

# QUICK GUIDE: **SERVING AS FORMAL OPPOSITION IN GOVERNMENT**

MAY 2020





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The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world for more than three decades. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. NDI in Iraq assists political actors and reform minded citizens to move beyond identity politics to facilitate national reconciliation and to work towards the development of outcome driven institutions that are responsive to the policy priorities of all Iraqis. NDI has training facilities in Baghdad and Erbil, where it collaborates with Iraq's political parties represented in two legislative bodies, the Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Kurdistan Parliament of Iraq (KPI).

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# PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLICATION

The purpose of this publication is to provide a set of ideas and strategies for political parties that wish to become formal opposition parties within their country's respective legislative branch. This publication provides an outline of some the institutionalized rules and traditions that many countries have to protect and strengthen the role of a formal opposition, as well as advice collected from political parties in countries new to democratic governance who have served the role of an opposition party over the past several years.

A strong, well organized opposition is an essential element of a well functioning multiparty democracy. The National Democratic Institute (NDI or the Institute) works with political parties from across the political spectrum and with parties both within governing coalitions and in the opposition. At the same time, the Institute recognizes that political parties' opportunities to engage citizens and to influence government vary significantly based on whether they control government or are serving in opposition. This particular guide focuses on some of the issues that political parties face while in opposition. It was developed in response to a request from partner parties as they entered the role of a democratic opposition for the first time. It supplements other NDI materials that focus on other aspects of healthy multiparty democracies, including how to manage transitions into government and other governance roles.



# INTRODUCTION

“Opposition is not only about power, or lack thereof, but influence -- proposing new ideas, which might get adapted by the governing party.”

- Jim Higgins, Irish politician.

A loyal opposition is a political party or bloc of political parties within a legislature that functions within a country's established system of elections and representation, but does not win a large enough share of the vote to form a governing coalition, or is left out of the governing coalition due to its disagreements with the parties forming the government. Within the context of a legislative session, this party then provides a contrasting view on bills presented by the government and provides citizens with an alternative choice to the ruling party when elections come around again. While the role of the opposition by its very definition means the opposition party often plays the role of blocking some of the government's priorities, this does not mean the role of an opposition party is merely to oppose the government on every single issue. An opposition party can agree with the government on certain issues, and work with the government to resolve them, while opposing the government on separate issues, without fundamentally undermining the role of the opposition. This does mean that one of the most difficult aspects of being an opposition party is balancing the role of obstructing government policies and highlighting its inefficiencies for public debate, and supporting government policies that an opposition may agree with. Too much of the former may make the legislature dysfunctional and increase political divides within the country, too much of the latter and the opposition party is no longer playing the role of an opposition at all.

The role of a loyal opposition is to strengthen democratic government in two vital roles. First, by holding the governing party to account publicly and questioning its measures and priorities, the opposition increases government transparency and lets a country's citizens clearly see how their government is functioning. The second role is the opposition provides citizens with an alternative to the ruling party's way of running the country. If a citizen feels marginalized by the ruling party, or that the issues that affect them are not really being addressed, a strong opposition party provides an alternative government that gives this citizen a choice when it comes time for the next round of elections. This is why it is vital for an opposition party to have a clear message and play a key role outside of an election year, as a democracy without a choice of different governing parties is not a well functioning democracy.

# FORMAL RECOGNITION OF OPPOSITION RIGHTS

This section provides an overview of laws and procedural rules that strengthen the role of opposition parties in some of the more well established democracies, particularly in the model of the United Kingdom (UK) which many developing democracies are based on. Many of these procedures were not implemented in the constitution of the country, but took decades of development to become enshrined in the political practices and norms of the country.

Typically, the role of the opposition is embedded in a parliament's rules of procedure, which then sets the tone and precedent for opposition rights in other facets of parliamentary function and operations. Committees are another area where particular rules of procedure can dictate the rights of the opposition.

## Parliamentary Procedures

- **Advance notice of parliamentary sessions and the agenda.** Pursuant to the declaration of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association that there “shall be adequate parliamentary examination of proposed legislation,” a legislator must be provided with advance notice of session meetings and the agenda for that session. If legislators are to work effectively amidst a heavy workload, it is imperative that their staff and citizens be given the earliest possible notice of session times and the agenda in order to prepare. This right of the legislator is especially important for members of the opposition.
- **Publicly debate bills before a vote.** All citizens have a right to voice their opinion and to affect the creation of laws. As the public assembly is the embodiment of the citizenry in a representative democracy, it follows that each legislator has the right to publicly reflect on bills under consideration. This right should be preserved for every legislator on a non-partisan basis, and is therefore a critical component for a strong opposition.

