

How does a Member of Parliament act?

Parliamentarians' Orientation Manual

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Introduction

The Parliament is considered the legislative authority in the state. It is the authority concerned with passing laws and monitoring performance of the executive authority. The Parliament's importance to the state stems from the fact that its members are directly elected by people. Consequently, the Parliament is representative and exercises its authority, and therefore, most of the democratic constitutions consider people the source of power.

The Parliament is made up of members, who in turn constitute party blocs and various committees and groups. However, the Parliament cannot pass a decision unless its members vote for this decision, and due to the importance of decisions and legislations, which the Parliament makes, the Parliament and its members must search and investigate to help in taking the right decision, due to lead to the public interest of the nation.

The manual aims to enable Yemeni Members of Parliament – individuals and groups – and the Parliament as a legislative authority in the process of legislations and monitoring the executive authority to do their task well. Also, it aims to help the reader, be it a Member of Parliament or an ordinary citizen, know about the Parliament's constitutional role, significance and means of its development.

The manual explains structuring followed by the Yemeni Parliament, in addition to the regulations and procedures stipulated by the constitution and the internal bylaw.

It is hoped that new Members of Parliament benefit from this manual to know about the sought role they have to play in constitutional, legal, political and media areas.

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Chapter One **Types of Legislative Systems**

There are three types of legislative systems worldwide, which are:

- Presidential System
- Parliamentary System
- Dual/Two-fold System

The structure of relationship between the Legislative-Executive Authority and its meaning is affected by the regime, which runs the state's affairs. Any regime (system) appoints some basic privileges and responsibilities for the legislative and executive authorities, along with adding the factors that boost cooperation or expand the scope of confrontation between authorities.

Additionally, each system contains ambiguous points that enable the firm legislative authority or the ambitious executive leaders to expand the scope of their influence. Based on this, legislators, who work hard to enjoy influence on the course of politics or supervise the executive authority effectively, must work within these ashy areas to enhance their influence.

According to types of the parliamentary systems, most of the democratic regimes can be labelled as purely parliamentary or purely presidential, but there are some systems with characteristics of both types, and then they turned to be named "Dual Systems".

These systems differ in some primary areas according to the level of separating between the legislative party and the government's executive jobs.

1. Presidential System

This system implies that the president has a decisive role in administrating affairs of governance. Also, this system gives the president enough freedom and capability to play his/her role. The president is elected by people and is directly responsible before them.

The presidential system is based on the principle of separating between authorities, and under this system, each institution makes its decisions independently from the other. The United States of America is famous for applying this system.

Under the presidential system, the president of the executive authority is tasked to lead the state and government and enjoys broad authorities, but the executive authority does not allow the president to dissolve the representative legislative council. Meanwhile, the legislative council has no right to oust the president. Both have authorities that don't allow either to dominate the other. However, the legislative authority has the power to depose the president under one circumstance, which is accusing him of something wrong. In this case, the president is accused before the Congress following the majority of votes by the legislative authority members. Such procedures can be taken only when the president is found to have behaved in an inappropriate or illegal manner.

The presidential system is distinguished by separating the Executive Authority from the state's legislative bodies, and the president is usually elected in a separated way from the legislative council on condition the presidential and legislative elections are valid for a specific term. The president appoints the council of ministers and its members must be other than the legislative council members.

The president may or mayn't have the majority of legislative council members affiliated to his party. The president has the veto to accept or oppose things and this is one of the most important authorities. Either legislators or the executive party can pass legislation, however, this legislation must be proposed by the executive party.

Presidential Systems: The U.S. Type

The United States of America is thought of as a type of the traditional presidential system that differentiates between the legislative and executive authorities, granting each its own independent electoral authorization. Nevertheless, it has become possible (and not strange) for the cases of disintegrated governments to increase, as most of the legislative authority members affiliate to a different party from that of the president. In this system, the legislative authority enjoys power to depose the president in case the president is accused before the Congress, following the majority of votes by the legislative authority members. Such procedures can be taken only when the president is found to have behaved in an inappropriate or illegal manner. Meanwhile, voting for holding the confidence in the British Parliamentary System (West Minister) is considered a job for political support (or lacking the political support).

The president can appoint his/her ministry members and distribute them to posts. Compared to their parliamentary counterparts, the main members of the ministry have a remarkable authority over their own agencies while the parliamentary ministers tend to take the posts of president's advisors and tenure in lieu of being potential successors.

2. Parliamentary System:

Under the parliamentary system, each authority becomes independent in making its decisions, cooperating with one another, despite the fact this system is based on the principle of authorities' separation. But, this chapter focuses on the balanced cooperation, which is reserved by every authority to avoid being controlled by the other.

Performances of executive and legislative parties in the parliamentary system get mixed with the Parliament obtaining the absolute authority. Under this system, the government (the executive party) is formed by a particular party or a group of parties, which are capable enough to lead the majority of votes in the Parliament. Leader of the biggest party usually becomes the prime minister (Suna Ghanidi in India is pondered upon as an example for those who have not desire to occupy this post), and then the prime minister selects ministers for his/her cabinet from the available members in the Parliament.

The process of legislation starts from the government although individual members may carry out such a process, which rarely succeeds.

The parliamentary system has two characteristics:

- Differentiating between authorities: This characteristic draws the parliamentary system closer to the principle of authorities' separation, but this separation is flexible and not absolute.
- Cooperation in doing jobs: Cooperation between the parliamentary system's institutions stipulates that these institutions must participate in the jobs of one another. For instance, an executive institution shares the

authorities of a legislative institution with regard to proposing laws, which is a legislative job.

Parliamentary Systems: The British Type

A traditional example of the parliamentary government is represented by the system of the British Public Council. Under this system, head of the government (prime minister) and his/her ministers are considered members of the ruling party (or parties in case of a coalition government) in the legislative authority. However, the government depends on the legislative authority's support and it can be easily dissolved via voting for holding the confidence. These people including the prime minister can be selected through an official parliamentary vote due to follow internal negotiations between party leaders. The legislative authority has the power to appoint the cabinet members (ministers) and dismiss them as well. Meanwhile, the prime minister in the parliamentary system has a political power bigger than that of his/her fellow ministers. The whole ministry tends to work with cooperation, as it takes decisions concerned with the government policy via consensus.

3. Dual System:

Under the dual systems, one can find characteristics of both presidential and parliamentary systems, and the French system is pondered upon as the most famous type of such a system.

In this system, there are a president and Parliament, and the latter elects the president through elections separated from the legislative polls while the president appoint the prime minister from the party/parties having the majority of seats in the Parliament. It is not necessary for the prime minister to be from the president's party. Sometimes, the prime minister doesn't affiliate to the president's party and this leads to a "coexistence government", as the French name. In this case, the president and government propose most of the legislations.

Dual Systems: The French Type

The increasingly common options are represented by combining components of both parliamentary and presidential systems and France stands for the traditional case of such a dual system. Under this system, voters elect Members of Parliament and the president directly, and then the president appoints ministers and the ministry according to the rate of party representation in the Parliament. This leads the president to appoint a prime minister from any party other than his/hers while this coexistence can help increase the political competition within the executive sector. However, the tradition stipulates that the French President controls all the political areas concerned with foreign affairs while the prime minister and the ministry manage the government's daily issues.

When the twofold system embodied features of both presidential and parliamentary systems, some critics held the view and provided justification that the dual system has the function of only one of both systems, whether the president and the Parliament's majority affiliate to the same party or not.

Parties' Role in Parliamentary Systems

Any policy loyal to a particular party affects the legislative-executive relationships radically in the government's presidential and parliamentary formations. But blending the executive and legislative authorities in the parliamentary systems, in a way contravening the principle of authorities separation in presidential systems, creates a stronger bond between dynamism and movement of the loyal party, on the one hand, and the legislative-executive relationships under these systems, on the other.

Government and opposition

Role of the ruling party/parties in the legislative authority is to work on transforming the government policies into laws, but most of the time this role is subjected pressures, for example the rate of seats and correlation within the single party (correlation between parties in case of forming a coalition government, public opinion and strength of the opposition).

Role of opposition parties in the Parliament is to work hard on holding serious discussion and challenging legislations levied by the government in case these legislations contradicts the public interest of people or take into account interests of the ruling party.

Any way, opposition in such a case has the right to defend an alternative group of priorities or a different method in tackling current issues in this regard. Opposition may propose amendments regarding the draft law presented for discussion to match with its stance. The best opposition is the one that struggle to be constructive, i.e., challenging legislations, which clearly contradict the opposition's policy.

Shade Government

The most successful opposition parties are those proving they are able to rule. And, it is part of exercising democracy in the parliamentary work for opposition to appoint ministers for the shade government to discuss, on the government's behalf, issues governed by the legislative authority in each ministry. Also, opposition members should formulate alternative policies or criticisms in conformity with program of the political party they belong to.

The opposition shade minister is considered as the prospective minister, who is ready to take job in case the government fails. Waiting and readiness for the post help return morale to the shade minister, on the one hand, and the government on the other. This helps increase opportunities before the legislative council member to influence the government's plans and moves if he/she has the will to do so.

The shade minister is an able and eligible minister, as he works along with opposition Members of Parliament toward approving a law in a council dominated by members of another political party. The shade minister works on matching the government's policy with the opposition's stance via spreading his alternative policy and promoting it. If opposition succeeded to recruit the public opinion while the government failed to amend its stance accordingly, most of the government members will be considered unable to represent people in an appropriate way.

Guidelines to Parliamentary Work

What are the factors behind a Member of Parliament's success?

