
Wednesday, 11th of
November 2009

Series I, No. 40

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF EAST TIMOR

JOURNAL OF THE REPUBLIC

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-
LESTE

SUMMARY

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT:

Rules of Procedure of the National Parliament of the
Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste 3757

Rules of Procedure of the National Parliament of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

TITLE I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 (Nature and function)

The functioning of the National Parliament is governed by these Rules of Procedure.

Article 2 (Headquarters)

1. The headquarters of the National Parliament are located in Díli.

2. On an exceptional basis, National Parliament may meet at any other location on national territory, in the event the Plenary so deliberates by absolute majority of the elected Members of Parliament.

TITLE II MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES

CHAPTER I MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Section I Mandate

Article 3 (Nature of the mandate)

Members of Parliament are representatives of all

the people of the nation, regardless of the constituency for which they were elected.

Article 4 (Mandate)

1. The mandate of members of parliament begins with the first meeting of the National Parliament after the election and ends with the first meeting after the subsequent election, notwithstanding the individual suspension or termination of the mandate.

2. Members of parliament are replaced by the following unelected candidate on the list to which the replacement belongs, under the terms of the electoral law.

Article 5 (Temporary substitute)

Members of Parliament who for compelling reasons are absent for over three consecutive days may submit, through the parliamentary party they belong to, a request for an advance notification of absence and temporary substitute of their mandate under the terms of no. 2 of Article 4 above.

Article 6 (Resignation)

Members of Parliament may resign from their duties, by way of a written reasoned statement.

Article 7 (Loss of mandate)

1. Members of Parliament may lose their mandate in the event:

a) they do not take their seat in National Parliament up to the fifth plenary session with no justification or fail to appear at five consecutive sessions of the Plenary or committees or has taken 15 intermittent absences with no justification;

b) they join a different political party from the one they were enrolled in when they were elected;

c) they have been convicted of an intentional crime, having received a prison sentence of over two years;

2. The loss of their mandate is declared by the Bureau, after having ascertained the facts resulting in such loss.

3. Members of Parliament are entitled to be heard and to appeal from such decision of the Bureau to the Plenary within the following ten days and shall remain in duty until final deliberation by secret ballot.

4. With regard to the deliberation of the Plenary which confirms the declaration that the mandate has been lost, an appeal to the High Court of

Justice may be lodged, with no suspensory effect.

Article 8 (Immunity)

1. Members of Parliament are not held civilly, criminal or disciplinary liable for their voting or for their opinions expressed during the course of their duty or resulting therefrom.
2. No Member of Parliament can be detained or preventively arrested, except in the case of an intentional crime punishable with a prison sentence of over five years, by way of authorisation given by the National Parliament.
3. In the event there are criminal proceedings initiated against a Member of Parliament and such Member is definitively accused, the National Parliament shall decide whether this Member of Parliament shall or not be suspended in order to pursue the proceedings.
4. The suspension referred to in paragraph 3 above shall be requested by a competent judge in a document addressed to the National Parliament, the decision being taken by secret ballot and absolute majority of the Members of Parliament present, preceding the opinion issued by the competent committee.
5. The decision not to suspend the Member of Parliament shall automatically produce the effect of suspending the limitation periods with regard to the object as laid out in the terms and provisions of penal laws.

SECTION II Powers and duties of Members of Parliament

Article 9 (Powers)

1. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure Members of Parliament shall, either individually or jointly, hold the following powers:
 - a) to submit drafts of constitutional revisions;
 - b) to submit draft laws, referenda, resolutions and deliberations;
 - c) to submit proposals for alterations;
 - d) to request parliamentary appraisal of legislative acts under the terms set out in article 98 of the Constitution for their alteration or termination;
 - e) to request that any bill or draft law or resolution or draft deliberation, as well as parliamentary appraisal be processed with the greatest urgency, as set out in paragraph d);
 - f) to submit censorship motions to the Government;
 - g) to propose that possible committees be set up

and that public audiences be held;

h) to submit written requests to the Government or other public authorities to receive written information which is considered necessary and useful for the undertaking of their mandate, within a period of 30 days?

i) to request to the High Court of Justice that they declare rules unconstitutional under the terms and provisions set out in sub-paragraph c) of article 150 of the Constitution.

2. The requests submitted under the scope of sub-paragraph h) of no. 1 are listed, published and forwarded by the President to the competent authority, which should respond with the urgency demanded by the question.

3. In order to ensure the mandate runs smoothly, Members of Parliament also have the following powers:

a) to sit during Plenary sessions and on committees and to take the floor in accordance with the provisions set out in the rules of procedure;

b) to vote;

c) to submit requests;

d) to put forward alterations to the Rules of Procedure.

Article 10 (Duties of Members of Parliament)

1. Members of Parliament have the following duties:

a) to arrive punctually and take part in the Plenary sessions and meetings of the Committees to which they belong;

b) to carry out the duties and functions for which they were appointed in Parliament and proposed by their respective Parliamentary party;

c) to take part in the voting;

d) to sign the records of attendance at the Plenary session or at the committees in which they participate;

e) to justify any absence at any of the plenary sessions or committee meeting within a period of 5 days after such absence.

2. Members of Parliament also have the following duties to perform:

a) to respect the dignity of the Parliament and the Members of Parliament;

b) to observe order and discipline as set out in the Rules of Procedure and comply with the authority

of the Speaker of the Parliament;

c) to contribute, through their behaviour, to the efficiency and prestige of parliamentary work;

d) to comply with the terms and conditions as set out in the Constitution and Law.

CHAPTER II PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES

Article 11 (Constitution and organisation)

1. The Members of Parliament elected in party lists or coalition of parties may establish parliamentary parties, regardless of the existence of pre-electoral party coalitions.

2. The constitution of each parliamentary party is undertaken by way of notification in writing addressed to the Speaker of Parliament and signed by the Members of Parliament of which it consists, indicating its president and vice-president, should they exist.

3. Any alteration to the constitution of the parliamentary party shall be communicated to the Speaker of Parliament.

4. The functions of president, vice-president or member of the Bureau are incompatible with those of president of a parliamentary party.

5. Parliamentary parties will be as far as possible provided with indispensable back-up services, in particular working offices.

Article 12 (Independent Members of Parliament)

1. The Members of Parliament who are not part of any parliamentary party shall inform the Speaker of this fact and shall carry out their mandates as independent Members of Parliament.

2. Independent Members of Parliament may not constitute parliamentary parties.

Article 13 (Powers and rights of parliamentary parties)

Each parliamentary party shall have the following powers and rights:

a) to participate in the committees in accordance with the number of its members and for this purpose shall indicate the names of its representatives;

b) to be heard when establishing the agenda and to determine the agenda of a certain number of plenary meetings;

c) to request that the Standing Committee summons Parliament;

d) to initiate laws;

e) to submit motions for rejection to the Government's programme;

f) to submit censorship motions to the Government;

g) to be regularly and directly informed by the Government about the state of the art of the principal affairs of public interest, when previously agreed between the Government and parliamentary parties;

h) to question the Government;

i) to request that debates be immediately held.

TITLE III ORGANISATION OF THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

CHAPTER I SPEAKER AND BUREAU OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

Section I Speaker

Article 14 (Status)

1. The Speaker represents the National Parliament, defends its rights and dignity, carries out and coordinates his/her work impartially, and exercises authority over all employees, agents and security forces placed at the service of the National Parliament.

2. The Speaker substitutes the President of the Republic under the terms of no. 1 of article 82 and of no. 1 of article 84 of the Constitution.

3. The Speaker receives the honours benefitting the representative of the second Organ of Sovereignty.

4. The Speaker shall be, in the case of absence or impediment, substituted on a rotational basis by one of the Deputy-Speakers.

Article 15 (Mandate)

1. The Speaker is elected for a parliamentary term.

2. The Speaker may resign from his/her post by notifying Parliament, which shall come immediately into force.

3. In the case set out in paragraph 2 above a new election for Speaker shall take place within a maximum period of five days.

4. The election of the new Speaker is valid for the remainder of the parliamentary term.

**Article 16
(Election)**

1. The candidatures for the post of Speaker of the National Parliament shall be signed by a minimum of ten and a maximum of 20 Members of Parliament and shall be submitted to the acting Speaker 24 hours before the election takes place.
2. The election of the Speaker shall be carried out by secret ballot in plenary session.
3. The candidate who receives absolute majority of votes by elected Members of Parliament shall be considered elected.
4. In the event none of the candidates is elected, another election shall immediately take place during the same meeting.
5. In the second round only the two candidates with the highest number of votes and who have not withdrawn their candidature shall run.

**Article 17
(Powers of the Speaker of the National
Parliament)**

1. The Speaker's responsibilities at Parliament during his term of office shall be:
 - a) to chair the Bureau;
 - b) to set the plenary sessions and the agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure, once the Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties have been heard;
 - c) to organise the plenary sessions;
 - d) to admit or reject the bills or draft laws or resolutions, draft deliberations and requests, once the fact that they comply with the Rules of Procedure has been ascertained, without prejudice the Plenary's right of appeal.
 - e) to receive and to refer to the competent committees the texts of the bills or draft laws and treaties, as well as those of petitions addressed to Parliament.
 - f) to maintain the order, discipline and security of the Parliament;
 - g) to sign the minutes of the sessions and the documents dispatched on behalf of Parliament;
 - h) to inform Parliament of the messages, information and explanations addressed to it;
 - i) to promote the publication of debates and all the works and acts carried out by Parliament;
 - j) to summon and chair the Conference of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties;
 - k) to exercise the other powers that the

Constitution, the Rules of Procedure and the Organic Law assign to them.

