

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC

Under the terms of Article 175a of the Constitution the Assembly of the Republic hereby passes the following:

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic

Title I

Members and parliamentary groups

Chapter I

Members

Section I

Members' mandates

Article 1

Term of office

The Members' term of office shall commence and end, and suspensions, substitutions and resignations shall take place, in accordance with the Statute of Members and other applicable legislation.

Article 2

Verification of credentials

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic shall verify Members' credentials. To this end it shall take note of the prior formal opinion to be issued by the competent parliamentary committee or, in the absence thereof, that of a credential verification committee, to be formed in accordance with the criteria laid down by Article 29.
- 2- Such verification of credentials shall consist of checking that mandates are formally in order and considering the eligibility of any Member who has been impugned on the basis of a fact which has not yet been the object of a judicial decision that has transited in rem judicatam.
- 3- Any Member shall possess the right to impugn at any time until the discussion of the formal opinion is concluded.
- 4- Any Member whose mandate has been impugned shall possess the right to defend himself before the competent parliamentary committee and before the Plenary, and to perform his duties until the latter has passed a definitive decision on the impugnement by secret ballot.
- 5- The Member may speak for a maximum of fifteen minutes in order to exercise the right of defence provided for by the previous paragraph.
- 6- In cases of impugnement the time limit for preliminary investigation shall not exceed thirty days, and the said time limit shall not be extended under any circumstances.

Article 3
Loss of seat

- 1- A Member shall lose his seat under the following circumstances:
 - a) In the cases provided for by the Statute of Members;
 - b) When he fails to take his seat in the Assembly by the fourth sitting thereof, or fails to attend four plenary sittings in any one legislative session, save when such failures to attend are duly justified.
- 2- Any justification of failures to attend as referred to in subparagraph (1)b above shall be submitted to the President of the Assembly within five days of the end of the fact that justified the failure.
- 3- When it has proven evidence of any of the circumstances referred to in paragraph (1) above, the Bureau shall first take note of the prior formal opinion issued by the competent parliamentary committee, in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of Members, and shall then declare that the Member concerned has lost his seat.
- 4- The Bureau shall notify the interested party of its ruling, which shall be published in the *Journal of the Assembly of the Republic*.
- 5- Any Member whose mandate is called into question shall possess the right to be heard and to appeal to the Plenary at any time within the next ten days, and shall remain in office until the Plenary issues a definitive decision on the appeal by secret ballot.
- 6- Within the same period, any other Member may likewise appeal by means of a written and duly substantiated request, which shall be published in the *Journal*.
- 7- The Plenary shall decide without any prior debate, but the Member whose mandate is disputed shall possess the right to speak for a maximum of fifteen minutes.
- 8- Any decision by the Plenary to confirm a declaration of the loss of a seat, or to itself declare such a loss, shall be subject to appeal to the Constitutional Court as laid down by Article 223(2)g of the Constitution and the law governing the organisation, operation and procedure of the Constitutional Court.

Section II

Powers

Article 4

Members' powers

- 1- Members shall possess the following powers, which they may exercise individually or as a group, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure:
 - a) To submit draft amendments to the Constitution;
 - b) To submit Members' bills, draft Rules of Procedure and draft resolutions, particularly draft referenda, and draft decisions, and to request that they be scheduled for discussion;
 - c) To take part and intervene in parliamentary debates, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure;
 - d) To question the Government about any of its acts or those of the Public Administration, save only the legal provisions concerning state secrets;
 - e) To request and obtain from the Government or the governing bodies of any public entity, such details, information and official publications as the Member or Members may deem useful to the exercise of their mandate;
 - f) To move the formation of parliamentary committees of inquiry;
 - g) To submit draft amendments;
 - h) To move that executive laws be considered with a view to their ceasing to be in force or their amendment;
 - i) To move the emergency processing of any bill, draft resolution or draft decision, and the emergency consideration of any executive law with a view to its ceasing to be in force or its amendment;
 - j) To make motions of no confidence in the Government;
 - l) To take part in discussion and voting;

- m) To propose the formation of ad hoc parliamentary committees;
 - n) To propose the holding of parliamentary hearings;
 - o) To ask the Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality and legality of any legal rule, in accordance with Articles 278 and 281 of the Constitution;
 - p) To appeal to the Constitutional Court against any decision by the Plenary of the Assembly to confirm a declaration of the loss of a seat, or to itself declare such a loss, in accordance with Article 223(2)g of the Constitution and the law.
- 2- In order to enable them to perform their mandate correctly, Members shall possess the following powers:
- a) To take their seats in the plenary chamber and committee rooms and to speak pursuant to the terms of these Rules of Procedure;
 - b) To perform specific functions in the Assembly;
 - c) To propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure.

Section III
Rights and duties

Article 5
Members' rights and duties

Members' rights and duties are defined by the Constitution and the Statue of Members.

Chapter II
Parliamentary groups

Article 6
Formation of parliamentary groups

- 1- The Members elected for each party or coalition of parties may form a parliamentary group.
- 2- Parliamentary groups shall be formed by means of a notification addressed to the President of the Assembly, which shall be signed by the Members belonging to the group and shall state the names of the group, its president, and its vice-presidents if any.
- 3- Parliamentary groups shall notify the President of the Assembly of any change in their composition or leadership.
- 4- The notifications referred to by paragraphs (2) and (3) above shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 7

Organisation of parliamentary groups

- 1- Each parliamentary group shall be free to decide how it is to be organised.
- 2- The offices of President, Vice-President or member of the Bureau of the Assembly shall be incompatible with that of president of a parliamentary group.

