see it fit to make an addition, I would crave their indulgence to look at the gender composition of the Committee. I am seeing, out of the nine, only one Hon Sister is captured, and I think that this imbalance is so huge. They should think about it and see if it is possible to add another Hon Sister.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** You are welcome to the club.

Yes, please?

**Mr Isaac Boamah-Nyarko:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

On the corrections, on page 8, if I have your permission, I recall that the Members of the Committee were given 45 days to come up with their Report, but, over here, it is captured as 90 days—“...report to the House within 90 days”, but I recall we said 45 days. So, if the Table Office could do the correction.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The brief I have is that the initial proposal was 45 days, but you concluded at 90 days, not 45. Is that the case? That is three months: 90 days

Yes, please?

**Mr Mahama Ayariga:** Yes, Mr Speaker. We were discussing the period, but then we realised that, based on his intervention on the Floor, extensive work

had already taken place. As you indicated, you financed a number of trips for people to understudy what is happening in other countries and then put together a report. We thought that there was no need wasting time because there is extensive work on the matter. So, instead of waiting for another three months, we insisted that it should be within the 45 days because that is how, in the past, some of these things fell through and never got done; let us review what we have, and if we need to add any information, we can add, and then we can wrap up the work. So, please, it remains 45 days.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Hon Members, since we are at correction of *Votes and Proceedings*, two things are to be taken care of by the Table Office: one is to add the name of the Mr Dafeamekpor, and the other is to *delete* “90 days” and *insert* “45 days”. The other matters would be discussed later on. That is not part of correction of *Votes and Proceedings*.

Page—Is it page 8?

Yes, please.

**Mr Issah Atta:** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, forgive me to take you back to page 7, the item numbered 7, I was present in the Chamber, but I have been marked absent. That is: “Atta, Issah (Sagnarigu)”.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Table Office kindly take note of that, but, please, by the Standing Orders, you have to make

some indication. Sometimes, it is difficult to identify the fresh Hon Members. So, when the form is being sent around, make sure you append your signature to it, please.

Page 9—

Yes, Hon Member?

**Mr Samuel Awuku:** Mr Speaker, permit me, once again, to refer to page 8, the item numbered 6(ii), the Hon Member for Weija/Gbawe—In fact, he called on the nation to prioritise care for persons living with neglected tropical diseases because the leprosy was captured under “neglected tropical diseases”. The follow-up comments and contributions were when we enlarged the discussion to persons living with disabilities. But in his actual Statement, he also asked that we prioritise the care for persons living with “neglected tropical diseases”.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Is the Hon Member available? No.

Yes, please?

**Mr Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, with respect to my Hon Colleague, on these matters, first of all, the *Votes and Proceedings* is supposed to capture summary; it is the *Hansard* that would reflect detailed proceedings. What we can do is that the Table could have a copy of the Statement, and then they would be in a position to confirm what the title exactly was. My Hon Colleague may have a point, but it has to be done in conjunction with the original text.

**The Speaker:** What is captured here is what the Statement was on. Was it on World Leprosy Day? That is what was being celebrated.

**Mr Awuku:** Yes, Mr Speaker, it was World Leprosy Day.

1.43 p.m.

**The Speaker:** Yes, so the details will be in the *Official Report*, so we take it as having been properly captured.

Page 9...12—

**Mr Boamah-Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, if I have your permission, I would like to look at page 9. The item numbered 7 gave a summary of the report that the Hon Majority Leader gave to the House concerning the issue of Ablekuma North, having regard to exactly what the Hon Majority Leader briefed us on. It was an update; he agreed to engage and come back to report to the House. I know his report had to do with an update on the collation exercise with his engagement with the Police. Finally, he told the House that he would further engage the Electoral Commission (EC) and other stakeholders and report back.

Mr Speaker, my concern is that the summary does not really capture it as I have indicated. It was an update to the House on the exercise he wanted to do and a suggestion for an extension of time to go back and further engage. So, I just want to ask if something could be done about this narration.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, is that a fair summary of what took place yesterday?

Yes?

**Mr Annoh-Dompreh:** Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is right, and we also further appealed to the respected Hon Majority Leader. In fact, we congratulated him for the good work he had done and further urged him not to work alone but rather work in collaboration with his counterpart, the respected Hon Minority Leader, so that he does not—And I thought that was a very significant point, even though it should find expression there in the summary.

**The Speaker:** Well, may I advise that you get in touch with the Table Office to get a proper rendition or summary of what took place. I was not the one who presided yesterday.

Yes, page 11...15—

Yes, please?

**Prof Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, on page 15, item number 3(xxix) and (xxxii), I see “Naa Ibrahim Mahama, Paramount Chief of Nyankpala” repeated. I am not sure whether it is the same person or different persons. Could the Table Office check and remedy it if it is the same person?

**The Speaker:** Table Office, kindly crosscheck. It must be a repetition.

Page 16...17—

Yes please?

**Prof Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, this is a minor observation under “Appointments Committee” on page 17, the item numbered 1(i) “Hon Muntaka Mohammed-Mubarak”, I see a hyphen in between “Mohammed” and “Mubarak” which is different from how his name is usually spelt. On page 5, item numbered 175, it is “Muntaka, Mohammed Mubarak (Alhaji)”; there is no hyphen between “Mohammed” and “Mubarak”.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Hon Member, we have taken notice of that, but it looks like the rendition at page 5 is rather incorrect. The rendition at page 17 is the correct one. It is hyphenated, “Mohammed-Mubarak”, from the official records available, so we would rather correct the one on page 5.

Page 18—

Yes?

**Mr Seidu Alhassan Alajor:** Mr Speaker, the name at item numbered 3(xxiv) should be “Mr Seidu Alhassan Alajor”, not “Dr”.

**The Speaker:** So, it is not “Dr”, it is “Mr”? Is that the correction?

**Mr Alajor:** Yes, that is correct.

**The Speaker:** Table Office, kindly take note of that.

Page 19—Yes please?

**Prof Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, on page 19, the item numbered 3(xxxii), “Nana Yaa Akyempem Jantah”, “Presidential Staffer, Office of the President”—If it is the Nana Yaa Jantuah that I know, then it should be “Jantuah”, not “Jantah”. I stand corrected though.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Hon Member, you are correct. That is the daughter of the great politician, Mr Jantuah, of the First Republic.

Page 20—Yes?

**Prof Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, on page 20, item number 3(xli), “Mr Muhammed Abdul Wahab”, I see “Iman, Kotokoli”. I think, though, I might be wrong, that it should be “Imam”.

**The Speaker:** It is likely to be the printer’s devil. Table Office, kindly take note of that.

Page 21, 22? Sorry, we end at page 21.

1.53 p.m.

Hon Members, in the absence of any further corrections, the *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

I have a copy of the *Official Report* of Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. Hon Members, any corrections?

**Prof Nyarko:** Mr Speaker, at column 102 under “Recommendation”, the rendition is not rightly captured. What is

captured here is, and if you would permit me, I would read, “The Committee recommends to the of the nomination of MS RITA AKOSUA AWATEY as the Eastern Regional Minister”.

Mr Speaker, it does not quite make sense. Looking at what was captured under previous recommendations, it should rather be, “The Committee recommends to the House, by consensus, the nomination of MS RITA AKOSUA AWATEY as the Eastern Regional Minister”.

I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Yes, the Hon Member is right; Table, kindly take note of that and inform the Office of Chamber Reporting to do the proper thing.

Yes, anymore?

Hon Members, the *Official Report* of Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, as corrected, is hereby adopted as the true record of proceedings.

Hon Members, may we now move to the item numbered 6—Statements? Do we take Statements now or do we have some Reports we can present before we take the Statements?

**Mr Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, we would seek your leave to alter the order of Business and take the Report. We would take the item numbered 8.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, I have been called upon to vary the order of Business. Is that the sense of the House? Yes, Minority Leader?



**Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Rightly so, Mr Speaker, the Majority Leader engaged me and I have no objection.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, at the Commencement of Public Business, we will proceed to take the item numbered 8—Motion to be moved by the Chairman of the Committee.

## MOTIONS

### Suspension of Standing Order 104(1)

**Chairman of the Committee (Mr Bernard Ahiafor):** 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 Ninth Report of the Appointments Committee on His Excellency the President's Nominations for Appointment as Ministers of State may be *moved* today.

**The Speaker:** Any seconder?

**Ranking Member of the Committee (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, I rise to second the Motion

*Question put and Motion agreed to.*

*Resolved accordingly.*

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, we will now move to the item numbered 9, which is also a Motion, to be moved by the Chairman of the Committee.

### Ninth Report on the President's Ministerial Nominations

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

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

Mr Speaker, in doing so, I present the Ninth Report of the Appointments Committee and I place on record that the Ninth Report is solely on Dr Kofi Omane Boamah. I urge the *Hansard* to capture the entirety of the Report as having been read, together with the answers provided by the Nominee, while I proceed to read the conclusion of the Report.

### 1.0 Introduction

On Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2025, H. E. the President, John Dramani Mahama, in accordance with Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution, communicated to Parliament the nomination of Dr Edward Kofi Omane Boamah as Minister-designate for the Ministry of Defence.

Mr Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 217, referred the Nominee to the Appointments Committee for consideration and report.

## 2.0 Reference Documents

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

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

## 3.0 Consideration of the Referral

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

The Committee held a public hearing on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, to consider the nominations. The Nominee subscribed to the Oath of a Witness before the Committee and answered questions from Hon Members. The Nominee was asked questions relating to his curriculum vitae, eligibility, competencies, issues of national concern, and those pertaining to the office to which he had been nominated.

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

## 4.0 DR EDWARD KOFI OMANE BOAMAH —

### MINISTER-DESIGNATE, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

#### 4.1 Background

Dr Edward Kofi Omane Boamah was born on 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1975 in Nkawkaw, and hails from Obomeng, both in the Eastern Region of Ghana. His early education began at Pope John Secondary School and Junior Seminary, where he completed both his GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels from 1989 to 1996.

He proceeded to the University of Ghana, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Medical Sciences in 2002. He then enrolled at the University of Ghana Medical School, where he obtained a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBChB) in 2006. In his pursuit of professional development, Dr Omane Boamah acquired a foundational certificate (PRINCE2) in Project Management from RIPA, London, in 2011. In 2014, he completed a certificate in Negotiations and Leadership at Harvard Law School, Boston, USA. Furthering his expertise in health policy, he obtained a Master of Science in Health Policy Planning and Financing from the London School of Economics and Political Science, in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, between 2017 and 2018.

Dr Omane Boamah began his professional career with a compulsory national service as a teacher at Benkum Secondary School in Larteh-Akuapim, from 1996 to 1997. He later provided clinical care at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital from 2006 to 2007 and at the 37 Military Hospital from 2007 to 2008. His medical practice extended to the private sector, where he served as a medical practitioner at Afrah International Hospital from 2019 to 2022.

His career in public service began with his appointment as Deputy Minister for Environment, Science, and Technology from 2009 to 2012. He subsequently served as Deputy Minister for Youth and Sports from 2012 to 2013. From 2013 to 2017, he was appointed as the Minister for Communications. In addition to his ministerial roles, Dr Omane Boamah served as Spokesperson to the President, and Minister responsible for Information from July 2014 to January 2017. Between 2017 and 2024, he acted as Policy Advisor and Political Strategist to H.E. President John Dramani Mahama.

Dr Omane Boamah has also held numerous leadership positions. He was a Board Member of the Ghana AIDS Commission from 2014 to 2017 and chaired the Governing Board of the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communication (GIFEC) from 2013 to 2017. In 2010, he chaired the Investigative Committee on the spillage of sodium cyanide into a water body in Kenyase by Newmont Ghana Gold Limited. He also served as Vice Chairman of the United Nations

Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) in 2011. As part of his international engagements, he led Ghana's delegation to the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico, in 2010. Additionally, he played a key role in facilitating the rollout of Ghana's 4G LTE network to enhance communication for security agencies from 2013 to 2017.

During his academic years, Dr Omane Boamah was actively involved in student leadership. He served as President of the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) from 2002 to 2003. He is currently a member of the Ghana Medical and Dental Council (MDC).

Dr Omane Boamah has contributed significantly to research and advocacy through his publications. He co-edited *The Outreach*, a WHO Ghana-sponsored student newsletter focused on preventive health. He authored *GETFund: A NUGS President's Account* in 2004, advocating for enhanced education funding in Ghana. He also wrote *Accounting to the People: Changing Lives, Transforming Ghana (2013-2015)*, which detailed the achievements of the Government of Ghana. His book, *A Peaceful Man in an African Democracy*, is currently under review.