2. In terms of the plenary meetings:
 - a) to chair the plenary meetings, declare them open, suspend and close them and to manage the respective business;
 - b) to give the floor to the Members of Parliament and members of Government and to keep order during the debates;
 - c) to grant permission to the Members of Parliament not to attend the sessions;
 - d) to secure fulfilment of the Rules of Procedure and the deliberations taken by Parliament.
3. The Plenary can always be used as an appeal to the Speaker's decisions.
4. In terms of the Members of Parliament:
 - a) to accept requests for temporary substitution;
 - b) to receive the declarations in which the Members of Parliament state they have resigned from their mandate;
 - c) to judge the notifications of absence submitted by the Members of Parliament.
5. The Speaker is also responsible for representing the National Parliament and heading representations and groups of Members of Parliament of which he is part.

**Section II
Bureau**

**Article 18
(Bureau)**

The Parliament Bureau consists of the President, two vice-presidents by a secretary and two deputy-secretaries.

**Article 19
(Election of the Vice-Presidents, Secretary and
Deputy-Secretaries)**

1. The Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Deputy-Secretaries of the Bureau are elected for the parliamentary term.
2. The candidates for the posts of Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Deputy-Secretaries of the National Parliament shall be undersigned by a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve Members of Parliament, by way of a closed, complete and nominative list.
3. The names of the candidates for the posts set out in paragraph 2 above shall be submitted to the Speaker up to 24 hours before the date set for the election.

4. The election shall take place by way of secret ballot, guaranteeing as much as possible the proportional participation of the parliamentary parties represented in Parliament in the composition of each competing list.

5. Those candidates who are included in the list which obtains an absolute majority of the votes by elected Members of Parliament shall be considered elected.

6. Once the meeting is over, the Speaker shall inform the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of the composition of the Bureau.

Article 20 (Resignation)

1. The Members of the Bureau may resign from their posts through reasoned notification to Parliament, the resignation becoming immediately effective, notwithstanding its subsequent publication in the Official Journal of the National Parliament.

2. In the case of resignation from a post, a new election will take place within a time limit of five (5) days.

Article 21 (General powers of the Bureau)

The parliamentary Bureau shall be responsible for:

a) declaring the loss of a mandate incurred by a Member of Parliament;

b) guaranteeing the performance of Plenary and Committees' support services;

c) ensuring that Members of Parliaments' requests for information and official publications is met;

d) drawing up a six-monthly report concerning the progress of the application of laws and fulfilment of the deadlines of the respective regulations;

e) any other functions which prove to be pertinent for the regular operations of the parliamentary work.

Article 22 (Powers of the Vice-Presidents)

1. The Vice-Presidents shall, on a rotational basis, substitute the President when absent or prevented from carrying out such work; should they however be absent or prevented from carrying out such work, the Presidency shall be assumed by the oldest Member of Parliament.

2. The Vice-Presidents shall be responsible for the readings deemed indispensable and requested by the President.

3. The Vice-Presidents shall be responsible for performing the functions of representing the Parliament when replacing the President and other functions which the President delegates in them.

Article 23 (Powers of the Secretary)

The Secretary shall be responsible for:

a) verifying the presences in the plenary sessions, as well as, at any time, verifying the quota and recording the votes;

b) putting in order the materials to be put to the vote;

c) organising the requests of the Members of Parliament and members of Government who wish to take the floor;

d) drawing up the minutes of the plenary meetings;

e) signing, the correspondence dispatched on behalf of the Parliament when delegated by the President;

f) signing, together with the President, the minutes of the plenary sessions.

Article 24 (Powers of the Deputy-Secretaries)

The Deputy-Secretaries shall be responsible for:

a) replacing the Secretary during his absences or impediments;

b) acting as tellers.

Article 25 (College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties)

1. The College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties consists of the Speaker, the presidents, or their representatives, of the parliamentary groups and by a member of the Government.

2. The Speaker meets with the presidents of the parliamentary parties, or their representatives, to appraise the affairs set out in articles 51 and 52 and others laid out in the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Speaker considers it necessary for the smooth running of Parliament.

3. The Government is entitled to be represented in the College and may intervene in affairs which are not exclusively related to Parliament.

CHAPTER II COMMITTEES

Section I

General Provisions

Article 26 (Specialised Standing Committees and ad hoc Committees)

1. Parliament has specialised standing committees and ad hoc committees.
2. The specialised standing committees, within the scope of their powers, may form sub-committees by way of a proposal of any Member of Parliament.
3. The specialised standing committees and ad hoc committees approve their own rules of procedure within a limit of 15 days from the date the corresponding Bureau was elected.
4. The specialised standing committee may not exceed the duration of the parliamentary term in which it was formed.
5. The ad hoc committees shall finish:
 - a) when their task has been concluded;
 - b) when the respective time limit has been reached;
 - c) when the parliamentary session is over, unless otherwise decided by Parliament.
6. The ad hoc committee which has not concluded its task may request an extension of its corresponding deadline.

Article 27 (Composition)

1. The number of Members of Parliament in each specialised standing committee and their distribution by the different parliamentary groups is established by deliberation of the Parliament, at the proposal of the Speaker, once the College is heard, at the beginning of each parliamentary term.
2. A seat on the committee belongs to the parliamentary group and the specialised standing committees consist of Members of Parliament indicated by their corresponding parliamentary parties.
3. The composition of the specialised standing committees as far as possible respects the proportional representation of the parliamentary parties in Parliament.
4. For reasons related to absence or impediment, Members of Parliament may be temporarily replaced by other Members of Parliament of the same parliamentary party, when duly authorised by such party.
5. No Member of Parliament may be indicated for more than one specialised standing committee,

except when the parliamentary party, due to the number of its Members of Parliament, cannot have representatives in all committees and, in this case, never more than two.

6. The limits referred to in paragraph 5 above do not apply to the Ethics Committee.

Article 28 (Non-attendance of Committee meetings)

1. The Members of Parliament who, without notification of absence, do not attend more than three of the committee meetings they are part of, shall lose their seat on such committee during the ongoing parliamentary term.
2. In the case referred to in paragraph 1 above, the Speaker shall notify the respective parliamentary group so that, within a period of three days, it may appoint another Member of Parliament for the same Committee.
3. The replaced Member of Parliament may join another Committee when appointed by his/her respective Parliamentary Party, which shall be immediately communicated to the Speaker.

Article 29 (Functions)

1. The appointment of the Members of the standing parliamentary committees shall cover the duration of the parliamentary term.
2. The Members of Parliament shall lose their capacity as members of parliamentary committees when:
 - a) they cease to belong to the parliamentary party for which they were appointed;
 - b) they request it;
 - c) they are, at any time, substituted by their parliamentary group on the parliamentary committee;
 - d) they fail to attend three parliamentary committee meetings per parliamentary term, except when duly justified.
3. The Presidents of the parliamentary committees are responsible for justifying the absences of their Members of Parliament.
4. Participation in parliamentary work constitutes justification.

Section II Specialised standing committees

Article 30 (Constitution and functioning)

1. The Plenary, at the proposal of the Bureau, and once the College has been heard, deliberates on

the constitution of the specialised standing committees, within a time limit of five days after the parliamentary parties have been formed.

2. The appointment, the number and the assignment of powers of the specialised standing committees are defined in the deliberation set out in paragraph 1 above.

Article 31 (Election of the Bureau of the Committees)

1. At the onset of each parliamentary term and within the five days following the appointment of their Members of Parliament, each committee shall meet, under the temporary Presidency of the oldest Member of Parliament, to draw up its work and elect its president, vice-president and secretary.

2. The distribution of the members of the bureaus of the committees shall as far as possible guarantee the proportional representation of the parliamentary parties in Parliament.

3. The Member of Parliament who is also a member of a Committee can, at any time and when duly justified, request a new election of the Bureau.

Article 32 (Powers of the Committee President)

1. The Committee president shall be responsible for:

- a) keeping in order and managing the work of the committee;
- b) being informed of all material received;
- c) appointing, from among the Members of Parliament of the committee, members of the sub-committees and to form its respective members;
- d) settling issues related to order and discipline;
- e) promoting the publication of the minutes of the meetings;
- f) inviting, by way of committee deliberation, professionals or experts and representatives of civil society authorities to be heard with regard to the question at hand;
- g) appointing rapporteurs.

2. When the president acts as rapporteurs, he shall transfer his presidency to the vice-president, whilst discussion of or voting on the matter for which he is rapporteur is underway.

Article 33 (Powers of the Secretary)

The Committee secretary shall be responsible for:

- a) signing, together with the president, the committee minutes and other general documents;
- b) registering the correspondence and informing the committee about such correspondence at each session;
- c) receiving the ballots, acting as teller and announcing the results;
- d) preparing and distributing the committee's agenda with an advance notice of 24 hours.

Article 34 (Report and rapporteurs)

1. The reports should, as much as possible, contain the following information:

- a) a succinct analysis of the facts, situations and realities in question;
- b) background summary of the problems raised;
- c) legal or doctrinal framework of the topic under debate;
- d) foreseeable consequences of the approval of the legislative instrument in question and the possible costs with its respective application;
- e) reference to the contributions received from entities who are interested in the matter;
- f) Conclusions and official opinion;
- g) Brief summary of the positions of the parliamentary parties with regard to the matter under discussion.

2. The reports shall indicate the initiative or matter and shall be signed by the committee president and rapporteur or rapporteurs.

3. The president, with regard to each matter to be submitted to the Plenary, shall appoint one rapporteur or more and may even appoint himself as rapporteur for each one of the matters which concerns his division.

4. The contents of the report is of the responsibility of the Member of Parliament acting as rapporteur.

5. Only the conclusions, recommendations and official opinions set out in the report may be altered and voted on by the committee.

Article 35 (Powers of the specialised standing committees)

The specialised standing committees shall be responsible for:

- a) discussing and issuing opinions on the bills and the draft laws, proposals for alteration and treaties

submitted to Parliament;

b) appraising the petitions submitted to Parliament;

c) keeping informed about political and administrative problems which are of their scope and provide Parliament, when it considers it convenient, with the necessary data for the appraisal of the acts of Government;

d) holding public audiences with authorities from civil society;

e) summoning any members of Public Administration bodies to provide information on matters related to their areas of competence.