Article 8

Powers of parliamentary groups

Each parliamentary group shall possess the following powers:

- a) To be represented on parliamentary committees in accordance with the number of its members, and to appoint such representatives;
- b) To decide the order of business of a given number of plenary sittings, in accordance with Article 64;
- c) To cause the holding of emergency debates, which the Government shall attend, in accordance with Article 74;
- d) In each legislative session, to cause the holding of two debates on a matter of general or sectoral policy, by calling upon the Government to attend the Assembly;
- e) To cause the holding of debates on current affairs, in accordance with Article 72;
- f) To initiate legislation;
- g) To make motions rejecting the Government's Programme;
- h) To make motions of no confidence in the Government;
- i) To move the formation of parliamentary committees of inquiry;
- j) To issue oral explanations of vote after each final overall vote, in accordance with Article 155.

Article 9
Rights of parliamentary groups

Each parliamentary group shall possess the following rights:

- a) To elect its own officers and decide its internal organisation and regulations;
- b) To choose the chairmen of parliamentary committees and subcommittees, in accordance with Articles 29 and 33;
- c) To be consulted when the order of business is set and to appeal to the Plenary against that order of business;
- d) To ask the Standing Committee to call the Plenary;
- e) To make political statements in Plenary, in accordance with Article 71;
- f) To move the interruption of plenary sittings, in accordance with Article 69;
- g) To be regularly and directly informed by the Government as to the situation and progress of the main matters of public interest;
- h) To dispose of places in which to work at the Seat of the Assembly, together with technical and administrative staff of its choice, as laid down by law.

Article 10
Sole party representatives

A Member who is a political party's sole representative shall possess the right to intervene as such, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure.

Article 11

Members who are not registered with a parliamentary group

Members who are neither registered with any parliamentary group, nor sole representatives of a political party, shall notify the President of the Assembly of the Republic accordingly and shall exercise their mandate as unregistered Members.

Title II

Organisation of the Assembly

Chapter I

President of the Bureau

Section I

President

Division I

Status, role and election

Article 12

President of the Assembly of the Republic

- 1- The President shall represent the Assembly of the Republic, direct and coordinate its proceedings and exercise authority over all its staff and agents and the security forces placed at its service.
- 2- The President of the Assembly of the Republic shall temporarily substitute the President of the Republic under the terms of Article 132 of the Constitution.

Article 13

Election of the President of the Assembly

- 1- Nominations for the office of President of the Assembly of the Republic shall be signed by a minimum of one tenth and a maximum of one fifth of all the Members.
- 2- Nominations shall be submitted to the outgoing President of the Assembly at least two hours before the election takes place.
- 3- The election shall take place during the first plenary sitting of each legislature.
- 4- The candidate who obtains an absolute majority of the votes of all the Members in full exercise of their office shall be elected President of the Assembly.
- 5- If no candidate obtains such a majority, a second vote shall forthwith be held solely between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes and have not withdrawn from the election.
- 6- If no candidate is elected, the proceedings shall recommence.

Article 14

Term of office of the President of the Assembly

- 1- The President of the Assembly shall be elected for the duration of the legislature.
- 2- The President of the Assembly may resign his office by notifying the Assembly accordingly. Such resignations shall take immediate effect, without prejudice to their subsequent publication in the *Journal*.
- 3- In the event that the President of the Assembly resigns his office or the position falls vacant, fresh elections shall be held within fifteen days.
- 4- The new President of the Assembly shall be elected for the remaining duration of the legislature.

Article 15

Substitution of the President of the Assembly

- 1- When absent or unable to perform his functions, the President of the Assembly shall be substituted by one of the Vice-Presidents.
- 2- In the event that he is ill, prevented from performing his functions for more than seven days by official duties, or absent abroad, the President of the Assembly shall be substituted either by the Vice-President of the Assembly from the party to which he himself belongs, or by such other Vice-President as he nominates.
- 3- Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, each Vice-President shall substitute for the President of the Assembly for a period corresponding to the quotient obtained by dividing the number of months in the legislative session by the number of Vice-Presidents.
- 4- For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the Vice-Presidents shall begin to perform the President of the Assembly's functions by descending order of the proportional share of the seats in the Assembly of the parties that proposed them for office.

Division II
Responsibilities of the President of the Assembly

Article 16
Responsibilities in relation to the Assembly's proceedings

- 1- The President of the Assembly shall possess the following responsibilities in relation to the Assembly of the Republic's proceedings:
 - a) To represent the Assembly and chair the Bureau;
 - b) To schedule plenary sittings and establish the order of business, in accordance with Articles 59 et sequitur;
 - c) Once he has determined that they comply with these Rules of Procedure, to admit or reject bills, draft resolutions, draft decisions, motions and requests, without prejudice to the right of appeal to the Assembly;
 - d) To submit the texts of bills and draft treaties for consideration by the competent parliamentary committees. If the subject thereof concerns more than one parliamentary committee, he shall indicate which one of them shall be responsible for drawing up the formal opinion referred to by Article 129(1), whereupon the other or others shall provide the parliamentary committee so indicated with their contributions thereto;
 - e) To promote the formation of parliamentary committees, supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure that the time limits which the Assembly sets for them are met;
 - f) To promote the formation of parliamentary delegations, supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure that they contribute to the visibility abroad and prestige of the Assembly and the country;
 - g) To inspire the formation of parliamentary friendship groups, mixed interparliamentary committees and other bodies that concern themselves with the

dialogue between the Assembly and countries that are friends of Portugal, and to supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure compliance with the regulations governing the matter;