- **Role in setting parliamentary agenda.** In the majority of parliamentary systems, particularly in the UK, it is the government that sets the agenda for the majority of a session of parliament, and the opposition does not have a formal mechanism to demand an agenda be brought up outside of delegated opposition or private member days. However, an organized opposition with a well planned set of policies on the government's proposed agenda can play a strong role in shaping the debate on an agenda that the government proposes to debate in the parliament. Mechanics such as opposition days, which are detailed below, also offer the opposition an opportunity for them to set the agenda during a small portion of a session of the legislature.

## Opposition in Action (Bosnia)

"We are very active in the plenary session because that gives us coverage in a media environment that does not usually cover the opposition. We also have many initiatives and directly contact citizens for discussions on government accountability."

- **Parliamentary group support.** Well established parliamentary systems have strong guidelines in place that ensures opposition parties have a role to play in governance. Whether this takes the form of an official opposition party like in the UK, or a more fragmented group of loosely affiliated parties in countries with more than two main political parties, the opposition has enshrined a role defined by tradition and parliamentary rules.
- **Funding for Parliamentary Group Functioning.** Most minimum benchmarks for democratic legislatures identify the allocation of resources to parliamentary groups as an important standard. In many democracies, the rights that officially-recognized parliamentary groups (including the opposition in parliament) enjoy includes office space and access to funding and/or staff. These and other publicly-funded resources are designed to help MPs and their parties perform their legislative duties and are usually allocated in proportion to each party's representation in the legislature. Depending on the country-specific provisions, parties may use these funds to hire staff, for outreach to members or other organizational purposes. In some countries, the largest opposition party in the legislature is entitled to choose the leader of the opposition. This office comes with particular benefits, often in terms of staffing.

- **Question Time.** Question time is an opportunity for MPs to ask questions directly to government ministers responsible for running specific ministries and helps hold the government accountable for their policies, particularly if the question time is televised for the public as it is in the UK. Any MP can submit a question to the ministers, ensuring the opposition has an opportunity to ask the government to directly answer a concern the opposition may have over a particular issue. This process also includes a session for direct questions to the prime minister, and in the UK the leader of the opposition is allotted an extra number of questions they can directly ask the PM. The most important aspect of question time is that it helps strengthen government transparency and ensure the government is prepared to defend their proposals from public scrutiny by the opposition.
- **Opposition Roles in Committees.** While in many governments it is the majority that decides who heads committees, such as in the US House of Representatives and Senate, there are rules in place to ensure the opposition has a specified number of seats on all committees, ensuring they have some say in all committee's deliberations. This means that even if the opposition or minority party cannot set the agenda of a committee meeting, they will at least have a chance to speak and present a counter argument to the government's position on a matter. This is particularly useful in committee sessions that are televised. In some countries, there are specific committees that are set aside to be led by the opposition, such as the Public Accounts Committee. For example, in France, the Finance Committees in the Senate and the National Assembly are both led by members of the opposition.

The legislature shall ensure that Public Accounts Committees provide opposition parties with a meaningful opportunity to engage in effective oversight of executive branch expenditures. It is essential that the rules of procedure governing the legislature not be drawn in such a way as to entirely empower the majority at the expense of the minority. Minority rights within the legislature must be protected during the legislative process, on the floor as well as in the committees. Any deterioration of minority rights would be especially problematic were the majority to abrogate its role of executive oversight. This is especially the case with regard to taxpayers' money. Therefore, to ensure that the legislature engages in meaningful oversight of the budgetary and fiscal activities of the executive branch, opposition parties shall have a meaningful opportunity to use public accounts committees to engage in effective oversight of executive branch expenditure.

## Opposition in Action (Albania)

“Parliamentary commissions are our main tool to hold the government accountable, as they are transmitted live by the media and consist of more in-depth debates than plenary sessions. Another important tool is press conferences held by high party officials, during which they denounce corruption, clientelism, nepotism and any other issue we wish to hold the government accountable for. Press conferences are so important that sometimes we hold three in one day.”