Section III Ad hoc committees

Article 36 (Constitution)

1. The Government may create ad hoc committees for any given purpose.

2. The initiative to constitute ad hoc committees may be undertaken by a minimum of 10 Members of Parliament or by the parliamentary parties.

3. The ad hoc committees may invite professionals to assist them when the nature of the matter so requires.

Article 37 (Powers of the ad hoc committees)

Ad hoc committees are responsible for appraising matters related to the object of their constitution and shall submit corresponding reports and official opinions with the time limits set by Parliament.

CHAPTER III STANDING COMMITTEE

Article 38 (How it works)

During the period in which Parliament is dissolved, during the intervals of the sessions and in other cases set out in the Constitution, the Standing Committee of the National Parliament shall function.

Article 39 (Composition)

The Standing Committee shall consist of the Speaker, who shall chair, the Vice-Presidents and by Members of Parliament indicated by all the political parties, in accordance with the corresponding representivity in the Parliament, under the terms and provisions set out in article 102 of the Constitution.

Article 40 (Powers)

The Standing committee shall be responsible for the following:

a) to monitor the activities of both the Government and the Administration;

b) to coordinate the activities of the parliamentary committees;

c) to take the necessary steps to summons Parliament whenever it is considered necessary;

d) to prepare and organise the plenary sessions of Parliament;

e) to approve the displacement of the President of the Republic under the terms of article 80 of the Constitution;

f) to manage the relationship between National Parliament and counterpart parliaments and institutions in other countries;

g) to authorise a state of siege and state of emergency;

h) to authorise the declaration of war and the making of peace;

i) to exercise the powers of Parliament in relation to the mandate of the Members of Parliament, notwithstanding the powers of the President and the competent committee in this area;

j) to prepare the opening of the plenary session;

k) to coordinate the functioning of the committees during the time when the legislative assembly is suspended, should this be required for the work to be able to run smoothly;

l) to decide on the complaints regarding inaccuracies in the wording of the final text of the parliamentary decrees and resolutions.

TITLE IV HOW PARLIAMENT WORKS

CHAPTER 1 MEETINGS

Section I Parliamentary term and legislative session

Article 41 (First plenary session)

1. The first parliamentary plenary meeting after the elections is scheduled by the outgoing Speaker within a time limit of fifteen (15) days from the date of the official publication of the results.

2. The outgoing Speaker, should he have been

elected, shall chair the first meeting until the new Speaker of the National Parliament is elected.

3. If the outgoing Speaker has not been elected, the Parliament shall meet under the temporary presidency of the oldest Member of Parliament.

Article 42
(Committee on the Verification of Credentials)

1. The credentials of the Members of Parliament are verified by the National Parliament through the parliamentary committee expressly formed for the purpose by deliberation.

2. The committee is composed of elected representatives from all the parties, according to the principle of proportionality, the president being elected from among its members.

Article 43
(The swearing-in of the members of parliament)

1. After the verification of credentials and during the act of taking office, Members of Parliament shall swear in under the following terms: *“I swear to God, to the People and on my honour that I will fulfil with loyalty the functions that have been invested in me, that I will abide by and enforce the Constitution and the laws and will dedicate all my energies and knowledge to the defence and consolidation of independence and national unity.”*

2. The oath is administered by the acting Speaker.

Article 44
(Parliamentary term)

The parliamentary term has a duration of five years and in the case of dissolution the elected National Parliament shall initiate a new term, the duration of which shall be given the time required to complete the period corresponding to the ongoing parliamentary term on the date of the election, under the terms and provisions set out in no. 5 of article 99 of the Constitution.

Article 45
(Legislative session)

1. The legislative session has a duration of one year, beginning on 15th of September and ending on 14th September of the following year.

2. The normal working period of the National Parliament begins on 15th of September and ends on 15th of July, notwithstanding the period it is suspended at Christmas between 23rd of December and 2nd of January of the following year, and when Parliament deliberates it will be suspended by a two-third majority vote of the elected Members of Parliament.

Article 46
(Opening hours of the sessions of the Plenary

and the Committees)

1. The sessions work as follows:

a) plenary meetings are held on Mondays and Tuesdays;

b) committee meetings are held on Wednesdays and Thursdays;

c) contacts between Members of Parliament and voters and the parliamentary party and inter-parliamentary party meetings are held on Fridays.

2. The normal working hours of the Parliament is from 9 A.M to 6 P.M., divided into two periods, a morning period and an afternoon period, from 9 A.M to 12.30 A.M. and from 3 P.M to 6 P.M., respectively.

3. The meetings have a 15 minute break, from 10.45 A.M to 11 A.M. and from 4.15 P.M to 4.30 P.M..

4. The Plenary may deliberate to extend the sessions, for a set time, at the proposal of the Speaker or upon the request of any Member of Parliament.

Article 47
(Quorum)

1. The Parliament begins the work of the plenary meetings with the presence of at least one third of the number of sitting Members of Parliament.

2. The deliberations of the Plenary are taken with the presence of over half of its sitting members.

3. Once it has been verified by the Speaker that there is a quorum for decisions, the Members of Parliament are called to Plenary and, should this not be full, the absences are recorded for the effects set out in the general regime of absences and the session is immediately closed.

4. The Members of Parliament may at any time request that the Speaker verifies the quorum.

5. The specialised standing committees work with the presence of at least three members and deliberate with over a half of its sitting members.

Article 48
(Summons outside the normal working period)

Outside the period referred to in paragraph 2 of article 45 above, the Parliament may function by deliberation of the Plenary, extending the normal working period, at the initiative of the Standing Committee, or whenever overbearing reasons of national interest so justify, at the request of the President of the Republic, under the terms of subparagraph d) of article 86 of the Constitution.

Article 49

(Extraordinary meeting of the committees)

1. Outside Parliament's normal working period and during suspensions, any committee may work. If this is required for the smooth running of its work, and if at the proposal of the committee, Parliament has granted such permission beforehand.

2. The Speaker of the National Parliament may summons any committee up to fifteen (15) days before the beginning of the legislative session in order to prepare its work.

**Article 50
(Suspension of plenary meetings)**

1. When Parliament is sitting, it may decide to suspend its plenary meetings for the purpose of the work of the committees.

2. The suspension may not exceed a period of ten (10) days.

**Section II
Period before the Agenda and Period during
the Agenda**

**Article 51
(Period before the agenda)**

1. There will be a period of time before entering into the agenda in order to:

a) Read any announcements or information which the Speaker considers pertinent, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties has been heard;

b) read and appraise the summaries of the plenary sessions;

c) read and appraise the reports of the representations and deputations;

d) discuss and approve wishes of congratulations, greetings and solidarity, protest or condolences proposed by the Bureau, by the parliamentary parties or the Members of Parliament;

e) hold emergency debates;

f) make political statements.

2. The period before the agenda normally lasts for one hour, which may be extended to two hours in the cases set out in sub-paragraph e) of no. 1, the time allotted being established by the College.

3. Once the college has been heard, the Speaker shall organise the period before the agenda under the terms set out in no. 1.

**Article 52
(Sequence of the items to be addressed on the
agenda)**

When setting the agenda, the Speaker shall give precedence to the items on the agenda as follows:

1. Suspension of constitutional guarantees and the declaration of stage of siege and state of emergency, under the terms set out in article 25 of the Constitution and also authorisation to declare war and make peace.

2. Affairs concerning rules of procedure of the National Parliament.

3. Discussion of bills and draft laws in the following order:

a) Appraisal of the bills concerning State Planning and the Budget;

b) Discussion of laws and treaties on matters which are of the exclusive scope of the legislative powers of the National Parliament.

c) Appraisal of decree-laws approved by legislative authorisation;

d) Discussion of laws and treaties.

4. Supervisory affairs and other political contents, under the following terms:

a) Elections and ratifications of nominations;

b) Authorisation for the displacement of the President of the Republic on State visits;

c) Appraisal of the Government's Programme;

d) Voting on motions for rejection, votes of confidence or censorship motions of the Government;

e) Deliberation on the Government's activity report;

f) Deliberation on the Planning and State Budget implementation report.

**Article 53
(Parliamentary Parties' Entitlement to set
agenda)**

1. Each one of the parliamentary parties of the political parties not represented in Government is entitled to set the agenda of one plenary session in each legislative session.

2. The exercise of the right set out in this article is announced in conference to the President by the 15th of each month in order to take effect during the following month.

3. If the bill is immediately approved in general terms, the parliamentary party or its author is entitled to have it voted on and have the final global voting undertaken within a maximum time limit of thirty (30) days.

Article 54
(Setting the agenda)

1. The agenda is set by the Speaker, once the College is heard, in accordance with the priorities defined in the Rules of Procedure.
2. An appeal can be made to the Plenary on the decisions taken by the President which set the agenda and the final decision shall be taken by the Plenary.
3. The agenda is distributed to the Members of Parliament at least twenty-four hours in advance and is made public by posting it on the board of the Parliament building.
4. The Plenary may at any time decide to eliminate one of the items on the agenda.

Article 55
(Priority to request from the Government)

1. The government may request priority in the discussion of affairs of national interest requiring urgent resolution.
2. Granting this priority is decided on by the Speaker, once the College has been heard.

Article 56
(Emergency Debates)

1. The Parliamentary parties and the Government may make a request to the Speaker, whenever justified, that emergency debates be held.
2. Emergency debates will take place in the seven working days following the approval by the College.

Section III
Use of the floor

Article 57
(Use of the floor by Members of Parliament)

1. Members of Parliament are granted the floor to:
 - a) intervene during the pre-agenda period;
 - b) take part in the debates;
 - c) submit draft laws or draft resolutions;
 - d) exercise the right to defend their honour and consideration and defend the good name of their party;
 - e) appeal;
 - f) request or provide explanations;
 - g) lodge complaints and protests;
 - h) provide explanations on vote.

