



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**TWELFTH PARLIAMENT - (FOURTH SESSION)**

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_ (No. 54 of 2020) \_\_\_\_\_

**ON**

**REVIEW OF SEATING CAPACITY IN VARIOUS SPACES &  
FACILITIES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DURING COVID-19  
PANDEMIC**

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**Hon. Members,** this communication supplements the *Guidelines Nos. 1 & 2*, which I issued on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020 with regard to Chamber and Committee Sittings during the Covid-19 pandemic period. You may recall that, as part of legislative Business Continuity Plan for both Houses of Parliament, the Parliamentary Service Commission, which I chair, did invite the Ministry of Health to undertake an inspection of facilities within the precincts of Parliament and recommend the appropriate capacity that the facilities could hold in compliance with Covid-19 prevention protocols.

Following an advisory from the Ministry of Health dated March 20, 2020 regarding suitable seating capacity for the Chamber, Committee rooms and other facilities during the Covid-19 pandemic period, I did issue Guidelines limiting the number of persons that may be accommodated in the Chamber and other facilities used by the National Assembly.

**Honourable Members,** on the strength of that advisory and the measures that Parliament had put in place, you will agree with me that, despite the breadth of interactions of Members of Parliament, there have been far too low Covid-19 infections within the parliamentary fraternity. As you may have also noticed, recent statistics on new infections are also tending towards flattening of the curve.

**Honourable Members,** Given the current situation, and so as to open up the Chamber and Committee rooms for more Members to engage in legislative work, on Monday, September 14, 2020, I instructed the Ministry of Health to inspect the facilities and recommend appropriate seating capacity for the Chamber, Committee rooms and other facilities within the precincts of Parliament.

I am glad to report to the House that, in its *Interim Report* dated today, Tuesday, September 15, 2020, the Ministry of Health has recommended upward review of numbers that may be accommodated in certain spaces in Parliament as follows-

1. The Main Chamber shall now hold 112 Members, up from the current 60 Members. This excludes the Speaker, the Clerk and 4 key officers facilitating the sitting of the House;
2. The seating capacity for Committee Rooms in Continental House has been adjusted to 15 from 10 persons;
3. The Chapel shall accommodate a maximum of 15 persons;
4. The Muslims' prayer room shall hold a maximum of nine (9) persons, being six (6) on the male section and three (3) on female section;

5. The Capacity of the Mini Chamber and Committee Rooms 9 and 7 remains as advised in March 2020; and

6. Committee Room 12 shall remain out of use.

With regard to the revised numbers in the Chamber, the Clerk is directed to take necessary measures to ensure that the Chamber is reconfigured so as to accommodate the revised number of Members with effect from the morning Sitting of the House on Thursday, September 17, 2020. Consequently, Committees which may have scheduled meetings in the Chamber tomorrow, Wednesday, September 16, 2020, are advised to reschedule their meetings to alternative venues, so as to allow the Clerk to reconfigure the Chamber as directed.

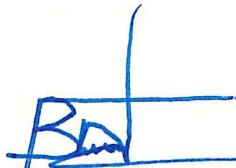
**Honourable Members,** the Catering facility has also been re-opened. However, it shall be restricted to **exclusive use by sitting Members of Parliament only.** Accordingly, I firmly reiterate that the facility is out of bounds to all visitors and direct that the Chief Serjeant-At-Arms strictly enforces this measure.

I also wish to restate that no visitors shall be admitted to the precincts of Parliament, except in exceptional circumstances permitted by the Speaker for persons appearing before Committees such as those currently appearing before Public Accounts Committee, Public Investments Committee, Special Funds Accounts Committee and the Departmental Committee on Transport, Public Works and Housing on various matters under consideration.

**Honourable Members,** even as we increase the capacity in various spaces within the precincts of Parliament used by the National Assembly, I encourage Members not to drop the guard with regard to observing Covid-19 prevention protocols. Every one of us is duty bound to take necessary measures towards flattening the curve of Covid-19 infections so as to hasten return to normalcy.

The House is accordingly guided.

**I thank you!**



**HON. JUSTIN B.N. MUTURI, EGH, MP**  
**SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

*Tuesday, September 15, 2020*