

# MEMORANDUM


TO : RT HON SPEAKER

FROM : MINORITY LEADER (OSAHEN ALEXANDER KWAMENA AFENYO-MARKIN)

CC : MAJORITY LEADER AND LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

DATE : 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2025

SUBJECT : REQUEST FOR THE RECUSAL OF HON EMMANUEL KWASI BEDZRAH AS CHAIR OF THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE



Rt Hon Speaker, I write to respectfully bring to your attention serious concerns regarding the continued Chairmanship of Hon Emmanuel Kwasi Bedzrah over the Ad-hoc Committee established to investigate the disturbances at the Appointments Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

As you will recall, the establishment of the Committee was met with strong procedural objections from the Minority, as detailed in our memorandum to your office on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. This matter was a key subject of discussion during our Leadership meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, where efforts were made to reach a mutually acceptable resolution to the issues at hand.

Following that meeting, at the plenary sitting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, I took responsibility for and on behalf of our side, while the Majority Leader also spoke on behalf of his side, urging you to vacate the suspension of the four affected Honourable Members, which you graciously did. This marked a critical and constructive step towards de-escalation and reconciliation.

However, subsequent developments relating to the conduct and public statements of Hon Bedzrah have given rise to legitimate concerns regarding his impartiality, which, respectfully, necessitate his immediate recusal as Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee.

Rt Hon Speaker, there are compelling reasons to respectfully request that Hon Emmanuel Kwasi Bedzrah recuse himself from his role as Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee. These include:

## (i) Breach of Committee Impartiality and Confidentiality

Hon Bedzrah has made public pronouncements regarding the ongoing work of the Committee in ways that compromise its impartiality. In a widely reported statement on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025, Hon Bedzrah alleged to the media that:

- I, as Minority Leader, instructed my colleagues not to participate in the probe;
- A Minority MP had explicitly communicated via SMS that he was acting on my directive to decline appearing before the Committee;
- An NPP MP, who initially participated, later withdrew from the proceedings, allegedly on my instruction.

These public statements, made while the Committee's work was still ongoing, are highly prejudicial. By publicly attributing motives and actions to the Minority Leader and Minority Caucus, Hon Bedzrah has:

- Demonstrated a clear lack of neutrality in the discharge of his role as Chair;
- Created a perception of bias, particularly against the Minority;
- Compromised the credibility of the Committee's work by appearing to pre-empt its findings in the public domain.

At a minimum, Committee proceedings must remain confidential until a formal report is laid before the House. That the Chair himself has chosen to engage in adverse public commentary on the process is, respectfully, wholly inappropriate and inconsistent with the principles of fair and impartial inquiry.

### **(ii) Violation of the Speaker's Directive Against Public Debate**

Rt Hon Speaker, your own guidance on this matter was unambiguous. In your address on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2025 you explicitly cautioned against turning the Committee's proceedings into a matter of public debate, stating:

*"I urge the committee not to make it a matter of public debate. What you know here is not known by the public, what you do here is also not known by the public, and so when you rush to the public, one word can confuse the whole country, but that word will be understood differently in this House. We still have a lot of work to do with our partners outside this House, a matter of education, a matter of advocacy and we will focus on it. So, I thank you all and please let's continue to work together as a family."*

Despite this clear directive, Hon Bedzrah has proceeded to make extensive public comments about the Committee's work, in direct contravention of your guidance. This blatant disregard for your instructions not only undermines the integrity of the Committee's process but also erodes confidence in the fairness and objectivity of its findings.

### **(iii) Prejudicial Commentary on Minority MPs and Committee Proceedings**

Further concerns arise from Hon Bedzrah's assertion that Minority MPs were afraid or unwilling to assist the Committee in its work. In an interview widely reported on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025, he stated:

*"This is a public interest issue. Public properties were destroyed. The Speaker has formed this Committee to look into it, so I don't see why people would be afraid or refuse to help the Committee in its work."*



He further said on On ChannelOne TV on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 that:

*...they should have waited for us to finish today's own and then we'll have a conclave and decide as the next level but you see parliament is a public place if we sign on to Open Government Partnership which is the OGP... any country which is developing will decided to open up its public space and so if we have opened our public space which parliament being a public space wise what do we have to hide why do we have to shelve some of these?...*

This casts aspersions on the Minority Caucus and creates an impression of non-cooperation, despite the clear and principled objections we raised regarding the procedural irregularities surrounding the establishment and continued operations of the Committee.

A Chairperson must inspire confidence in the objectivity of the proceedings. Unfortunately, Hon Bedzrah's statements have achieved the opposite. The trust required for fair hearings to take place has been eroded, and his continued leadership of the Committee risks further undermining its credibility.

Rt Hon Speaker, as the presiding authority of this House, you have consistently upheld the principle that Parliamentary Committees must conduct their work without prejudice or bias.

The role of a Chairperson of an investigative Committee is particularly delicate, as it requires:

- Fairness, objectivity, and discretion;
- A commitment to allowing the process to speak for itself, rather than publicly interpreting or pre-judging the facts before a report is concluded;
- Ensuring that all parties - regardless of political affiliation - feel their voices will be heard fairly.

In this regard, Hon Bedzrah's public posture and conduct have fallen short of this standard. As such, his continued leadership of the Committee poses a serious risk to the credibility of its findings and the broader effort to resolve the issues arising from the 30<sup>th</sup> January disturbances.

To ensure fairness and to maintain confidence in the process, I respectfully urge you to request his immediate recusal from the Committee and to - in consultation with leadership of the House - appoint more neutral and measured individuals to constitute the Committee.

In the light of these concerns, I humbly request that:

1. Hon Emmanuel Kwasi Bedzrah recuse himself as Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee immediately, to restore confidence in its proceedings.
2. The Committee should be reconstituted with a new Chairperson, in consultation with the leadership of the House. The new Chairperson must undertake the task with the requisite neutrality and discretion as well as all Members of the Committee.
3. I be granted audience with you at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter further and explore how best to ensure that the Committee's work does not further inflame tensions within the House.

This request is made not as a challenge to your authority as Speaker but as a necessary corrective measure to restore faith in the process and ensure that the inquiry does not lend itself to perceptions of partisanship or undue prejudice.

Rt Hon Speaker, I remain committed to working with you in the spirit of cooperation to resolve these issues in a manner that upholds the integrity of Parliament and ensures that justice is done fairly, without the risk of bias or improper influence.

I trust in your good judgement and leadership in addressing this matter, and I look forward to your timely intervention.

Respectfully submitted.