2. The use of the floor shall be given in the order in which it is requested.

Article 58
(Duration of the use of the floor)

1. The time allotted when taking the floor shall be of five minutes the first time and of three minutes the second time.
2. The author or authors of draft laws or bills or resolutions shall be granted the floor for fifteen minutes for their presentation, and the rapporteur, should there be one, shall be entitled to 10 minutes to present the corresponding report and official opinion.
3. When addressing a specific topic, the maximum time allotted to take the floor shall of three minutes the first time and one minute the second time.

Article 59
(Use of the floor by members of the Bureau)

Should the members of the Board wish to take the floor at a plenary meeting and actively participate in the work, they should be replaced in their duties and may not resume their duties until the end of the debate or votes, should this take place.

Article 60
(Use of the floor by the members of Government)

Members of Government are granted the floor to:

- a) present draft laws and draft resolutions;
- b) take part in the debates;
- c) answer questions from Members of Parliament on any acts of Government or of Public Administration;
- d) answer requests for clarification.

Article 61
(Explanations on vote)

1. Parliamentary parties and Members of Parliament are entitled, once the final voting is over, to offer an oral or written explanation on their vote.
2. The maximum time allotted for an oral explanation on vote shall be of one minute.

Article 62
(Point of order)

1. A request can be made in order to make a point of order.
2. The point of order interrupts the current sequence of speakers, with the exception of the voting period.

3. The Member of Parliament who makes a point of order should give the grounds for such a request and indicate the rule infringed.

4. The point of order may only be made once a speaker has finished speaking.

5. The time allotted to make a point of order shall not exceed one minute.

Article 63
(Decorum when speaking)

1. The use of the floor is only permitted when granted by the Chairman of the Bureau and when good manners are respected.

2. The speaker may not be interrupted, unless he or she moves away from the topic under discussion and should in this case be advised by the Chairman, who may request that he or she withdraw should they continue with such an attitude.

3. The Chairman may order that any rude remarks be removed from the minutes of the plenary sessions.

Article 64
(Defence of honour and consideration)

1. Whenever a Member of Parliament or member of Government considers that offensive remarks were made against his or her honour or consideration, he or she may take the floor to defend themselves for a time of no longer than three minutes.

2. The author of those remarks considered offensive may provide an explanation for no longer than three minutes.

3. The Chairman takes note of the request to defend their honour and consideration in order to grant them the floor and offer the corresponding explanation following the end of the ongoing debate, without prejudice to immediately granting the floor when he or she considers that the situation justifies such action.

Article 65
(Inappropriate behaviour when taking the floor)

1. The Chairman of the Bureau may warn the speaker when taking the floor and behaves in the following manner:

a) to divert from the agenda or matter under discussion;

b) to exceed the time allotted to the speaker;

c) to take the floor without permission;

d) to offend the decorum of the Parliament and its Members of Parliament;

e) use inappropriate, injurious or offensive language;

f) to insult or threaten against the physical or moral integrity of any Member of Parliament.

2. Should a speaker continue with such behaviour, the Chairman of the Bureau may not permit this person to speak again until the end of the session, notwithstanding possible judicial proceedings which such behaviour may result in.

Article 66
(Appeals)

1. Any Member of Parliament may appeal against the decisions taken by the Chairman or the Board to the Plenary.

2. The Member of Parliament who has lodged an appeal may take the floor to explain the grounds of his or her appeal for a maximum period of three minutes.

3. In the event the appeal has been lodged by more than one Member of Parliament, only one of their representatives may intervene in order to present the corresponding grounds, whether or not they belong to the same parliamentary party.

4. Should there be several appeals with the same object, only one Member of Parliament from each parliamentary party to which the appellants belong may provide the grounds for such appeal.

CHAPTER II
DELIBERATIONS AND VOTING

Article 67
(General rule)

1. The deliberations are taken by plurality of votes, with the presence of over half the elected Members of Parliament, with the exception of the cases set out in the Rules of Procedure or in the Constitution.

2. Abstentions do not count for the calculation of the majority.

Article 68
(Voting)

1. Each Member of Parliament is entitled to one vote.

2. The Member of Parliament present must vote, notwithstanding the right of abstention.

3. Votes by correspondence or by proxy are not admitted.

Article 69
(Forms of voting)

1. Voting is carried out in one of the following

ways:

- a) Ordinary vote
 - b) Nominal vote
 - c) Vote by secret ballot
2. Voting by acclamation is not permitted.

Article 70
(Ordinary vote)

1. An ordinary vote is the way Parliament normally deliberates and consists in asking who votes for, who votes against and who abstains.

2. The vote is cast by raising one's hand in the air.

Article 71
(Nominal vote)

1. Nominal votes are cast in the following cases:

- a) Authorisation to declare state of siege and state of emergency;
- b) Authorisation to declare war or make peace.

2. There shall be nominal votes cast on any other matters when the Plenary so decides, at the request of ten Members of Parliament.

3. Nominal votes are cast in alphabetical order of the political parties with seats in Parliament.

Article 72
(Vote by secret ballot)

Voting by secret ballot shall only take place in elections or deliberations which, according to the Rules of Procedure or Statutes of Members of Parliament, should take this form, or when the Plenary so decides, at the request of ten Members of Parliament.

Article 73
(Tied vote)

1. Should the voting result in a tie, the object of the vote shall be discussed before being put to the vote again.

2. A second tied vote is the equivalent to a rejection.

Article 74
(Setting the time for the vote)

1. Voting on bills, draft laws or draft resolutions shall take place immediately after the discussion.

2. Without prejudice to paragraph 1 above, the Chairman, once the College has been heard, shall set the time for the vote on bills and draft laws or draft resolutions, which shall be disclosed in advance.

3. Once the time set for the vote has arrived, and if the debate has not yet been concluded, the Chairman may set a new time for the vote.

Article 75
(Votes on proposals of alteration)

The vote cast on proposal of alteration shall be undertaken in the following order:

a) Proposals of elimination are those intended to suppress the provisions under discussion;

b) Proposals of amendment are those intended to keep part of the text under discussion but restrict, increase or modify the scope of its meaning;

c) Proposals of substitution are those which contain provisions different from those which have been presented;

d) Proposals of addendum are those which conserve the original text and its meaning but which add new material.

CHAPTER III
COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Article 76
(Summons and agenda)

1. The meetings of each committee are set by its chairman, under the terms of these Rules of Procedure.

2. The agenda is set by each committee or by its chairman, once the Members of Parliament members of the committee have been heard.

3. At the request of the majority of the committee members, the chairman shall include on the agenda that proposed by those Members of Parliament and proceed to summon the meeting.

4. The agenda of the meetings shall be distributed, on the day before the meeting, to the members of the committee and the member of Government responsible for parliamentary affairs.

Article 77
(Collaboration or presence of other Members of Parliament, members of Government and advisors)

1. Any Member of Parliament may attend the committee meetings of which they are not a part and, should the committee so authorise, may take part in the work but with no right to vote.

2. Members of government may request to be heard in the committee meetings.

3. The advisors of the parliamentary parties may attend the committee meetings.

Article 78
(Participation of consultants and professionals)

1. The committees may request the participation of consultants, professionals and members of civil society organisations who are experts in the legislative matter under discussion in their work, with no right to vote.

2. The measures set out in this article are carried out by way of the committee chairman and shall be communicated to the Speaker.

Article 79
(Powers of the committees)

The committees may take the necessary steps to ensure the smooth running of their functions, namely:

- a) carrying out studies;
- b) requesting information or official opinions;
- c) requesting statements for certain citizens;
- d) undertaking public audiences;
- e) requesting and hiring experts to assist them in their work, when authorised by the President and by decision of the Parliament Plenary;
- f) undertaking information or study missions.

Article 80
(Public audiences)

1. The committees may hold public audiences with public and civil society authorities to discuss any legislative matter under appraisal, as well as addressing matters of relevant public interest, pertaining to their specific area of work.

2. The decision to hold public audiences shall be of the exclusive responsibility of the committee, which shall decide by absolute majority of the Members of Parliament present by ordinary vote.

Article 81
(Committee minutes)

Minutes shall be drawn up and approved for every committee meeting indicating the presences and absences, a summary of the matters addressed, the debates, the positions held by the Members of Parliament members of the committee and the results of the votes, with their corresponding explanations on votes.

Article 82
(Quarterly report on the committees' work)

The Committees inform the Parliament on the state of the art of their work on a quarterly basis, by way of reports submitted to the Plenary and published in the Official Journal of the Parliament.

Article 83

(Technical support)

The work of each committee is supported by administrative employees and appropriate technical advisors, under the terms set out in the Rules of Procedure and the Organic Law of Parliament.

Article 84
(Application of rules from the Plenary to the Committees)

When addressing the affairs specific to the committees, the same rules that the Rules of Procedure apply to the Parliament Plenary shall be applied, with the necessary adjustments.

CHAPTER IV
DISCLOSURE OF ACTS OF PARLIAMENT

Article 85
(Public nature of the plenary meetings)

1. Parliament plenary meetings are open to the public.

2. Any person may attend the sessions in the places reserved for that purpose, as long as they are unarmed and remain in silence, making no sign of applause or disapproval regarding the events taking place.

Article 86
(Disclosure of committee meetings)

Committee meetings are open to the public should they so decide.

Article 87
(Diary of the National Parliament)

The official Journal of Parliament is the Diary of the National Parliament.

Article 88
(Agenda and newsletter)

In order to provide Members of Parliament, the press and the public with information, the Bureau:

- a) has the agenda and newsletter on parliamentary activities distributed before each plenary meeting;
- b) promotes the yearly publication in special editions of reports drawn up in relation to the different parliamentary committees.

Article 89
(Publication of acts of Parliament)

1. The acts of Parliament, which under the terms of the law, shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic are forwarded to the Official Printing Office by the Speaker in the shortest delay possible.

2. Any Member of Parliament or parliamentary

party may request the rectification of texts of acts published, which is appraised by the President and once approved after the Board is heard, they are forwarded to the Official Printing Office within a time limit compatible with that legally set established for the publication.