His participation in global conferences and workshops includes the United Nations General Assembly meetings in New York in 2015 and 2016, the Conference on the Swine Flu Global

Pandemic in Washington, DC, in August 2009, and the Conference on Psychiatric Problems of HIV/AIDS in African Children at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in April 2008. Additionally, he attended the Unite for Sight Annual Health Conference at Yale University, Connecticut, in April 2008.

Dr Omane Boamah is a Christian, and married with three children. He is fluent in Twi and English and enjoys reading, writing, and engaging in football, both as a player and spectator.

### **Questions Asked of the Nominee and His Responses**

#### **4.2 Commitment to Transparent Recruitment in the Ghana Armed Forces**

The Committee questioned the Nominee on whether he would maintain transparent recruitment practices within the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), an institution mandated by Article 210 of the 1992 Constitution to defend the nation. In response, the Nominee reaffirmed his commitment to uphold and strengthen the existing recruitment framework if approved as Minister for Defence.

He acknowledged the Ghana Armed Forces' well-established recruitment and training procedures, which follow a four-stage process: Application, Shortlisting, Screening, and Training. He assured the Committee that these processes have been time-tested and are designed to ensure merit-based selection, fairness, and efficiency in recruiting personnel into the Armed Forces.

The Nominee emphasised the importance of reinforcing the Ghana Armed Forces' Recruitment Portal to enhance transparency and inclusivity. This platform provides a structured and accountable application process, allowing applicants to track their progress and reduce the risk of favouritism or undue influence in recruitment. He highlighted that leveraging digital tools in recruitment enhances accessibility, fosters public trust, and ensures qualified candidates have a fair chance of being selected.

The Nominee further pledged to uphold equal opportunities for all applicants and ensure that recruitment is based solely on competence and qualification rather than external influences. He reiterated that transparency and accountability in recruitment are crucial for maintaining public confidence in the Ghana Armed Forces, and sustaining its reputation as a professional and disciplined institution.

In conclusion, the Nominee stated that maintaining transparent recruitment practices is essential for preserving the integrity and operational effectiveness of the Ghana Armed Forces. He assured the Committee that he would work diligently to uphold these standards, and ensure that the institution continues to fulfil its mandate of national defence with professionalism and credibility.

#### **4.3 Accommodation Challenges in GAF, and the Threat of Terrorism**

In response to a question on strategies to address the challenges of accommodation within the Ghana Armed Forces and the

threat of terrorism to the nation, the Nominee underscored his awareness of the critical nature of these issues.

Acknowledging the increasing threat of terrorism, he emphasised that national security must remain a top priority, as experts caution against the imminent possibility of terrorist activities within the region. To counter this looming threat, the Nominee highlighted the strategic importance of Forward Operating Posts (FOPs) as critical infrastructure for early detection and prevention.

He further pledged to build on continuing Government efforts to modernise and re-equip the Navy and Air Force. However, he stressed that a comprehensive and integrated approach is essential. Completing and extending FOPs, including their expansion to river transport routes, will be critical to his security strategy.

The Nominee acknowledged a current deficit of approximately 17,000 housing units due to accommodation shortages. He recognised that providing decent and secure housing is fundamental to troop welfare, morale, and operational readiness.

To address this critical concern, he outlined a multifaceted strategy that includes constructing new housing facilities, renovating existing structures, and innovative housing solutions.

He reiterated that the welfare of soldiers remains a top priority and pledged to foster an environment that

supports personnel's living and working conditions.

The Nominee affirmed his commitment to safeguarding national security and improving the overall welfare of the Ghana Armed Forces to ensure they remain a formidable and resilient force in the nation's defence.

#### **4.4 Enhancing Military Healthcare Infrastructure**

When asked about strategies to improve military healthcare infrastructure, particularly with the challenges of the 37 Military Hospital and ensuring the completion of the Afari Military Hospital, the Nominee emphasised that completing the Afari Military Hospital remains a top priority.

He assured the Committee that he would collaborate closely with Euroget De-Invest, the contractors responsible for the project, to expedite its completion, which currently stands at 92 per cent. He noted that operationalising the Afari Military Hospital would significantly alleviate the burden on the 37 Military Hospital, and ensure that military personnel and their dependents have access to high-quality healthcare services.

The Nominee further outlined his commitment to improving the state of the 37 Military Hospital. He assured the Committee that his focus would include enhancing healthcare systems, upgrading infrastructure, ensuring adequate medication supplies, and modernising medical equipment.

He underscored his ultimate objective of transforming military hospitals into centres of medical excellence capable of delivering world-class healthcare services. He stated that this would support the health and well-being of soldiers and their families and extend benefits to the general public.

The Nominee reiterated his unwavering dedication to fostering a robust healthcare system within the Ghana Armed Forces, emphasising that the health and welfare of military personnel are critical to maintaining a strong, resilient, and capable Armed Forces.

#### **4.5 Enhancing Ghana's Role in Global Peacekeeping Efforts**

In response to a question on strategies to increase Ghana's participation in international peacekeeping operations and the associated benefits to the Ghana Armed Forces and the country, the Nominee emphasised that Ghana's active involvement in peacekeeping missions is crucial for fostering global peace and security. He pledged that if approved as Minister for Defence, he would work diligently to position Ghana as a more active and reliable contributor to international peacekeeping efforts.

The Nominee noted that participation in peacekeeping operations provides military personnel invaluable exposure to diverse operational environments, allowing them to gain international experience and adopt best practices from other military forces. He stressed that this would significantly enhance the skills, professionalism, and operational effectiveness of the Ghana Armed Forces.

Recognising the importance of equipping personnel for success, the Nominee pledged to ensure that the Armed Forces are equipped with modern fit-for-purpose equipment. He highlighted the need for continued investment in new technology and adopting a structured equipment replacement cycle to maintain combat readiness and efficiency.

The Nominee concluded by expressing confidence that increased peacekeeping participation and investment in modern capabilities would elevate Ghana's standing as a respected and valued contributor to global peace and security efforts. He underscored the broader benefits, including enhanced national reputation, promotion of regional stability, and the development of a highly skilled and adaptable military capable of navigating complex security challenges.

#### **4.6 The Role of the Military in Domestic Law Enforcement**

In response to questions regarding the role of the Ghana Armed Forces in domestic law enforcement, the Nominee articulated a balanced and cautious position. He acknowledged concerns about the potential implications of military involvement in civilian security operations and emphasised the need for a measured approach.

The Nominee underscored that the immediate deployment of the Armed Forces in response to domestic issues could be counterproductive, primarily due to the "shock and awe" effect. This military strategy relies on overwhelming

power and forceful displays to dominate and suppress threats. He explained that such an approach could cause undue fear, escalate tensions, and weaken public trust in the security apparatus when applied to civilian contexts.

He highlighted that excessive military involvement in internal security operations has the potential to undermine the rule of law, escalate violence, and erode the longstanding trust between the military and the civilian population. Furthermore, assigning routine policing duties to the military could politicise soldiers, diminish their primary defence role, and create unnecessary friction between the security forces and the public.

To safeguard Ghana's democratic order and ensure civil stability, the Nominee advocated for limiting military engagement to situations where it is absolutely necessary. He cited overwhelming security threats, counter-terrorism efforts, and specialised military operations as instances where military intervention may be warranted.

He also emphasised the importance of establishing clear guidelines and operational protocols to regulate military involvement in domestic security matters. According to the Nominee, such measures would ensure that military deployments remain proportionate, lawful, and respectful of human rights. He stressed that these frameworks are crucial for maintaining public trust and preventing the perception of the military as a tool for political control.

The Nominee reaffirmed his commitment to exercising restraint in deploying the military for domestic law enforcement. By adopting a carefully measured and structured approach, Ghana could maintain a safe, stable, and democratic society while preserving the integrity and professional reputation of the Ghana Armed Forces.

#### **4.7 Military Deployment in Combating *Galamsey***

When asked about his opinion on the military's role in combating illegal mining (*galamsey*), the Nominee emphasised that the fight against *galamsey* extends beyond military intervention and requires a holistic approach that addresses socioeconomic, legal, and institutional challenges.

He highlighted that *galamsey* is a symptom of deeper socioeconomic issues, including poverty, unemployment, and the lack of livelihood opportunities in mining communities. As such, he stressed that combating illegal mining must be complemented by sustainable development initiatives and job creation programmes that offer alternative livelihoods for affected populations.

To prevent illegal mining and hold perpetrators accountable, the Nominee underscored the need to enhance law enforcement capacity, implement judicial and regulatory reforms, and foster institutional collaboration. He stressed that effective enforcement requires collaboration among stakeholders, including local communities, traditional leaders, civil society organisations, and

the private sector. He emphasised that a united front is essential to developing and implementing strategies to prevent illegal mining and promote sustainable mining practices.

Regarding military deployment, the Nominee acknowledged that while military involvement may be necessary in high-risk situations, it should be carefully streamlined and guided by strict protocols to prevent potential excesses. He proposed the strategic use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for surveillance and monitoring purposes to support security agencies in their fight against *galamsey*. These UAVs, he explained, would provide critical intelligence to inform enforcement operations while reducing the need for direct military intervention.

To ensure accountability and prevent human rights abuses, the Nominee stressed that the use of UAVs must be governed by clear rules of engagement and strict adherence to human rights principles. He further noted that transparency and oversight mechanisms would be essential to maintaining public trust in the Government's efforts to stop *galamsey*.

The Nominee concluded by pledging to work closely with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), and other stakeholders to develop and implement a comprehensive and sustainable strategy to combat *galamsey*. He expressed confidence that a sustained, coordinated, and inclusive effort would protect Ghana's environment, promote sustainable development, and uphold the rule of law.

#### **4.8 Military Deployment at Polling Stations during Elections**

When questioned on whether the Nominee would deploy soldiers to polling stations during elections, he emphasised that under normal circumstances, soldiers would not be deployed to polling stations, as their presence could create an intimidating atmosphere and potentially undermine the democratic process.

He acknowledged, however, that exceptional situations may require careful consideration of military deployment. He stressed that any decision would be guided by a comprehensive risk assessment, focusing on specific areas of concern or potential hotspots where peace and order might be at risk. He reiterated that the Armed Forces must act in a manner that preserves democracy, respects civil liberties, and does not interfere with the electoral process.

The Nominee underscored the importance of empowering the National Election Task Force as the primary body responsible for election security. He highlighted the need for adequate resource allocation, capacity building, and multi-agency coordination to ensure law enforcement agencies can effectively manage election security without unnecessary military intervention.

Reaffirming the existing mandate of the Ghana Armed Forces, he stated that their role in elections would be limited to standby support for the police rather than direct deployment to polling stations. This approach, he explained, ensures a



balance between maintaining security and upholding the integrity of the democratic process.

He concluded by pledging that any decision to deploy soldiers during elections would be taken only as a last resort and in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the Electoral Commission and the National Security apparatus. The Nominee mentioned that his ultimate goal is to ensure peaceful, free, and fair elections that uphold Ghana's democratic values while safeguarding the safety of all citizens.

#### **4.9 Combating *Galamsey* and Ensuring Pollution-Free Rivers**

When queried on his strategy to address the environmental challenges posed by illegal mining (*galamsey*), particularly in restoring Ghana's rivers to a pollution-free state, the Nominee outlined a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach.

He emphasised the need for continuous river monitoring to identify and assess areas affected by illegal mining activities. This would involve leveraging advanced technologies like drone surveillance to provide real-time data on pollution levels and mining hotspots. He noted that such technological interventions would enhance enforcement efficiency and ensure evidence-based decision-making.

To strengthen enforcement efforts and prevent corruption among officers tasked with combating *galamsey*, the

Nominee proposed implementing a rotation policy. This measure minimises the risk of compromise by limiting extended postings at specific locations, ensuring that enforcement officers do not build relationships that could undermine their impartiality and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the Nominee highlighted the importance of collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including local communities, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and traditional authorities, to develop and implement sustainable strategies to combat *galamsey*. He stressed that engaging local communities in awareness campaigns and alternative livelihood programmes would foster a sense of ownership in environmental preservation efforts.

He expressed confidence that adopting this comprehensive and collaborative approach would significantly mitigate the environmental threats of illegal mining, ultimately ensuring that Ghana's rivers are restored and maintained in a pollution-free state. He affirmed his commitment to prioritising environmental protection as a crucial national security and sustainable development component.