- h) To convene meetings with the chairmen of the various parliamentary committees and subcommittees in order to inform himself about their work;
 - i) To receive representations or petitions addressed to the Assembly and forward them to the competent parliamentary committees;
 - j) To propose that full sessions of the Assembly be adjourned;
 - l) To chair the Standing Committee;
 - m) To chair the Conference of Leaders;
 - n) To chair the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen;
 - o) To ask the competent parliamentary committee for a formal opinion on conflicts of responsibility between parliamentary committees;
 - p) To cause the Assembly's resolutions to be published in the *Diario da Republica*, in accordance with Article 166(6) of the Constitution;
 - q) To maintain order and discipline and the security of the Assembly, to which end he may requisition and use such means as are necessary and take such measures as he deems fit;
 - r) To order corrections in the *Journal*;
 - s) To consider whether nominations that Members submit for elected offices are in order, announce the results of the elections and proclaim the successful candidates elected;
 - t) To oversee the staff in the Assembly's service;
 - u) In general, to ensure that these Rules of Procedure and the Assembly's decisions are complied with.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall possess the following responsibilities, which he shall exercise after first consulting the Conference of Leaders:

- a) To promote the establishment of offices to serve the electorate in the various constituencies;
 - b) To establish protocol agreements and assistance protocols with universities;
 - c) To oversee the Assembly of the Republic's website and the Parliament Channel;
 - d) Exceptionally, to invite prominent Portuguese or foreign persons to sit in the chamber and address the Assembly of the Republic.
- 3- The President of the Assembly may delegate the exercise of his powers and responsibilities to the Vice-Presidents by order published in the *Journal*.

Article 17

Responsibilities in relation to plenary sittings

- 1- The President of the Assembly shall possess the following responsibilities in relation to plenary sittings:
- a) To chair plenary sittings, declare them open, adjourned and closed and direct their proceedings;
 - b) To give Members and members of the Government the floor and ensure that debates proceed in an orderly fashion;
 - c) To notify the Assembly in good time of such messages, information, explanations and invitations as are addressed to it;
 - d) To put such bills, drafts, proposals, motions and requests as are admitted to discussion and the vote.
- 2- The President of the Assembly may ask for clarifications and take the initiative of giving Members the floor, whenever necessary to the proper conduct of the proceedings.
- 3- The President of the Assembly's rulings during plenary sittings shall always be subject to complaint, as well as to appeal to the Plenary.

Article 18
Responsibilities in relation to Members

The President of the Assembly shall possess the following responsibilities in relation to Members:

- a) To rule on justifications presented by Members who fail to attend plenary sittings, in accordance with Article 3;
- b) To rule on requests for temporary substitution, in accordance with the Statute of Members;
- c) To receive resignations and have them published;
- d) To take steps to ensure that the competent parliamentary committee verifies Members' credentials;
- e) To follow up motions, requests and questions that Members submit, in accordance with Article 4.
- f) To authorise official trips.

Article 19
Responsibilities in relation to other bodies

The President of the Assembly shall possess the following responsibilities in relation to other bodies:

- a) To send decrees of the Assembly of the Republic to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 134b of the Constitution;
- b) Following their passage, to send international treaties to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 135b of the Constitution;
- c) For the purposes of Article 195 of the Constitution, to notify the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of the results of votes on motions rejecting the

Government's Programme, and on motions of confidence or no confidence in the Government;

- d) By agreement with the Government, to schedule the plenary sittings at which members of the Government shall be present to reply to Members' questions and enquiries;
- e) To sign documents sent in the Assembly's name;
- f) To head Assembly deputations to which he himself belongs.

Division III

Conference of Leaders

Article 20

Proceedings of the Conference of Leaders

- 1- Whenever he deems it necessary for the smooth running of the Assembly, the President of the Assembly shall meet the parliamentary group chairmen or their substitutes, in order to consider the matters provided for by Article 16(1)b and elsewhere in these Rules of Procedure.
- 2- The Government shall possess the right to be represented at the Conference of Leaders and may intervene in matters that do not solely concern the Assembly itself.
- 3- Each parliamentary group representative shall have the same number of votes at the Conference of Leaders as the number of Members he represents.
- 4- In the absence of a consensus, the Conference of Leaders shall take decisions by majority, subject to the presence of representatives of an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.

Division IV
Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen

Article 21

Proceedings of the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen

- 1- The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall meet regularly in order to supervise the functional aspects of the various parliamentary committees' activities, as well as to consider the general conditions under which the legislative process is proceeding and whether laws are being duly implemented.
- 2- The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall be chaired by the President of the Assembly, who may delegate this responsibility.
- 3- The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall especially be responsible for:
 - a) Participating in the coordination of the parliamentary committees' functional organisation and technical backup;
 - b) From the perspective of a proper drafting of laws and the efficiency of the Assembly's proceedings, considering the general conditions under which the legislative process is proceeding;
 - c) Taking steps to ensure the drawing up at the commencement of each legislative session of a progress report on the passage of laws and the approval of the consequent regulations and their entry into force, including compliance with the applicable time limits;
 - d) In relation to laws that have been passed, determining which shall be the object of a qualitative analysis of their contents, the resources allocated to their implementation, and their practical effects.
- 4- Without prejudice to the previous paragraph, parliamentary committees may ask the Member who is acting as rapporteur, or if it is impossible for him to do so, any Member

on the parliamentary committee, for a report on the qualitative monitoring of the regulation and implementation of given legislation.

Section II

The Bureau of the Assembly

Article 22

Composition of the Bureau of the Assembly

- 1- The President of the Assembly and the Vice-Presidents shall together constitute the Presidency of the Assembly.
- 2- The Bureau of the Assembly shall comprise the President of the Assembly, four Vice-Presidents, four Secretaries and four Vice-Secretaries.
- 3- At plenary sittings the Bureau shall be constituted by the President of the Assembly and the Secretaries.
- 4- In the event that both the President of the Assembly and his substitute under the terms of Article 15 are absent, sittings shall be chaired by the other Vice-Presidents on a rotating basis, or, in the event of their absence, by the oldest Member.
- 5- When absent, the Secretaries shall be substituted by the Vice-Secretaries.
- 6- When absent, the Vice-Secretaries shall be substituted by such Members as the President of the Assembly nominates.