TITLE V PROCEEDINGS

CHAPTER I ORDINARY LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

Section I Initiative

Article 90 (Power of initiative)

The power to initiate legislation shall lie with Members of Parliament, parliamentary parties and the Government.

Article 91 (Procedures)

1. Initiation of legislation: draft legislation is normally put forwarded by Members of Parliament and parliamentary parties and bills when put forward by the Government.
2. The initiative, under appraisal, shall take the form of a draft amendment.

Article 92 (Limits)

1. No draft laws or bills or draft amendments which violate the Constitution or the principles established therein and which do not specifically define the sense of the alterations to be introduced into the legislation shall be admitted.
2. The draft laws and bills definitively rejected may not be put forward again during the same legislative session.

Article 93 (Specific limits on the initiative)

Members of Parliament and parliamentary parties may not submit draft laws or draft amendments which involve, during the ongoing economic year, an increase in State expenditure or decrease of State revenue set out in the Budget or amending Budgets.

Article 94 (Renewal of initiative)

1. The draft laws and bills not voted during the legislative session in which they were submitted do not require renewal in the following legislative sessions, unless the parliamentary term comes to an end.
2. The bills become invalid with the resignation

of the Government or with the end of the corresponding parliamentary term.

Article 95 (Admission and cancelling of the initiative)

1. Once legislation has been initiated it should be numbered and upon verification of the established legal requirements, the Chairman admits it and refers it to the competent committee, should this be applicable, and shall be announced at Plenary.
2. Once a draft law, bill or draft resolution has been admitted, its authors may withdraw it before the general vote.

Article 96 (Implementation of legislative initiative)

1. No draft law can be undersigned by more than ten Members of Parliament.
2. The bills shall be undersigned by the Prime Minister and ministers responsible for the matter and it should be mentioned that the bills were approved by Council of Ministers.

Article 97 (Emergency procedure)

1. Any draft law, bill or draft resolution may be the object of an emergency procedure.
2. An emergency procedure may be initiated by Members of Parliament, parliamentary parties or by the Government.
3. The request for urgency is forwarded to the competent committee, which shall assess it within a time limit of 24 hours and shall draw up a reasoned report.
4. Once the report has been drawn up, the Plenary shall deliberate on the urgency by way of a debate organised by the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary parties.

Article 98 (Formal requirements concerning draft laws and bills)

1. Draft laws and bills shall:
 - a) be drawn up in any official language, the text in the Portuguese language being the basic text which shall prevail over the versions in other languages, the Members of Parliament being allowed to speak in any working language.
 - b) be drawn up under the form of articles, possible divided into paragraphs and sub-paragraphs;
 - c) have a title which shall convey its principal object;

d) be preceded by a brief justification or explanation of the motives.

2. The requirement referred to in sub-paragraph d) of paragraph 1 above involves, as far as bills are concerned and whenever possible, the presentation of an introduction which contains the following requirements:

a) A descriptive document concerning the applicable social, economic and financial situations;

b) Informative summary of the advantages and consequences of its application;

c) A summary of the legislation in force regarding the matter.

3. Draft laws and bills which do not meet the requirements set out in sub-paragraphs a) and d) of paragraph 1 above shall not be admitted.

4. The non-fulfilment of the any of the requirements set out in sub-paragraphs b) and c) of paragraph no. 1 above implies that it be suppressed within a time limit of five days.

Article 99 (Appeal)

1. Once a draft law or bill has been admitted and distributed to the committee competent in that specific matter for general appraisal, or once it has been rejected, the Chairman shall inform Parliament of the fact.

2. Until the end of the following plenary meeting, any Member of Parliament may appeal against the decision of the Speaker to the Plenary, by way of written and reasoned document.

3. Once the appeal has been filed, the Speaker shall submit it to the decision of the Plenary.

4. The appeal shall be read and voted on, each parliamentary party being permitted to take the floor for no longer than 3 minutes.

Article 100 (Draft resolutions)

Draft resolutions shall be subject to the rules set out in this section, with the following adaptations.

Section II Initial appraisal in the committee

Article 101 (Referral of bills and draft laws)

1. Once any draft law or bill has been admitted and copies distributed to the parliamentary parties, the Speaker, by order, shall refer the text to the committee competent in that matter for appraisal and for the drafting of report and official opinion.

3. Should the committee consider it is not competent in the matter, it should immediately inform the Speaker, in order to reappraise the corresponding order.

Article 102 (Labour legislation)

When addressing labour legislation, the committee shall ensure that the draft laws or bills be assessed by the trade union or employers organisations and the Government, establishing a time limit for the purposes of the provisions set out in article 80.

Article 103 (Deadline for the initial appraisal of the initiative in the committee)

1. The committee shall give its official opinion by way of a reasoned report within the deadline established by the Speaker.

2. The committee may request from the Speaker that an extension of the deadline be given by way of a reasoned request.

3. The non-submission of any report or official opinion within the established deadline does not preclude the initiative for discussion and vote on general points in the Plenary.

Article 104 (Draft laws or bills concerning the same matter)

Should other draft laws and bills on the same matter be submitted, the committee may decide to appraise them together.

Section III Discussion and vote on general points in Plenary

Article 105 (Start of the discussion)

1. The discussion on general points relates to the principles and systems of each draft law or bill.

2. The discussion includes the presentation of the initiative by its author, for a period of 15 minutes, the presentation of the conclusions of the report and official opinion by the rapporteur, for a period of 10 minutes and a period of questions and answers.

3. The Speaker may decide to shorten or extend the time allotted to the discussion, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties have been heard.

Article 106 (Minimum time limit before the debate on general points)

The draft laws or bills may not be submitted to

discussion on general points before a period of seven days has elapsed from the date of its admission, notwithstanding the provisions set out in article 97.

**Article 107
(Vote)**

1. The vote on general points shall relate to each draft law or bill.

2. Once it has been approved in general, the draft law or bill may be referred to the committee competent in that matter for appraisal and vote on specific points.

**Section IV
Appraisal of specific points by a committee**

**Article 108
(Discussion and vote on specific points)**

1. Discussion and vote on specific points concerning the matter included in paragraphs 2 and 3 of article 95 of the Constitution shall take place in the Plenary session.

2. The Plenary may deliberate, at the request of one or more Members of Parliament, that the discussion and vote on specific points of a draft law or bill which relates to the matters referred to in paragraph 1 above takes place within the Committee, notwithstanding the provisions set out in Chapter VII.

**Article 109
(Discussion)**

1. The discussion on specific points relates to each article, notwithstanding the provisions set out in paragraph 2 below.

2. There shall be no discussion on an article on specific points if no draft amendment has been submitted.

**Article 110
(Vote)**

Voting on specific points may relate to each article, paragraph or sub-paragraph.

**Section V
Final overall vote and final wording**

**Article 111
(Final overall vote)**

1. Once the voting on specific points in Plenary has been concluded, the final overall vote shall take place.

2. Once the specific points have been approved, the text is forwarded to the Plenary for the final overall vote.

Article 112

(Final wording)

1. The final wording of the approved draft laws and bills is of the responsibility of the competent committee or, in the event more than one committee has addressed the matter, the one the Speaker selects, within a maximum time limit of five days.

2. The committee may not alter the legislative meaning and shall confine itself to improving and systematising the text and its style, by way of deliberation.

3. Once the final version has been concluded, the text is sent to the Speaker.

**Article 113
(Complaints)**

1. Members of Parliament may lodge complaints to the Speaker against any imprecision in the text up to the beginning of the second plenary meeting subsequent to the deliberation taken by the committee as set out in paragraph 2 of article 112.

2. The Speaker shall decide within a period of 24 hours, the Members of Parliament who had lodged the complaint being permitted to appeal to the Plenary immediately upon announcement of this decision.

3. The text, against which there have been no complaints lodged or once they have been decided on, shall be considered a decree.

**Article 114
(Promulgation)**

The decrees, once they have been signed by the Speaker, are forwarded to the President of the Republic for promulgation and publication.

**Section VII
New consideration**

**Article 115
(Procedure for new consideration)**

1. In the event the President of the Republic exercises his right of veto under the terms of paragraph 1 of article 88 of the Constitution, the decree shall be considered once again within a time limit of 90 days subsequent to the reception of the reasoned message, at a meeting set by the Speaker on his/her own initiative, at the request of ten Members of Parliament or parliamentary parties.

2. In the discussion on general points only the authors of the draft laws or bills and one Member of Parliament for each parliamentary group may intervene, but only once.

3. The vote on general points concerns the confirmation of the decree by parliament.

4. There will be room for debate on specific points if by the end of the debate on general points draft amendments have been submitted, the vote however only concerns those articles which are object of the draft amendments.

5. The text which in the second deliberation suffers no alterations is not required to be sent to the committee for a final draft.

Article 116
(Effects of the new consideration)

1. If the Speaker confirms the vote by absolute majority of the elected Members of Parliament, under the terms of paragraph 2 of article 88 of the Constitution, the President of the Republic shall promulgate the diploma within a period of eight days.

2. A two-third majority of the Ministers present will be required, when it is higher than absolute majority of the Members of Parliament elected to confirm the diplomas which concern the matters set out in article 95 of the Constitution.

3. Should the Parliament introduce amendments, the new decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for promulgation.

4. In the event of non-confirmation of the vote, the initiated legislation cannot be renewed during the same legislative session, except in the event of a new election for the National Parliament.

Article 117
(Veto for reasons of unconstitutionality)

1. In the event the President of the Republic exercises his right of veto under the terms of article 149 of the Constitution, the provisions set out in articles 115 and 116 of the Rules of Procedure and article 88 of the Constitution, taking into account the exceptions included in this article.

2. The vote on general points may concern the removal of the rule or rules considered unconstitutional by the High Court of Justice or concern the confirmation of the decree.

3. The text which in the second deliberation was the object of removal of rules considered unconstitutional returns to the committee for the final draft.

4. If the Parliament removes the rules considered unconstitutional or confirms the decree, it is forwarded to the President of the Republic for promulgation within a time limit of 8 days.