#### **4.10 Maintaining the Globally Trusted Image of the Ghana Armed Forces**

When asked about his strategies for maintaining the globally trusted image of the Ghana Armed Forces, the Nominee emphasised that preserving this reputation is a top priority, given the military's long-standing tradition of precision, professionalism, and discipline.

He outlined several key measures to achieve this goal. First, he stressed the need to combat impersonation within the Armed Forces by strengthening security protocols and ensuring that only qualified individuals are enlisted. He noted that fraudulent activities involving individuals posing as military personnel undermine the institution's integrity and must be addressed decisively.

Secondly, the Nominee highlighted the importance of improving the remuneration and welfare of military personnel. He asserted that ensuring fair and competitive compensation would enhance morale, reduce corruption risks, and motivate personnel to maintain high professional standards.

Additionally, he pledged to promote greater transparency in the administration of the Armed Forces, particularly in recruitment, promotion, and procurement processes. He assured the Committee that he would uphold strict ethical standards and ensure accountability at all levels of the military hierarchy.

The Nominee expressed confidence that these measures would safeguard and enhance the trusted image of the Ghana Armed Forces, ensuring continued respect and admiration from the international community. He reiterated his commitment to upholding the institution's professionalism and operational excellence in domestic and international engagements.

#### **4.11 Clarification on Previous Remarks about the Electoral Commission**

In response to questions regarding his previous remarks about the Electoral Commission (EC), in which he described

its actions as incompetent, biased, and even criminal, the Nominee affirmed that such comments were indeed made. He clarified that concerns over significant arithmetic errors and inconsistencies during the electoral process drove these criticisms. For example, the incorrect transfer of voters between polling stations raised questions about the fairness and accuracy of the process.

The Nominee stressed that his critique was never personal but aimed to ensure transparency and accountability in Ghana's electoral system. He emphasised that he has strong professional relationships with individuals within the Electoral Commission and that his objective has always been to promote the integrity of Ghana's elections.

Addressing concerns over the software used for electoral calculations, the Nominee expressed his belief that the EC should avoid using CorelDraw, primarily a graphic design tool, to perform arithmetic tasks. Instead, he recommended adopting more specialised and reliable software, such as Excel, to ensure accurate calculations and minimise the risk of errors in future elections.

The Nominee reiterated that his ultimate aim is to support a transparent, credible, and accurate electoral system which is fundamental to upholding the integrity of Ghana's democratic processes.

#### **4.12 Resignation from Role as Director of Elections for the NDC**

In response to the question regarding his decision to step down as the Director of Elections for the National Democratic

Congress (NDC), the Nominee confirmed that he is willing to resign from this position.

He explained that as the Director of Elections for the NDC, his primary responsibility is to oversee the party's electoral strategy and operations. He, however, recognised the importance of serving in a public capacity without any potential conflicts of interest. He emphasised that the decision to step down is not solely within his discretion, but is guided by the Constitution and the principles of good governance, which mandate that public officials avoid situations that could compromise the public's trust.

In light of this, the Nominee expressed his readiness to step down from his role as the Director of Elections for the NDC to ensure his ability to serve the public with integrity, free from any undue influence or conflicts of interest.

#### **4.13 Addressing Disparities in UN Reimbursement Rates for Ghana's Peacekeeping Deployments**

In response to the Committee's enquiry regarding the disparities in the United Nation's (UN) reimbursement rates for Ghana's peacekeeping deployments, the Nominee acknowledged the concern regarding the significant differences in reimbursement rates among African countries. As of 2019, the UN reimbursed peacekeeping soldiers at US\$1,428 per soldier, with countries such as Nigeria receiving US\$600, Kenya US\$756, and Ghana receiving only US\$435.

The Nominee expressed that this disparity is troubling, and he intends to thoroughly investigate the underlying causes. He noted that countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan view peacekeeping deployments as a significant source of revenue to finance their armed forces. At the same time, Ghana appears to be receiving a relatively lower rate.

To address this issue, the Nominee plans to conduct a retrospective analysis of the financial proceeds from Ghana's peacekeeping operations. He aims to identify any delays or inefficiencies in releasing funds to the Ghana Armed Forces, particularly in cases where troops are preparing for missions. Additionally, he suggested that economies of scale may contribute to the disparity, as countries with larger troop deployments may have the leverage to negotiate better reimbursement rates.

Furthermore, the Nominee intends to investigate the maintenance costs associated with Ghana's peacekeeping contributions, recognising that more frequent or extensive maintenance could result in higher operational costs. He expressed his commitment to ensuring that Ghana receives a fair and equitable reimbursement rate for its significant contributions to international peacekeeping efforts.

The vision of the Nominee is to address the disparities comprehensively and ensure that Ghana is fairly compensated for its role in promoting global peace and security.

#### **4.14 Supporting Veterans' Health, Trauma, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

When questioned about his approach to support the health and well-being of veterans, particularly in addressing trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the Nominee acknowledged the profound and lasting impact that service-related experiences have on many veterans. He highlighted that the memories of fallen comrades, the sights and sounds of combat, and the emotional toll of war often leave deep psychological scars, making it difficult for veterans to recover from their experiences fully.

The Nominee outlined his commitment to prioritising comprehensive mental health support for veterans. His plan includes enhancing access to counselling services, therapy, and peer support groups. Recognising that transitioning from military to civilian life can be particularly challenging, he emphasised that it is a collective responsibility to provide the necessary resources and care to support veterans reintegrating into society.

In addition to improving mental health services, the Nominee plans to collaborate with veteran organisations, mental health professionals, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement effective strategies to address trauma and PTSD. These strategies may include mentorship programmes, vocational training, and educational initiatives aimed at reducing the stigma

that surrounds mental health issues within the veteran community.

The Nominee stressed that veterans have made tremendous sacrifices in service to the nation, and it is the duty of the Government and society to ensure that they receive the care and support they deserve. By focusing on the mental health and well-being of veterans, he is confident that these initiatives will help them heal, recover, live fulfilling and productive lives.

#### **4.15 Resolving Land Disputes and Compensation for La Dade-Kotopon Residents**

In response to the Committee's enquiry regarding the ongoing land disputes in La Dade-Kotopon, particularly concerning the military base located in the area and the residents' efforts to reclaim their land, the Nominee outlined his approach to resolving the matter. He acknowledged the claims that the Akufo-Addo Government had stated that the land has been returned to the allodial owners. Yet, there are reports of military personnel preventing the allodial owners from accessing the land, even resorting to physical violence.

The Nominee assured the Committee that his first step would be to verify the relevant documentation to confirm whether the land has, indeed, been officially returned to the allodial owners. Should the land be verified as returned, he emphasised that he would then assess the residents' legal entitlement to compensation for the period during which the military occupied the land.

He expressed his commitment to ensure a fair and just resolution to the matter, considering both the legal rights of the allodial owners and the well-being of the residents, while upholding the rule of law and protecting the interests of all parties involved.

#### **4.16 Fair Compensation for La Dade-Kotopon Residents and Ensuring Justice for Allodial Land Owners**

When asked about the measures he would implement to ensure that residents of La Dade-Kotopon receive fair compensation for the use of their land and households, the Nominee emphasised his commitment to achieving a just and equitable resolution. He stated that his approach would involve engaging with all relevant stakeholders, including the military, Government authorities, and the residents themselves to negotiate a fair compensation package.

The Nominee affirmed that he is dedicated to protecting the rights of the residents, ensuring that they are treated with dignity and respect throughout the process. He further emphasised his determination to ensure that allodial landowners are recognised and their rights upheld, with the ultimate goal of ensuring that the residents receive fair and adequate compensation for the use of their land and properties.

#### **4.17 Adequate Pensions for Military Officers and Veterans**

In response to the question regarding his plans to ensure that military officers and veterans receive adequate pensions, the Nominee emphasised that the welfare of service members is central to his

policies. He expressed strong commitment to ensure that both officers and veterans receive the pensions they rightfully deserve. This will involve reviewing and improving existing pension schemes to ensure they meet the needs of our officers and veterans.

The Nominee assured the Committee that he would work diligently to address pension-related concerns, ensuring that veterans and military personnel can enjoy the peace of mind they have earned through their dedicated service to the nation. He emphasised that providing appropriate pensions for military officers and veterans would be a priority in his tenure, reflecting the nation's gratitude and support for their sacrifices.

He further stated that he would collaborate with stakeholders to ensure pension schemes are fair, equitable, and transparent. This would include the provision of clear guidance on pension entitlements, eligibility criteria, and application processes. He noted that he would explore opportunities to enhance pension benefits, in addition to providing support for those with service-related injuries or ailments. He would also work to ensure that the pension schemes are adaptable to changing circumstances, such as inflation or changes in the cost of living. His vision is to provide the military officers and veterans with the financial security and stability they deserve.

#### **4.18 Timely Payment of Civilian Employees**

When asked about his plans to ensure the prompt and timely payment of civilian employees, the Nominee responded

that this matter is one he takes very seriously. He emphasised his commitment to ensure that all civilian employees receive their pay in a timely manner. He recognises that delays in salary payments can cause significant hardship and uncertainty.

The Nominee outlined his approach, stating that, if given the opportunity to serve, he would instruct the administrative team to conduct a thorough review of the payroll processes to identify the root causes of any delays. He expressed his intention to work closely with the finance department to address any administrative challenges, streamline payment systems, and ensure prompt distribution of payslips.

In addition, the Nominee committed to establishing a clear timeline for resolving these issues and provide regular updates to employees on the progress made. He emphasised his dedication to transparency and accountability, assuring that employees would be kept informed throughout the process.

Ultimately, the Nominee's goal is to eliminate delays and ensure that all civilian employees consistently receive their pay on time. He expressed his determination to work tirelessly toward achieving this objective and improving the overall efficiency of the payment process.

#### **4.19 Effective Collaboration between the Military and the Ministry**

In responding to the question on ensuring effective collaboration between

the military and his Ministry, the Nominee emphasised his firm belief that a strong and productive partnership between the military and the Ministry is essential to achieving the country's national security objectives.

To foster this collaboration, the Nominee outlined his plan to establish open, transparent, and consistent communication channels with the military high command. He stressed the importance of maintaining ongoing dialogue, actively listening to the military's concerns, and offering the necessary support to ensure their operational success.

The Nominee also highlighted his commitment to ensure that his Ministry remains responsive to the needs of the military by providing timely and effective solutions to the challenges they encounter. He pointed out the need to build a foundation of trust and mutual understanding between the military and his Ministry, recognising the military's autonomy and expertise while aligning their efforts with the broader national security goals.

By leveraging the strengths and knowledge of both entities, the Nominee expressed his confidence that such a partnership would enable efficient and effective achievement of security objectives. He concluded that this collaboration would be built on mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to safeguard the nation's safety and security.

## **4.20 Embracing Modern Military Trends in the Ghana Armed Forces**

In his response to embracing modern military trends to shape the future of the Ghana Armed Forces, which include artificial intelligence, advanced defence equipment, technology, robotics, and data analysis, the Nominee responded that he firmly believes these key trends would shape the trajectory of our armed forces.

He explained that artificial intelligence would enhance decision-making, improve operational efficiency, and develop effective military strategies. He stated that investing in innovative technology will ensure our military remains equipped to face emerging threats. He pointed out that technology would improve communication, logistics, and operational capabilities. He further mentioned that robotics would enhance military operations, improve safety, and reduce casualties while data analysis would inform decision-making, optimise resources, and improve military effectiveness.

## **4.21 Ensuring Adequate Pensions for Officers and Veterans**

When asked about his plans to ensure that officers and veterans receive adequate pensions, the Nominee firmly responded that he believes our officers and veterans deserve a secure and stable financial future after their service. As a nation, we must ensure they receive the pensions they have earned.

To achieve this, he prioritises welfare at the heart of his policies. His team would work tirelessly to provide appropriate pensions, giving our veterans the peace of mind they have earned through their service. This will involve reviewing and improving existing pension schemes to ensure they meet the needs of our officers and veterans.

He would also collaborate with stakeholders to ensure our pension schemes are fair, equitable, and transparent. This includes providing clear guidance on pension entitlements, eligibility criteria, and application processes.

Furthermore, we will explore opportunities to enhance pension benefits, such as providing additional support for those with service-related injuries or illnesses. We will also work to ensure that our pension schemes are adaptable to changing circumstances, such as inflation or changes in the cost of living.

His vision is to provide our officers and veterans with the financial security and stability they deserve and demonstrate our nation's gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation**

In accordance with Article 78(1) of the 1992 Constitution and Standing Order 217, the Committee considered the nomination submitted by His Excellency the President. After thorough deliberation, the Committee finds the Nominee competent, knowledgeable and well-suited for their respective ministerial roles.