How to be a successful parliamentarian? Being a parliamentarian, you have to enjoy some subjective and objective qualities, as these qualities are called factors behind success of a Member of Parliament as a legislator in the parliamentary institution. Success of the Member of Parliament, as an effective representative in his/her relations with supporters in the electoral constituency, other Members of Parliament and employees and media depends on the following factors:

- **Respecting the Legislative Authority as an Institution:**

Great institutions develop thanks to efforts by great men and women, and for these institutions to operate effectively, the government needs relations of confidence between people and their representatives. Each Member of Parliament has to grow and develop this confidence, i.e., to understand, have patience and digest the meaning of the joint goal and fate. Also, each Member of Parliament must attempt to resort to the best intents of his/her colleague to then talk about what they are intending and striving to achieve during their term. Both have exerted efforts to achieve their goal.

- **Understanding Pervasive Rules:**

To be an effective Member of Parliament, you have to understand all the pervasive/common rules like those of a football game where the player, who neither knows nor respects the game's rules, loses the match. This is applicable on the part of a Member of Parliament, who must understand well rules of the game.

The first thing a Member of Parliament should do is to always carry a book on the pervasive rules (Internal Bylaw) with him. The Member of Parliament can consult this book while seeing the democratic process in the Parliament before his eyes. For the first time, such rules appear to be strange, but over time, they will be meaningful. Understanding parliamentary rules and laws is due to help make a change in you career. In case it has been several years since you started the career, you can resort to experienced Members of Parliament and always utilize their advice.

- **Abiding by Moral Rules**

When you become a Member of Parliament, you will be nicknamed (His Eminence). You will be responsible for the behaviour that fits such a big nickname. Members of Parliament share the responsibility of the good appearance of their Parliament. People always long to see highly cultivated behaviour enjoyed by Members of Parliament thanks to such a big nickname.

Perceiving tactics and moral behaviour in the Parliament is not only a vital matter for the legislative institution and voters, rather it does matter the respected post of every Member of Parliament. Giving a piece of advice in such cases that are considered legal but may raise questions about a Member of Parliament's personality and behaviour, one of the American veteran parliamentarians says: "If your behaviour seems to be inappropriate, don't behave this way today. Make sure that you abide by rules governing behaviour inside the Parliament since parliamentarians rarely care for controlling their behaviours. Try to ask your self 'Will I be hurt when I see myself in

newspapers behaving this way?" Suffering no doubt, you can utilize the advice of experts in these behavioural and moral rules, as this helps you evaluate your conduct."

Sometimes, it appears a bit difficult for you to control your behaviour, but there are two important criteria:

The First criterion : Avoid anything, which you can interpret as a conflict of interests, and your indecent appearance may have catastrophic influence on your status as a parliamentarian.

The Second Criterion : Abiding by pervasive rules and traditions is thought of as an essential matter for every parliamentarian so as to participate effectively in any parliamentary activity. You have to be on full alert that your enemies are observing you and waiting to pay harm to you.

- **Get the Parliament's Help:**

You can not be an expert in everything and don't attempt to be everything for people. You have to follow the committee's instructions and guidelines in your career and be well-informed in order to be ready for any discussion or negotiations even if you are not the primarily concerned person. Had you become one of those experienced in certain issues, you would have been the referential colleague for providing cooperation and information. This is due to help in developing your negotiation skills and building your reputation as an important decision maker among your colleagues and society. In the Parliament, you can find all that helps you develop your profession. You have to seek consultation, knowledge and expertise with absolute freedom, and Members of Parliament are pondered upon as an important source for this information. Search information wherever it is and learn that this information represents your strengths.

The pressure groups are thought of as paid members, who are tasked to promote a particular point and always work hard to give the kind of information that enhances their viewpoint. You have to always bear in mind that every currency (coin) has two faces and this is applicable to such an issue.

The legislative authority has cadres whom other members trust on condition every member has to examine the sought utility through using his/her special cadre. If you ask for the cadre's help, make sure that you will benefit from this help in research and summaries. Before any committee holds a meeting, you have to allow yourself enough time to review draft laws or the objective procedures on the agenda, as this will help you to be more effective at the meeting and your influence will have more influence on the decision taken by the committee or the Parliament in general.

- **Capability of Media Means**

Media are considered the means of communication between people and representatives in the government; media are the vital part of any democracy. So, media have to be responsible for spreading awareness among citizens about what happens and this task has to be performed seriously. Members of Parliament have to meet with journalists occasionally to inform them of their attitudes toward any issue.

Maintaining good relation with media means is of crucial importance as this is expected to help establish relationship of partnership. In many cases, the media play an excellent role that deserves praise, but in other times, the media performs its role beyond the permissible and at this point, these means deserve constructive criticism. A Member of

Parliament needs to establish relations with the press like that when a person builds an open relation of partnership with one's husband or brother, or work relations with colleagues. The media means work as a pyrometer for people's opinions. In light of this, you should have an open eye on what the media means present to the public.

Don't let the press popularize you on its means, as the press is known to upgrade a few but degrade many. The judicious reaction toward reports by media means is a vital matter for building and enhancing the parliamentary personality. You have to select when to respond to reports by the media, as this judiciousness will help you gain respect and confidence.

- **Controlling Time**

There are only a few professions that require much time like that of a Member of Parliament who has to remain ready for any call 24 hours a day. Time stands for a source of fear if it is not dealt with judiciously and this may not help achieve anything. Prioritize and dedicate your efforts the most important things, and by this, you would have made a step forward in the parliamentary work. The successful parliamentarian must enjoy punctuality, arrive at the Parliament on time, commit oneself to appointments and arrive at the committees' meetings on time.

The style via which you organize your time reflects aspects of your personality. The parliamentary calendar is very exact, and if any Member of Parliament has forgotten the timetable for presenting a draft law or a proposal, this may result in wasting an entire year for the Member of Parliament to hardly get a chance to present its project or proposal. Of course, every parliamentarian has his own personal life that requires its own time. Parliamentary professional liabilities are as important as other non-parliamentary responsibilities. So you should not break your relations with your family and colleagues for the sake of these tasks because you will find yourself in need of such relations when you return to the normal life.

- **Suitable Time for Talk**

The greatest part of a parliamentarian's work is organizing words that must be prepared before talk. Some great spokesmen said that preparing words takes tenfold the time of delivering them, and the spokesman's personality is manifested by his/her talk (Speech is a quality of the speaker). The effective talk can not be measured in light of its length. You have to be brief while talking and don't try to discuss all the subjects. Before you move toward the platform for talk, you have to take into account that much talk about all projects weakens your being effective.

Preparing for talk doesn't represent the Member of Parliament's eloquence, rather it is an indicator of the good preparation of your speech, as the rational talk is worth listening and accepted by all parties better than any talk containing obvious insult.

- **Be Part of the Solution**

There is a common proverb saying, "You are part of the problem unless you will be part of the solution". Most of the controversial and hot issues occur in the Parliament and some of these issues may take place in your electoral constituency. Being an elected leader, people will see your reaction to these cases and most of them will adopt the ones

you supported. You have to take into account the consequences of any conduct you select to achieve change.

Conducts that may cause you harm are represented by exercising politics in its worst form. You have to benefit from your skills and post as a parliamentarian to help in providing solutions to the persistent problems, and in case a parliamentary or social project is proposed, you have to cooperate with local and government agencies to suggest the best solutions. Frame questions, conduct researches and show your positive influence to your colleagues in the Parliament and society.

Effort for reaching solutions to persistent issues means working with people whom you don't agree with politically. And, search for solutions requires a consensus and desire to reach the middle solutions and helps in reaching good understanding of these issues with an open mind and not with unstable and unchangeable attitude. Adopting a new attitude with new understanding indicates strength and not weakness. Meanwhile leadership requires balanced work and not an emotional and sentimental understanding of problems, and you have to admit that you may commit a mistake. The politician whose desire compels him/her to exploit his/her post and influence to solve problems, which the country or citizens face in general, becomes a statesman or a stateswoman.

*** Don't burn bridges**

In politics, there are neither permanent enemies nor permanent friends. When you feel reluctant to or hate some colleagues, you have to bear in mind that today's enemy may be tomorrow's ally.

Every Member of Parliament must acclimatize oneself with tolerance and not to scorn others easily. It will be possible for anyone to debate judiciously and eloquently when personal matters are separated from public affairs. You have to build reputation characterized with frankness and truth and expect to deal with those who are in difference with you. You will be in need for establishing good relations with your colleagues irrespective of your post at the Parliament.

*** Be on high alert while voting**

You have to be on full alert while supporting the procedures you selected, as history is rich with examples telling stories of members who sign bylaws or proposals and then feel as if they know nothing about these bylaws or proposals when discussing them at the Parliament. You have to examine these bylaws and proposals beforehand in order to get rid of embarrassment due to be caused by voting against a decision, which you might sign.

There are cases when members feel themselves ready for vote, but after clearing the mind or obtaining new information, this leads you to change your attitude. When such happens, let the new attitude be known to all, as credibility is the mental process for any parliament.

*** Maintain relationship with ones' electoral constituency**

It is an easy task for an Member of Parliament to insist on his own viewpoint and forget that all members are responsible for their citizens' affairs, and locals of the constituency

may not agree permanently with attitudes of their representative. These locals may respect their representative much more if he/she consult them before reaching a decision on any issue. Don't forget to answer the telephone calls, respond to messages, hold meetings and do what your supporters know. It is very difficult to establish a strong bond with your supporters via media means. Nevertheless, if you are a skilled writer, think of writing a weekly column for your supporters in your electoral constituency and other people as well.

Chapter Two

The Parliament's Role in Democratic Systems

General Rules for Work in The Parliament

Given below are the most important rules for work in The Parliament:

- **Defining the Parliamentary Work:**

Parliamentary procedures constitute a series of rules the legislative institution should follow in order to reach decisions in a democratic and organized manner. Meanwhile there should be much respect for the principle of the political majority tasked for the final approval of the legislative institution's jobs and roles through vote.

- **The Parliament's Effectiveness:**

This is the Parliament's tendency for approving the parliament's work plan with regard to setting timetables and taking decisions at the time that allows discussions and debates on the subject.

