

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, the Committee on Privileges & Ethics is one of Sessional Select Committees charged with the responsibility to oversee and uphold the privileges, laws and customs of the House as well as the responsibilities of Members of Parliament and Standard of Parliamentary conduct which is enshrined in Section 93(i)(f), 93(6)(a), 97 and 99 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone and Standing Orders 70 (11).
- 1.2 The Parliamentary Ethics, Privileges and Panel codes describe the responsibilities, rights and punishments that Members and Staff are to conform and adhere to as Members and serving official of the House based on set principles and laws.
- 1.3 Obligations of MPs set out in the code are complimentary to those which apply to all Members of Parliament and staff by virtue of procedural and other rules of the House. The rules create obligations that members of Parliament must follow. The House of Parliament also provides guidance to Members and Staff which generally reflect good practice.
- 1.4 Ethical Standards for Staff and Members of Parliament are laws or norms that individuals should adhere to while serving as Staff or Members of Parliament.
- 1.5 It will be recalled that, at a sitting of Parliament on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2022, commotion and pandemonium took place in the Well of Parliament during a debate on a Government Motion for the laying on the table of the House of two Statutory instruments Nos. 13 and 14 of the 2022 respectively published in the Sierra Leone Gazette on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2022. These Instruments contained Regulations by the Electoral Commission of

Sierra Leone (ECSL) designed to give effect to the District Block Proportional Representation System, a form of Proportional Representation enshrined in section 38A of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone.

- 1.6 The devastating and disorderly conduct in the Well of Parliament resulted in injuries being inflicted on some Members of Parliament, destruction of communication equipment, and other properties and temporary disruption of sitting for that day. See attached ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament. ( section 99 (subsections i-v)
- 1.7 As a result of the Speaker's Ruling on the incident of 23<sup>rd</sup> of November,2022,Hon.Members of the Committee were summoned to meetings on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2022 and Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 respectively with the objective of bringing out recommendations to the ruling and to also bring sanity to Parliament in general.

## **2.0 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

2.1 Membership of the Committee comprises:

1. Hon. P.C. Alie Badara Sheriff – Chairman
2. Hon. P.C. Matilda Yayu Lansana Minah – Deputy Chairman
3. Hon. Dickson M. Rogers - Member
4. Hon. Alusine Kanneh - Member
5. Hon. Christopher K. Vandy – ”
6. Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay - ”
7. Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina - ”
8. Hon. Quintin Salia Konneh - ”
9. Hon. Abdul Titus Kamara – ”
10. Hon. Dr. Abdulai D. Sesay – ”
11. Hon. Mohamed Bangura – ”
12. Hon. Abdul Turay – ”
13. Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo – ”
14. Hon. Ajibola Manly –Spain – ”
15. Hon. Alusine Bash Kamara – ”
16. Hon. P.C. Fatmata H.B.M.K. Koroma

### **Staff**

1. Kemoh Marrah – Principal Clerk of Committee
2. Mohamed Kargbo – Committee Clerk

## **3.0 MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE**

3.1 The mandate of the Privileges & Ethics Committee is broadly described under section 99 subsection 1- 5 of Act No. 6 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. It gives the Committee the mandate to

investigate the matter so referred and to report to Parliament for appropriate action. This is also provided for in the Standing Orders of Parliament (S.O 70(11a&b)).

#### **4.0 PROCEDURE**

4.1 The Committee met on diverse dates; Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2022 and Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 to primarily discuss and also endorse the Speaker's ruling.

In each of the meetings, motions (for or against) were moved and carried.

The discussions were climaxed by voting which resulted into the confirmation of Speaker's ruling by a majority vote at each interval.

#### **5.0 DISCUSSION**

5.1 During the deliberation there was division over the Ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker which resulted to motion and counter motions put forward by Members pursuant to Standing Orders of Parliament (S.O 25 (1g)).

A Motion was moved by Hon. Dickson M. Rogers and seconded by Hon. P.C. Matilda Yayu Lansana Minah in favour of adopting the ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker.

5.2 Counter Motion by Hon. Mohamed Bangura and seconded by Hon. Abdul Turay that the matter be referred to the Committee for proper investigation and also appealed for reduction of penalties.5.3. By the directive of the Chairman and with reference to Standing Orders (S.O) 42, 44 and 46 the Committee Clerk was instructed to do head count on the voting process.

5.3 **Motion** -The Chairman moved the motion, 'All those who are in favour of adopting the ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker for the November 23rd incident raise your right hand'.

Six (6) Members stood in favour of the Ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker. Whilst Four (4) stood against the motion with strong argument that the matter be referred to the said Committee for further investigation or proper hearing.

The discussions were climaxed by voting which resulted into the confirmation of Speaker's ruling by a majority vote.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, the Committee on Privileges & Ethics met for the second time (Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2023). The Committee Members deliberated and resolved to go by the ruling of the Speaker.