Article 23

Election of the Bureau of the Assembly

- 1- The Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries shall be elected by ballot for complete nominative lists.
- 2- Each of the four largest parliamentary groups shall propose one Vice-President and, when it has one tenth or more of all the Members, at least one Secretary and one Vice-Secretary.
- 3- Candidates who obtain an absolute majority of the votes of all the Members in full exercise of their office shall be deemed elected.
- 4- If any candidate is not elected, a further ballot for his place on the list shall immediately be held at the same sitting, until the situation described in the following paragraph is achieved.
- 5- Once the President and half the remaining officers of the Bureau have been elected, the quorum required for the Bureau to perform its functions shall be deemed to have been reached.
- 6- Once the sitting has ended, even if the vacancies have not all been filled, but provided that it already includes the Vice-Presidents, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of the Bureau's composition.
- 7- The Bureau shall remain in office until the commencement of the next legislature.

Article 24

Term of office

- 1- The Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries shall be elected for each legislature.

- 2- Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries may resign their office by making a written statement to the Assembly. Such resignations shall take effect forthwith, without prejudice to their subsequent publication in the *Journal*.
- 3- In the event that an officer of the Bureau resigns, his office falls vacant, or his mandate as a Member is suspended, a new officer shall be elected by the fifth sitting of the Assembly thereafter, in accordance with the rules laid down by paragraph (4) of the previous Article.

Article 25

General responsibilities of the Bureau

- 1- The Bureau shall be responsible for:
 - a) Declaring that a Member has lost his mandate, in accordance with Article 3;
 - b) Ensuring that the secretarial services function fully and effectively;
 - c) Establishing the regulations for entry to and use of the public galleries;
 - d) In general, assisting the President of the Assembly in the performance of his functions.
- 2- The Bureau may delegate the oversight of the secretarial services to one of the Secretaries.

Article 26

The Bureau of the Assembly's responsibilities in relation to plenary sittings

- 1- The Bureau shall possess the following responsibilities in relation to plenary sittings:
 - a) Incorporating oral and written initiatives submitted by Members, parliamentary groups and the Government into the forms provided for by these Rules of Procedure;
 - b) Ruling on questions concerning the interpretation and construction of these Rules of Procedure;
 - c) Considering and ruling on complaints concerning the *Journal*.
- 2- The Bureau's rulings shall be subject to complaint and appeal to the Plenary.

Article 27

Vice-Presidents

The Vice-Presidents shall be responsible for:

- a) Advising the President of the Assembly in the performance of his functions;
- b) Substituting for the President of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 15;
- c) Exercising such powers and responsibilities as the President of the Assembly delegates to them;
- d) Acting as deputy chairman of the Standing Committee;
- e) Representing the Assembly in such ways as the President of the Assembly charges them with.

Article 28
Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries

- 1- The Secretaries shall be responsible for the Bureau's day-to-day work, particularly:
 - a) Verifying who is present at plenary sittings, verifying the quorum at any time and recording votes;
 - b) Establishing the order of the items that are to be put to the vote;
 - c) Organising the register of Members and members of the Government who wish to speak;
 - d) Reading out required texts during plenary sittings;
 - e) Taking steps to ensure the publication of the *Journal*;
 - f) When so delegated by the President of the Assembly, signing correspondence sent in the name of the Assembly.
- 2- The Vice-Secretaries shall be responsible for:
 - a) Substituting the Secretaries when they are absent or unable to perform their functions;
 - b) Serving as tellers during votes.

Chapter II
Parliamentary committees

Section I
General provisions

Article 29
Composition of parliamentary committees

- 1- The composition of parliamentary committees shall be proportional to each parliamentary group's share of the seats in the Assembly.
- 2- Parliamentary committee chairmanships shall be distributed as a whole among the parliamentary groups in proportion to the number of Members in each group.
- 3- For the purposes of the previous paragraph and without prejudice to the principle of proportionality, parliamentary groups shall choose their chairmanships in order of priority, commencing with the parliamentary group with the largest share of the seats in the Assembly.
- 4- The Assembly shall decide the number of members of each parliamentary committee and the distribution of seats among the different parliamentary groups upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.
- 5- The decision referred to by the previous paragraph shall mention which unregistered Members and Members who are sole representatives of a political party are to be members of parliamentary committees.
- 6- Exceptionally, in the light of their nature, parliamentary committees may possess a mixed composition with permanent and non-permanent members depending on the items on their orders of business. Such composition shall comply with the following:

- a) Permanent seats shall be distributed in accordance with the principle of representation in accordance with each parliamentary group's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly;
- b) Each parliamentary standing committee shall appoint and mandate its non-permanent members, who shall enjoy all the rights of the permanent members, save only the right to vote.

Article 30

Appointment of parliamentary committee members

- 1- The power to appoint Members to sit on parliamentary committees shall lie with their parliamentary groups, which shall exercise it within the time limit set by the President of the Assembly.
- 2- If any parliamentary group does not wish or is unable to appoint such representatives, the vacancies in question shall not be filled by Members from other parliamentary groups.
- 3- Each Member may only be an effective member of one parliamentary standing committee and a substitute member of another.
- 4- Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, a Member may be appointed as an effective member or a substitute member of:
 - a) Up to three parliamentary standing committees if, due to the number of Members who belong to it, his parliamentary group cannot have representatives on all the parliamentary committees;
 - b) Up to two parliamentary standing committees, if this should prove necessary in order to ensure compliance with paragraph (1) of the previous Article.
- 5- Substitute members shall enjoy all the rights of effective members, save that they shall only possess the right to vote if they are substituting for an effective member.

- 6- In the event that their substitute member is absent or unable to perform his functions, effective members may occasionally have themselves substituted by other Members from the same parliamentary group.
- 7- Unregistered Members shall indicate their options as to which parliamentary committees they wish to join, and after first consulting the Conference of Leaders and wherever possible in compliance with the said options, the President of the Assembly shall designate the parliamentary committee or committees to which each such Member shall belong.