- **System of the Parliamentary Work:**

This emphasizes that the Parliament and parliamentarians have to work in an organized way, meanwhile the organization idea contains an agenda and timetables for the period required by the issue, committees' work plus sittings, which are attended by all the members. Also, the organization idea includes the method of managing the meeting because the unorganized discussions may lead to chaos.

- **Equality in Administering Parliamentary Procedures**

This rule necessitates respect for the decision reached by the political majority and voting, as well as protecting rights of the political minority in the legislative institution: the right to talk, discussion and voting must be granted to all. Any restrictions on the political majority must not be accepted, as these restrictions contravene laws and the democratic values. In addition, one can not consult documents and other references except in case they are available and can be obtained by all the members including the political minority.

- **Sources of Disputes in The Parliament and Society:**

The Parliament has to contribute to suggesting solutions or a mechanism to settle disputes in the society, particularly if these disputes include issues between people and organizations, on the one hand, and the government on the other. The integral role for elected members, who are considered the sole representatives of the society in the Parliament, is to fill the gap between society and the executive party. In other words,

the Parliament ensures citizens' rights and concerns, which are expressed in the Parliament during sittings, questions and committees' discussions. By discussing the work paper and amendments, Members of Parliament's work on reaching a compromise between what the executive committee wants to implement and citizens' interests.

Concepts of Parliamentary Work

What are the Concepts of Parliamentary Work?

- **Independence:** The Parliament is an independent authority with its own laws and procedures.
- **Generality:** (Non-exceptionality) The Parliament's procedures and laws pass on everyone without an exception.
- **Understanding the nature of procedures:** The conventional laws, procedures, practices and characteristics require determination and understanding on the part of Members of Parliament.

Parliamentary Principles:

1. Political Majority's Vote

- The political majority's vote approves any matter or any government activity, and this makes every member committed to the political majority voting.
- One of the most important principles of the parliamentary work laws must be related with the significance of respect for the political majority vote on any matter. i.e., despite differences in viewpoints of political majority and minority, all the members must accept the vote result and the resultant decision taken by the parliamentary majority. Such decision and vote usually fit the government work programs, which is why all members must work according to the laws voted for by the parliamentary majority at the end of work paper discussions. Also, i.e., respecting one of the most important democratic values. Similarly, the Parliament must respect these democratic values.

2. Protecting the Political Minority

Respecting rights of the political minority in the Parliament is considered part of the important democratic values, and it is one of the principles of the parliamentary work laws in specific. This means that Members of Parliament, who belong to the parliamentary minority, must be granted the freedom of talk, questioning and discussion, as well as the freedom during discussions, questioning periods and committee's meetings.

3. Equality Between Members of Parliament

Achieving justice and equality between members in rights, privileges, duties and the freedom of talk is an important legal principle to exercising parliamentary work. To ensure discussing any issue, amendment process or a disputable matter, all Members of Parliament have to be granted the right to talk. However, this necessitates the Parliamentary Procedural Law to include an article stipulating that members of

opposing opinions have to show respect for others and stop making personal comments. Also, the parliamentary work laws must include the sequential system of matters while Parliamentary interrogations have to be dealt with in an instant and fair way regardless of who asks for this. The equality principle in this procedure stipulates that all the members vote at a time to avoid any misunderstanding of partiality or neutrality in the Parliament. In this respect, it is necessary for the parliament speaker to be neutral during discussions according to parliamentary laws.

4. Moderate Behaviour (Concise Discussions)

To ensure regularity of discussions and respect for opinions, the parliamentary laws have to clarify what is a civilized behaviour inside the Parliament and what is not. No personal defamation, acts of violence with hands and legs or any harsh criticism between Members of Parliament can be accepted. This means there is moral behaviour to be abided by all, and the procedural law must include an article referring to the procedures that may be taken against any Member of Parliament, who doesn't respect those principles. Everyone has to bear in mind that Members of Parliament's behaviour shapes the parliament's reputation and image. Otherwise, people will have in mind a chaotic and uncivilized image of the Parliament.

5. Citizens' Awareness

People have the right to be informed of what takes place and know all the parliamentary procedures. The Parliament has to be a transparent institution enjoying good reputation as an authority representing the public. Procedures of this authority must be known to the public via different media means, as this alone will help increase people's confidence in the Parliament and upgrade the status of such a legislative institution. It makes people satisfied with decisions the Parliament took on their behalf. Increasing awareness about all the parliamentary procedures helps upgrade the status of work and discussion between Members of Parliament. Also, it helps people to obtain genuine vision and interpretation of efforts expended by Members of Parliament to defend their interests and discuss their issues. Nevertheless, parliamentary procedures must allow people and media means an access to attendance and coverage in an official newspaper, a parliamentary publication, and information on the Internet.

6. Neutrality of Parliament Speaker

All parliamentary work laws have to stress neutrality of the parliament speaker. This means this person can not participate in any activity of his/her party, nor can he/she participate in any discussion. In light of the above-said, we should not understand that the parliament speaker's role is partial to any party bloc or political force inside the Parliament. This subject has an essential significance to make a leading role ensuring that the procedural laws and the system are respected by all Members of Parliament.

7. Following a Fixed System in Taking Decisions

The Parliament has to know the way its work progresses. This means there is a work program plus a fixed system for any issue in the Parliament. This allows discussion and controversy, but set a specific period of time for Members of Parliament to reach a decision. One should not forget that the Parliament's primary role is taking decisions via the political majority vote. Thus, any delay, chaotic discussion or an absence of a deadline to finish discussions will lead to the Parliament's disability and

ineffectiveness. This principle explains the importance of the political minority respecting will of the majority in the Parliament. It stresses spreading awareness about the Parliament's matters.

Parliamentary Work & Party Blocs

A Member of Parliament can play his/her role individually, or as part of a party bloc. This means a group of members of the same party or coalition form a congregation for them inside the legislative authority, under the name of "party bloc". Members of Parliament, who affiliate to the same party, sit together in the same hall. They often have rooms in the Parliament and cadres to help them achieve their work such as conducting researches and communications. Such party blocs help in organizing activities of their own members, such as providing chances for talk and strategies for daily work in the Parliament.

The work regulations specify entitlements for the party blocs such as the chances of talk and funding resources to administer their work. For instance, many parliaments allocate budgets, proportionally based on the number of Members of Parliament each party bloc.

Every legislative authority has a minimum limit for the number of Members of Parliament required for forming the party bloc, and most of the party blocs tend to have an executive party group to run its internal affairs and external relations with main officials in the Parliament and other partisan groups.

Party blocs can be of a non-official nature like any party congregation on any issue. Many big political parties in the Parliament often have party blocs for women through which women Members of Parliament hold meetings. Also, these big parties can have regional party blocs for Members of Parliament who belong to the same area, state or city. Such party blocs help vary interests within the party or the legislative authority to effectively discuss issues of joint interest.

Morals of the Parliament and the Legislative Authority

The legislative authority plays a prominent role in developing good management and limiting corruption and poor management in all the community sectors. People expect members of the legislative authority to enjoy high levels of creativity in their professional life (career). Also, they expect them to offer services from an inside will and behave well before people.

In other words, members of the legislative authority benefit from their powers to take decisions in favour of the state and citizens as well.

Parliamentarians' failure to reach these expectations leads not only to harming citizens' confidence in the capability of their elected representatives to work for citizens' interests, but also to harming the country's legitimacy and institutions. In the best circumstance, this failure leads to losing confidence and breaking relations between citizens and their representatives, and in the worst circumstance, it leads to interrogating the political regime as a whole.

Elected Members of Parliament have to behave well and demonstrate high morals. This is why legislative authorities have "work pacts" or "behaviour regulations" to control members of the legislative authority and government as well.

One of the great benefits generated by behaviour regulations is represented by creating and restoring citizens' confidence in the Parliament and its members. To be effective, pacts should not only be provided, rather they have to be published in and outside the legislative authority to increase awareness about their contents and facilitate public observation of adherence to these pacts and their values. Members of the legislative authority have to be trained on how to understand contents and implications of these regulations. Finally, these members have to be aware of risks associated with accountability procedures in case these pacts are not respected.

There are many means to ensure effective implementation of the mechanisms designed to enhance unity of members and the legislative authority.

Selecting an effective implementation system, though politically sensitive it seems, is a decisive resolution to ensure that members abide by these regulations. Without an observation mechanism, but there is an accountability-related risk, different regulatory procedures will be ignored, and consequently become ineffective.

Parliamentary Majority & Minority

Following elections in most of the legislative councils, there is a party or parties having the majority of votes, which allows it/them to pass any platform. Also, there will be a political minority in the Parliament from one party or several parties, who don't agree with viewpoints of the majority, and this minority may have other viewpoints different from that of the majority. This is a democratic nature. In many circumstances, laws are passed by a narrow majority of votes of the legislative council members.

In many democracies, the matter requires more majority to pass particular types of legislations such as constitutional amendments or [passing the veto of the presidency](#). In these cases, the matter requires obtaining a considerable majority (two-thirds or three-fourths) of members' votes in favour of any law or constitutional amendment. The principle of majority and minority is thought of as an essential matter in the democratic government while discussions are conducted according to the political majority. When the majority takes a decision, the minority has to respect such a decision, but before taking the decision, the political majority has to allow the minority to quiz, discuss, debate and propose amendments, as well as to use all the procedural laws in support for its issue.

Chapter Three

Parliamentary System in Yemen: Formation & Structure

Parliamentary System in Yemen & Stages of its Development

Yemen's parliamentary system went through several stages before Reunification in both parts of the country as follows:

1. Before Reunification in North Yemen

- The National Council 1969 – 1971
- [The Shoura Council 1975 – 1997](#)
- The Constituent People Assembly 1978 – 1988
- The Shoura Council 1988 – 1990

2. Before Reunification in South Yemen

- The Higher People Assembly 1971 – 1978
- The Higher People Assembly 1978 – 1986
- The Higher People Assembly 1986 – 1990

3. After Reunification

- Interim Parliament 1990 – 1993
- Parliament 1993 – 1997
- Parliament 1997 – 2003
- Parliament 2003

The Parliament Term

Following the most recent constitutional amendment, the Parliament term is six years, but according to the former constitution it was four years. This is confirmed by Article 65 of the Amended Constitution, stipulating a new election before the Parliament term expires.