CHAPTER II
SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

Section I
Declaration of state of siege or state of emergency

Article 118
(Meeting of Parliament)

1. Should the President of the Republic request authorisation from the Parliament to declare a state of siege or state of emergency, under the terms of sub-paragraph g) of article 85 of the Constitution, the Speaker shall immediately put it the appraisal by the Parliamentary Plenary or by the Standing Committee.

2. The inclusion on the Agenda of the appraisal of the request for authorisation and setting of the Parliamentary Plenary or the summons of the Standing Committee shall take precedence over any deadline or formality set out in the Rules of Procedure.

3. The period shall not include a pre-agenda period.

4. The provisions set out in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above shall apply, with the necessary adjustments, to the debate in the Standing Committee.

Article 120
(Vote and form of authorisation)

1. The vote shall concern the granting of the authorisation.

2. The authorisation shall become law when granted by the Parliamentary Plenary and resolution when granted by the Standing Committee.

3. The authorisation, when granted by the Standing Committee, shall be confirmed by Parliament during its first plenary session.

Section II
Declaration of war and making of peace

Article 121
(Meeting of Parliament)

1. Should the President of the Republic request from Parliament or the Standing Committee authorisation to declare war or make peace, under the terms of sub-paragraph h) of article 85 of the Constitution, the Speakers shall summons the Parliament or Standing Committee should the former not be sitting.

2. The provisions set out in articles 118, 119 and 120 shall, with the necessary adjustments, be applicable to the procedure concerning the debate, vote and form of authorisation.

CHAPTER III
LEGISLATIVE AUTHORISATIONS

Article 122
(Object)

1. The Parliament may authorise the Government

to draft decree-laws on the matters set out in article 96 of the Constitution.

2. Authorising legislation shall define the object, meaning, scope and duration of the authorisation, which may be extended for a given period by way of new legislation.

Article 123
(Special rule)

1. In addition to the terms and provisions set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 of article 96 of the constitution, legislative authorisations shall observe the following special rules:

a) The initiative shall be of the exclusive responsibility of the Government;

b) There shall be no discussion in committee.

2. The Government, once it has proceeded with public consultations on a draft decree-law, shall, for information purposes, add it to the draft legislative authorisation law, accompanied by the stands taken by the different parties interested in the matter.

CHAPTER IV
APPRAISAL OF GOVERNMENT ACTS OF
LEGISLATION

Article 124
(Application for appraisal of decree-law)

1. The application for parliamentary appraisal of the decree-laws for termination or amendment shall be subscribed by a fifth of the Members of Parliament and submitted in writing to the Bureau within the thirty days subsequent to publication, not counting the days Parliament is suspended.

2. The application shall indicate the decree-law and its date of publication, and the corresponding legislative authorisation law, as well as the explanatory statement.

3. The rules set out in article 98 with the necessary adaptations shall be applicable to the admission of the applications.

Article 125
(Time limit for the appraisal of the decree-law)

Once the application for parliamentary appraisal of the decree-law has been admitted and drawn up under the scope of a legislative authorisation law, the Speaker shall schedule it up to the 6th plenary meeting subsequent to its presentation.

Article 126
(Debate on general points in Plenary)

1. The decree-law shall be appraised by Parliament and there shall be no discussion in committee.

2. The debate shall be open by one of the others of the application, the Government being entitled to intervene.

3. The debate may not exceed two plenary meetings.

Article 127
(Suspension)

1. Once the appraisal of a decree-law drafted under the scope of legislative authorisation has been requested and in the event draft amendments have been submitted, Parliament may suspend all or part of the duration of the decree-law until the law which shall amend it has been published or until the rejection of all the draft amendments submitted.

2. The suspension shall terminate after ten plenary meetings have been held in which Parliament has not analysed the diploma.

Article 128
(Vote and form)

1. The vote on general points shall take place upon termination of the duration.

2. The termination of the duration of the decree-law shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 129
(Termination of its duration)

In the event its duration terminates, the decree-law ceases to be in force on the day of publication of the resolution in the Official Journal, and such decree-law may not be published again during the same parliamentary session.

Article 130
(Changes in decree-law)

1. If the termination of the duration of the decree-law is not approved and draft amendments have been submitted, the decree law, the draft amendments shall be referred to the competent committee to discuss the specific points, unless Parliament deliberates it be analysed in Plenary.

2. The draft amendments may be submitted up to the end of the debate on the general points in Plenary, without prejudice to new draft amendments being submitted in committee, debate and vote on specific points.

3. When the suspension of the duration of the decree-law has been deliberated, the suspension shall no longer be valid should ten plenary sessions have taken place without Parliament having analysed the diploma.

4. In the event it has been deliberated that amendments are to be introduced and Parliament has not voted on the respective law by the term of the ongoing legislative session, and fifteen

plenary sessions have taken place, the process shall be considered terminated.

5. Once the draft amendments in committee have been approved, the text shall be sent to the Plenary in order to be submitted to the final global vote and subsequent drafting of final text in the following plenary meeting.

6. In the event the diploma has been suspended and all draft amendments have been rejected, the Speaker shall forward the term of suspension to be published in the Official Journal.

7. In the event the time limits set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 have been exceeded, the parliamentary appraisal process shall be considered terminated, the Plenary being immediately informed of the fact and the corresponding resolution being forwarded for publication in the Official Journal.

CHAPTER V APPROVAL OF TREATIES

Article 131 (Initiative)

1. Agreements, conventions and treaties, hereinafter referred to as treaties, subject to approval, denunciation or ratification by Parliament under the terms of sub-paragraph f) of paragraph 3 of article 95 of the Constitution, shall be initiated by the Government.

2. The Speaker shall distribute the draft resolutions to the parliamentary parties and shall put them to the appraisal of the committee in the matter and should this be the case, of another or of other committees.

Article 132 (Discussion and vote)

The debate of the treaty shall take place in Plenary and once such debate has come to a conclusion, the global vote on the treaty shall take place.

Article 133 (Effects of the vote)

1. Should the treaty be approved, denounced or ratified, the resolution and the text of the diploma shall be sent to the President of the Republic for the purposes set out in sub-paragraph a) of article 85 of the Constitution.

2. The approval, denouncement or ratification which the diplomas contain for the purposes set out in n° 1 is exercised by way of resolution.

3. The resolution contains the text of the diploma.

CHAPTER VI STEERING AND POLITICAL MONITORING PROCESS

Section I Appraisal of the Government Programme

Article 134 (Parliament meeting)

1. The Parliament plenary meeting to present the Government programme, under the terms of articles 108 and 109 of the Constitution, shall be scheduled by the Speaker with the agreement of the Prime Minister.

2. Should the Parliament not be sitting, it shall obligatorily be summoned by the Speaker.

3. The debate on the Government programme shall last no longer than five consecutive days.

Article 135 (Appraisal of the Government's Programme)

1. The Government Programme shall be submitted to the appraisal of Parliament by way of a declaration by the Prime Minister for a maximum time limit of 40 minutes.

2. Once the presentation is concluded, there shall be a period of questions and answers.

3. The debate shall be organised by the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties.

4. During the debate, the plenary meetings shall not have a pre-agenda period.

Article 136 (Rejection of the Government's Programme and vote of confidence)

1. Without prejudice to the closing of the debate and until such time, any parliamentary party may suggest that the Programme be rejected or the Government may request approval by a vote of confidence.

2. Once the debate is over, the vote on motions of rejection and of confidence shall take place during the same meeting.

3. The motions may, up to the time of the vote, be withdrawn.

4. The rejection of the Government's Programme requires an absolute majority by the elected Members of Parliament.

5. The Speaker conveys the result, depending on the case, to the President of the Republic for the effects set out in sub-paragraph g) of article 86 and of sub-paragraph e) of paragraph 1 of article 112 of the Constitution.

Section II Vote of confidence

Article 137 (Parliament meeting)

1. Should the Government, under the terms of article 110 of the Constitution, request the approval of a vote of confidence from Parliament on a general political statement or on any affair of relevant national interest, the discussion shall start on the seventh parliament day following the submission of the request for the vote of confidence to the Speaker.

2. When Parliament is not sitting, the Government's request shall only determine the summons of the Plenary through prior deliberation of the Standing Committee.

Article 138 (Debate)

1. The debate can last for no longer than three days and shall start with an intervention by the Government which shall be of no longer than 30 minutes.

2. The rules set out in paragraph 1 of article 58 shall apply to the vote of confidence, should the College of Representatives not decide otherwise.

3. The vote of confidence may be withdrawn by the Government until the end of the debate.

Article 139 (Vote)

1. Once the debate is over, the vote on the confidence shall take place at the same meeting.

2. The vote of confidence shall be considered approved when it obtains the absolute majority of votes from the elected Members of Parliament.

3. The President of the Republic shall be informed on the result of the vote on the vote of confidence by the Speaker for the effects set out in sub-paragraph e) of paragraph 1 of article 122 of the Constitution.

Section III Censorship motions

Article 140 (Initiative)

Censorship motions may be submitted to the Government on the implementation of its programme or affair of relevant national interest, under the terms of article 111 of the Constitution by a quarter of the sitting Members of Parliament.

Article 141 (Debate)

1. The debate shall be opened and closed by one of the signatories of the motion.

2. The Prime Minister shall be entitled to immediately intervene after and before the interventions set out in paragraph 1 above.

3. The provisions set out in article 138, with the necessary adjustments, shall apply to the debate.

Article 142 (Vote)

1. Once the debate is over, the vote shall take place at the same meeting.

2. The censorship motion shall only be considered approved when it receives an absolute majority vote from the elected Members of Parliament.

3. Should the censorship motion not be approved, the signatories may not submit another one during the same legislative session.

4. The Speaker shall inform the President of the Republic of the result for the effects set out in sub-paragraph f) of paragraph 1 of article 112 of the Constitution.

Section IV Questions to the Government

Article 143 (Questions to the Government)

1. Members of Parliament may, in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 2 of article 101 of the Constitution, orally ask any questions to the Government at Plenary meetings, especially scheduled for the effect.