- **Opposition Days.** In some systems, like in the UK, an opposition day is a day in a legislature in which an opposition party sets the agenda. Most days the parliamentary agenda is set by the government; opposition days allow the smaller parties to choose the subject for debate. The number of days varies between parliaments. The UK system allocates 20 days of a parliament session for the opposition.
- **Shadow Cabinets.** Often, opposition parliamentary groups appoint spokespersons or points of contact who are responsible for monitoring, analyzing and leading communications on particular areas of policy or government ministries. These individuals are usually drawn from within the opposition parliamentary group and senior members are often called the Shadow Cabinet. Members of the Shadow Cabinet usually lead the debate on bills originating from their assigned minister and lead outreach to the particular community of interest. Each of these activities can be a forum to highlight party policy. This process also helps the opposition and the public learn more about how the policy needs to be applied or refined.

Jim Higgins, former Irish politician, notes that “as a shadow minister, you are a minister-in-waiting, ready to work if the government fails. Being ready for office, even anxious for office, is good for morale, but, more importantly, good for government. Opportunity exists to influence the government if you have the will... you aren’t a shadow, but a vital and capable minister... who, along with opposition deputies, is constantly working towards the “prize” of having a bill passed in a house controlled by members who are not of your party.”

Shadow cabinets strives to move government policy towards the opposition by publicizing and gaining support for alternative legislation. If the opposition mobilizes public opinion, and the government does not adjust their position accordingly, the governing majority can be perceived as arrogant and nonrepresentational.



## Access to Information and Certain Government Facilities

- **Access to Embassies/Their Support When Traveling.** Many governments allow full access to any visiting member of the legislative branch to the embassy of any country they are visiting. This often includes full access to the activities of the embassy and any government ministries operating programs out of the embassy. This strengthens transparency and allows for opposition members to play a role in foreign policy even when the party in government is setting the agenda for the nation's foreign policy.
- **Opposition Statutes.** In some countries, especially those whose systems are heavily influenced by French political traditions, there is an opposition statute, a piece of legislation that enshrines certain opposition rights in the law. These laws typically cover some of the same issues that are outlined elsewhere in this document but give them the force of law. This includes provisions for: office space and staffing for the leader of the opposition; inclusion of opposition representatives in events and discussions of national importance; and embassies to assist senior members of the opposition when they travel.

### Opposition in Action (Romania)

“The most important right is our power to request a ruling on the constitutionality of an illegitimate law. A good and balanced Constitutional Court and a well intended Ombudsman are essential institutions which helped us to eliminate unconstitutional laws.”

## Public Funding of Parties

Given the important role that political parties play in a democracy and in recognition that democracy requires a vibrant multi-party system, countries around the world provide some form of public (government) funding or subsidies to political parties. As part of a broader framework for regulating political party financing, such subsidies can also help reduce parties' reliance on illicit sources of funding that could compromise the political system.

It is possible to give public funding through both direct and indirect means (120 countries provide direct funding to political parties). Direct funding is simply giving money. Indirect is when a government provides resources to a political party/

candidate that they may use, such as a certain amount of free or subsidized air-time on state media. While less common, matching funds and tax credits are also possible methods of public funding. A government will match the funds raised by a party/individual if they are able to prove that they have received these funds through small individual donors. A taxpayer in the US can have their taxes reduced if they have given a political donation.<sup>1</sup> In the US, several states allow taxpayers to “check-off a box on their return” which will then contribute part of their taxes to the state’s political parties. This money can then be used to help fund conventions, voter registration drives, and other party activities.

While there are many benefits of public funding, some of the main perks, according to ACE Project are:<sup>2</sup> “limit the influence of interested money and thereby help curb corruption, the State can encourage or demand changes in for example how many women candidates a party fields, increase transparency in party and candidate finance and thereby help curb corruption, and if parties and candidates are financed with only private funds, economical inequalities in the society might translate into political inequalities in government.”

In order to ensure fair access and distribution of government funding, it is essential to have rules on the allocation of aid as well as mechanisms for the reporting and disclosure of the recipient’s use of funds.

## **Administrative Requirements:**

- 1) If financial payments are given to political parties, a legal definition must be given to the term ‘party’. Without such a definition, it would be impossible to decide which organisations should receive aid. Normally, a party is defined as an organisation which has presented a stated minimum number of candidates for election and which has gained at least a minimum proportion of votes. In Germany, the qualifying hurdle to enable an organisation to qualify as a ‘party’ for the purpose of receiving public subsidies is to gain at least 0.5% of the national vote.
- 2) To receive public funds, a party will normally be obliged to set up an acceptable administrative structure to ensure that the grants are properly used and that accounts are kept.