Constitutional Article (65): " The term of the House of Representatives is four calendar years starting from the date of its first meeting. The Speaker shall call the voters to elect a new House at least sixty days before the expiry date of the existing House. If in extraordinary circumstances, elections cannot be held, the existing House continues to function until such circumstances are overcome and elections can be held."

Yemeni Parliament's Relation with President of the Republic

Under its relation with President of the Republic, the Yemeni Parliament is tasked to:

- Accept nominations for the post of President of the Republic.
- Accepts resignation of President of the Republic and be in charge of running the state's affairs in case the presidential post is vacant
- Attributing charges of great treason, constitutional violation, or any other act causing harm to the country's independence and sovereignty to President of the Republic and the senior government officials.

President of the Republic's Relation with the Parliament

Under his/her relation with the Parliament, President of the Republic exercises a group of tasks, the most important of which are:

1. Calling on voters to elect the Parliament.
2. Calling on the Parliament to hold meetings within two weeks of announcing the vote result
3. Demanding reconsideration of any law passed by the Parliament within 30 days following the date of presenting such a law to the president.
4. Issuing laws, which the council approved and ensuring that these laws are published in the official newspaper.
5. Issuing a decision of approval on conventions, agreements and laws approved by the Parliament. Any laws enacted by the Parliament will not be placed in effect unless President of the Republic approves them.
6. The right to dissolve the Parliament when necessary on condition a public referendum has to be conducted with regard to causes of the dissolution.

The Parliament's Relation with Government

In the context of its relation with government, the Parliament has many tasks to do, the most important of which are:

(1) Granting confidence to the government

Constitutional Article (86): " Within a maximum of twenty-five days of the Formation of the new government, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers shall present his governments programme to the House of Representatives in order to win a vote of confidence by the majority of the members of the House. If the House of Representatives is in recess, it is to be recalled for an extraordinary meeting. The members of the House and the House as a whole has the right to comment on the government's program. The failure of the government to win the required majority is to be considered a with-holding of confidence."

(2) Monitoring the government's works by giving directives, presenting a general subject for discussion, forming committees or authorizing one of the Parliament's committees to investigate facts and examining activities of the government's executive apparatuses via questioning.

(3) Accepting or rejecting the draft law presented by the government.

(4) Approving projects of development plans, annual budgets and final account sheets, in addition to the general policy levied by the authority.

Constitutional Article (87): "The House of Representatives shall approve comprehensive social and economic development plans. A law shall be enacted to

stipulate the process of the preparation of such plans, their submission to the House and the approval thereof."

Government's Relation with the Parliament

The government is tasked to do the following:

- (1) Proposing a draft law plus proposing its amendment
- (2) The right to issue bylaws and regulations
- (3) Combining the Parliament's membership with the ministry.

The Parliament's Membership

The Constitution specified requirements of the Parliament's membership as follows:

Constitutional Article (64):

1. A voter must meet the following two conditions:
 - a. Must be a Yemeni citizen.
 - b. Must be at least 18 years old.
2. A candidate for the House of Representatives must meet the following conditions:
 - a. Must be a Yemeni.
 - b. Must be at least 25 years old.
 - c. must be able to read and write (literate).
 - d. must be of good character and conduct, fulfill his religious duties and have no court convictions against him for committing crimes that contradict the rules of honour and honesty, unless he was pardoned /reprieved.

Legal Frames Organizing the Yemeni Parliament

- Constitution of the Republic of Yemen
- The Parliament's Internal Bylaw

1. Constitution of the Republic of Yemen

Constitutional Article (4): "The people of Yemen are the possessor and the source of power, which they exercise directly through public referendums and elections, or indirectly through the legislative, executive and judicial authorities, as well as through elected local councils.

"The political system of the Republic of Yemen is based on political and partisan pluralism in order to achieve a peaceful transformation of power. The Law stipulates rules and procedures required for the formation of political organizations and parties, and the exercise of political activity. Misuse of Governmental posts and public funds for the special interest of a specific party or organization is not permitted."

Constitutional Article (62): "The House of Representatives is the legislative authority of the state. It shall enact laws, sanction general state policy and the socio-economic plan, and approve government budgets and final accounts. It shall also direct and monitor the activities of the Executive Authority as stipulated in this constitution."

Constitutional Article (63): "The House of Representatives consists of 301 members, who shall be elected in a secret, free and equal vote directly by the people. The Republic shall be divided into constituencies equal in number of population with a variation of not more than 5% plus or minus. Each constituency shall elect a member to the House of Representatives."

2. The Parliament's Internal Bylaw

The Parliament's internal bylaw is composed of 233 articles distributed over eight parts, which are divided into other chapters as follows:

Part One: Definitions & General Principles

Part Two: The Parliament's Components

Chapter One

- Formations

Chapter Two

- Electing the presidium

Chapter Three

- Authorities of the presidium

Chapter Four

- Authorities of the parliament speaker

Chapter Five

- Forming committees and assigning their tasks

Chapter Six

- Forming the general secretariat and assigning its tasks

Part Three: Progress of the Parliament's works

Chapter One

- Parliament's sittings

Chapter Two

- Maintaining order in the Parliament

Chapter Three

- System of work during sittings

Chapter Four

- Wrapping discussions up

Chapter Five

- Voting (Expression of opinion)

Chapter Six

- Minutes of sittings

Part Four: The Parliament's works

Chapter One

- Legislative Affairs
- Subchapter One
 - Draft laws and proposals
- Subchapter Two
 - Conventions and agreements
- Chapter Two
 - Parliament's monitoring
- Subchapter One
 - Questions
- Subchapter Two
 - Decisions and asking for discussions and investigations
- Subchapter Three
 - Discussing the government's program or any statement about its policy
- Subchapter Four
 - Interrogations
- Subchapter Five
 - Petitions and complaints
- Chapter Three
 - Financial Affairs
- Subchapter One
 - Budgets and its final account sheets
- Subchapter Two
 - Development plans
- Subchapter Three
 - The Parliament's budget and accounts

Part Five : Membership provisions

- Chapter One
 - Examining membership authenticity
- Chapter Two
 - Cancelling membership
- Chapter Three
 - Resignation
- Chapter Four
 - Vacant posts and leaves

- Subchapter One
 - Vacant posts
- Subchapter Two
 - Absence regulations
- Chapter Five
 - Immunities of Members of Parliament
- Chapter Six
 - Rights and Privileges accrued to Members of Parliament

Part Six: Procedures of nomination for post of President of the Republic

Part Seven: Constitutional amendment's procedures

Part Eight: General provisions

The Yemeni Parliament: Formation & Structure

The Parliament's Board and Formation

- **The Parliament's Apparatuses/Components**

The parliament's main /apparatuses components are:

1. The parliament's presidium
2. Committees
3. The general secretariat

- **Formations of the Yemeni Parliament's Board**

The Yemeni parliament's boards consist of:

- The parliament speaker and his/her deputies
- The Parliament's office
- Parliamentary committees.

In its structure, the Parliament depends on a staff under the name of the "general secretariat", which is tasked to supervise administrative works and prepare sittings' minutes.

- **Electing the Presidium**

At its first meeting, the Parliament elects, with an absolute majority of its members, the speaker and members of the parliament's presidency board. Voters cast their ballots secretly but in open (televised) sitting.

- **Authorities of Parliament's Presidium**

The parliament presidency board (presidium) is in charge of supervising the parliament's activities and committees, and assisting different committees in all their work areas. The parliament presidency board is responsible before Members of Parliament for all the parliament's works and activities and exercises authorities and tasks specified by the Constitution and the Parliament Bylaw.

- **Authorities of the Parliament Speaker**

The parliament speaker has authorities specified by the bylaw in the first chapter, Article (23) as follows:

The parliament speaker is the person who represents Parliament in communicating with other bodies according to the parliament's will, show results reached by his/her meetings, contacts and visits and supervise all the activities in the Parliament.

Internal Bylaw, Article (24): In compliance with authorities mandated to the parliament speaker under provisions of the Constitution and this bylaw, the parliament speaker is responsible for the following:

1. Chairing meetings of the presidium and Parliament, and opening and adjourning sittings in conformity with provisions of this bylaw.
2. Permitting MPs to speak and assigning the topic of discussion according to the agenda and in compliance with provisions of this bylaw.

3. Clarifying any matter that seems to be unclear.
4. Crystallizing and excerpting viewpoints and proposals reached by the parliament's discussions and transforming them into primary and specific headings, presenting them for vote, and bringing together Members of Parliament's viewpoints on the topic of the sitting.
5. Announcing any decisions issued by the Parliament.
6. Signing agreements and contracts in the name of the Parliament, or any eligible Member of Parliament may be mandated for the task in light of the organizing bylaw.
7. Maintaining stability of order during the Parliament's sittings, and to achieve this task, the Parliament has the right to ask its guards and policemen for help when required.
8. Exercising authorities of the prime minister with regard to affairs of the Parliament's employees.
9. Transferring subjects, drafts and letters to the concerned committees.
10. In case the Speaker is absent, his jurisdictions are carried out by one of the presidium member authorized to act on his behalf.
11. Any other jurisdictions delegated by the parliament or presidium.

Parliamentary Committees

According to the suggestion of the presidium during the first session, the Parliament shall form permanent committees of its members; these committees shall be formed for a two- year term. The committees shall start performing their jurisdictions in order to carry out their assignments in preparation for presenting them to the Parliament. The Parliament has the right, when necessary, to set up special committees, to study certain subjects.