The Committee, therefore, recommends to the House, by *CONSENSUS*, the adoption of its Report and the approval of the nomination of **Dr Edward Kofi Omane Boamah** as Minister for Defence.

Respectfully submitted.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, any seconder?

**Ranking Member of the Committee (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, I rise to second the Motion. In seconding the Motion, I need to point out an important matter which is not the fault of the Chairman of the Committee, but the Clerk to the Committee. Mr Speaker, I am seconding this Motion only because I want Government Business to proceed because the Ministry of Defence is a critical Ministry that needs a Minister, but the records of this House must reflect that the Clerk has opted not to share the draft report with the Hon Minority Leader and the Hon Ranking Member of the Committee.

2.03 p. m.

Mr Speaker, I have complained and if we are to pursue our rights, perhaps, we would not take this Report. But I would want to place on record that this same Clerk, who when I was in Government would insist that the Minority Leader must see the draft Report before she fairies same to the Chairman to sign, has now conveniently managed to only get the Chairman of the Committee to sign the Report without getting it to my office.

Mr Speaker, there were very key matters that came up at the Appointments Committee hearing and she found it prudent to capture those that she conveniently thinks must be in the Report. Key issues such as the Nominee's social media post that the New Patriotic Party (NPP) was looting Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) lands were brought up. When the Nominee was confronted with that fact, he retreated by admitting that indeed, he had erred and that with the benefit of hindsight, that incident would not repeat itself. In fact, he retracted it. This is a very critical matter of reputational value. This is because there was incident at GIS, where a private citizen, at 2 a. m., was appropriating GIS land and this led the Nominee to write on social media that the NPP Administration was looting public land. The Nominee indeed retracted this, yet, the Committee Clerk, unbeknown to me, prepared this Report and sent it to the Chairman without capturing these key things.

Mr Speaker, there were also some comments that he made against the Electoral Commission (EC) of which he had to beat a retreat on when confronted about them. These are matters that have not been properly addressed. We would not want to be pursuing these things but we would just want the record to reflect that we are in this together and the right thing must be done.

Mr Speaker, that said, I would want to encourage the Nominee to pursue what had said that he intends to take steps to ensure the sustainability of certain infrastructural development that



he classified as some success stories he had come across as part of the debriefing. I would encourage the Nominee to pursue these things because Government is a continuum.

Secondly, there was the issue of military lands. Since all looting has now gained public prominence, he gave his assurance to the Committee that he would investigate how a private developer was able to acquire the vast stretch of state land in the area which has now become known as “chain homes”, which previously belonged to the military. That was his promise to the Committee but unfortunately, it has not been well captured. I would pray that he would take steps to do this.

Mr Speaker, directly connected to this matter, is an incident that I related to this morning where even in the presence of the military, certain individuals invaded the VVIP lounge. They placed —

**The Speaker:** Hon Minority Leader, I do not want you to combine the two.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, I thought I could deal with it once and for all but if I should deal with it independently after this, that is fine. I would take guidance from you.

**The Speaker:** That is fine.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Then I would address it after this as we have agreed. Then without more, I shall rest my case and second the Motion for the House to deal with it.

**The Speaker:** Yes, please?

**Alhaji Alhassan:** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Ninth Report of the Appointments Committee requesting this House to approve the President's Nominee for the Ministry of Defence. While doing so, I wish to express my reservation about the manner in which the Hon Minority Leader has gone against his own advice—Advice that he has given to many of us on the Floor. The advice being not to introduce staff of Parliament, officers of this House who have no opportunity to defend themselves on the Floor, into our discussions. I am surprised that an advocate of that over the years would throw caution to the wind this afternoon and take on the Clerk of the Appointments Committee in the manner he has done, knowing very well that the Clerk has no opportunity to defend herself on the Floor of this House.

I have come to learn that the Clerks are usually not able capture all that transpired during the meeting of the Committee. So, the practice is that when a Report is laid, Hon Members are at liberty to comment on the issues that were raised at the Committee level, even if those do not find expression in the Report, like the Hon Minority Leader has done. He could have just gone ahead to highlight the issues he wanted captured in the Report without raising reservations about the conduct of the Clerk.

Mr Speaker, having said that, I want to reiterate the point that the President's nominee, in this case, Dr Omane Boamah, is one distinguished gentleman;

very focused and intelligent. This showed in the manner that he answered the questions that were asked by Members of the Committee when he appeared before them. Indeed, Dr Omane Boamah has been in Government before, served as Minister for Communications and discharged his duties creditably. As somebody who some of us have worked closely with, especially when I was in the media, I can attest to his diligence, professionalism, fairness and objectivity when it comes to the way he handles issues that are presented before him. I, therefore, hope that he is going to carry those same qualities that he has been noted for over the years to the Ministry of Defence which requires such selflessness, discipline, and thoroughness, to put our country's security at the level that we would all feel safe to go about our everyday activities.

Mr Speaker, I was particularly excited when he gave the assurance that our military would be cleaned or exorcised off political or partisan spirit that we have come to associate with over the period, especially when it comes to recruitments. Over the years, we have all expressed concern about how political figures parade officers that they facilitated or assisted to get recruited into the Ghana Armed Forces. A practice that many of our citizens have condemned and rightly so because it encourages partisanship and throws discipline to the dogs.

I think that he would have the support of many Ghanaians if he ensures that the recruitment processes are above board, fair and opened to every Ghanaian who

is willing to put on the uniform to serve our nation. I was very excited about that assurance.

However, I was a bit concerned when during deliberations, it came out that there were protocol recruitments extended to Members of Parliament and political figures. I think such things put all of us in the political class at risk. It does not really help with the kind of cooperation and collaboration that we want from our citizens to protect and preserve this democracy. When people begin to think that unfair favours are extended to a certain class of people, then it becomes a worry for them to be expected to support that kind of system that exploits them.

As a Member of Parliament, I know that I never enjoyed any protocol recruitment by any Minister in any of our security services.

2.13 p.m.

I am sure that majority of us here never enjoyed that, but every now and then we all receive mails either through social media or from people who tell us that they have heard of protocol slots or they know of protocol slots or people have duped them using offers of protocol slots in our names. During our campaigns in our constituencies, it comes up and we struggle to defend that these favours are not extended to us, but when we have some of our Hon Colleagues, especially in Leadership go on national television and make those claims like they were made during the vetting of the Hon Minister-designate for

Defence. It gives credence to this, which fuels in some cases hate against us in the political class and also makes it difficult for us to defend the truth. The truth is that we all are not always given these protocol slots. If some have enjoyed it, I am sure they are in the Minority and not in the Majority and Minority here is not referring to the classes in this Chamber but to the fact those Members are few compared to those of us who are in the majority who did not enjoy these favours. Even if that exist, we should be looking at how to make the system such that it is equitable and fair, and everyone who applies stands an equal chance of getting selected and rather not to encourage this practice.

Mr Speaker, with these few words, I would want to associate myself with the call for this House to approve the President's nominees. I thank you for the opportunity.

**The Speaker:** I think after this, we may have to put the question. So, I would give the opportunity to the Hon Member for Nhyiaeso.

**Dr Stephen Amoah:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, I would like to humbly add my voice to the voices that are ballyhooing Dr Omane Boamah, the Hon Minister-designate for the Ministry of Defence in our country. In trying to add my voice positively to what Hon Colleagues are saying, apart from wishing him well, I would like to also admonish him, to expedite, as a matter of urgency and emergency, actions on what

is prevailing in our country today. What is tarnishing our reputation as a country, not only on the continent of Africa but globally in terms of attacks on private homes, and properties and properties of the State.

Mr Speaker, one of the things that has actually placed Ghana on top of the global league table is our reputation in terms of peace, tranquility, co-existence and democracy. But what is happening today in our country is unprecedented and I think each and everyone who has Ghana at heart must join this call so that as a country, we will not get ourselves into a situation where it will be very difficult for us to restore our image.

Mr Speaker, Article 18(1) of the 1992 Constitution, states emphatically clear without any ambiguity that; "Every person has the right to own property either alone or in association without others.

Clause 2 of the same Article states that;

"No person shall be subjected to interference with the privacy of his home, property, correspondence or communication except in accordance..."

Mr Speaker, here is the case that we are witnessing glaringly, properties of private sectors and even public, being burnt, destroyed and even the blood of innocent Ghanaians being shed, and private investors all over the world are watching us. Almost everywhere in the world, when they are talking about

Africa, they mention Ghana as the gateway to Africa. Now they see the blood stains on that same gate, so investments are being undermined and threatened just because a political party has won power.

Mr Speaker, permit me to give just a line from this chorus: *Odie asem pa na enam oo, asem pa na enam oo*. Is this the *asem pa* that they were talking about? Asem pa where by people are dying in our country? Now, in certain parts of Ghana, some innocent Ghanaians and school children are supposed to stay home because of insecurity. [**Some Hon Members:** Eiiii] Let us go to Obuasi. In some churches, the thematic topics for Sunday preaching is about insecurity. I never knew the unprecedented victory was going to allow something that we thought in our opinions as Ghanaians; a peaceful country such as Ghana, this primitive, outmoded and dysfunctional behaviours.

Knowing Dr Omane Boamah, who is a very fine gentleman, very knowledgeable and has gone through the mill; we all have had the opportunity to be in association with him but it is my outcry and that of many Ghanaians, old and young, rich and poor, men and women, that this unprecedented, dysfunctional and socially unacceptable behaviour must be curtailed as early as possible. It is the first preliminary test of the incoming Minister and this is an admonishment that I am asking every Tom, Dick and Harry in this House to help uphold the democracy that, Mr Speaker, we all learned from you and

others when we were young. It is very unacceptable that in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, on the globe and on the continent of Africa, a party will win an election and a party that believes in democracy will begin to take us back.

**The Speaker:** Hon Member, just a minute.

Yes, Alhaji Suhuyini Sayibu Alhassan?

**Alhaji Alhassan:** Mr Speaker, I rose to get your guidance to direct our Colleague to speak to the Report that has been submitted for consideration.

Mr Speaker, the references he is making are about internal security. The Report is about the Hon Minister-designate for the Defence and not for the Hon Minister-designate for the Interior. I would have thought that if he were concerned about internal security, for which he wants attention to be given, he should wait for us to consider the Report for the Hon Minister-designate for the Interior and not Defence.

Mr Speaker, with all due respect, I seek your guidance to plead with our Colleague to hold his already prepared weapons and wait till it is time for the Hon Minister-designate for the Interior.

Some Hon Members from the Minority Caucus —*rose*—

*Pause*

2.23 p.m.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, I took it that you rose in support of your Leader. That is why I gave you time after showing your support to resume your seats, which you have done. So, I would give the Hon Member the permission to have a word. But I had already indicated that I was going to give him an opportunity to make a Statement on a similar matter, on issues of violence after elections and what is happening in the country. He tried adding it but I said no and that I would give him a special opportunity to make that Statement today. So, I can only advise that we move from that and consider this Report. Then, when the Statement is made by the Hon Minority Leader, we could all comment on it and as a House take a position and see how we could lead the country to nip in the bud this growing tendency or trend of the aftermath violence in our usual four-year election cycle. It is really bad and not good for the country.

I have been here since 1992 and I can attest to some of those things. As somebody who has been in leadership—I have been in leadership since 2001 and gone through all these elections. I have copious evidence of these things and I do not think it is something that we should encourage. But before we get that, let me listen to the Hon Minority Leader.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker with respect, thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, I want to bring to your attention an observation I have made and I would start with this very morning. I

had my bite on this matter when I seconded the Motion, when my respected junior Colleague, Alhaji Suhuyini Sayibu Alhassan had the opportunity to contribute. He spent his first five to six minutes attacking my submissions and I did not have a problem with it. He had his bite. Our Side listened to him in silence. No single Hon Member of Parliament to your left opened his mouth; we listened to him. I never got up to even challenge him. I could have gotten up to raise issues but I thought it was unnecessary. This is democracy and tolerance is part of it.

Mr Speaker, it has gotten to the turn of Dr Stephen Amoah. Throughout his submissions, we heard them, the noise, the name-calling and all that even though they did not speak into the microphone. But I recall when we were younger and in the Minority in the year 2015 and you had assumed the black seat as a Majority Leader one more time, there was a day that we, the Backbenchers were heckling you. I recall you said to us that heckling is part of democracy but reckless heckling is unacceptable. These were your words.