<sup>1</sup> “Public Financing of Campaigns: Overview,” National Conference of State Legislatures, Feb. 8, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> “Advantages and Disadvantages of Public Funds to Political Parties and Candidates,” Ace Project.

The level of funding for political parties varies widely across different countries. Some countries, such as the United States, only make funding available for political campaigns for the highest political office, that of the president. Others, such as Germany, provide a high wide level of funds to all political parties for their campaigns, though with stipulations that such funds cannot exceed the funds a political party is able to fundraise, ensuring parties cannot be wholly reliant on taxpayer funds. These public funds for campaigns help level the playing field during elections and ensure that even parties with limited fundraising capacity have a more equal chance of gaining the necessary funds they need to run election campaigns for their candidates.

## Challenges for the Opposition

**Albania:** Parliamentary sessions are too formal and lack any real impact in decision making. There is no way to change the government's decisions through parliamentary commissions because in the end, the majority will vote only for the legislation that the government approves.

**Bosnia P1:** The hardest thing is to keep people in the party – both [citizen] membership and party officials engaged and supporting our platform. It is difficult to contend with the pressure that the governing coalition puts on our supporters to try to sway them to support the governing coalition. It's also hard to stay consistent if you stay in the opposition too long. Long periods of time spent in the opposition is tiring for people. We found that direct contact keeps people going. Another important thing to do is to always give new people a chance to present new ideas and work with those who are no longer in politics.

**Bosnia P2:** The biggest challenge was to make the party a recognizable and reputable organization, a party that has its own identity and offers new solutions. The ruling party claims that opposition parties are a financial burden and that they are not doing anything concrete. Opposition parties must rid themselves of this label and present themselves as concrete and active political forces with alternative solutions. The media darkness in which the opposition political party operates is difficult, but quality work and intelligent solutions can move the party from such a position. Free media and relatively free media draw upon the topics that they consider to be interesting to the wider community and it is the goal of party representatives to produce such topics.

## Messaging and Communication

**Bosnia P1:** We explain that we are the political option that gives alternative solutions to citizens. We think that those alternative solutions could bring a better tomorrow if we got the chance to come to power. On campaigning, our party became recognized at the local level by putting focus on communal issues. However, at the national level, our party was irrelevant for two election cycles. We consider that experience to be invaluable, because we started building our political role as a party of local and communal issues which enabled us to become recognized by voters in smaller communities. Furthermore, we used that period to consolidate and articulate our views on national policies. This approach allowed people who built their political career on local policies to be recognized and invited to participate at the national level. This kind of process enables the gradual growth of the political organization, stabilization of the internal party structure and the maturing of political leaders.

**Romania:** We have several objectives which were widely embraced by the citizens: fight against corruption, a more transparent and efficient administration and a more meritocratic system. We communicate our objectives through email newsletters, WhatsApp groups, Facebook groups and weekly events and meetings, which are mainly organized by MPs or local party officials. We try to keep short communication chains between the decision makers and the party members and we encourage our party members to talk directly to officials and the MPs.



# GOVERNING PARTY VS. OPPOSITION PARTY ROLES IN A TIMES OF CRISIS

The COVID-19 pandemic presented serious challenges both to parties that are in government as well as parties that are in opposition. Governing parties have an immense responsibility to implement measures unforeseen in peace time, creating cascading changes in people's lives, the economy and society as a whole for the future. Opposition parties, now more than ever, have the crucial duty of scrutinizing and questioning the government's measures while maintaining national unity.

Most parliamentarians around the world are political party members and the legislature is one of the most significant platforms available to parties. When performing oversight of government responses to COVID-19, conducting constituent outreach on COVID-19 -related issues or contributing to debate over the short, medium and long-term impact of the pandemic, many political leaders are wearing multiple hats, including both as elected officials and as party representatives.

**Rethinking Elections and Business Continuity for Parliaments.** Ultimately elections are not just a technical or legal exercise. They are highly political. As a result, it is important that agreements over how to amend or adjust processes are reached in an inclusive manner and through constructive dialogue among political parties. Parties need to be kept informed, understand the options and be comfortable with them. The same applies to discussing and agreeing upon options for maintaining essential legislative functions.

**Outreach and Public Health Messaging.** Through their networks and in their communities, parties/legislators/local officials can reinforce/amplify public health messaging, government responses/where to get help. They can but also collect information about how the pandemic and its response are playing out in different communities, and feed that information into parliamentary processes or their own public messaging

**Oversight & Policy Alternatives.** Parties/legislatures have important roles to play in highlighting gaps/concerns about government responses in the short to medium term but also in debating and outlining alternatives for the short and longer term impacts of the pandemic.