Candidacy for committees shall be made depending on the request of the Members of Parliament and their specializations. The committees of the Parliament are assisting apparatuses that help the Parliament exercise its legislative and overseeing duties.

The Parliament consists of the following committees:

1. Constitutional Affairs Committee
2. Higher Education and Youth Committee
3. Transportation and Transit Committee
4. Defense and Security Committee
5. Development and Oil Committee
6. Committee of Information, Culture and Tourism
7. Working Forces and Social Affairs Committee
8. Local Administration Committee
9. Trade and Industry Committee

10. Services Committee
11. External Affairs and Migrants Committee
12. Petitions and Complaints Committee
13. Financial Affairs Committee
14. Fishery and Agriculture Committee
15. Endowments and Justice Committee
16. Public Freedoms Committee
17. Education Committee
18. Public Health and Population Committee
19. Shariah Laws Legislation Committee
20. Water and Environment Committee

Tasks and Jobs of the Yemeni Parliament

The Parliament is the institution concerned with the legislative authority. The functions of the Parliament is defined in the Simple Arabic Ensychnopodeia as "The institution produced by the people for excercising the legislative functions of which the taxes report and law enactment as well as overseeing the government are more important."

The political jurisdiction/ political oversight over the executive authority is probably the most significant jurisdiction of the other finaincial and legislative jurisdictions. Assuming this way, along with its tools we are going to explain later, the Parliament shall hold the executive authority accountable for all actions it takes; it shall discuss the general policy and laws the executive authority carries out.

The jurisdictions of the Parliament are divided into the following three functions:

• **Constitutional Duties**

Constitutional Article (92): The House of Representatives shall ratify international political and economic treaties and conventions of a general nature, of whatsoever form or level, and in particular those connected to defense, alliance, truce, peace or border alterations, and those, which involve financial commitments on the state or for which their execution needs the enactment of a law.

Constitutional Article (93):

- A) The House of Representatives has the right to present instructions and recommendations to the government regarding general issues. If the government failed to execute these instructions and recommendations it has to justify such action to the House.
- B) If the House of Representatives is not convinced with the justifications, it has the right to directly initiate the procedures of withdrawing confidence from one of the Prime Minister's Deputies or from any of the concerned ministers. The request for withdrawing confidence may not be presented to the Parliament but by a quarter of the Members of Parliament after holding an interrogation. The House may not make a decision on the request before seven days since the day of presenting it. The decision of withdrawing confidence shall be approved with the majority number of the House.

Constitutional Article (94): At least twenty per cent of the members of the House may move a motion to discuss a public issue, request explanation of government policies and exchange views concerning that issue.

Constitutional Article (95): Upon a request signed by at least ten of its members, the House of Representatives may create a special committee or instruct one of its fact- finding committees to investigate any issue which is contrary to public interest or to investigate the actions of any ministry, government agency, board, public/mixed sector's corporations, or local councils. To carry out such investigations, the committee may gather proof and hold hearings by seeking testimony from any party/person it deems necessary. All executive and special authorities shall comply by laying all

information or documentation they possess at the disposal of the relevant committee.

- **Legislative Duties**

The legislative function is considered the key jurisdiction of the Parliament; it passes three stages, namely:

- voting
- deliberation and voting
- Endorsement and issuance

According to the constitution, each draft suggested by the government shall be transferred to one of the parliamentary committees to study it and present a report on it. The drafts suggested by the Members of Parliament shall be examined by a special committee which shall give its opinion on whether it is valid to be presented to the parliament before transferring it to committees. Unlike the drafts presented by the government, the rejected drafts of the Members of Parliament shall not be presented again during the same session.

- **Financial Duties**

Concerning the financial duties, the Constitution of Yemen states the following:

Article (88):

- A) The proposed general budget shall be submitted to the House of Representatives at least two months before the beginning of the fiscal year. A vote shall be taken on each part of the budget. It shall be enacted by a law. The House may not change the proposed budget without the approval of the government. No allocation of revenue for a specific purpose may be authorized except by a law. If the budget law is not enacted before the beginning of the fiscal year, the previous year's budget shall be followed until the new budget is approved.
- B) The law shall specify the way to prepare and categorize the general budget as well as specifying the fiscal year.

Article (89): The transfer of any amount from one section to another of the general budget must be approved by the House of Representatives. Every expenditure not provided for in the budget or any additional revenue shall only be authorized by law.

Article (90): The law shall specify the rules of the budgets of public authorities, corporations and companies, their accounts, the autonomous and supplementary budgets, and their final accounts. With the exception of the above, the budgets shall be subjected to the rules of the general budget and its final account including its being submitted to the House for endorsement.

Article (91): The final account of the state's annual budget shall be submitted to the House within a period that does not exceed nine months from the end of the fiscal year. Voting on the Bill shall be made on a section by section basis and shall be approved by an enactment of law. Also the annual report

of the organization concerned with the auditing and control of government accounts shall be submitted to the House, together with its comments thereon. The House of Representatives has the right to ask the Organization to submit any supplementary documents or reports.

Tasks and Jobs of the Member of Parliament

Concerning the duties and function of the Member of Parliament, the Constitution of Yemen declares the following:

Article (75): A member of the House of Representatives represents the whole nation, guards the public interest and his representation may not be subjected to any restriction or special condition.

Article (76): A member of the House of Representatives shall, prior to his assumption of membership duties, swear the Constitutional oath before the House in an open session.

Article (78): If a seat of a member of the House of Representatives becomes vacant for more than a year before the expiry of the House's term, a replacement shall be elected within sixty days of the House's declaration of the vacancy and this membership ends when the existing House duration comes to an end. (No. of Article ????)

Article (79): A member of the House of Representatives shall not interfere with the work of the Executive or the Judicial authorities.

Article (80): Membership of the House of Representative may not be combined with membership of a local council or with any public employment. Membership of the Council of Ministers may concur with membership of the House of Representatives.

Article (81): A member of the House of Representatives shall not be held responsible for facts he comes across or matters he raises in the House or any of its committees, or for his voting pattern in open or closed meetings. This does not apply to cases of slander or defamation by members.

Article (82): A member of the House of Representatives may not be subject to procedures of investigation, inspection, arrest, imprisonment, or punishment except with the permission of the House of Representatives save in the case his being caught in the act, and in such a case, the House shall be notified forthwith. The House shall make sure of the rectitude of the procedures followed in such cases. If the House is in recess, permission shall be sought from the Presidency Board of the House, and the House of Representatives shall be notified at the first meeting following the procedures taken.

Article (83): Members of the House of Representatives submit their resignations to the House, which has the exclusive right to accept them.

Article (84): The membership of a member of the House of Representatives may not be nullified unless any of the membership conditions stipulated in this Constitution cease to apply, or if the member commits a grave violation of the membership duties according to the specifications of the internal regulations/ by-law of the House.

Article (85): A member of the House of Representatives and the government have the right to propose bills for laws, and their amendments. In the case of financial laws that aim at increasing or abolishing an existing tax, or decrease or give exemption from part of it, or aim at allocating part of the state funds for a certain project, these may only be proposed by the government or by at least 20% of the representatives. All the proposed laws presented by a member or additional members of the House shall not be referred to one of the committees of the House before being studied by a special committee which will determine whether the proposal meets the requirements for action by the House. If the House decides to discuss any of these it can be transferred to the committee responsible for examining and reporting thereon. Any proposed law/ draft submitted by any parties other than the government may not be submitted again during the same session.

Chapter Four

Methods and means of the Parliament and Members' work

Every member of the legislative authority has an important role to play; this role is related to their rights and responsibilities as a member of the Legislative Authority. Every member has all privileges and responsibilities stipulated in laws and procedures of the Legislative Authority; these rights are the following:

- Right to talk
- Right to direct questions and make interrogation
- Franchise

Every one of these rights is considered decisive in the light of the democratic process.

Right to talk

Participating in discussion and saying what you think concerning a draft or suggested budget to introduce your view on a subject if you accept or reject a procedure.

Right to direct questions and make interrogation

Each Member of Parliament has the right to direct a question or an interrogation to the Head of the Council of Ministers, any of his deputies, any minister or their deputies on any subject of their interest. The person whom the question is directed to shall answer. The bylaw of the Parliament, Articles 134- 142, explains the procedures of directing a question. Articles 154- 161 of the bylaw explain the procedures for holding an interrogation. The interrogation leads probably to withdrawing confidence from the government or any of its ministers.

Franchise

As a member of the Legislative Authority, you represent the public and it is your right and responsibility to vote on subjects before the legislative board.

What is the role of general sittings

The sitting/ meeting is the place or avenue where most of the activities of the Legislative Authority is held; it is the place where the Members of the Legislative Authority can direct questions, discuss, debate and amend laws- related issues the Parliament is in charge to vote on. It is the place where the members vote on the business of the legislative authority to pass or reject the laws presented to it for study. Generally, the debate would not be held on the details of a bill which is usually delegated to a general committee but on the principles of law and general policy.

Role of committees

Since the general sitting is the avenue or place of public debates and taking decisions, most of detailed work of the legislative authority or government takes place in the committees. The system of committees allows more flexibility for the legislature to perform their duty; it also allows the work of the legislative authority to do its work much more efficiently through dividing the work into smaller and more concentrated activities. Committees are able for example to deal with the executive authority, which is one of the ways the government is held accountable for its actions.

Work of committees

Committees are usually assigned to study the legislation and the draft (as in the U.S.A.) suggesting amendments to the legislation and asking witnesses for testimony to prepare the reports, offer advice and call for government officials. Committees may have permanent or temporary feature or be dissociated as soon as their assignment is done.

Committees perform their work publicly and their agenda of meetings shall be published and open to the public and press. The work of committees should be published as a report reflecting what a committee has achieved and reached; the report usually includes recommendations deduced through the work of the committee. The government might not adopt those recommendations which often have a great influence on the government's policy and decision making.