Article 31

Performance of functions

- 1- Members shall be appointed to parliamentary standing committees for the duration of each legislature.
- 2- A Member shall cease to be a member of a parliamentary committee:
 - a) If he ceases to belong to the parliamentary group that nominated him;
 - b) If he so requests;
 - c) Whenever his parliamentary group replaces him on the parliamentary committee in question;
 - d) If he fails to attend four meetings of the parliamentary committee in question in a given legislative session, save when such failures are duly justified.
- 3- The chairmen of parliamentary committees shall be responsible for justifying the failures to attend of their effective members, in accordance with Article 3(2).
- 4- On the basis of such information as they possess, the parliamentary committee support services shall note on the attendance sheets any effective committee members who are absent from a meeting because they are engaged in parliamentary work provided for by Article 53, and such absences shall not be deemed failures to attend.

Article 32

Parliamentary committee officers

- 1- The officers of each parliamentary committee shall comprise a chairman and two or more deputy chairmen.
- 2- The officers shall be elected at the parliamentary committee's first meeting, which shall be convened and chaired by the President of the Assembly, and at which each Member shall have one vote.
- 3- The President of the Assembly shall take the steps needed to ensure that the provisions of Article 29(2) are complied with.
- 4- Each parliamentary committee shall notify the President of the Assembly of the composition of its officers, whereupon he shall cause it to be published in the *Journal*.

Article 33

Subcommittees and working groups

- 1- Each parliamentary committee may form subcommittees and working groups.
- 2- The formation of subcommittees shall be subject to prior authorisation by the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen.
- 3- The parliamentary committees in question shall be responsible for defining the composition and scope of their subcommittees and working groups.
- 4- The chairmanships of all the subcommittees shall be divided up between the parliamentary groups in accordance with Article 29(2). The choice of each chairmanship shall be guided by the principle of alternation, both between subcommittee chairmanships and in relation to the chairmanship of the parliamentary committee in question.
- 5- Subcommittees shall report their findings to their parliamentary committee.

- 6- For the purpose of publication in the *Journal*, each parliamentary committee chairman shall notify the President of the Assembly of the name of any subcommittee that the parliamentary committee forms and of the names of the subcommittee's chairman and members.

Section II

Standing and ad hoc parliamentary committees

Division I

Standing parliamentary committees

Article 34

List of standing parliamentary committees

- 1- At the commencement of each legislature, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall decide the list of parliamentary standing committees and the specific responsibilities of each one, without prejudice to any allocation of specific responsibilities to parliamentary committees by law.
- 2- Exceptionally, when such alterations are justified, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, or from a parliamentary group, the Plenary shall decide whether to alter the list of parliamentary standing committees or the division of responsibilities between them.

Article 35

Responsibilities of parliamentary standing committees

The parliamentary standing committees shall be responsible for:

- a) Considering bills, draft amendments, treaties and agreements which are submitted to the Assembly, and producing the appropriate formal opinions;
- b) Considering presentations of legislative initiatives, in accordance with Article 132;
- c) Voting on the details of texts that the Plenary has passed on the general principles, as provided for and within the limits laid down by Article 168 of the Constitution and by these Rules of Procedure;
- d) Under the terms of the Constitution and the law and without prejudice to the powers of the Plenary, monitoring, considering and pronouncing on Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union, and drawing up reports on the information referred to by Article 197(1)i of the Constitution;
- e) Considering petitions addressed to the Assembly;
- f) Informing themselves about political and administrative problems which fall within the scope of their responsibilities and, when the Assembly so deems fit, providing it with the elements needed to consider the acts of the Government and the Public Administration;
- g) Verifying that the Government and the Public Administration have complied with the Assembly's laws and resolutions, in which respect parliamentary standing committees may also suggest to the Assembly such measures as they deem appropriate;
- h) Proposing to the President of the Assembly that the Plenary debate topics which fall within the scope of the responsibilities of the parliamentary committee in question, so that the Conference of Leaders can then decide each issue's timeliness and interest;
- i) Drawing up reports on matters that fall within the scope of their responsibilities;

- j) Drafting and passing their own regulations;
- l) Considering questions concerning mandates and these Rules of Procedure.

Article 36

Articulation between parliamentary committees, parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups

The parliamentary committees with responsibility for the matter in question shall ensure articulation with parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups, particularly by:

- a) Periodically taking steps to ensure the holding of joint meetings;
- b) Considering those parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups' orders of business and reports in a timely manner;
- c) Promoting participation in their own meetings and specific activities.

Division II

Ad hoc parliamentary committees

Article 37

Formation of ad hoc parliamentary committees

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic may form ad hoc parliamentary committees for any given purpose.
- 2- Save only committees of inquiry, ad hoc parliamentary committees may be formed on the initiative of at least ten Members or any parliamentary group.

Article 38

Responsibilities of ad hoc parliamentary committees

Ad hoc parliamentary committees shall be responsible for considering the matters for which they were formed and shall submit their reports within the time limits set by the Assembly.

Chapter III

The Standing Committee

Article 39

Sessions of the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee of the Assembly of the Republic shall function during periods when the Assembly of the Republic is not in full session or has been dissolved, and in the other cases laid down by the Constitution.

Article 40

Composition of the Standing Committee

- 1- The Standing Committee shall be chaired by the President of the Assembly and shall also comprise the Vice-Presidents and Members appointed by all the parliamentary groups, in accordance with the latter's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly.
- 2- The rules laid down by Articles 29, 30 and 31 shall apply to the Standing Committee.