Some of the key tasks include:

- For parties in both governments and opposition parties, communicating positions clearly and consistently to the people. Invest enough time and resources in coming up with a communications strategy.
- For governments, having the courage to lead in a time of crisis while remaining adaptable if it becomes clear that measures being taken are not working.
- For governments, recognizing that backbench parliamentarians also have a key role in scrutinizing the executive. This scrutiny can be done through internal party mechanisms, such as the party's caucus in parliament.
- For opposition parties, having the courage to call out measures the government is taking that clearly are not working – and to propose ideas on how to do things differently. This should be done through focusing on issues, not political positioning. In practice, this can mean focusing on questioning specific measures or spending, not the performance of other politicians. The latter risks being perceived as politicizing the crisis.
- Both governments and opposition parties have a responsibility to maintain national unity while performing their roles; this involves the difficult balance between supporting politicians in other parties while constructively questioning them.

## CASE STUDIES: CRISIS RESPONSE

For an example of the nexus between parliamentary and opposition party roles, check out this exchange<sup>3</sup> in the UK Parliament.

In the United States, more and more political messaging<sup>4</sup> is focusing on the pandemic.

In Chile, the Progressive Party partnered with a group in Brazil to set up a crisis monitoring<sup>5</sup> group to review government responses and to propose alternatives where necessary.

In Belgium, Pakistan, Sweden, South Africa and elsewhere, politicians are reaching across party lines<sup>6</sup> to respond to the crisis.

A number of political leaders<sup>7</sup> joined other celebrities in the World Health Organization-sponsored campaign for #SafeHands. Others used flyers/circulars<sup>8</sup> to their elected officials/members, social media<sup>9</sup> and other methods, including music<sup>10</sup>, to get public health messages out.



3 Andreou, Alex, (@sturdyAex). “TWO EXAMPLES of why @Keir\_Starmer’s #PMQs made me very happy. 1. Instead of ploughing on with a prepared set, watch how he listens to the evasive answer given by @DominicRaab and turns it into an even more devastating point.” April 22, 2020, Tweet. Available at: <https://twitter.com/sturdyAlex/status/1252941189797552129>

4 Corasaniti, Nick. “Coronavirus Takes Over Political Advertising”. *The New York Times*, April 21, 2020. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/21/us/politics/coronavirus-takes-over-political-advertising.html>

5 “Progressives launch Observatory to face pandemic crisis in alliance with Lula party Studies Center”, *Progresistas*, April 7, 2020. Available at (in Spanish): <https://www.progresistas.cl/progresistas-lanzan-observatorio-para-enfrentar-crisis-de-pandemia-en-alianza-con-partido-brasileño-de-lula/>

6 Kayitare, Frank. “Overcoming polarization to embrace cooperative and inclusive political decision-making: A silver-lining for democracy in the COVID-19 situation”. *International IDEA*, April 23, 2020. Available at: <https://www.idea.int/news-media/news/overcoming-polarization-embrace-cooperative-and-inclusive-political-decision-making>

7 Caron, Pierre-Louis. “Coronavirus: African presidents show how to wash hands properly to fight the epidemic”. *France Info*, March 19, 2020. Available at (in French): [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/sante/maladie/coronavirus/video-coronavirus-des-presidents-africains-montrent-comment-bien-se-laver-les-mains-pour-lutter-contre-l-epidemie\\_3875027.html#xtor=CS1-747](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/sante/maladie/coronavirus/video-coronavirus-des-presidents-africains-montrent-comment-bien-se-laver-les-mains-pour-lutter-contre-l-epidemie_3875027.html#xtor=CS1-747)

8 “Turkish political parties issue circulars amid COVID-19”. *Daily Sabah*, March 19, 2020. Available at: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/turkish-political-parties-issue-circulars-amid-covid-19/news>

9 African National Congress (@MYANC). Twitter profile. Available at: [https://twitter.com/MYANC/header\\_photo](https://twitter.com/MYANC/header_photo)

10 Seiff, Kevin (@kseiff). “Uganda has the best Coronavirus PSA.” March 25, 2020, Tweet. Available at: <https://twitter.com/kseiff/status/1242809779292196876?s=20>





# OPPOSITION IN THE CONTEXT OF IRAQ

Iraq's constitution does not outline any formal rights or inclusion of an opposition party within the Council of Representatives (CoR). Moreover, no party has so far in Iraq's history since 2003 played the role of an opposition party largely due to the formation of a consensus government where the Shia parties negotiate a candidate between themselves to assume the role of PM, while the Kurdish and Sunni parties merely adhere to the choice of the typically larger Shia blocs. This leaves Iraq with a large number of representatives in the legislature that could play the role of a loyal opposition party, but without an established tradition of the parties in the minority forming an opposition group to the government, this has not happened in Iraq's system.