If the committee was examining a legislation, it should be sent to the legislative authority along with its suggested amendments in order to be taken into account by the legislative authority as a whole. The recommendations presented by the committee on a legislation have an important role to play in the final form of a bill.

Structure of committees

The committee members should be from all parties, ruling and opposition; the percentage of membership should correspond to the number of Members of the Parliament. The committee membership is often determined by every partisan representation which should be balanced in terms of members of experience and members of interest.

The structure of the committee leadership is usually set in laws and procedures of the legislative authority. It may be joint leadership divided between the government and opposition parties. For example, the committee Chairperson can be from the party of majority whereas his deputy from the party of minority. The position of the committee Chairperson of some committees can be sometimes confined to the party of majority

while some committee chairpersons from the opposition Members of Parliament, for example the General Accounting Committees in the United Kingdom and Canada which are concerned with checking and observing the government's expenditure are usually headed by a member of the key opposition party.

Types of committees...Permanent and temporary committees

The permanent committees of the legislative authority are formed in the same form of the variety of government posts such as finance, defense, health, human rights, trade, and environment. It is also possible to form committees responsible for a number of governmental institutions with similar natures. These committees are allowed then to closely check the performance of government institutions setting up plans, political initiatives and long- term plans.

It is probable for these committees to play a vital role in the development of the legislative process; these committees can check any document, sentence by sentence, and present suggestions for amendments to the concerned committee. **That may be decisive in the process of passing them to the legislative authority or not.**

Committees of Special tasks

They are committees identified with a certain period of time depending on studying and examining a certain event or carrying out a specific assignment delegated by the legislative authority. These committees may be given special authorities different from those of the permanent committees, for example committees in Canada may tend to ask for the assistance of independent officers like the Ombudsman* or a officer of conflict of interest which are positions requiring the support of all parties.

Whether those committees are temporary or permanent, they work in accordance with laws and procedures assigned to the Legislative Authority; they work independently in compliance with laws. These committees should be equipped with money and people to work efficiently.

Sub- committees

They are the smallest committees formed by the bigger committees. They are usually established to study a certain assignment or issue related to the bigger committees. These committees are useful when the main committee has lots of things important to do. The smaller committee report to the main one. For example, it is possible for the External Affairs Committee to have a sub- committee concerned with a specific country; the Trade Committee can have a sub- committee to be concerned with specific trade issues such as tariff or World Trade Organization.

*Ombudsman: a title usually, not always, used for an officer appointed by the government or parliament whose duty is to represent the people's interests whilst investigations and following up complaints presented by the citizens. In a section of the judicial authorities, the 'ombudsman' is pointed to as a parliamentary committee member.

Chapter Five

The Parliament's sessions and meetings

• Parliament's Sessions

Concerning the Parliament's sessions, the Constitution of Yemen states the following:

Article (70): The House of Representatives shall, on an invitation from the President of the Republic, hold its first meeting no later than two weeks after the announcement of the results of the elections. If no such invitation is made, the House shall meet on the morning following the date of expiration of the said two weeks.

Article (74) The House shall annually hold two ordinary sessions. It may be called to hold extraordinary sessions. The internal regulations/ by-law of the House shall specify the dates of the ordinary sessions and their durations. In times of necessity, the House may be called for extraordinary sessions by Presidential decree, a decision by the Presiding Board of the House at their discretion, or a written request from one third of the members. The House session shall not be adjourned during the last quarter of the year before the endorsement of the General Budget of the state.

• Parliament meetings

Concerning the subject of the Parliament's meetings, the Constitution of Yemen states the following:

Article (72): For the meetings of the House of Representatives to be valid, it is necessary for more than half of its members to attend, excluding those whose seats were declared vacant. Decisions shall be taken by an absolute majority of the attending members except in cases where the Constitution or House regulations/ by-law demand a specific majority. If the results of voting are equally divided, further deliberations must be rejected within the same session, but shall be given priority if submitted in another session.

Article (73): Meetings of the House of Representatives shall be open to the public but the House may hold closed meetings at the request of the Speaker, the President, the Government, or at the request of at least twenty members of

the House. The House shall then decide whether the discussion of the subject should be conducted openly or in closed meetings.

System of work in meetings

As regards the system of work in meetings, the bylaw of the Yemeni Parliament states the following:

Article (88): A list of the members names, the hansard of the previous sitting and the agenda of the coming sitting shall be presented to them half an hour before opening the sitting on which they shall sign when they are present.

Article (89): When opening the sitting, the hansard of the previous sitting shall be recited. After that, the letters directed to the Parliament from the President of the Republic, Prime Minister and External Parliamentary Boards as well as any subject the presidium deems to present to the parliament shall be delivered.

Article (90): Requests for talk are listed in chronological order; the concerned Ministers, government representatives, committee heads and rapportuers are allowed during the debate to talk about the subjects issued by their committees. There shall be no debate on a subject transferred to one of the committees but after the submission of the report by the concerned committee.

Article (91): Before starting the discussion of any subject presented to the Parliament, a record shall be opened for those who request to talk on the subject. The Chair of the sitting shall announce the names of the members requested to talk and then give the listed names permission to talk in achronolical order. He allows then the other members who offer their requests for talking during the sitting without diagression from the subject being discussed.

Adjournment of debate

As regards the issue of adjourning a debate, the bylaw of the Yemeni Parliament states the following:

Article (101): The Chair of the sitting shall announce the adjournment of the debate after the members requested to talk finish their talk.

Article (102): The Chair of the sitting has the right to suggest the adjournment of a debate if he thinks that the subject was sufficiently discussed. The adjournment of debate may be suggested in a written request from at least twenty members of parliament of those who has not talked about the subject. This suggestion shall be presented to the Parliament.

Article (103): According to a suggestion by the Speaker, government, the concerned committee or a written request from at least twenty members. They shall decide the deadline for finishing the discussion of a subject and voting on it or adjourning the discussion. To adjourn the debate, two members supporting the subject and two at least against the subject shall be given permission to talk about the subject before the adjournment of debate. At least one member is allowed to talk after the talk of the government representative.

Article (104): Only one of the members supporting the subject and one rejecting it are allowed to talk about the suggestion of the adjournment of debate; those who requested to talk about the key subject have priority. The Parliament shall then make a decision on whether adjourning or continuing the debate with the majority of attending members. If the adjournment of debate is decided, voting shall be taken on the main subject.

Article (105): The request for talking may not be presented after the adjournment of debate and before voting is made except for wording the question on which the voting is to be made.

Voting (expressing opinion)

Concerning the issue of voting, the by-law of the Yemeni Parliament states the following articles:

Article (106): The Parliament may not take decision unless the majority of its members attend the sitting excluding those whose seats were declared vacant. Decisions shall be taken by an absolute majority of the attending members except in cases where a specific majority is demanded. If the results of voting are equally divided, further deliberation on the discussed subject must be rejected. The same subject may not be presented again to the Parliament for voting but in another session. Anyway, the decision is considered valid if it is voted for by a quarter of Members of Parliament and an additional member.

Article (107): No suggestion is presented for voting on except from the Speaker and voting shall be taken first on the suggestions regarding the presented subject. Voting shall be taken on the more extended ones that are farer

from the original text. In case the suggestions are rejected, voting is to be taken on the original text.

Minutes of meetings

Regarding the minutes of meetings, the by- law of the Yemen Parliament states the following articles:

Article (113): Every meeting has two minutes of which one is a detailed one (hansard) and the other includes all procedures of the session, the presented subjects and discussions as well as the decisions taken and the names of members in all cases voting is made either through calling out the names or via computers indicating the view of each one of them.

Article (114): A copy of the comprehensive minutes is submitted to all Parliamentary committees and another copy to each Parliamentary caucus while five copies shall be kept in the library of the Parliament. Each member has the right to get a copy of the minutes. In case any Member of Parliament presents a request for making corrections on the minutes, the minutes is presented to the Parliament with the requests for corrections. Once the corrections are approved by the parliament, they shall report that in the minutes of the meeting when the decision of the Parliament is taken and the minutes shall be accordingly corrected.

Article (115): Before the endorsement of the hansard, any Member of Parliament is allowed to attend the meeting has the right to request correcting the hansard only by deletion or addition. No member shall be allowed to do the discussion again. The hansard shall be kept in the records of the parliament and published as a whole or partially, if the Speaker thinks that, via the official journal unless the Parliament think otherwise.

Article (116): A brief minutes shall be quickly prepared to be published after every meeting reporting in general the subjects presented to the Parliament and the discussions held and the decisions taken. This minutes shall be made available for different media means.

Evaluating the Parliament's practice of legislative and overseeing authorities

The degree of practicing the legislative supervision by the Legislative Board

	Universal legislative supervision	Limited legislative supervision	Weak/ Absence of legislative supervision
Supervision Committee	<p>Strong committee supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees have the suitable people in terms of action and expertise. • Ministers participate in sittings of supervision responding quickly to the written requests for information. • It is probable to conduct investigations or field visits. 	<p>Only committees respond to the issues that attract the attention but they lack the universal or effective adjacency to supervision; they may lack the experience or necessary resources as well.</p>	<p>The committee supervision is absent; the committee sittings rarely have ministers or other high ranked government officials; its written requests for information are neglected.</p>
General Accountancy Committee	<p>The General Accountancy Committee is characterized with the independence, high funding and experienced staff; it makes an organized supervision on the government expenditure; its efforts are coordinated with the General Auditor.</p>	<p>The General Accountancy Committee is available but it lacks the staff, officers and funding.</p>	<p>The General Accountancy Committee is not there; the legislative supervision on the financial policy does not have the sufficient resources or it is not available.</p>
Parliamentary questions	<p>Parliamentary questions are recurrent; the ministers are required to answer duly and quickly. The Prime Minister and other ministers participate in the sitting of 'general questions'.</p>	<p>The legislatures direct parliamentary questions but the ministers usually avoid them or give insufficient answers; the opposition may get benefit from suitable opportunities for stirring up such issues.</p>	<p>Parliamentary questions, if any, are limited; whereas ministers neglect the written questions and do not participate in the 'question period' sittings.</p>
The independent external supervision	<p>There are independent external supervision entities with sufficient staff such as the General Auditor, Financial Inspector and the Complaint Officer</p>	<p>Some institutions are available but they may suffer from lower funding, few staff and not to be always referred to by the Legislative Board.</p>	<p>The independent external supervision entities are not available; the Parliament should specify the issues of supervision and follow up itself alone.</p>

Appendices

Parliamentary Terms By Abdul-Qawi Al-Qaisi

A

Absolute majority:

It is voting for a subject by more than half of the Members of Parliament. It is voting for a certain subject by the more number of members in comparison with the few number of members.

