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Wednesday, March 19, 2025

RT. Honorable Tajudeen Abbas
Speaker of the House of Assembly
House Chambers,
National Assembly Complex
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja

Dear Mr. Speaker,

DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY AND PROPOSED SUSPENSION OF GOVERNOR, DEPUTY GOVERNOR AND LAWMAKERS IN RIVERS STATE

I write in reference to yesterday's declaration on the above subject by His Excellency, the President.

We are all aware that the President has the power to declare a state of emergency, subject to concurring authorization by the National Assembly that must be obtained within a defined timeframe to remain valid.

I encourage you to carefully consider whether the need exists for a state of emergency in this case and, if so, which measures may be validly and appropriately introduced in furtherance thereof. In this regard however, it should be well noted that a number of legal authorities as well as the Nigerian Bar Association have counseled that nothing in the constitutional provisions empowers the President or the Federal Government to suspend the Government of a State within the Federal Republic that was duly elected by its people.

In my view, this is the same spirit that lies behind the idea, recently reinforced by a ruling of the Supreme Court, that a State Government cannot unilaterally remove an elected local government.

Accordingly, this element of the President's declaration must be unequivocally rejected by the National Assembly as, in my opinion, it is extreme, uncalled for in the circumstances and a violation of our federating principles as envisaged in the constitution, most notably regarding the separation of powers.

Thank you.



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Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Distinguished Senator Godswill Akpabio
President of the Senate
Senate Chambers,
National Assembly Complex
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja

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