2. The plenary sessions for questions to the Government shall take place once a month and shall last no longer than two hours.

Article 144 (Scope and procedure)

1. The questions shall concern matters related to the responsibilities of Government and shall be a brief and to the point.

2. The questions shall be put in writing, signed by the Member of Parliament who is the author of the question and identify the member of Government competent to answer.

3. The questions shall be submitted to the Bureau and forwarded to the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties, which shall approve the corresponding list, organise the questions by sectors and put them into sequential order.

4. Once the list of questions has been approved, it shall be distributed to the Members of Parliament and sent to the Government with an advance notice of at least eight days.

Article 145 (Duration)

A maximum of twenty questions shall be asked the Government in a period which may not exceed three hours.

Article 146
(Questions session)

1. The Speaker shall give the floor to the Members of Parliament who are the authors of the questions in the sequential order approved by the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties.
2. The author shall ask the question orally and shall take no longer than three minutes to do so.
3. The Government shall answer as soon as the question is asked and shall take no longer than three minutes to do so.
4. The author of the question may request further explanation and take no longer than two minutes to do so, followed by the Government's answer which cannot last longer than three minutes.
5. The Speaker may also authorise another Member of Parliament to request further explanations, which shall take no longer than three minutes and the member of Government shall take no longer than the same amount of time to answer.
6. No request for further explanations are allowed on matters unrelated to the main issue.

Article 147
(Repetition of questions)

Questions may not be repeated during the same legislative session.

Article 148
(Date of the meetings)

Questions are asked the Government at monthly meetings organised for this purpose by the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties.

Section V
(Questions in writing)

Article 149
(Scope)

1. Members of Government may at any time ask the Government questions in writing.
2. The questions shall be concise and objective and relate to matters within the scope of the Government's responsibility.
3. Members of Parliament may request that documents be added, which shall serve as a complement to the Government's answer.

Article 150
(Deadline for answers)

1. The questions asked by the Members of Parliament shall be answered by the Government

within a time limit of one month.

2. The Government's answers shall be published and distributed during the following month.

3. When the answers are not sent to Parliament within the time limit set out in paragraph 1 above, the respective questions may, at the request of the author, be scheduled for the subsequent session of questions, under the terms and provisions set out in the previous section.

Section VI
Debates with the Government

Article 151
(Debate with the Prime Minister)

1. The Prime Minister shall attend a session of questions by Members of Parliament at Plenary, before it ceases to sit, on a date to be set by the Speaker, once the Government and the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties have been heard.
2. The Speaker, once the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties has been heard, shall inform the Prime Minister on the matters to be discussed with an advance notice of one month.
3. The debate shall last no longer than one day, the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties being responsible for put the interventions into order in accordance with the representivity of each parliamentary party.
4. The debate shall open with the intervention of the largest opposition party, the parliamentary parties have at their disposal the maximum overall time.
5. Each question shall be immediately followed by the answer by the Prime Minister, who has an overall period of time to answer equivalent to that of the parliamentary parties who have questioned him.
6. The Prime Minister may request from one of the ministers present to answer or complete a given question.
7. The debate shall be closed with the intervention of the Prime Minister.

Article 152
(Debate with the ministers)

1. Each minister shall attend a debate with the Parliament before the Plenary at least once in every legislative session.
2. The debate may concern all the areas for which the minister is responsible.
3. The Speaker, once he has heard the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties, shall

schedule the dates for the debates referred to in paragraph 2 above with an advance notice of one month.

4. The debate shall have a maximum duration of three hours, the College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties being responsible for fixing the order of the questions in accordance with the representivity of each parliamentary party.

5. Each question shall take no longer than three minutes to ask and shall be immediately followed by the minister's reply of no longer than one minute.

Section VII Notifications to the Government

Article 153 (Debates on matters of relevant national interest)

1. At the request of ten Members of Parliament or of the parliamentary parties, debates may be held on matters of relevant national interest.

2. The debate shall take place ten days after the request is made.

Article 154 (Debate)

1. The debate shall open with the intervention delivered by the signatory Member of Parliament or by a Member of Parliament from the parliamentary party responsible for raising the matter and a Member of Government.

2. The debate may not exceed one parliamentary day and shall have no pre-agenda period.

3. The debate shall end with interventions delivered by a signatory Member of Parliament or a Member of Parliament from the parliamentary party responsible for raising the matter and a member of Government who shall close the session.

4. The College of Representatives of Parliamentary Parties shall be responsible for defining the times when the debates shall be held.

Section VIII Petitions

Article 155 (Exercising the right of petition)

1. The right of petition set out in article 48 of the Constitution and the law, shall be exercised before Parliament by way of petitions, claims or complaints.

2. Whenever the word "*petition*" is referred to, all the forms mentioned in paragraph 1 above shall be contemplated.

Article 156 (Form)

1. The petitions shall be drafted in writing and contain the name of the author and author's domicile and shall be signed by him/her or by another person, at his/her request, when the petitioner cannot or does not know how to write.

2. The petitions shall be intelligible and clearly specify their object.

3. In petitions submitted by a number of petitioners, it is sufficient to give the name and address of one of the signatories of the petition.

Article 157 (Presentation and procedure)

1. The petitions shall be addressed to the Speaker, who shall refer them to the committee responsible for this matter.

2. The petitions shall be numbered and recorded by the competent services of the Parliament secretariat.

3. Once the petition has been received, the committee shall proceed to discuss it in order to first of all ascertain the following:

a) whether there are any legally established causes which determine its refusal;

b) whether the requirements set out in article 156 above have not been observed.

4. Refusal implies that it shall be archived, the petitioner or the first of the signatories being notified of such decision.

5. Parliament may however set a period of thirty (30) days for the interested parties, to suppress any shortcomings set out in article 156 above.

Article 158 (Discussion by the committee)

1. The committee shall appraise the petitions within a period of 90 days, which may be extended, counted from the meeting referred to in paragraph 3 of article 157 above, and shall draw up a report with the measures they considered appropriate.

2. If the case set out in paragraph 3 of Article 157 above occurs, the time limit established shall only count from the date on which the shortcomings ascertained have been corrected.

3. The committee may suggest that the petition be submitted to the Human Rights and Justice Ombudsman and in this case the Speaker shall send the report for the effects set out in paragraph 2 of article 27 of the Constitution.

Article 159

(Appraisal by the Plenary)

1. The appraisal in Plenary shall depend on the approval by the committee competent in the matter under discussion.

2. Once the report has been drawn up by the committee, it shall be sent to the Speaker for appraisal in Plenary, followed by an intervention by a representative of each parliamentary party for a time to be set by the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties.

Article 160 (Informing the author or authors of the petition)

The Speaker shall inform in writing the author or the first author of the petition on the report by the committee and the subsequent measures to be taken.

Section IX Inquiry

Article 161 (Function and object)

1. The purpose of parliamentary inquiries to supervise the fulfilment of the Constitution and laws and to appraise acts of Government and administration.

2. Parliamentary inquiries are held by forming ad hoc committees, formed specifically for each case, by way of parliamentary resolution.

3. The formation of committees of inquiry, the inquiry and its execution shall be initiated under the terms set out by law.

CHAPTER VII PLAN, GENERAL STATE BUDGET, BUDGETARY IMPLEMENTATION AND GENERAL STATE ACCOUNTS

Section I General State Budget

Article 162 (Presentation)

Plan and General State Budget bills concerning each economic year are submitted to Parliament by the 15th of October.

Article 163 (Distribution)

1. Once the bills have been admitted, the Speaker shall order that they be immediately distributed to all parliamentary parties, as well as to those Members of Parliament who so request it.

2. The bills shall also be forwarded to the Economic and Finance Committee to draft a report and reasoned official opinion, and to the

other specialised standing committees for the purposes of providing an official sectoral opinion.

Article 164 (Appraisal by the Committees)

1. The Specialised Standing Committees shall send their corresponding official opinions to the Economic and Finance Committee, within a time limit of fifteen days from the date the bills are admitted.

2. The Economic and Finance committee shall draw up a report and reasoned official opinion on the bills within a time limit of twenty days, counted as set out in the terms of paragraph 1 above.

3. For the purposes of the appraisal of the bills, within the time limits set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, the Committees shall summons the meetings they consider necessary with the participation of Members of the Government.

4. For the purposes of the paragraphs above, the members of Government shall send to the Specialised Standing Committees written information on the draft budget which cover the areas they are responsible for.

Article 165 (Schedule)

Once the report and the official opinion have been received from the Economic and Finance Committee, the Speaker, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties has been heard, shall schedule the Plan and General State Budget bills for discussion, under the terms of the following article.

Article 166 (Discussion and vote on the general points in Plenary)

1. The debate on the general points of the Plan and General State Budget shall have a duration of three days, in compliance with the terms and provisions set out in article 105.

2. The debate shall start and finish with an intervention by the Prime Minister.

3. Before the closure of the debate, parliamentary parties and the Government are entitled to speak on the bills for a maximum period of 10 minutes.

4. During the debate, the plenary meetings shall not have a pre-agenda period.

5. At the end of the debate, the general points of the Plan and General State Budget bills shall be voted on.

Article 167 (Discussion and vote on the specific points)

1. The debate on the specific points of the Plan and General State Budget bill can take no longer than 10 days, and it is organised in such a way as to discuss the budget of each ministry with the participation of the respective members of Government.

2. The debate on the specific points of the Plan and General State Budget bill is held in Plenary.

Article 168
(Final global vote)

Once the specific points have been approved, the bills shall be submitted to the final global vote.

Article 169
(Final text)

The Economic and Finance Committee is responsible for drafting the final version of the decrees.

Article 170
(Amending budget)

The rules set out in this section, with due adaptations, shall apply to the amending budget bill.

Section II
Budgetary Implementation

Article 171
(Presentation of the budgetary implementation report)

The budgetary implementation report with regard to the previous financial year shall be submitted to Parliament in the three months following the end of the respective year.