Article 41
Responsibilities of the Standing Committee

- 1- The Standing Committee shall be responsible for:
 - a) Monitoring the activities of the Government and the Public Administration;
 - b) Without prejudice to the specific powers of the President of the Assembly and the competent parliamentary committee, exercising the Assembly's powers in relation to Members' mandates;
 - c) Taking steps to call the Assembly whenever necessary;
 - d) Preparing the opening of legislative sessions;
 - e) Consenting to the President of the Republic's absence from the country;
 - f) Authorising the President of the Republic to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency, declare war or make peace;
 - g) If necessary to the pursuit of their work, authorising parliamentary committees to proceed while the legislative session is adjourned;
 - h) Ruling on complaints concerning inaccuracies in the texts of the final wording of the Assembly's decrees and resolutions;
 - i) Appointing parliamentary delegations;
 - j) Drawing up its own regulations.
- 2- In the case provided for by subparagraph f) of the previous paragraph, the Standing Committee shall take steps to call the Assembly as soon as possible, using any means of communication that enables the call to be made known and published effectively.

Chapter IV
Assembly of the Republic delegations

Article 42
Parliamentary delegations

- 1- Parliamentary delegations may be standing or ad hoc delegations.
- 2- Assembly of the Republic delegations shall observe the principles laid down by Articles 29 and 30.
- 3- When delegations cannot include representatives of all the parliamentary groups, their composition shall be determined by the Conference of Leaders, or, if the latter fails to reach agreement, by the Plenary.
- 4- When their mission is complete or, in the case of standing delegations, at the end of each legislative session, Assembly of the Republic delegations shall draw up reports containing the information needed to consider their purposes, which shall be sent to the President of the Assembly and, if he so deems fit, be presented in Plenary. Such reports shall in any case be distributed to the parliamentary committees with responsibility for the matter in question and published in the *Journal*.
- 5- Whenever the case so warrants, standing delegations shall draw up a report addressed to the President of the Assembly.

Chapter V
Parliamentary friendship groups

Article 43
Notion and object

- 1- Parliamentary friendship groups shall be Assembly of the Republic bodies whose vocation is to engage in dialogue and cooperation with the Parliaments of countries that are friends of Portugal.
- 2- Parliamentary friendship groups shall promote the actions needed to intensify relations with the Parliaments and parliamentarians of other states, particularly:
 - a) The general exchange of knowledge and experiences;
 - b) The study of bilateral relations and their place within the alliances and institutions in which both states participate;
 - c) The publicising and promotion of common interests and objectives in the political, economic, social and cultural fields;
 - d) The exchange of information and mutual consultations with a view to the possibility of articulating positions in international bodies of an interparliamentary nature, without prejudice to the full autonomy of each national group;
 - e) Joint reflection on problems that involve the two states and their nationals, and the search for solutions that entail each state's legislative competency;
 - f) The attachment of increased value to the historical and current role of any emigrant communities from the two states.

Article 44

Composition of parliamentary friendship groups

- 1- The composition of parliamentary friendship groups shall reflect the composition of the Assembly.
- 2- Their chairmanships and deputy chairmanships shall be considered as a whole and divided between the various parliamentary groups in proportion to the number of Members in each group.
- 3- For the purposes of the previous paragraph and without prejudice to the principle of proportionality, parliamentary groups shall choose their chairmanships in order of priority, commencing with the largest parliamentary group.
- 4- The Assembly shall decide the number of members of each parliamentary friendship group and the distribution of seats among the different parliamentary groups upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.
- 5- The decision referred to in the previous paragraph shall mention which unregistered Members and Members who are sole representatives of a political party are to be members of parliamentary friendship groups.
- 6- The power to appoint Members to belong to parliamentary friendship groups shall lie with their parliamentary groups, which shall exercise it within the time limit set by the President of the Assembly.

Article 45

List of parliamentary friendship groups

- 1- The Plenary shall decide the list of parliamentary friendship groups at the commencement of each legislature, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.
- 2- Whenever the case so warrants, and again upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall decide whether to create other parliamentary friendship groups.

Article 46

Powers of parliamentary friendship groups

Parliamentary friendship groups may in particular:

- a) Hold meetings with their counterpart groups, on a basis of exchange and reciprocity;
- b) Engage in relations with other persons and bodies that seek to bring states and their respective peoples closer together, by supporting initiatives and undertaking joint actions or other forms of cooperation;
- c) Invite members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organisations, experts and other persons and bodies whose contribution they consider important to the pursuit of their purposes to participate in their meetings or in the activities that they promote or support.

Article 47

General provisions concerning parliamentary friendship groups

The Assembly shall define the remaining matters concerning parliamentary friendship groups by resolution, particularly as regards their organisation, proceedings and support, as well as their programmes, budgets and activity reports.

Title III

Proceedings

Chapter I

General rules governing proceedings

Article 48

Seat of the Assembly

- 1- The Seat of the Assembly of the Republic shall be in Lisbon, at Sao Bento Palace.
- 2- When so required for practical reasons, the Assembly's work may be conducted at another location.

Article 49

Legislative sessions and normal parliamentary term

- 1- Legislative sessions shall last for one year commencing on 15 September.
- 2- Without prejudice to suspensions decided by a two-thirds majority of the Members present, the Assembly of the Republic's normal parliamentary term shall run from 15 September to 15 June.

- 3- Before the end of each legislative session, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall approve the schedule of parliamentary activities for the following legislative session.
- 4- In the event provided for by Article 171(2) of the Constitution, the potestative rights established by these Rules of Procedure shall be added to in proportion to the duration of the period in question, save only as regards the provisions concerning calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly.

Article 50

Extraordinary parliamentary committee meetings

- 1- Any parliamentary committee may function outside the normal parliamentary term and while the Assembly is adjourned, if this is indispensable to the pursuit of its work and, with the consent of the majority of the members of the parliamentary committee in question, the Assembly so decides.
- 2- In order to prepare the work of the forthcoming parliamentary term, the President of the Assembly may take steps to convene any parliamentary committee for the fifteen days prior to the commencement thereof.
- 3- The provisions of paragraph (1) above shall not apply to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for pronouncing on matters concerning the verification of Members' credentials, loss of seat or immunity, under the terms of these Rules of Procedure or the Statute of Members.