Acclamation:

It is the testimony of the Member of Parliament, either through giving opinion or secret voting, favoring any of the presidential candidates.

Ad hoc/ Special Committee:

Ad hoc committees are set up temporarily by the parliament to carry out a specific assignment and it get dissolved as soon as it finishes.

Adjournment

The period between the termination of a meeting of the House and the start of the next meeting.

Annual session:

The Parliament holds two sessions during the year.

Arresting in act:

The witnessed crime about which the prosecution does not require an evidence to prove the identity of the perpetrator.

Attendance sheets:

They are the lists on which the Members of Parliament put their signature to prove that they attended the sittings of the Parliament and meetings of committees.

Attention:

It is notifying the talking member by the Speaker not to go beyond the subject being discussed or that the idea he is explaining in the Parliament is completely clear.

Avoidance of voting:

It is rejecting voting by the Member of Parliament on the subject presented to the Parliament for voting. Avoidance of voting requires the Member of Parliament to justify their attitude.

B

Ballot:

A paper for voting in an election which has the names or symbols of candidates running.

By-election:

An election held to fill a vacancy arising in the parliament due to resignation, death or holding membership of a member.

Bylaw:

It is the set of rules approved by the Parliament in purpose of organizing its activities.

C

Candidate:

A person chosen to represent a political party for certain elections in a specific constituency or a person who runs as an independent in an election.

Caucus:

The groups of elected members of parliament who represent a specific party

Caucus Chair:

The Member of Parliament elected a chair of a bloc by a group of Members representing a specific party in the Parliament.

Caucus of majority:

It is the group of elected members representing a specific party that got most of the parliamentary seats in comparison with the other parties.

Challenge on validity of membership:

It is a written petition people of interest present to the specialized courts or Parliament requesting the nullification of membership of the member challenged against during a certain period.

Close constituency:

It is the electoral constituency where the independent candidate or the party candidate is assured to win the elections.

Close sitting:

It is the sitting the Parliament approves it to be closed and not attended by any people other than members of Parliament or those officers authorized by the Parliament and nobody other than the said ones is allowed to see the minutes of that sitting.

Closure

The procedure by which a debate may be terminated by a majority decision of the house, even though there are members wishing to continue.

Coalition government:

It is the government formed from two or more parties because no specific party got sufficient parliamentary seats to allow it to form a government separately.

Commentary on government platform:

It is a report prepared by the committee delegated by the Parliament to study the government program; this report includes the view of the Parliament on the program.

Committee office:

It is the permanent secretariat of the committee which is formed of a number of secretary, technical, and specialist people, experts and consultants.

Committee rapportuer:

It is the Member of Parliament elected by the committee members and considered the Deputy Head of the committee.

Committee Secretary:

It is a public officer of the Parliament appointed from the General Secretariat to arrange and organize the committee work.

Comprehensive minuets:

The written minutes that includes in details all procedures of sittings, whatever subjects presented, debates held and decision taken as well as the names of the members who talked including the viewpoint of every one of them.

Concealing confidence:

It is the voting of the Parliament against the government program or statement presented to it for approval.

Conditions of membership:

They are the conditions stated in the constitution concerning the nomination of whoever wants to run for Parliament.

Conflict of interest:

The involvement of more than an authority of the state's three authorities in a legal disagreement about the priority in deciding on a certain issue.

Constant session case:

Considering quickly the Parliament in a state to hold session though its meetings are prorogated for an identified period.

Constitutionally- driven meeting:

It is the meeting declared by the constitution like the meeting held by the Parliament after the decree on the dissolution of the Parliament by the President of the Republic without conducting either a general public referendum or the Parliamentary elections on time identified by the constitution.

Constitutional oath:

It is the oath stated in the constitution which all Members of Parliament swear before activating their membership.

Constitutional amendments:

It is amending some or all articles of the constitution under the request of the President of the Republic or a third of the Members of Parliament.

Constituency:

Electoral boundaries defined by population and geographical location within which the citizen exercises their right in voting; the constituency consists of a number of voting centers.

Constitutionality of a law:

It is the approval of a bill according to the constitutional procedures without violating its rules.

Constitutional vacancy:

It is an unusual political situation in which a constitutional term of the President of the Republic as well as the Parliament is concluded or the resignation of the President of the Republic is presented and no Presidential elections are conducted on the identified time.

Cooperation agreement:

It is a legal formula for organizing a relationship between the parties of the agreement in a certain field.

D

Decision of accusation:

It is the decision taken by the Parliament with the majority of two thirds of members directing accusation to the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister or one of his deputies, or a Minister in preparation for transferring them to investigation and trial due to whatever crimes they committed during their occupation of those posts or because of them.

Declaration of assets:

It is the financial testimonial about the money and stable assets each minister writes before occupying their new ministerial post.

Decree by law:

It is the right of the President of the Republic to issue republican decrees with the power of laws; they are issued during the periods when the Parliament holds no sittings provided that they are presented to the Parliament in its first sittings. This right was cancelled in the constitutional amendments in 2001.

Democracy:

It comes from the two Greek words: 'demos' meaning people and 'kratos' meaning strength. It is a system of government where the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised indirectly through their elected representatives.

Determining vote:

It is the vote that determines a specific issue presented for voting yet the number of the votes for the subject is similar to the number of the opposing votes.

Directive:

The right of the Parliament to make the government commit to implement some of the recommendations related to public issues.

Dissolution of parliament:

Means by which the parliament comes to an end by a decree by the President of the Republic after a public referendum on this issue is conducted.

Division:

It is the case when the number of the vote for the subject presented to the Parliament equals those who are against.

Double- room system:

It means that there is another council whose members may be appointed; it consists of people of specializations and expertise besides the Parliament which is elected.

Draft:

It is the initial wording of a bill presented by the government or a Member of Parliament to the parliament for debate and approval.

E

Early elections:

It is the Parliamentary elections that are called for by the President of the Republic before their time.

Election:

This is the process where citizens choose a person to act as their representative in the parliament or in local councils.

Electoral platform:

It is a set of ideas, views and bases to be presented by a party or an independent candidate for the sake of gaining their confidence and convincing them to vote for them.

Emergency case:

It is a decree announced by the President of the Republic and approved by the Parliament aiming for ceasing the effectiveness of some articles of the constitution imposing an extraordinary case on the public situation of the state for a definite period.

Event correction:

It is the right of the Member of Parliament to talk about a certain issue presented to the Parliament in a form different from reality.

Expository memo:

It is the letter enclosed by the government with a draft or a general agreement presented to the Parliament; the memo explains the reasons and justifications that support what is presented.

Extraordinary session:

It is the exceptional/ extraordinary session the Parliament calls for holding it whilst being on official leave.

F

Facts finding:

It is a committee formed by the Parliament to study a specific subject or examine the activity of a ministry or institution and present a report to the Parliament.

Final account:

It is the government report presented to the Parliament showing the results of the implementation of the general budget of the state for the last year.

Final voting:

It is the process of voting on the draft as a whole after finishing the debate of the draft once.

Financial law:

It is the set of rules that organize the process of setting up the general budget of the state and the ways of its categorization and implementation.

Financial oversight:

It is the set of jurisdictions the constitution and law bestows on the Parliament for overseeing the financial performance of the government and the degree of its compliance to law in respect of the issues related to the expenditure of the public money.

Financial statement:

It is the summary including the basis, goals and monetary and financial policies of the general budgets presented by the government along with the general budget of the state to the Parliament.

First reading:

It is the first time the Parliament reads the report of the special committee on any draft transferred to it from the Parliament.

Fiscal year:

It is twelve months of which the beginning and the end is identified by the Financial Law.

G

General Secretariat:

It is the executive apparatus of the Parliament.

General budget:

The universal schedules outlining all revenues estimated to be collected and all expenditures anticipated to be spent during a fiscal year.

General government program/ platform:

It is the program the government presents after its formation to the Parliament in order to gain confidence; it includes the basis of the future plan of the government work.

General mobilization:

It is the constitutional right of the President of the Republic to call the military, security and reserved forces for getting ready for confronting an internal or external danger threatening the security of the country.

Giving opinion:

It is the voting for or against or avoiding to vote on any subject presented to the parliament for the sake of take the opinions of members.

Government formation:

It is the process of nominating ministers in the ministerial posts; this process is carried out by the Prime Minister in consultation with the President of the Republic.

Government representative:

It is the Member of Cabinet or officer assigned by the government to attend the sittings of the Parliament.

Government statement:

It is the vision presented by the government to the Parliament on the occasion of its adoption of a new policy that may not match its Program with which it was given confidence.

Grave treachery:

Committing an act violating the constitution and law and endangering the independence, sovereignty and security of the home.

Group responsibility:

It is the involvement of the Prime Minister and Ministers in the responsibility of the government activities before the President of the Republic and the Parliament.

H

Hall of sittings:

It is the place specified for conducting the general sittings of the Parliament.

Hansard:

The official, verbatim record of parliamentary debates and proceedings that includes the subjects presented and decisions taken in every sitting

Hearings:

They are the sittings the committees call citizens to attend the sittings and listen to the debates held about a certain subject.