Mr Speaker, the reckless heckling coming from the Majority is becoming one too many. This is not part of democracy. Their intolerance level is getting out of hand. You have your say. *[Uproar]* You, see? *Oyiwa!* Yes, yes—they would not tolerate. We are always ready to listen to them but they are not ready to listen to us. As for me, because I can say to them what they say to me, I would keep quiet and listen to them. Because, when it gets to my turn, I can

also do what I want to do. But let us understand that this is democracy. Listening to your Colleague in silence is part of democracy and that is what the Speaker taught us. There should be no reckless heckling.

Mr Speaker, I would end here without more. My Colleague is on his feet and the pleasure is yours to direct proceedings.

I thank you so much.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Majority Leader—

**Mr Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, the Hon Member who was on his feet, in the past he had sometimes been so emotional that he cried. What I heard from this Side were pleas that he should not cry because they saw him getting so emotional. So, they were not heckling him, but they were just begging him not to cry. We like him and get excited anytime he is on his feet. He has contributed enormously to the vocabulary of this Chamber. So, each time he speaks, we listen attentively because he might drop one or two new vocabularies. But we do not want him to cry.

I have heard the Hon Minority Leader. I think that it has become something that we do in this Chamber. Sometimes we are very good friends and do not intend to heckle them. But I would also plead with the Hon Minority Leader that using such words as “intolerant” and accusing the Majority of being intolerant is also not in very good taste. So, if you can deal with that.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** The Hon Majority Leader is my gentleman of the year. He is my senior and he saw to my political career in the sub-region. So, with this coming from him, I take it back. It should not be part of the records that I used the words that the “Hon Members have been intolerant.” But please I would urge the Hon Members to limit the heckling. I have taken back the phrase “you are intolerant” and I apologise to you.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Dr Amoah, you may continue.

**Dr Amoah:** Mr Speaker, thank you.

Mr Speaker, with the advice you have given us, I am sure at the appropriate time we are going to actually tackle this comprehensively. However, I would like to correct my brother from the other Side. Now when you have social issues such as what is prevailing in Ghana and you are trying to deal with it, that task becomes laborious, cumbersome, and tedious. You need to make sure that you consolidate the effort of all security agencies. So, it is not limited to the Ministry of the Interior only.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude, I would like to call the State to ensure that we find a way to develop a balance between military necessity and humanity. It is extremely critical and we need to look at that. I would not be too emphatic because of your advice. But it is also good that we continue to let them understand the fact that now, our mothers

and sisters out of fear cannot even go out after 5:00 p.m.

Mr Speaker, one good thing I like about you is that you are a man of truth; you said it all. It is unprecedented. Until recently, we had such a peaceful country, society, ecosystem and now we cannot live together because somebody has come to power. To the extent that the Fire Service, the Police stations—now even the security agencies are not safe, how much more we ordinary Ghanaians?

2.33 p.m.

Mr Speaker, this is something that we need to accord the necessary attention to as a country. Or is it part of the 24-Hour Economy?

Mr Speaker, as I said, we will have the right time to address this unprecedented mumbo jumbo, higgledy-piggledy issue—[**Some Hon Members:** Eii!]  
—But, I would like to say that Dr Omane Boamah is someone that, in terms of meritocracy, deserves this appointment and we would accord him the needed support so we can work together as a House.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon Members, I will proceed to put the Question.

*Question put and Motion agreed to.*

**The Speaker:** Is there any other item we would take before we go to Statements?

**Mr Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, we can go back to Statements.

**The Speaker:** Thank you so much.

Hon Members, we will take the item numbered 6—Statements. We have a number of Statements and these have been admitted by the Speaker. But, before that, I wanted to give opportunity to the Minority Leader so that he could make his Statement, then I would hand over to the Second Deputy Speaker to take the rest of the Statements.

I have an indication from the Minority Leader that he is going to make a Statement on a subject matter he shared with me. Before he does that, please, I want to stress the issue raised by Mr Sayibu Suhuyini Alhassan. You know how supportive our staff are to us. They are not perfect and can err, but because they do not have the opportunity on the Floor to defend themselves, we all agree that we should not take them on. These are administrative matters that can be handled behind the scenes and not on the Floor.

So, I think the Minority Leader went overboard in his references to the clerk to the Committee and, please, it is not something that should be done. After his statement, I took up the matter, did a bit of investigation and got responses to that, but these are not matters I would be disclosing on the floor of the House. They are matters that we will handle after this. So, please, may I, on your behalf, convey our regrets to the clerk. It is something that, at least, she would

understand, having been in this House for some time.

Once in a while, Members are carried away by some of these things because the challenge of this House is that many of the things that we complain about are beyond our control. Even Members of Parliament have been assaulted and killed a number of times. A number of Members of Parliament (MPs) have lost their lives in the course of their duty. So, this is a matter that concerns us all and I want us, even in this position, to try to be a force to get Ghanaians to turn over a new leaf.

As the Minority Leader in 2001, I can share a lot of experiences and documents with you on this matter, but that does not mean it is something that we should allow to fester; we have to do something about it as Leaders. We have to do something about it and get the Executive, who are to execute what we decide as representatives of the people. We take the decisions and make the laws, and they are to implement those decisions and laws. So, we must first take the decision and make the law, then ensure that they implement the laws. It is a responsibility we have to shoulder.

So, when you are expressing these things, let us have the patience to listen because I would give you the opportunity if you want to express your views. But there is some impression out there which is not right. We must all help to combat it; we must be united in that, not because one is in power today and the other is in opposition. No, that is not it. Please, let us be honest and candid in our

submissions and let the people not just hear us; let them feel and see in us that we are trustworthy and that we mean what we say. Let it not be because the fire is on someone's back and not yours.

Please, I am saying this because the Minority Leader is going to make a Statement which would touch on this issue of violence, and I want us to take the time to deal with it and let Ghanaians hear us. Then, from there, we can move on to take some resolutions. We are to assist and oversee the Government to do what is right. If we are talking about resetting, we must be part of it. I would allow the Minority Leader to have his say and I would give all of you the opportunity, if you want to, depending on the guidance from the Leadership. Today is your day.

Minority Leader, as you make your Statement, take this on board.

## STATEMENTS

### **Violence at the Jubilee Lounge of the Kotoka International Airport**

**Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for this treasured space to make this Statement on the violence that took place at the Jubilee Lounge at the airport on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2025.

Mr Speaker, the director in charge of the lounge, popularly known as the Jubilee Lounge, Mr George Boateng, on the said date, was conducting his usual duties. Soon after the departure of His Excellency the President to Dubai, some



thugs jumped the gate and attacked him until he became unconscious. He is an officer of the State and had the firm instructions of the Chief of Staff to hold on till a replacement was made. In other words, he was told to hold on till 31<sup>st</sup> January when a replacement would be made and a new person would be appointed. So, he was only waiting to do a formal handing over.

Mr Speaker, as you rightly said, what happened on 7<sup>th</sup> January was a regular election in our country, a change of government, and a new party had taken over, and that is democracy. We must not allow some thugs within our ranks to do that which would jeopardise the future of democracy in our country.

2.43 p.m.

I take this opportunity to call on all political leaders in our country, to take time, educate the youth, encourage them to be lawful and avoid taking the law into their own hands.

Mr Speaker, Mr George Boateng is a Ghanaian like all of us. It is true that the Government that appointed him is no longer in power but there is a need for smooth transition; a transition that would allow the new officer take over from him. Mr Speaker, while I am at this, let me also thank the military men on duty that day for their peaceful intervention. But for them, perhaps Mr George Boateng would have lost his life. Watching the pathetic video, their intervention helped to save the life of our dear brother, Mr George Boateng. I pray, that a thing like this never happens again in our country.

Mr Speaker, to conclude, I would want this House to ferry a Resolution to the Executive, to the effect that all must be done in ensuring that if possible, a Bill is brought to this House for an enactment that would deal with issues such as what has happened in a post-election era. Ghana is all we have; we do not have to jeopardise our democracy. Our conduct as political leaders must also give a positive signal to our citizens, that we are here as brothers and sisters; we are not here to fight. We do not demand for power to unleash violence; but we demand for power for development.

Mr Speaker, without more, I would want to thank you for this treasured space and I pray that the needful would be done to safeguard our democracy and to assure every citizen that the change of power does not call for violence.

**The Speaker:** What is the pleasure of the House? Two from each Side of the House and then Leaders, but I would allow the Majority Leader to have a bite and then — Because I see some Members want to say something and definitely, I would be very watchful and I would make sure that I do not allow you to go beyond some limits. So, I would allow the Majority Leader to speak first, then I take one from the Minority Side and another from the Majority Side and then we end it.

Sorry? Minority Leader, you would end it and after you have spoken, that is the end?

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, with respect, originally, the understanding was that it was going to be Leaders but

considering the pleasure of the House, we can take two contributors each from both Sides, under the guidance you gave, then the Majority Leader would close it up. You could take Mr Kojo Oppong Nkrumah and Mr Samuel Abdulai Jinapor from my Side.

**The Speaker:** Well, I would take one from my right before I come to my left again. And so, from my right, Hon Member for Tamale North, are you the one from your leader? Alright.

Yes, Hon Member for Tamale North?

**Mr Suhuyini Sayibu Alhassan (NDC — Tamale North):** Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

I am very excited you are guiding this conversation for us not to do our usual politicking with this very serious matter that in some cases, have led to loss of lives and destruction of properties.

Mr Speaker, we are often told, that the more things change, the more they remain the same. And based on that, we are encouraged to see wrong as wrong; no matter the time and no matter who it affects. I am sure if we did that repeatedly, many of our problems in this country would have been solved long ago. I am happy that the guidance we have as we engage in this conversation is for us to look at how we can deal with this problem and not how to remind each other of who did it first, and who is taking revenge, or responding. I am especially happy that the conversation is not about laying blames on which regime is the one that has done it the most during political takeover after election.

Mr Speaker, when I was listening to the Minority Leader, for a moment — and it is so many news reports. Sometimes when one picks our old news reports, one only has to change names, and the story would still be relevant today, even if the story was first published in the 1960s. So when I was listening to the Minority Leader, for a moment, I thought he was going to say ASP Nanka

Bruce but he said George Boateng and the scenarios are the same. The effect is the same, it is just the times that differ; 2017 and 2025. When would it end? That is why I am happy that this conversation is about looking at how to deal with the problem.

So Mr Speaker, I thank you for that guidance and I thank the Minority Leader for raising this concern. Sometimes, let us not wait for an equalisation before we look for a solution. Every time something is wrong, let us deal with it as and when it is wrong, whether it affects us or not. Once we identify it as being wrong, we must be bold enough to confront it.

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Hon Member for Ofoase Ayirebi?

**Mr Kojo Oppong Nkrumah (NPP — Ofoase Ayirebi):** Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statement that has been made by the Minority Leader.

Mr Speaker, I was hoping that in the commentary, we would not go back to finger pointing and the attempt to equalise. Indeed, this has happened in time past. Around 2017, when similar incidence took place, the administration even went further to pass the Vigilantism and Related Offences Bill, 2019 into law, as part of measures to contain it. So, my hope is that the discussion we are having today would not seek to equalise and be pointing fingers here and there.

Mr Speaker, to deal with it, the first thing we have to do is to take responsibility, and we have to call a spade, a spade. This escalation of post elections violence in the 2024 elections is simply because the two leading political parties have instigated it, and Mr Speaker, I would give evidence.

On the night of the election, we had senior political actors on television, asking supporters of their parties to go to the collation centres under various disguises. Mr Speaker, that is the kind of instigation that triggered what started then, and is still going on. We must accept responsibility as the first step if we want to deal with it.

Mr Speaker, the second responsibility is that we have failed to be bold in condemning it. We whiff-whaff around the corners depending on where we are. In fact, it is only the Savannah Regional branch of the NDC, that I have seen issue a clear statement of condemnation and asked the police to deal with the persons who are engaging in this incidence of violence. The condemnation should be

strong and robust, and across board, and not whiff-wharving because they may be persons who are associated with our political parties.

Mr Speaker, the third thing is that there is a failure to deal with the people who are doing this.

2.53 p.m.

The number of incidences that have taken place, recorded on camera, and aired on television, even in this particular instance, the persons who perpetuated this level of assault are all clear, you can see them but we are yet to hear of anybody who is being brought before the courts or being punished for this and that is the reason for which it is going on.

Mr Speaker, in addition to the Hon Leader's call that we send a resolution to the Executive branch, my prayer would be that the resolution includes a request for a proper public enquiry into the conditions under which law and order broke down at quite a number of collation centres. The conditions under which we have seen attacks on public institutions and offices.