The ruling was read thus;

"Taking all the facts and circumstances of the inglorious incident of 23rd November into account, and in exercise of both the powers contained in S.O. 43 and those vested in me as Speaker and in order to provide a deterrent against similar action in future, I have decided as follows:

1. That Hon. Aaron Aruna Koroma of Constituency 048; Hon. Lahai Marah of Constituency 042 and Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara of Constituency 059 shall withdraw indefinitely from all proceedings in the House until a final determination is made by the House from the recommendations of the Committee of Privileges to which their misconduct is hereby committed. Until then all their privileges, immunities, remuneration and allowances are withdrawn;

2. That they pay equally to Parliament within two weeks the total amount of NLe380,000 being the cost of the properties of Parliament damaged as a result of the attack on the Chamber on 23rd November 2022 and that if they fail to pay the said amount within the time thus stipulated that it shall be deducted from any gratuities due to them at the end of the life of this Fifth Parliament;
3. That with immediate effect no strangers be allowed into the galleries of the Well of Parliament except by official invitation from the Office of the Speaker and all strangers so invited shall be subjected to proper search before admission;
4. That with immediate effect no strangers be allowed to enter the premises of Parliament with mobile phones, drinks and food items;
5. That with immediate effect all drivers to Members of Parliament shall only be allowed to stay in their vehicles or in the vicinity of where their vehicles are parked.
6. That for the avoidance of double punishment no further action shall be taken by the Sierra Leone Police against the three Members of Parliament aforementioned;
7. That appropriate action shall be taken by the Sierra Leone Police against all the strangers who participated in the incident of 23rd November 2022.

Hon. Members, this is my Ruling.”

Having read the recommendations of the Ruling of the Speaker, as stated above, the Chairman of the Committee moved the motion for the second time; Six (6) Members who were present voted in favour and endorsed the recommendations as stated in the ruling of the Speaker.

The Motion was carried.

## **6.0 OBSERVATIONS**

6.1 After lengthy deliberation the following were observed:

- a. That, the Rt. Hon. Speaker is the supreme head of the Legislative service whose decision is legitimate and final especially in bringing sanity, order and precedent in the House of Parliament. The Rt. Hon. Speaker's decision is final and cannot be subjected to any appeal;
- b. Majority of the Members viewed the Ruling as the right decision and endorsed the ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker since no sign of remorse was demonstrated by the Members concerned to date;
- c. That, the minority agreed with the ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker but they suggested that the Committee's findings should have come out first before the Ruling of the Hon. Speaker.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 The Committee made the following recommendations:

- That, the Committee through majority vote endorsed that the Rt.Hon. Speaker's Ruling must stand as legitimate and final; and
- That, Members of the Committee also pleaded that the punishment regarding the withholding of salaries be reduced from three (3) months to two (2) months.

## **8.0 CONCLUSION**

8.1 Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, following the engagements held in relation to the Ruling submitted by the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament, the said ruling is viewed by the Majority as the right decision and therefore endorsed the decision for the riotous conduct of some Members of Parliament in the Chamber of Parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2022.

8.2 The Leadership of Parliament should therefore be very mindful of the critical role of the Privileges & Ethics Committee for which it should be fully supported for the credibility and integrity of the Institution for a prudent democratic dispensation.

I thank you.

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Hon. P.C. Alie Badara Sheriff III  
Chairman



**MINUTE OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES & ETHICS  
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1, PARLIAMENT BUILDING ON  
WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER, 2022 AT 1:32 P.M.**

**1.0 PRAYERS:** Members observed individual silent prayers

**2.0 ATTENDANCE**

**2.1** The following Members were present:

1. Hon. P.C. Alie Badara Sheriff III - Chairman
2. Hon. P.C. Matilda Yayu Lansana Minah – Deputy Chairman
3. Hon. Dickson M. Rogers – Member
4. Hon. Alusine Kanneh - Member
5. Hon. Christopher K. Vandy
6. Hon. Victoria K. Sesay
7. Hon. Abdul Titus Kamara
8. Hon. Mohamed Bangura
9. Hon. Abdul Turay
10. Hon. Alusine Bash Kamara

**2.2 The following Members were absent :**

1. Hon. Saa Emerson Lamina = with Excuse
2. Hon. P.C. Fatmata M. K. Koroma – with Excuse
3. Hon. Quintin Salia Konneh
4. Hon. Dr. Abdulai D. Sesay
5. Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo
6. Hon. Ajibola Manly – Spain

**3.0 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

In his opening statement, the Chairman, Hon. P.C. Alie Badara Sheriff III applauded the timely response of Members to the meeting. He informed the Committee about the previous conflict resolution process that was undertaken in Moyamba Town and asked that the report be made available to Members.

The Chairman further admonished Members on the conduct of some Members of Parliament in the Well of Parliament on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 which resulted to the Rt.Hon. Speaker's ruling and recommendations on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.

He concluded by highlighting the mandate of the Privileges & Ethics Committee and its key responsibilities to recommend for sanctions of Members of Parliament for misconduct as stated in S.O 70 (11b & c).

He encouraged Hon. Members to read the ruling of the Rt. Hon. Speaker and discuss actions for prompt recommendations.

**4.0 DISCUSSION**

**6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.0 ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee rose at 2:15 p.m.

**Signed:**

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**Kemoh Marrah, Principal Clerk of Committee**