Article 172
(Distribution)

1. Once the report has been admitted, the Speaker shall order that it be immediately distributed to all parliamentary parties, as well as all Members of Parliament.

2. The report shall also be forwarded to the Economic and Finance Committee and other Specialised Standing Committees for their appraisal.

Article 173
(Appraisal by the Committees)

1. The Specialised Standing Committees shall send their official opinions on the implementation report to the Economic and Finance Committee, within a time limit of fifteen days.

2. The Economic and Finance committee shall draw up a final reasoned official opinion on the report within a time limit of ten days, counted from the end of the time limit out in paragraph 1

above.

3. For the purposes of the appraisal of the implementation report, within the time limits set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, the Committees shall summon the meetings they consider necessary with the participation of Members of the Government.

Article 174
(Schedule)

Once the report and official opinion have been received from the Economic and Finance Committee, the Speaker, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties has been heard, shall schedule a debate, with no pre-agenda period, under the terms of the following articles.

Article 175
(Debate on the budgetary implementation)

1. The debate shall have a maximum duration of three days, under the terms of the rules set out in paragraph 2 of article 105.

2. The debate shall start and finish with an intervention by the Government.

3. Before the closure of the debate, parliamentary parties may take the floor for a final intervention the duration of which shall be defined by the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties.

Section III
General State Accounts

Article 176
(Presentation of the General State Accounts)

The Higher Administrative, Fiscal and Accounts Court shall submit an official opinion to Parliament on the General State Accounts, within the ten months following the end of the economic year to which they refer.

Article 177
(Knowledge)

1. Once the General State Accounts have been admitted, the Speaker shall order that they be immediately distributed to all parliamentary parties, as well as to those Members of Parliament who so request it.

2. The General State Accounts shall also be sent to the Economic and Finance Committee.

Article 178
(Appraisal by the Economic and Finance Committee)

1. The Economic and Finance Committee shall draw up a reasoned official opinion and recommendations, should there be any, on the

General State Accounts within a time limit of 30 days.

2. For the effects of appraisal of the General State Accounts and within the time limit set out in paragraph 1 above, the committee shall schedule the meetings it considers necessary with the participation of members of Government and high Public Administration officials.

**Article 179
(Schedule)**

Once the report and official opinion have been received from the Economic and Finance Committee, the Speaker, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties has been heard, shall schedule a parliamentary debate, with no pre-agenda period, under the terms of the following articles.

**Article 180
(Debate)**

1. The debate shall have a maximum duration of one day, under the terms of the rules set out in paragraph 2 of article 105.

2. The debate shall open by the largest opposition party and shall finish with an intervention by the Government.

3. Before the closure of the debate, parliamentary parties may take the floor for a final intervention under the terms defined by the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties.

**CHAPTER VIII
PROCEDURES RELATED TO OTHER
BODIES**

**Section I
Procedures related to the President of the
Republic**

**Division I
Investiture and swearing-in of the President of
the Republic**

**Article 181
(Parliament Meeting)**

1. The Parliament shall meet especially for the investiture and swearing-in of the President of the Republic, under the terms and provisions of article 77 of the Constitution.

2. Should the Parliament not be sitting, the Speaker should summon it for this effect.

**Article 182
(Formalities)**

1. Once the plenary meeting is open the Speaker of the National Parliament shall suspend it to receive the President of the Republic elect and guests.

2. Once the meeting has been reopened, the Speaker of the National Parliament shall have the minutes of the results of the elections read by a member of the Bureau.

3. The President of the Republic elect is invested by the Speaker of the National Parliament and takes office in a public ceremony before the Members of Parliament and the representatives of the other sovereign bodies, taking the oath established in paragraph 3 of article 77 of the Constitution, after which is played the National Anthem.

4. The records of the investiture are signed by the President of the Republic and by the Speaker of the National Parliament.

**Article 183
(Subsequent acts)**

1. Once the investiture document has been signed, the Speaker shall greet the new President of the Republic.

2. The President of the Republic shall deliver a message to Parliament and the Nation.

3. Once the President of the Republic has spoken, the Speaker shall declare the sessions closed, the National Anthem being played was again.

**Division II
Consent for the President of the Republic to be
absent from national territory**

**Article 184
(Initiative and powers)**

1. The President of the Republic shall request from Parliament or the Standing Committee to consent to his/her absents from the country by way of a message, as set out in the terms of paragraph 1 of article 80 of the Constitution.

2. The deliberation by Parliament shall take the form of a resolution.

**Division III
Resignation of the President of the Republic**

**Article 186
(Parliament meeting)**

1. In the event the President of the Republic resigns, Parliament shall meet to be informed of the message set out in article 81 of the Constitution, within a time limit of 48 hours.

2. There shall be no debate.

**Division IV
Criminal liability and constitutional
obligations of the President of the Republic**

**Article 187
(Initiative)**

1. For the purposes of the provisions set out in paragraph 2 of article 79 of the Constitution, Parliament shall be responsible for initiating the process, by way of a proposal put forward by a fifth and deliberation approved by a majority of two thirds of the elected Members of Parliament.

2. Parliament shall set up a special committee in order to draw up a report and official report within the deadline established for such purpose.

Article 188
(Debate and vote)

1. Once the committee report has been received the Speaker of the National Parliament shall schedule and extraordinary meeting of the plenary to address the matter, within the 48 following hours.

2. At the end of the debate, the Speaker of the National Parliament shall put the initiative to the vote, by secret ballot, which shall be approved by a two-third majority of the elected Members of Parliament.

3. The lifting of the President of the Republic's immunity is also undertaken by the initiative of Parliament, by way of a resolution, in compliance with the terms and provisions set out in paragraph 3 of article 79 of the Constitution.

Section II
Criminal liability of members of the Government

Article 189
(Criminal liability of members of the Government)

The necessary deliberations by Parliament, under the terms set out in article 113 and 114 of the Constitution, are taken by secret ballot and absolute majority of the elected Members of Parliament, preceded by official opinion of the committee specially created for this purpose.

Section III
Appointment of posts outside the National Parliament

Article 190
(Election)

1. Parliament shall elect, under the terms set out in the Constitution or by law, persons who shall hold posts outside the Parliament, the appointment of which being under its responsibility.

2. In the absence of constitutional or directly legal applicable provisions, the terms and provisions set out in the following articles shall be observed.

Article 192
(Suffrage)

1. The candidate who obtains more than one half of the validly expressed votes shall be considered elected.

2. If none of the candidates obtains this number of votes, there shall be a second suffrage, in which only the two most voted for candidates shall run, whose candidacy has not been withdrawn.

Article 193
(System of proportional representation)

Whenever the system of proportional representation is applied, the election shall be undertaken by complete lists, the d'Hondt method of the highest average being applied.

Section IV
Representations

Article 194
(Representations)

1. The representations of Parliament shall respect the principle of proportionality, the Members of Parliament being indicated by parliamentary parties in College.

2. When representations cannot include representatives of all political parties, their compositions shall be established by the College and, failing an agreement, by the Plenary.

3. Once their mission has been completed, the representations shall draft a report, which shall be submitted to the Plenary by the chairman of the delegation or by a Member of Parliament delegated by such chairman.

4. When they are permanent missions, a report shall be submitted to the Plenary on a quarterly basis.

5. After the representation, the Members of Parliament may request explanations, the times for which shall be set by the College.

Article 195
(Deputations)

The terms and provisions set out in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of article 194 above shall apply to National Parliament Deputations.

Article 196
(Accreditation of the Press)

1. Organisations belonging to the press, radio and television may have their professionals accredited before the bureau to exercise their journalistic, information and dissemination activities with regard to Parliament and its Members of Parliament.

2. The Bureau provides for the distribution of documents concerning matters under discussion and the interventions of the representatives of the

media.

CHAPTER IX FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 197 (General principles of the legislative procedure)

1. Legitimacy in the drafting of laws is guaranteed by way of the strict observance of the provisions set out in the Rules of Procedure, through the following basic principles:

- a) Full and equitable participation of Members of Parliament of all legislative activities with respect for procedural limits;
- b) Alterations in procedural rules only by way of competent legislation in full observance of the Rules of Procedure.
- c) No decision which contradicts the Rules of Procedure is valid.
- d) Prevalence of special rule over general rule.
- e) Decision on cases not expressly mentioned in accordance with analogy and general principles of Law.
- f) Preservation of rights of minorities;
- g) Collegial decision, with the exception of the specific areas of competence set out in these Rules of Procedure;
- h) Impossibility to take decisions without the observation of a procedural quorum set up for the effect;
- i) The Agenda, set by the Speaker, once the College of Representatives of the Parliamentary Parties has been heard, shall be drawn up with sufficient advance notice to allow all Members of Parliament to be informed with due notice.
- j) Disclosure of the decisions taken;
- k) Possibility of comprehensive political negotiation by way of established Rules of Procedure.

2. The non-observance of any of these principles may be denounced by way of point of order or political declaration.

Article 198 (Institutional relations)

The institutional relations of Parliament with national sovereign bodies, parliamentary institutions of other countries or other national or foreign institutions shall take place by way of the Speaker or delegations of Members of Parliament or Member of Parliament delegated by such Speaker.

Article 199 (Changes)

These Rules of Procedure may be changed by Parliament by absolute majority of elected Members of Parliament, by way of proposal by at least one quarter of the elected Members of Parliament.

Article 200 (Interpretation and integration of gaps)

The Speaker and the Parliamentary Bureau shall be responsible for interpreting and integrating any possible gaps in the Rules of Procedure, by resorting to Plenary.

Article 201 (Provisional powers of the Court of Auditors)

Until the installation of the Higher Administrative, Fiscal and Accounts Court, the General State Budget shall be presented to the National Parliament by the competent body, under the terms of article 164 of the Constitution.

Article 202 (Entry into force)

Once the Rules of Procedure have been approved by Plenary and signed by the Speaker they shall immediately come into force.

Approved on 20th October 2009

To be published

The Speaker

Fernando La Sama de Araújo