Article 51

Calling the Assembly outside the normal parliamentary term

- 1- Following a Plenary decision to extend the normal parliamentary term, or on the initiative of the Standing Committee, or, in the event that the said Committee is unable to function and there is a dire emergency, on the initiative of more than half of all the Members, the Assembly of the Republic may conduct proceedings outside the term laid down by Article 49(2).
- 2- In the event that the Assembly is called on the initiative of more than half the Members, the said call shall be publicised by the appropriate means of communication.
- 3- The President of the Republic may also call the Assembly on an extraordinary basis in order to address specific matters.

Article 52

Adjournment of plenary sittings

- 1- At any time during a full session the Assembly may order the adjournment of its plenary sittings in order for parliamentary committees to conduct their business.
- 2- Such adjournments shall last for no more than ten days.

Article 53

Parliamentary proceedings

- 1- Sittings of the Plenary and meetings of the Standing Committee of the Assembly, parliamentary committees, subcommittees, working parties formed under the aegis of parliamentary committees, parliamentary groups, the Conference of Leaders, the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen and parliamentary delegations shall be deemed parliamentary proceedings.

- 2- The following shall likewise be deemed parliamentary proceedings:
 - a) Participation by Members in meetings of international organisations;
 - b) Parliamentary seminars organised by parliamentary groups;
 - c) Other meetings convened by the President of the Assembly;
 - d) Parliamentary group meetings to prepare the legislature that are held between the elections to, and the first sitting of, the Assembly.
- 3- Parliamentary group proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with each group's regulations, which shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 54

Parliamentary days

- 1- The Assembly shall function on every working day.
- 2- Exceptionally, the Assembly shall also function on any day required by the Constitution or these Rules of Procedure, or when it so decides itself.
- 3- When any time limit expires on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, it shall be transferred to the following parliamentary day.

Article 55

Convening sittings and meetings

- 1- Save only if they are scheduled at the previous sitting, plenary sittings shall be convened by the President of the Assembly, who shall give at least twenty-four hours' prior notice thereof.
- 2- Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings shall obligatorily be convened in writing and in such a way as to ensure that Members know of them at least twenty-four hours in advance.

- 3- Members who were absent from the previous sitting or meeting or are not present when a sitting or meeting is convened orally, shall obligatorily be summoned in writing under all circumstances.

Article 56

Failures to attend plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings

- 1- Members who fail to attend a plenary sitting or a parliamentary committee meeting shall be notified of such failure on the next working day.
- 2- Failures to attend plenary sittings shall be published on the Assembly of the Republic's website, together with the nature of the applicable justification, if any.

Article 57

Organisation and functioning of parliamentary proceedings

- 1- Parliamentary proceedings shall be organised in such a way as to reserve specific periods for plenary sittings, for parliamentary committee and parliamentary group meetings, and for Members to spend on constituency business.
- 2- At the request of the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly may organise parliamentary proceedings in such a way as to enable Members to conduct political work with their constituents for periods of up to one week, particularly during election processes, for the publicising and public discussion of matters of special importance.
- 3- When asked to do so by any parliamentary group, the President may also adjourn the Assembly's proceedings to enable the group to hold its parliamentary seminars or party conferences.
- 4- Plenary sittings shall take place on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings.

- 5- Plenary sittings shall commence at ten a.m. if they take place in the morning, and at three p.m. if they take place in the afternoon.
- 6- Parliamentary committee meetings shall take place on Tuesdays and on Wednesday mornings and, when necessary, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons once the plenary sitting has ended.
- 7- When convenient for their work and subject to authorisation by the President of the Assembly, parliamentary committees may meet anywhere in Portugal, as well as on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.
- 8- Mondays shall be for Members to conduct constituency business.
- 9- Thursday mornings shall be reserved for parliamentary group meetings.
- 10- After first consulting the Conference of Leaders and without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph (4) above, the President of the Assembly may organise parliamentary proceedings in such a way as to concentrate two days of Members' constituency business into one week, and three days of parliamentary committee meetings and other parliamentary committee activities into the following week.
- 11- The Assembly or the Conference of Leaders may exceptionally decide to schedule more than one meeting for the same day, as well as plenary sittings on days and at times other than those referred to in paragraphs (4) and (5) above.

Article 58

Quorum

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic shall only sit in plenary when at least one fifth of all the Members in full exercise of their office are present.
- 2- The Plenary shall only take decisions when more than half of all the Members in full exercise of their office are present.
- 3- Once the President of the Assembly has ordered that the quorum for sitting or for taking decisions be verified, the Members shall be summoned to meet in Plenary. In the event that there is no quorum, those Members who are not present shall be noted for the purposes provided for by the general rules governing failures to attend, whereupon the sitting shall immediately be declared closed.
- 4- In the case provided for by the previous paragraph, unfinished business shall be added to the order of business for the next day of the ordinary session, on which it shall take precedence, albeit without prejudice to the priorities referred to by Articles 62 and 63, or to parliamentary groups' rights to set the order of business.
- 5- Parliamentary committees shall only proceed and decide in the presence of more than half of all their members in full exercise of their office. The remaining rules governing their proceedings shall be laid down by their own regulations.

Chapter II
Organisation of proceedings and order of business

Article 59
Setting the order of business

- 1- The President of the Assembly shall set the order of business at least fifteen days in advance, in accordance with the priorities laid down by these Rules of Procedure.
- 2- Before setting the order of business, the President of the Assembly shall consult the Conference of Leaders on an indicative basis. If the Conference of Leaders fails to reach a consensus, it shall take its decision in accordance with Article 20(3) and (4).
- 3- The President of the Assembly's rulings in relation to the setting of the order of business shall be subject to appeal to the Plenary, which shall then issue a definitive decision.
- 4- Appeals against the President of the Assembly's rulings in relation to the setting of the order of business shall be put to the vote without prior debate. However, the appellant may address the Plenary on the grounds for his appeal for a maximum of two minutes.

