



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT (SECOND SESSION)  
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_ (No. 030 of 2023) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROPRIATE DRESS CODE FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

**Honourable Members,**

1. My attention has been drawn to Members attending Committee meetings, activities or such other specified places in the Rules, while donned in attires that are inappropriate or dressed in a manner that departs from what would pass as decorous parliamentary dress code, which is firmly established in parliamentary traditions and jealously guarded by Parliaments world over.
2. As your Speaker and custodian of the Rules of decorum of the House, it is incumbent upon me to constantly remind Honourable Members of the inescapable imperative to dress appropriately and within the boundaries prescribed in the Speaker's Rules (2017) currently in place.
3. **Honourable Members,** the manner of dressing during plenary and parliamentary committee meetings is prescribed in Rule 9 of the Speaker's Rules relating *Dress code for Members of Parliament, media representatives and guests.*
4. For clarity, **Honourable Members,** the said Rule provides and I quote –

*"9. Members of Parliament, members of the press and guests should not enter the Chamber, Lounge, Dining Room or **Committee Rooms** without being properly dressed. A proper dress for men means a coat, collar, tie, long-sleeved shirt, long trousers, socks and shoes or service uniform. For the ladies, business, formal or smart casual wear applies. Skirts and*

*dresses should be below knee-length and decent. Sleeveless blouses are prohibited."*

5. In this regard, **Honourable Members**, the prescription of dress code was deliberately intended to preserve the honour and dignity of the House. Indeed, my predecessors have severally been invited to guide the House on questions of proper dress code particularly in plenary and in committees.
6. In the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the Late Hon. Jakoyo Midiwo invited the Speaker to guide on a question of proper dress code and whether the prescription should be flexed to allow alternative attire, including national or cultural attire.
7. In this case on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2009, the then Speaker made an elaborate Ruling in where he observed as follows –

*"... the essence of this communication is not restricted to the concept of proper dress code, but extends to capture **a deep reflection on the need to uphold the dignity of the House, which we have jealously protected and defended over the years.** ... I, therefore, urge all Hon. Members to uphold the dignity of the House and observe Rule 5 of the Speaker's Rules on dress code, **not only in this Chamber, but also in Committees, the Lounges and Dining areas"***

8. Further, **Honourable Members**, on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in the 12<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the Member for Kisumu West Constituency, Hon. John Olago Aluoch, sought Speaker's guidance on the matter of appropriate dress code for Members in the Chamber. In that instance, the Speaker guided as follows –

*"... I must emphasize that it is in the interest of Members that whenever they appear in the House or its committees to transact business, they do so in decorous attire befitting their stature as legislators and that of Parliament as an institution.*

*The same does apply to Members while in the Lounge and Dining Room. **I hasten to restate that whenever the House shall find a Member to be improperly dressed, the Chair will not hesitate to enforce strict adherence to proper dressing.** Members who incessantly dress*




*improperly will be deemed to be disorderly and may be subject to applicable sanctions"*

**9. Honourable Members,** I am not about to drop the guard in so far as enforcing the subsisting Speaker's Rules on Dress Code is concerned. As a matter of fact, observance of proper dress code by Members helps to maintain the decorum and dignity of the National Assembly as an August House. I render this guidance with the understanding that by virtue of the high office of a Member of Parliament in the society, Honourable Members are expected to lead by example and uphold the highest standards of conduct. Proper attire is thus a vital aspect of this conduct. I, therefore, implore upon Honourable Members to see to it that their dress code reflects high standards of decorum that befit their honourable positions.

**10.** in view of the foregoing, **Honourable Members,** and taking into account the provisions of Rule 9 of the Speaker's Rules, 2017, I **direct** –

- (i) That,** every Member, **without exception,** adheres to Rule 9 of the Speaker's Rules on Dress Code in committees, lounges and dining areas just as would be the case in the Chamber;
- (ii) That,** Chairpersons of Committees enforce the Speaker's Rules in their respective Committee meetings and activities, just as I would enforce them in the Chamber, and;
- (iii) That,** where for very good reasons, a Chairperson of a Committee is approached by a member to exempt the application of the said Rule, necessary discretion shall be exercised by the Chairperson, without compromising the intent and purpose of Rule 9 of the Speaker's Rules.

**I thank you**

  
**THE RT. HON. (Dr.) MOSES M. WETANG'ULA, EGH, MP**  
**SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

