



PNP Councillors Demand Transparency and Proper Governance in ALGAJ Proceedings

Kingston, Jamaica. January 31, 2025: The People's National Party (PNP) Caucus of Councillors expresses deep concern and disappointment regarding the abrupt halt to the recently convened Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association of Local Government Authorities of Jamaica (ALGAJ). The meeting, led by ALGAJ President Councillor Winston Maragh, descended into disorder after significant breaches of procedural rules and constitutional requirements were highlighted.

According to President Aspirant Councillor Scean Barnswell of the Hayes Division in Clarendon, "The meeting was started without adherence to critical constitutional guidelines, including verifying a quorum as stipulated in Appendix 2, Section 5 of the ALGAJ Constitution. This requirement clearly states that one-third of the membership must be present to form a quorum. Additionally, the agenda for the meeting was neither timely shared nor correctly structured in accordance with Appendix 2, Section 6 of the constitution, which mandates that a copy of the agenda be sent to each councillor and authority at least five days before the meeting."

Despite raising these issues with the Chair, President Maragh proceeded with the meeting without amendments to the agenda or proper verification of quorum. When councillors requested that the financial report — which had not been presented since 2017 — be included, citing the importance for newly elected councillors and transparency, the Chair moved a motion to bypass the discussion.

Councillor Barnswell continued, "The matter of presenting the financial report was critical considering the seven-year gap since the last AGM. It was unreasonable and irresponsible to seek to suppress this discussion."

The meeting further descended into chaos when members of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) called for the suspension of standing orders to proceed directly with the election of officers. This motion was vehemently opposed by PNP councillors, who insisted that proper procedures be followed and that the agenda be adhered to.



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Additionally, concerns were raised about the inappropriate presence of President Maragh's wife at the registration table, despite her not being a member of the organization.

"We remain committed to the resumption of this important meeting in a manner that upholds the integrity and constitutional principles of the ALGAJ. Transparency, order, and adherence to governance rules must be maintained to protect the interests of all councillors and the people we serve," stated Councillor Barnswell.

The councillors also expressed their displeasure at the Social Development Commission (SDC) being tasked with conducting elections and are requesting that the Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ) oversee all electoral matters to ensure fairness and transparency.

The PNP Caucus is calling for an urgent reconvening of the AGM, with strict adherence to the ALGAJ Constitution and General Rules. The Caucus underscores its commitment to ensuring that local government operates in a transparent and accountable manner, fostering trust and effective governance.

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