Hindrance to endorsement:

It is the use of long speeches and going into deep discussions aiming at postponing voting on a subject presented to the Parliament.

I

Inclusive:

It is a word the Member of Parliament uses to withdraw his right in talking when he finds that what he is intending to present has been already presented by the members who talked before him.

Individual responsibility:

It is the solo responsibility of the Prime Minister, one of his deputies, ministers or one of their deputies before the Parliament regarding any topic comes in their jurisdictions.

Indecent statement:

Any talk produced by a Member of Parliament during the debate disdaining the dignity of people, boards or institutions.

Independent member:

A member of the parliament who is not a member of any political party.

Initial- letters signed agreement:

It is any preliminary agreement between two parties who primarily agree on its terms and, both of them, put a specific sign on the agreement; this sign is considered a signature but not the genuine or official one. Such an agreement signed with the initial letters may be subjected to modifications. Signing such an agreement does not require an authorization from the Prime Minister.

Initial voting:

It is the process of voting on a draft article by article during the debate of the draft.

Interjectional decision:

It is the right of the President of the Republic in presenting a draft for the second time to the Parliament, though it has previously approved it, in order to amend it or some of its articles.

Interrogation:

It is the right of the Member of Parliament to call a member of the government or the government as a whole accountable for any of public issues related to its performance of duties.

Intervention:

It is the notice presented by the Member of Parliament aiming at replying to a point of the debate.

J

Joint Meeting:

It is the meeting that brings together both, the Parliament and the Shura Council.

Judgment on validity of membership:

It is the decision taken by the majority of Members of Parliament either for accepting or termination of the membership of one of the members.

L

Law:

The set of principles that determine the behaviors and actions of a group of people or a specific institution or the entire society.

Legislative course:

It is the period of time constitutionally identified for the Parliament since the first sitting held after the elections till the last sitting held before conducting the new elections.

Loan agreement:

It is an agreement between two parties on which one of the parties presents a specific amount of money with an identified interest for a determined period of refunding to the other party according to the conditions agreed upon by both the parties.

Lobbyist groups:

It is a homogeneous group of the Members of Parliament working on convincing others to adopt its views and suggestions on a certain subject presented to the Parliament.

M

Majority Government

The government that is formed from the single party that gained the majority number of seats in the parliament.

Majority of attendance:

It is the process of voting for a subject by more than a half of the votes of the attending members provided that the votes are not less than a quarter of the Members of Parliament.

Member of Parliament:

It is the member elected a Member of Parliament representing a constituency.

Minority Government

The government that is formed from coalition gained fewer number of seats in the parliament than those gained by other parties.

N

Nomination:

It is the right of citizens to run for the seats of the Parliament.

Nullification of drafts:

When the legislative course of the Parliament is wrapped up, all drafts presented to the Parliament are cancelled and the government shall present them again to the new Parliament.

Nullification of immunity:

It is the decision of the absolute majority of the Members of Parliament on taking any judicial actions, such as investigation, arrest, imprisonment or any punishment, against any Member of Parliament under a request presented by the Minister of Justice to the Parliament Speaker.

Nullification of membership:

It is the decision of the Parliament with the majority of its members on the nullification of the membership of one of its members due to the loss of one of the membership conditions or committing a grave violation of the membership duties.

O

Official journal:

It is the gazette issued by the Ministry of Legal Affairs which includes all laws issued by the Parliament as well as all decrees by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister.

Open sittings:

They are the sittings held by the Parliament and broadcasted via media.

Opposition caucus:

It is a group of elected members representing a party or more in the Parliament without any representation in the government.

Opposition Leader

The leader of the political party that does not participate in the government

Ordinary session:

It is one of the sessions the Parliament holds during a year; the period of each session is six months.

Original articles:

It is the original text of the articles of law of which a substitute draft is presented to the Parliament; it may be also the articles of a draft the government presented and the concerned committee inserted its amendments.

P

Parliament

The legislature or legislative authority that enacts laws and oversees the government's performance and decides whether to give it confidence or withdraw it.

Parliamentary culture:

It is the list of conventions, values, traditions and practices that prevail the work of any Parliament.

Parliamentary Immunity:

It is the constitutional immunity preventing taking any judicial action such as investigation, inspection, detention or imprisonment against any member of the parliament without referring to the parliament or its presidium.

Parliament's endorsement:

It is approving, through voting, any agreement or bill discussed in the Parliament.

Parliament's presidium:

It is the permanent apparatus of the Parliament during the legislative term; it consists of the Speaker of Parliament and three deputies.

Party of majority:

It is the party that won more than the half of the seats of the Parliament in any parliamentary elections.

Peaceful transfer of power:

It is the principle of the acceptance of the ruling party to transfer the power to the other party due to the win of the latter in fair and free elections.

Periodic agenda:

It is the subjects to be discussed by the Parliament during a specific period of its meetings.

Point of Order:

The protest of a member of the parliament against the illegitimacy of the debate or procedures on an issue being discussed.

Political asylum:

It is the acceptance of the state to allow a citizen or more of another country/ countries to live in it for a specific period due to fear for their lives in the regimes of their countries.

Political Party

Group of individual united by common political and economic ideas and beliefs about society's service.

Political plurality:

It is the political system based on allowing a variety of parties in the same country according to a law organizing such system.

Presenting a subject for discussion:

It means presenting the subject to the Parliament for debate and voting.

Presidential assent:

The legal procedure by which the President of the Republic puts his signature that is considered the final approval to any agreement approved by the Parliament.

Presidential endorsement:

It is a legal pattern in the form of decree signed by the President of the Republic on which the signature is considered the final endorsement of any agreement approved by the Parliament.

Press balcony:

It is the stage designated for press people and representatives of the agencies and radio stations to follow the work of the Parliament.

Proclamation:

An official notice on the approval of the President of the Republic to issuing a bill approved by the Parliament.

Prorogation:

The act by which the President of the Republic brings a session of the Parliament to an end in preparation for conducting early Parliamentary elections.

Public balcony:

It is the stage specified for the citizens to sit and follow the work of the Parliament.

Public referendum:

It is taking the opinion of people regarding a certain issue or more through polling.

Q

Question:

The right of the Member of Parliament to ask prime minister, any of his deputies, a minister or any of their deputies questions related to their respective responsibilities.

R

Recommendations:

It is the suggestions directed by the Parliament to the government to implement them.

Re-holding deliberations:

It is the request presented by the government or five of the Members of Parliament for conducting the discussion again on an article or more of the articles of a draft discussed and voted on in a previous deliberation.

Rejection:

It is the Parliament's refusal of a subject presented to it for voting.

Request for postponement:

It is the right of the government or Members of Parliament to postpone the time of debate and voting on any subject presented to the Parliament.

Request for talk:

Asking for the permission of the sitting Chair to talk in the Parliament about a subject presented for debate.

Resignation:

It is the written desire of the Member of Parliament in terminating their membership and stopping to practice their duties as a Member of Parliament.

S**Second reading:**

It is the period which follows the first reading and includes deliberation on the general principles of the draft and the discussion of its articles one by one and voting on them.

Secret voting:

It is voting secretly by the voter in any election process or referendum without revealing their vote to any other person.

Separation between authorities:

It is the constitutional principle in which the legislature states the separation of the three authorities of the state from each other and not mingling the jurisdictions nor constitutionally allowing to mix the jurisdictions of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities.

Session:

It is a two- week period during which the Parliament holds its sittings/ meetings.

Speaker of Parliament:

The member who is elected by the members to preside over all meetings of the parliament in a fair and non-partisan manner. The Speaker manages the work of the parliament is carried out in accord with the rules and orders.

Special majority:

It is the majority on which the constitution or the by-law put the condition of voting for a certain subject by a special majority more than the majority of the attending members.

Standing committee:

The parliamentary committees that are formed in the first session of the parliament.

Suffrage: It is the right of every citizen at or over the age of 18 full calendar years to vote who represents them in the parliament or in the Local Councils.

System of majority:

It is the electoral system that allows a candidate to win in a specific constituency with the majority of votes regardless of whether the majority of votes is considered 50% of the total voted people or not.

T**Term of President of the Republic:**

It is the constitutional period of time that determines the legal course for the occupation of the post of the President of the Republic.

Term of the Parliament's presidium:

It is the legal period of time for occupying the position of the Speaker of Parliament and his Deputies.

U**Urgency feature:**

Introducing a subject in the agenda of the Parliament before other subjects to discuss and reach a division on urgent basis.

V**Vacant seat:**

A seat of the Parliament gets vacant due to the death or resignation of the Member of Parliament or the termination of their membership.

Validity of membership:

It is the case in which the membership of the Parliament is gained as soon as he/she received the certificate of win from the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER).

Voter:

It is the person who lives in a voting domicile and has the right to vote in any elections.

Voter's vote:

It is the vote of the citizen who is eligible to vote to the candidate they want in a specific election.

Voting:

It is giving opinions of the Members of Parliament about a subject presented to the Parliament.

Voting ID card:

It is an official document that includes the name and photo of the voter along with their electoral domicile by which they can practice their right in voting in every electoral process or referendum.

W

Warning the talking member:

It is the right of the Speaker of Parliament to prevent the member who is talking from elaborating in talking because their viewpoint becomes clear.

Withdrawing confidence:

It is the decision taken by the Parliament with the majority of its members whose result is the resignation of the Prime Minister and members of cabinet.

Withdrawing talk:

It is the apology of a member for their talk during the debate declaring their willingness to remove it from the minutes of the sitting because it harms the reputation of people without evidence.

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Conclusion

The freely elected Parliament in a pluralistic political system is considered the essence of the democratic process. When the Parliament succeeds in its representation of the society's interests, it achieves a higher status and credibility at the societal sight as an actual representative of the people's power.

This helps in the development of democracy and stabilizing its values leading to the establishment of the democratic civil society whose members get their rights, freedoms and advancement.