The lack of established norms for the formation of an opposition group or party does not mean an Iraqi political party wishing to play the role of the opposition is without tools to employ to start building up the tradition of forming an opposition within successive sessions of the CoR. As Iraq's legislature is largely based off the parliamentary system of the United Kingdom, the strategies and systems used by the formal Her Majesty's Opposition is the most realistic model that could be employed in Iraq, with the important exception that Iraq has far more political parties present in the CoR than the UK parliament so any Iraqi opposition party would have a smaller role unless it was able to form a large opposition bloc.

Iraq's constitution does have some mechanisms that would allow an opposition party to function in a similar manner to a party in the UK parliament opposition. Specifically Article 61, subsection seven A allows for any member of the Council of Representatives to directly question the prime minister or any of his cabinet ministers. While this is not a formally outlined "question time" like the system that exists in the UK parliament, an opposition party could utilize this article in the constitution to basically follow through with the same framework of holding the government accountable for its policies by asking direct questions. While this would not need to take the form of organizing a shadow government within the opposition party, it would strengthen the opposition party's oversight role if MPs were assigned to follow the developments of a ministry and play a leading role in questioning the ministry they follow.

In addition, article 61, subsections seven B and C allow for 25 MPs in the CoR to raise a specific issue for discussion, in particular pertaining to the performance

of the PM and his cabinet of ministers. While these 25 MPs do not control when this discussion takes place (the speaker of the parliament does), which means the issue the 25 MPs wish to discuss can be delayed, this mechanism does give the opposition party an informal way to have opposition days where the CoR will discuss issues the opposition would like to highlight. This provides the opposition with an additional mechanism for providing oversight on the government's policies and an opportunity for the opposition to present an alternative view to the Iraqi people.

Because the CoR is made up of a large number of parties, none of whom form a government majority, it is important that the opposition be made up of a coalition of parties. These parties do not necessarily need to have the same political platform, but that they can use the coalition as a forum to discuss and identify areas of consensus and issues upon which they are willing to coordinate and work together. An opposition bloc would also ensure that the opposition always has at least 25 seats in the CoR so they have access to the mechanism for informal opposition days.

The most important takeaways for a party wishing to become the opposition party are as follows:

- the party must have a principled reason for serving as the opposition, and not merely taking that roll for the sake of being the opposition party.
- the party should not be obstinate and obstructive towards the government simply for the sake of it, compromise on key issues the party wants to address is in the best interest of the opposition party.
- the opposition party should maximize the use of existing platforms and opportunities to expand its base of support and agenda, whether that's through local government, media or within the CoR.

By following through with these practices, an opposition party can build up the tradition of a loyal opposition in Iraq through several election cycles.

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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Public Funding Solutions for Political Parties in Muslim-Majority Societies, *IFES*. Executive Summary available at <https://www.ifes.org/publications/public-funding-solutions-political-parties-muslim-majority-societies>

“Guidelines on the rights and duties of the opposition in parliament.” *Inter-Parliamentary Union*, May 19, 1999. Available at: <http://archive.ipu.org/dem-e/opposition.pdf>

“Rights and Responsibilities of the Opposition in a Parliament”. European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, June 12, 2010. Available at: [http://www.assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/APCE/pdf/ConfPres/2010Limassol/Droitsetresponsabilitesparlement\\_E.pdf](http://www.assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/APCE/pdf/ConfPres/2010Limassol/Droitsetresponsabilitesparlement_E.pdf)

Rules and Procedures of the Chamber of Deputies”. *Republic of Italy*, 13 December, 2001. Available at: [https://en.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/camera\\_eng/file/RULES\\_OF\\_PROCEDURE\\_CHAMBRE\\_OF\\_DEPUTIES.pdf](https://en.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/camera_eng/file/RULES_OF_PROCEDURE_CHAMBRE_OF_DEPUTIES.pdf)



