

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Hon. Members,

I received a letter dated 29 November 2021 from the Hon. Whip of the Opposition requesting that Dr the Hon. Boolell be allowed to intervene on the Independent Broadcasting Authority (Amendment) Bill (No. XVIII of 2021) today.

In 2012, the then Speaker ruled that the selection of orators was a matter for the Whips, namely the Chief Government Whip and Opposition Whip to decide on the list and when they should speak.

In 2013, the then Speaker observed that it was not proper to raise a point of order in regard to list and selection of orators.

The Speaker, making reference to Erskine May and Shakhder, expressed the view that, I quote –

“During the course of actual working, the Government Whip and the Opposition Whip should come to contact with each other to sort out matters of common interest and to understand and accommodate each other.”

Moreover, in 2013, in the course of the same debate, the then Speaker was invited to use his powers under Standing Order 77 to “prevail upon the Government Side to rearrange the order of speaker”. The Speaker ruled that it was an established practice of having, in our parliamentary system, Whips preparing lists of orators while business is being conducted in the Assembly, and submitting same in the Chamber, without the Speaker’s intervention. The House has always accepted that lists of orators are reached through consensus between the Whips.

Hon. Members,

I wish to point out that at the last Sitting, the name of Dr the Hon. Boolell was on the list of orators that was duly circulated. When his turn was reached, his name was called out but he was absent and no explanation was given. It is also an established practice that when a Member whose name is on the list to intervene but when called, is absent, he loses the opportunity to intervene in the debate.

In the light of the above, I regret not being able to intervene. However, I have requested Hon. Armance to sort out the matter with the Hon. Chief Government Whip.

I thank you.