Mr Speaker, the reason is that if we do not do this, a subtle message has been sent to every contestant in the 2028 elections. Let us be very honest, if we do not deal with this and nip it in the bud, a subtle message has been sent to every contestant in the 2028 elections that they have to prepare their own private security to find ways of either protecting or preserving law and order at the

collation centres and that would be dangerous. We do not need to do that and it is important that this is nipped in the bud.

Mr Speaker, one of the very worrying things is that you see police and military persons there but often incapacitated and unable to contain these situations. We must say something to the security agencies as well, that the fact that a party has won power and their supporters may be perpetuating some sort of activities on electoral officers or other persons does not mean you should be afraid to do your job. We must be firm and clear with the security agencies that it is their job to provide security whether at collation centres, public institutions or to public officers who go about their duties.

Mr Speaker, I support the Hon Leader's call that we send a resolution to the Executive branch. My prayer if it is possible, is to include in that resolution that the proper public enquiry should take place into the conditions under which law and order broke down at many parts where that law and order should have been preserved. This is so that we nip it in the bud and do not have an incident in 2028 where people take the law into their own hands.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Majority Leader? Should we take two from each Side?

**Mr Ayariga:** Yes, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Mr Felix Ofosu Kwakye?

**Mr Felix Ofosu Kwakye (NPP—Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese):** Thank you, Mr Speaker for the opportunity. I have listened carefully as my Hon Colleagues on the other Side have spoken to this matter. I am on all fours with anyone who calls for some prompt action to stem this tide of misconduct and lawlessness which has come to characterise our post-electoral periods.

Mr Speaker, it is absolutely imperative that this discussion is had in a frank manner. One would be tempted to think if he were not living in this country that this is a recent phenomenon. The reality is that since the year 2000, all those who recall, would know that every change of government has been followed by this sort of activity.

Mr Speaker, things came to a head when after the 2016 elections, all manner of groups who had adopted blood curdling names such as Invisible Forces, Delta Forces and what have you were unleashed on the people of Ghana.

Mr Speaker, I regret to recall that on the very first day of assumption of office by President Akufo-Addo at the Flagstaff House, a senior police officer, ASP Nanka Bruce who had been the head of security at the presidency under the previous administration was set upon by a member of these so-called Delta Forces.

Mr Speaker, what was the response—

**The Speaker:** Hon Member, please, I thought that we had gone beyond that. We have acknowledged all that in earlier Statements only the details were not given but it is something that we all have acknowledged. We have experienced them so we are now looking for the way forward.

**Mr Ofosu Kwakye:** Thank you, Mr Speaker for the guidance but it was necessary to recall these events to place the discussion in proper context because I listened to my Hon Friend and Brother and others who spoke in a manner that suggested that this is a recent phenomenon.

Mr Speaker, I have a few proposals of my own. What I believe is the cause of these problems is that whereas we have done relatively well in the management of our elections, at the very least we have had four peaceful transfers of power. So, we have got that right, what we have failed to do is to get the immediate post elections period processes right. It does appear that right after elections or after the winner is declared, our security agencies go to sleep, they effectively collapse and therefore are unable to deal with these miscreants. Some of whom act this way in retribution against others who they perceived to have wronged them in the past.

Mr Speaker, it does appear that our Presidential Transition Act, 2012 (Act 845) requires further amendment to strengthen the hands of State Agencies to deal more effectively with the immediate post-election period.

Mr Speaker, I have wondered why it is not possible for the winner of the elections to take over power immediately. We do know that in the United Kingdom for instance, a day after a new prime minister is elected, he takes over Downing Street, so there is literally no gap that would be filled by miscreants and persons who are minded to engage in lawlessness. I think we can go on that tangent and ensure that the transition is quicker, swifter and more seamless than it is at this particular time. We run a patronage system, all of us would appreciate that sometimes the security agencies are frozen into inaction because they are uncertain about what fate awaits them if they were to move against persons who are perceived to belong to the party that has won the elections. That is why sometimes these things happen but we cannot resolve this problem without taking a holistic view, without appreciating that it runs deeper than merely citing recent instances to buttress one's argument.

Mr Speaker, I associate with the position taken by the Minority Leader but let us broaden the discussion, let us realise that the problem runs much deeper than we are appreciating at the moment.

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

**The Speaker:** Yes, Mr Samuel Abdulai Jinapor?

**Mr Samuel Abdulai Jinapor (NPP—Damongo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker for the opportunity to contribute

to this very important matter on the Floor and I would want to thank the Hon Minority Leader for bringing this up.

Mr Speaker, when countries have problems, challenges or some mischief that they have to cure, we are required to brainstorm to work together to seek solutions to those problems. A case in point is the passage of the Presidential Transition Act, 2012 which was a response to the chaotic nature of the Fourth Republican transitions which seems to have largely assisted in the smooth transition from one Government to another. The Presidential Office Act is yet another example and that is why I believe that your admonishment and the call that we should focus on solutions and proffer suggestions to be able to deal with this matter is absolutely important.

3.03p.m.

Mr Speaker, the proposal that a resolution be sent from this House to the Executive expressing the concern of this House and making the point that Parliament takes a dim view of what is happening in our country and further calling for a public enquiry into how these disturbances occur during collations and the chaos we are witnessing in our country is one that I support and I think that we should examine very seriously. That this House, this Parliament, an arm of Government, the Legislature, sends a resolution to the Executive, expressing the House's deep concern about what is happening and calling for a public enquiry into all these acts of violence which have taken place in this country.

Mr Speaker, regarding the concerns raised about the length of transitions, in the United States of America, elections are held on 4<sup>th</sup> November, inauguration takes place on 20<sup>th</sup> January, some two months plus, that is their transitional period. In Ghana we have a one-month transition, with the exception of the infamous 2021 transition, they do not have such chaos and such violence characterise their transitions and so that for me is not the reason for what is going on.

But Mr Speaker, there is another erroneous impression which has been created. Yes, there have been acts of violence perpetuated against Members of the erstwhile government and Members of the NPP but what is even more disturbing is the intra-government battles and I say violent battles. Mr Speaker, that is more disturbing. An NPP Member has been pounced upon, he has been assaulted, he has been beaten; an NPP former Minister has been molested, that is bad enough.

Mr Speaker, the situation where the President of the Republic makes an appointment to an important institution of State and political party thugs, hooligans, and actors take siege of that institution and say —

**The Speaker:** Hon Member, I do not know whether you were around. We have acknowledged these things and you know that it is not just happening only today, it has happened before. So, let us be honest and look at the way forward.

**Mr S. A. Jinapor:** Mr Speaker, I perfectly agree with you. I really take your wisdom. I am just contextualising the matter and situating it in the context where we can have a bi-partisan buy in. Mr Speaker, if you listen carefully, the impression that is created is that, when the NPP took office in 2017, violence was meted out unto NDC Members and indeed, Mr Speaker, that may be the case and that since the NDC has been in office — a certain revenge and I heard that from the other Side. But I am saying that for me, it is not the issue, and that we all agree but it is more of a fundamental challenge which is why Mr Speaker you are right, that we should seek solutions and come up with suggestions in dealing with this matter. I am saying that this matter has even gotten to the point where the sitting President is being threatened as we speak today —[*Uproar*]— Mr Speaker, today, two gentlemen appeared at the headquarters of the Youth Employment Authority with both of them holding appointment letters from Jubilee House. Both of them came with their thugs and there was a clash at the Youth Employment Authority today and the President was being threatened.

Mr Speaker, what I have to say is that, this call by Mr Speaker and the Minority Leader, supported by the Majority Side that we need to deal with this matter, I want to make some recommendations.

The first recommendation I want to make is that this matter in all forms and shape, is purely a matter of law and order. If somebody goes to pounce on Mr Boateng at Jubilee Lounge and assaults

him, we do not have to expand the Transitional Act, 2012 in order to deal with it. It is assault; it is a crime under the Criminal Code of our country, and the Police must take charge of it and deal with it.

Mr Speaker, when people go to seize the Ghana Revenue Authority headquarters and threaten that they would not allow the President's appointee to take office, it is an issue of law and order.

Mr Speaker, when people go to National Communication's Authority and lay siege on the National Communication Authority, it is a law and order issue.

Mr Speaker, when party thugs and hoodlums seize the weapon of a military officer, they have the audacity and the effrontery to seize the weapon of a soldier, Mr Speaker, it is a law and order issue. Mr Speaker is asking for solutions and I welcome that. Thank you for that request.

Mr Speaker, the proposal and the suggestions we are making from this Side of the House is that, this should be construed by all intents and purposes as a law and order issue and the Inspector-General of Police and the Ghana Police Service, and the President of the Republic who is the chief custodian of law and order, should step in and bring law and order into our country.

Mr Speaker, if we do not deal with this matter, I am not a prophet of doom, it is going to get worse because once the Government gets fully established, and

there are no other offices for party thugs to take over, all of us and by that, I mean all of us —[*Uproar*]— Mr Speaker, if you would allow me to be blunt, the Rt Hon Speaker himself, Members of this House, Members of the religious community, civil society members, members of the media, ordinary citizens, my good friend Mr Asare Kwame Obeng, all of us in this House, and all of us in Ghana would be at risk.

Mr Speaker, I have followed your career very closely and you have been an advocate of discipline, and law and order, and you know too well that just as the former President Jerry John Rawlings said to them, that when you have a stove and one person puts his hand on the stove and it burns him and another person puts his hand on the same stove and it does not burn him, then there is a breakdown of law and order — [*Hear! Hear!*].

3.13 p.m.

Mr Speaker let me conclude by reiterating the call that this House sends a resolution to the Executive and in that resolution, we should call for a public enquiry into the circumstances under which on the night of 7<sup>th</sup> December, through 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2024, after Ghanaians have exercised their civil responsibility by casting their votes in peace and tranquility, when it came to collation, the Electoral Commission came under siege. At gun point, declarations were made and this has travelled all the way to this point and Ablekuma North is still outstanding. That public enquiry should unravel and

establish the circumstances which have led to this level of anarchy.

In conclusion, in that Resolution, we should call on the President, who is the chief custodian of law and order, to take charge of law and order in this country. President Mahama should take charge of law and order in this country. Mr Speaker, respectfully, the number one duty and responsibility of a President is to ensure that there is law and order. Today, he has a Minister for the Interior and a Minister for Defence, so the security apparatus has been put in place. In all humility, modesty, and respect, I conclude by saying that Mr President should take charge of law and order.

**The Speaker:** Yes, Majority Leader?

**Mr Mahama Ayariga (NDC—Bawku Central):** Mr Speaker, the matters we are discussing in this Chamber today are very grave. I am not a Christian, but some biblical verses sometimes jump at me such as the one found in Galatians 6:7 —

**The Speaker:** Hon Majority Leader, please take your seat. Hon Members, kindly give me a five-minute suspension of Sitting. I would just attend to something and be back myself to preside over this. We would take five minutes only.

3.14 p.m. — *Sitting suspended.*

3.20 p.m. — *Sitting resumed.*

**Mr Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, first and foremost, any act of violence against any



person in Ghana ought to be condemned. So, I start by unreservedly condemning any violence committed by anybody against any citizen of this country.

Mr Speaker, we must all stand together in condemning violence; it should not be encouraged and entertained. I think that we are discussing something bigger than just the act of violence by one person against another. We are discussing what we have all observed as a pattern that is developing in our democracy. Initially, the problem was organised violence by the different political parties against one another during election campaigns. That was what led us to think through the problem and we passed the Bill against vigilantism. That was to deal with pre-election violence and violence during elections, violence during campaigns, and the organisation of security groups by both political parties used during campaigns and ultimately used during elections.

We enacted that legislation and I think that we all agree that this last election, at least the period leading up to the election and the period of the campaign saw less violence than we had seen previously in our political history. What we are seeing is also another form of violence that has often characterised change in regime, not election transitions because when it is a transition from a president who has served one term and is serving a second term, and is continuing in office, we hardly witness violence during such transitions. But when it is a transition from one political party to a different political party, whether from

the National Democratic Congress (NDC) to New Patriotic Party (NPP) or vice versa, what we have consistently witnessed has been some form of violence and that is an area that as a country, we have not yet thought through carefully and found a mechanism for addressing that form of violence.

