



REPORT OF THE CHIEF WHIPS' FORUM REGARDING MATTERS REFERRED TO IT BY THE NARC

30 May 2012

On 18 April 2012 the National Assembly Rules Committee referred the following matters to the Chief Whips' Forum for discussion, namely: The use of electronic devices in the Chamber, guidelines for condolence motions, guidelines for motions without notice and guidelines for notice of motions.

The Chief Whips' Forum reports as follows:

1. Use of electronic devices in the Chamber

The Chief Whips' Forum observed that members were using a number of electronic devices in the House and in that there is currently no rule that prohibits the use of electronic devices. It was agreed that tolerance must be observed by Presiding Officers in lieu of a final decision by the NARC.

As the ruling made by the Deputy Speaker, that use of electronic devices would be tolerated as long as their use was not obstructive to the decorum of the House, stands until a final decision is made by the NARC, it was agreed by the CWF that the status quo would remain to allow for a detailed study to be conducted.

Recommendation:

- (a) That a detailed study on the use of electronic devices in other parliaments be undertaken; and
- (b) Guidelines for the use of electronic devices in parliament be drafted after the completion of the comparative study.

2. Guidelines for condolence motions

The Forum raised a concern regarding the number of former members parliament would have within the coming years. It was proposed that the guidelines be amended to only allow a debate on the condolence motions of a former member only if there is agreement amongst parties.

Recommendation:

- (a) The proposed guidelines should be approved with the amendment that the House should acknowledge the passing away of former members and that a debate would only take place with the consensus of the Forum.

3. **Guidelines for notices of motion**

All members agreed to the guidelines as presented.

Recommendation:

The proposed guidelines be approved.

4. **Guidelines for motions without notice**

All members agreed to the guidelines as presented.

Recommendation:

The proposed guidelines be approved.

5. **Guidelines on the draft resolutions**

All members agreed to the guidelines as presented.

Recommendation:

The proposed guidelines be approved.