Mr Speaker, contributors have said a lot of things, that I believe, provide some ideas as to how we may deal with a problem like that. As a member of the ECOWAS Parliament, I happened to be part of the election observation team to Sierra Leone. Immediately the results were declared, at 12 midnight of the evening of the declaration of the results, I observed that everybody was running towards the Radisson Blu Mammy Yoko Hotel. I asked, "What was happening at the Radisson Blu Hotel?" I was told they were going to swear in the President. I said, "But they just declared the results" but they said "Here, immediately they declare the results, we swear in the President. We do not allow any gap. The President has to take over immediately." That is how they do it in Sierra Leone. Later, an inaugural event is organised, but upon the declaration of the results, the President-elect takes office immediately so that he is in charge. Here, we have a period, usually, about one month between when the results are declared and when the new President takes over.

Mr Speaker, I have an experience that I want to recount here. After the election and before the inauguration of the new President, I received a call that the rice and maize that this House approved to be

purchased, which had been stored in Tema at a warehouse, was being guarded and protected by some civilians and that if I did not intervene, they would be a problem, since I was a member of the Transition team. So, I got up and drove there to find out who these civilians were. There were some young people; some of them I knew, but others I did not know. I asked them what the problem was and they said the rice that was purchased was being stolen so they were there to protect it. I asked them, “But you are not security agents so why have you taken it upon yourselves to protect the rice?” They said, “Sir, we have to protect the rice because some people intend to steal it.”

Mr Speaker, I engaged them and we came to some understanding as to how the rice should be protected until 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 when the new President is sworn in.

Mr Speaker, young people went to some of the ministry buildings, and some of the agencies, and if one went to them to ask why they were standing there, they would say they were protecting public assets. They claimed that some people intended to steal the vehicles and some items in the ministries, and they could not trust the security agencies so they were there to protect those assets. We saw a similar pattern across the country. In fact, in my region, the young men went and some of them said there were some items in the warehouses of the various district assembly buildings. So, I called my regional chairman and we called the Regional Police Commander and said, “Go and secure these warehouses;

put a padlock”— and we told the young people, “If you believe that there are items there that would be stolen by the assembly staff, you should add one padlock, take your key away and the Regional Commander would also take his key away. Nobody would open those ware houses until after the 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 when the new President is sworn in.” They did that and we secured everything in the warehouses.

So, what I see is a problem of trust and lack of confidence during transitions. Citizens taking upon themselves to protect public assets is something that I find regrettable, yet they think they are engaged in a patriotic duty. Why have we arrived at this?

Mr Speaker, if you would recall, four years ago, in this very House, we had a major challenge which was the question of recruitment into our security agencies. If Hon Members would recall, my Colleagues, Alhaji Alhassan Suhiyini, Mr Okudzeto Ablakwa, and I brought before this House a Motion to investigate recruitments into the security agencies.

Mr Speaker, the ordinary thing that should happen is that during a transition, the security agencies should secure every asset of the State. Why is it that the youth of this country do not have confidence in the security agencies to do their job? The answer is simple. They do not have confidence because in most cases, they see the actors in those security agencies as an extension of the party in power. They do not see the security agencies as independent professional institutions that would genuinely protect public

assets because by the way we conducted affairs, we compromised the integrity of our security agencies.

Yesterday, a civil servant, serving in a ministry that I would not mention, called me and said, “I am a civil servant. I came to work; I want to take one of the official vehicles and drive to the Controller and Accountants General Department to carry out some functions but there are some young people at the entrance of my ministry saying that I cannot move the vehicle out. I should use my own vehicle to carry out these functions.”

3. 30 p.m.

Mr Speaker, I drove there, met the young people, asked them what the problem was and they told me they were protecting the vehicles. I told them to allow the civil servant drive the vehicle to the Controller and Accountant-General’s Department’s office and carry out his functions and come back. They told me that since I had gone to tell them, they would let the vehicle go.

Mr Speaker, why will they seek to protect state assets from civil servants because we know that our Civil Service is supposed to be non-partisan; it is supposed to be professional. Why? Because we have conducted ourselves in a such way that we always, while in power, try to co-opt the Civil Service and use them as if they are a part of our party apparatus and not independent professional officers who should not be acting under the whims and caprices of politicians.

In doing that, we have compromised the neutrality and the integrity of our Civil Service. And so, the public do not see the civil servants as neutral, independent professional actors; they see them as part of our various political organisations and so they do not trust them. So, what we are facing today is a major loss of confidence in institutions that ordinarily should be independent, professional and should be respected and highly regarded by every single Ghanaian, but they are not. And so, when I am asked the Motion that should be passed in this House, the Resolution to be passed in this House, we should pass a resolution asking this House to enquire into our conduct in and out of office that has ultimately led to the situation that we are faced with today: where the young people in this country do not have confidence in our Civil Service; do not have confidence in our Police Service; do not have confidence in our Army and feel that they on their own should go on and protect property and assets that we have recruited and are paying these same services to protect. We have a genuine problem, and it is not a partisan matter.

Today, we are reaping the benefits of the seeds that we, invariably, sowed when we were in office. And I hope that the party that I belong to and has just won an election, and has taken over this country, will not go along that path. That is why I was happy when Hon Ministers who appeared before the Appointments Committee promised that they would ensure that recruitments into the Military, Police, Fire Service and all these professional bodies that are supposed to carry out independent and

professional functions, indeed are impartial, not political, and every Ghanaian citizen has a fair opportunity of being recruited. And that when they are recruited, they are not made to understand that it is a reward for being a member of a political party but that it is a calling to be a part of a noble organisation that should stand up for this country and not one political group.

Mr Speaker, we are reaping what we sowed; let us not complain. I will conclude by saying that I agree that we should condemn it together, unambiguously. It should not happen across party lines. I agree that we should review the situation with a view to coming out with proposals of how to deal with this problem that we are confronted with. We can make recommendations which we could communicate to the Executive, but let us not turn it into a partisan thing and start saying that the President has lost control; the President is not doing this; he has not taken charge and that he should take charge.

The President is trying to take charge of the situation but the young people are telling him that they cannot trust the Police, Military, Public Service because those who came before him politicise these organisations [*Hear! Hear!*]. I am telling us what I personally experienced. And I am telling you that, just yesterday, I had to go and convince the young people to allow a civil servant to perform his functions. They are clearly not right, but were we right when we created an impression that people should be recruited to the security agencies on the basis of partisanship; were we right?

Were we right when we politicised our Civil Service? Were we right when we politicised our Military Service? Were we right when we ran this country in such a way that we excluded everyone who was not part of our party? Were we right when a majority of procurements were sole-sourced and the business community were denied business unless they identified with a political party?

Mr Speaker, we are reaping what we sowed. So, I do agree that it is a genuine problem but I am saying that all of us have in the past behaved in ways that have encouraged the attitudes, tendencies and behaviours that we are witnessing today. Let us agree as a House that we are going to work together to end impunity; that we are going to work together to ensure greater inclusion in governance; that we are going to share the benefits of prosperity together.

Mr Speaker, on this note, I would thank my Colleague, the Hon Minority Leader for making this Statement. We join him to condemn the violence against the manager of the Jubilee Lounge. We agree with him that the matter should be investigated, and that those who engage in such conducts, must be held accountable. But I urge all of us to work together to change the narrative, and to reset Ghana.

**The Speaker:** Well, Hon Members, not just this House, I think the whole country has identified a very serious challenge and a threat to the survival of our democracy. A friend of mine resident in the United States of America (USA), wrote to me and termed our democracy,

Ghana's democracy, as a "lawless democracy". Now, when they say a democracy is lawless, it means it is not a democracy; it is a failed democracy because democracy strives on rule of law. Please, in this House, I read a Statement two days ago, it is made up of 276 representatives of the people; elected Hon Members. The Executive is made up of an individual; a President elected by the same people. If we the 276 elected from the diversity of Ghana, cannot come together to agree on the way forward and we would want to allow one individual who does not represent that diversity, but represents one group; a party, how could he be the one to take the decision to solve such a problem.

3.43 p.m.

That is why it is incumbent on this House; this is a House that can sit together and find a solution to this national challenge.

Globally, we are acclaimed, but this is a very sore point and all objective observers saw this coming. We used to have what we call dominion service which came down to colonial service, then to government service, then to civil service which was termed public service. It is now self-service. Are you getting the trend? You cannot get it? Now it is self-service. Which people are leading that? It is the political class.

It used to be called dominion service because at that time the United Kingdom (UK) had dominions. So those who worked there were called dominion service. Then, later on they termed us

colonies, so it became colonial service, and we used to have the secretary of State. By that, we became a government, thus. we formed our own governments and then it became government service. We then established the civil service.

I have ever worked in the civil service before. It had very strict rules. This civil service deteriorated and the term public service came into use. Usually, as they deteriorate, the conditions of service get better. So, the public servants rather receive better conditions of service than the civil servants who were just serving the civilians. They were not looking for material gains. Now, this whole public service has worsened and it is now self-service. So, when people are appointed into positions, including those elected, the focus is how they serve themselves. So, it is now self-service.

The people are observing us as political leaders. This is what has deteriorated, to the extent that our security agents now moved from state security to government security, then from that into private security. That is where we are now. Even with the private security, if you look at our laws, there are regulations but they are not being followed. So, everybody is now trying to survive on his or her own. That is where we have come to, and that is why we have this.

The only organ of government that can provide a solution is Parliament because all the interest groups are represented here. The President cannot do that because he is seen as representing

one class of people thus the political party. Hon Members have to lead to find a solution. So, when you get the opportunity and get up there, you are a mirror of what is happening, you encourage it and that is why we say we would manage this discussion so that we can take up the issue of the transitional blows which is what is happening in our country now. Yes, we have very good and peaceful elections, and thereafter, everything goes haywire. We cannot continue this way. Yes, it is true we have to look at the Presidential (Transition) Act, 2012 (Act 845). It was progress made but there are a lot of gaps.

The system that you were referring to, if you talk about UK, they do not have a term limit. There is no law in the UK that says that when you elect a government into power, it would serve from this date to that date. So, circumstances determine whether they should call for election or not. But our Constitution is very specific which is from 7th January to 6th January with a four-year term. It is automatic, and we have to prepare. It is not the period that you use—

The Hon Member cited the United States of America (USA). Yes, they use a period and we also use one. But what should happen? Handing over is not what happens in Sierra Leone. Immediately they announce results, the president is sworn in. What has he taken over? There must be a process where there is a real handing over, a peaceful one. You are going to be a minister and this is what you are taking over. You cannot just go and take over an empty office. You look

for information and you do not even know where it is. That was what was happening here and that is why we are trying to pass the Parliament Transition Act—where after a Speaker is elected, before he gets to the office, the former Speaker is nowhere to be found. Then all the staff there would have also left because their tenure has ended. Then you start asking questions. You look for files and you cannot trace any. It has happened and it is happening in government.

We need to sit down—I thought by this time, after this handing over a number of times, we have understood that no party can be in government forever, yet, we have not because—it is not them; I am telling all Hon Members. There is no “them” and “us”, we are the same people. These people are just tools that are being used by some people in political offices. They are just doing that for survival. You are the people behind the scene, pushing them there to do what they are doing. Until the political leaders sit down and take control, this is what would continue to happen in the country. We would all be at risk.

I really do not see leadership in many of you because you are being led by the mob. You are afraid of your followers. The leader must lead. Yes, you have to listen to your followers but you take the decision and hold yourself responsible. You cannot allow the mob to push you to do what is happening in this country, that is not allowed. Then what is leadership about? It is both ways and not just one party. It has happened. In fact, on some occasions, I have had to weep because of

how people I knew were mutilated and killed during transitions. Yes, even Jesus Christ wept —[*Laughter*]. You must know this. I think all of you have been quoting the Holy Quran and the Holy Bible and the lessons are there. Who was the best friend of Jesus Christ? Judas Iscariot and not just Judas, there are many of them named Judas.

3.50 p.m.

Who finally sold Jesus? Is it not Judas? So, today you sit here—And Bob Marley told you that those who eat and drink with you will do what? Your best friends could be what?—[**Some Hon Members:** Your worst enemy]—Exactly! Please! They would do what? [An Hon Member: Crucify you]—Crucify you. And it has happened on many occasions in this country.

I would want to urge all of you to read the political history of this country and you will see and learn so many lessons to guide you in your political career; that is, if you want to stay long. If you want to be like others, fine, you can continue, but there are a lot of lessons for us to learn which we have not learnt at all.

Our definition of leadership is wrong. I would be initiating in this House and I would need your support. We would have to have what I term, “National Integrity Award” where we would annually identify people we believe are men and women of integrity and give them sumptuous awards—[*Hear! Hear!*].—This is so that we can motivate people to do what is right, good and just,

and to sacrifice for people, and to build people but not to build houses. I do not know whether you would carry these mansions that you are building into the grave. I cannot understand it.

So, when these young people are so hungry because they have been denied food for eight or four years and they see that the one denying them the food is no longer there, what do you think they will do? It is survival of the fittest. When I saw the incident that the Minority Leader referred to, it was sad. We have seen similar ones, but should we encourage it? Should we allow it go on? Should we keep on decrying the situation? We must find a solution to it. So, I am going to charge the Leaders—It is not a matter of Resolution, no.

We have to take this Presidential (Transition) Act, 2012 (Act 845)—We are working on that of Parliament’s. We have done a transition smoothly here without you realising it. There was a Clerk to Parliament, but, now, we have a new Clerk to Parliament. It is a smooth transition, and we managed it. He is still acting, and he would act till the last day which is 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2025. That is when the former Clerk to Parliament would have ended his tenure. He is on leave prior to retirement; then, the Acting Clerk to Parliament would now be confirmed as the Clerk to Parliament. This was done smoothly, and we are doing everything to make sure that the former Clerk to Parliament will still have us in mind, so that, anytime we call upon him, he would be here to support the House. We can put these systems and structures in place at the national level.

I had to call the former Speaker, Prof Aaron Mike Ocquaye, and that is why, a lot of the times, I refer to him when I do things. We have been talking; we are good friends, and he is my former boss. It is just that now it is my term. Why can we not do that at the national level? It is sad.

What is the difference between this and the military regimes? You have not experienced it—[*Laughter*—You do not know; you were not born during the 1966 *coup d'état* and, during the 1979 *coup d'état*, you were young—[**An Hon Member:** Mr Speaker, he was not born]—Were you born in 1979? Were you born in 1981? — [**Dr Stephen Amoah:** Mr Speaker, I was born]—You were born during that 1981 *coup d'état*. Is it during the 1979 *coup d'état* that you were not born? — [**Dr Amoah:** I was born]—But you do not know what occasioned it; you also do not know what the then Leaders—Many of you keep blaming H. E. the late Jerry John Rawlings; he was even in detention. Those who staged the *coup d'état* took him as their leader when he came in; you do not know happened. We were there, and I was a student leader then. These days, you get up and talk about your leadership. You are latter day saints. [*Laughter*]

Please, we are in charge of the issue of law and order; let us do what is right. This is because, as at now, until we take up the leadership, the current Ministers we are approving to be appointed by the President will have a difficulty in resetting the country on their own. It is this House that has to anchor them to be

able to do it. If you keep on making these exchanges, you are worsening the situation. I would end it here, and I want to call on all of you with private security to disband them. We do not want “something-something” forces or what are the other names? “Something-something” boys? No, we do not want them.

Please, I expect that after you have spoken, you would take up the leadership. I have directed that each and every one of you be given the code of conduct that we approved as a House. Every Member of Parliament must be given a copy, and I am going to enforce it. That is why I made the statement that if you have evidence of any Member indulging in *galamsey*, draw my attention to it. I will put in motion a process where you would lose your membership as a Member of Parliament. Please, bring the information to my notice; we will take action. Yes, that is how we can fight *galamsey* because if you are the people behind it—These poor people who are saying, “all die be die” know that when they are in the pit, it can collapse and they would die, but they have no alternative. When they come out of the pit, do you look at them as human beings? They are just tools you are using, so we will start it from here and I mean what I am saying.

Hon Member, are you listening? The gentleman seated by the Hon former Minister for Finance, are you listening to me? I mean what I am saying; I am not joking. Unless you hide the information from me, but if I get any credible information on any of you on this matter,



I am going to initiate the process, and you can lose your seat as an MP. The law is there to enable us do that.

4.00 p.m.

Please, a word to the wise is enough.  
[Pause]

Leadership National Integrity Award, we would take it up. The second one, please let us take up the Transition Act, whether we still call it Presidential Transition Act or something else, let us look at it deeply. We are doing ours; Parliamentary Transition Act. But let us look at the national one, and make sure that all what you have learnt and what you said, are taken care of. We can lead the process. Do not let us leave it to the Executive, because they represent one group; I can tell you for sure, that they are being led by the mob. Our illustrious King, Otumfuo Nana Osei Tutu II, himself stated it, that our Presidents are usually cocooned by societal forces; so, the decisions they take are not their decisions. We cannot allow that to continue; you are the leaders here. I keep on saying that democracy is Parliament. When Parliament kicks or ticks, then democracy would also tick. So we must change our ways.

Thank you so much.

We have a few more Statements, and I would ask the First Deputy Speaker to take at least two of them, and you can continue with the rest tomorrow. They are very important Statements. I am happy that the first-timers are doing well in this direction; well researched, well

written Statements. So please take two of them and with the support of the Leaders, I think we should start with the one on the intergovernmental organisation, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS); Statement on Nigeria's Admission into BRICS and its Implications for West Africa and ECOWAS.

4:03 p.m. —

[MR FIRST DEPUTY SPEAKER  
IN THE CHAIR]

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, the Speaker has recognised a Statement and that is the Statement on the floor.

Yes, Hon Minority Leader?

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** Mr Speaker, as you may be well aware, we have some vetting going on, so I would want to proceed with mine, if leave would be granted.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Is it in relation to the Statement that has been admitted and supposed to be taken on the floor?

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** That is so, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** But let me remind you that the Statement is on Nigeria's Admission into BRICS and its Implications for West Africa and ECOWAS.

**Osahen Afenyo-Markin:** That is so, Mr Speaker.

## STATEMENT

### **Nigeria's Admission into BRICS and its Implications for West Africa and ECOWAS**

**Minority Leader (Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin):** Mr Speaker, thank you once again for this treasured space to make this Statement on Nigeria's Admission into BRICS and its Implications for West Africa and ECOWAS.

Mr Speaker, I make this Statement in my capacity, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Deputy Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament, and Member of the ECOWAS Parliament. I find it imperative to address this House on Nigeria's recent admission as a partner country of the BRICS bloc, which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This development presents both opportunities and challenges that demand our immediate attention within the context of West Africa and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), particularly as the region navigates economic recovery in a post-pandemic era.

Mr Speaker, since its inception in 2009, BRICS has grown into a significant alliance representing over 40 per cent of the global population and approximately 25 per cent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), valued at over \$27 trillion. With the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB), boasting of an initial capital of \$100 billion, the bloc aims to provide alternatives to traditional

Western-dominated financial institutions. This collective economic acumen positions BRICS, as a major player in shaping global trade, investment flows, and development policies, with the potential to influence key international economic decisions.

Mr Speaker, in recent years, BRICS has expanded its membership, with Indonesia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, United Arab Emirates and with Iran joining, other countries like Argentina, Malaysia, Thailand and Turkey have also expressed interest. This expansion highlights BRICS' commitment to fostering cooperation among emerging economies, and enhancing its role in global governance.

Mr Speaker, as Africa's largest economy, Nigeria's inclusion in BRICS is a recognition of its growing influence on the global stage. As the most populous nation in Africa, with a robust and diversified economy, Nigeria's alignment with the BRICS group could redefine regional trade, development and geopolitical strategies. Through BRICS, Nigeria can advocate for fairer trade practices, increased foreign investment in Africa, and access to technology that supports industrialisation.

Mr Speaker, for West Africa, this development could serve as a catalyst for regional integration and economic development. Nigeria accounts for approximately 60 per cent of the total GDP of the ECOWAS, making its BRICS partnership a potential game-changer for the region. Nigeria's membership offers an opportunity to

attract BRICS investments into the region, particularly in infrastructure, energy, and technology. As BRICS nations expand their focus on South-South cooperation, West Africa could benefit from increased collaboration in addressing developmental challenges such as food security, climate change, and trade barriers. Leveraging BRICS' trade links could expand market access for ECOWAS member states especially in sectors like agriculture, energy and technology.

Mr Speaker, in addition, funding from the NDB, formerly the BRICS Development Bank, could be channeled into regional projects such as the West African Power Pool and other infrastructure developments. Again, Nigeria's strengthened global standing may enhance ECOWAS' ability to address security issues in the Sahel region, which have obstructed various development efforts.

Mr Speaker, these notwithstanding, this alliance may also come with its challenges. Nigeria's alignment with BRICS could potentially shift its focus from ECOWAS priorities, particularly in instances where BRICS interests diverge from regional objectives. This could lead to a redefinition of Nigeria's leadership role within ECOWAS, as it balances its commitments to the region and its responsibilities within BRICS.

Additionally, Nigeria's membership could create new power dynamics within West Africa. As the largest economy, Nigeria must ensure that its engagement with BRICS benefits not only its

domestic interests but also contributes to the collective development of the ECOWAS sub-region. This will require strategic diplomacy and a commitment to shared regional goals.

Mr Speaker, I urge this House to consider how Ghana and the rest of ECOWAS can strategically position themselves in the light of this development. We must engage Nigeria to ensure that its participation in BRICS complements rather than undermines the objectives of ECOWAS. As a region, we must explore partnerships with BRICS' countries to strengthen our collective bargaining power and enhance economic development across West Africa.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, Nigeria's admission into BRICS is a significant milestone with profound implications for West Africa and ECOWAS. It is a strategic partnership which potentially offers Ghana and ECOWAS new pathways to trade, development and economic integration. However, to fully realise these benefits, regional leaders must embrace cooperation, invest in innovation and implement strategies that leverage shared strengths for collective progress. As the global balance of power shifts, let us harness the opportunities it presents while addressing the potential challenges to ensure that our region continues to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

2.53 p.m.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Thank you very much. Hon Members, the Statement standing in the name of the Hon Minority Leader, Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin is made, I would welcome comments from Hon Members subject to Standing Order 93(5).

I recognise the Majority Leader.

**Mr Ayariga:** Mr Speaker, I think we have a matter that needs your attention.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, owing to a pressing need, I am minded to suspend the House for an hour.

*4.15 p.m. — Sitting suspended*

*6.11p.m. — Sitting resumed*

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** The House was suspended after a Statement on Nigeria's Admission into BRICS and its Implications for West Africa and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was presented by the Hon Minority Leader, Osahen Alexander Kwamena Afenyo-Markin. We were about taking comments subject to Order 93(5) when the need arose that I should suspend the House, so we are now back and we are at a point that Members should make comments on the Statement within the ambit of our own Order.

Yes, Hon Member?

**Mr Alhassan Tampuli Sulemana (NPP — Gushegu):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, looking across this hallowed Chamber, I am not too sure we have the requisite number of Members to continue to transact Business in this Chamber. Mr Speaker, I refer to Order 64(3), and Article 104(1) of the Constitution of the Republic to draw your attention to the fact that we do not have the requisite quorum to transact Business in this Chamber.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, do you have the Constitution with you?

**Mr A. T. Sulemana:** Mr Speaker, I rather refer to Article 102 of the Constitution of Ghana, that is, quorum in Parliament, not quorum to take decisions.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Members, the issue of quorum has been raised. The Statement is emanating from the Minority Leader. May I have the pleasure of the available Minority Leader in the person of the Minority Chief Whip?

**Minority Chief Whip (Mr Frank Annoh-Dompreh):** Mr Speaker, my pleasure cannot be different from the pleasure of the Constitution and as a renowned and respected lawyer, I am sure your position would not be different from my position. Mr Speaker, if it is the question of my pleasure, I would want to compromise on my pleasure and invite you for us to go by the dictates of the Constitution.

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Well, I was thinking that once the Statement is emanating from your Side, we could plead with the Hon Member who raised the issue of quorum and take the comments on the Statement, but if your position is not different from the position of the Constitution, let me see what is the pleasure of the available Majority Leader then we will proceed to do the needful.

**Mr Peter Kwasi Nortsu-Kotoe:**  
Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, per what the Hon Member was quoting, I think it is when we are going to take a decision that issues of quorum arise. This one, it is a Statement that was made and we were not able to take decision —

**Mr First Deputy Speaker:** Hon Member, I know the provisions of

Article 102 and 104 of the Constitution, that is why after making reference to 104, I asked him whether he has the Constitution with him, because Article 104 of the Constitution has got to do with decision making and Article 102 of the Constitution is on quorum to commence Business. So, if they would not want us to take comments on their own Statement as a result of which they are raising a Constitutional quorum, Hon Members, I will accordingly proceed to have the House adjourned to Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2025, at 10.00 in the forenoon. Thank you.

## ADJOURNMENT

*The House was adjourned at 6.11p.m. till Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2025, at 10.00 in the forenoon.*