Article 60
Publicising the order of business

The President of the Assembly shall cause orders of business to be publicised within twenty-four hours of their being set.

Article 61

Ensuring the stability of the order of business

- 1- The order of business shall not be set aside or interrupted, save only in the cases expressly provided for by these Rules of Procedure, or by decision of the Plenary with no votes against.
- 2- The Plenary may decide to alter the sequence of items set for each sitting.

Article 62

Prioritisation of items when setting the order of business

- 1- When setting the order of business, the President of the Assembly shall comply with the priorities and precedences laid down by the following paragraphs.
- 2- The following items shall possess absolute priority:
 - a) Authorisation for the President of the Republic to declare war or make peace;
 - b) Authorisation or confirmation of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency, in accordance with Article 161l of the Constitution, and consideration of the manner in which such a declaration has been applied, pursuant to Article 162b of the Constitution;
 - c) Consideration of the Government's Programme;
 - d) Votes on motions of confidence or no confidence in the Government;
 - e) Passage of laws containing the Major Options of National Plans or the State Budget;
 - f) General policy debates caused by calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly, pursuant to Article 180(2)d of the Constitution.
- 3- The following items shall possess special priority:
 - a) Reconsideration in the event of a veto by the President of the Republic, in the cases provided for by Article 136 of the Constitution;

- b) Passage of laws and treaties on matters on which the Assembly of the Republic possesses sole responsibility to legislate;
 - c) Consideration of Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union;
 - d) Authorisation for the Government to contract and grant loans and engage in other lending operations, other than floating debt operations, and to set the upper limit for guarantees to be given by the Government in any given year;
 - e) Consideration of the accounts of the state and of such other public bodies as the law may require;
 - f) Consideration of executive laws passed under legislative authorisation;
 - g) Debates and votes on the political and administrative statutes of autonomous regions;
 - h) The grant of amnesties and general pardons;
 - i) Passage of laws and treaties on matters on which the Assembly of the Republic has special but non-exclusive rights to legislate;
 - j) Consideration of annual and final execution reports on National Plans;
 - l) Consideration of executive laws;
 - m) Passage of laws and treaties on other matters.
- 4- Legislative initiatives shall be incorporated into the order of business in the order determined by the date and time of the issue of the applicable formal opinion or, in cases in which no such formal opinion exists, of their admission, with due consideration to the proportional share of the seats in the Assembly held by each parliamentary group and the principle of alternation.
- 5- For other items, the order of business shall be set in the order determined by the date and time of the issue of the applicable formal opinion or, when no such formal opinion exists, of their submission.
- 6- The President of the Assembly shall also include consideration of the following items on the order of business:

- a) Decisions on Members' mandates;
- b) Appeals against his own rulings;
- c) Supplemental elections to the Bureau;
- d) The formation of parliamentary committees and delegations;
- e) Communications from parliamentary committees;
- f) Appeals against rulings on complaints under the terms of Article 157, and against the choice of the competent parliamentary committee under the terms of Article 130;
- g) Inquiries, under the terms of Articles 233 and 236;
- h) Consent to the President of the Republic's absence from the country;
- i) Appointments to offices outside the Assembly;
- j) Amendments to these Rules of Procedure.

Article 63

Priority at the request of the Government or parliamentary groups

- 1- The Government and parliamentary groups may request that priority be given to matters of national interest which require urgent resolution.
- 2- After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall decide whether to assign priority to such matters. Parliamentary groups and the Government may appeal such rulings to the Plenary.
- 3- Priority requested by the Government or parliamentary groups shall not be granted with prejudice to the provisions of paragraph (2) of the previous Article.

Article 64

Right of parliamentary groups to set the order of business

- 1- In each legislative session, parliamentary groups shall possess the right to set the order of business of plenary sittings in accordance with the table of potestative rights set out in Annexe II.
- 2- Members who are sole representatives of a political party shall possess the right to set the order of business for one plenary sitting in each legislature.
- 3- Each of the sittings provided for by the previous paragraphs may entail:
 - a) One legislative initiative, without prejudice to the Conference's ability, with the agreement of the holder of the right to set the order of business, to schedule other, related initiatives from the same or any other parliamentary group for the same sitting; or
 - b) A political debate, in which the Government shall possess the right to participate.
- 4- When an order of business that is set in accordance with the provisions of the present Article is based on a legislative initiative, the time limit laid down by Article 136 shall not apply and the legislative initiative's proposer may opt to present it to the Plenary.
- 5- Holders of the right provided for by this Article shall notify the President of the Assembly, at the Conference of Leaders, by the fifteenth of the month, of their intention to exercise it, whereupon it shall take effect in the following month under the terms of Article 59.
- 6- Proposers of the schedulings referred to by subparagraph a) of paragraph (3) above shall possess the right to move a vote on the general principles on the day of the order of business itself.
- 7- In the event provided for by the previous paragraph, if the general principles of the bill are passed, the parliamentary group or Member that proposed it shall possess the right to secure a vote on the details and a final overall vote within thirty days.

Chapter III
Plenary sittings

Section I
Sittings

Article 65
Plenary sittings

- 1- Parliamentary committee meetings shall not take place during plenary sittings, save only exceptional authorisation by the President of the Assembly.
- 2- Whenever parliamentary committee meetings do take place at the same time as a plenary sitting, the President of the Assembly shall publicly announce the fact to the Plenary and shall obligatorily cause the parliamentary committee proceedings to be interrupted in order to enable the Members in question to exercise their right to vote in Plenary.

Article 66
Seating arrangements

- 1- Members shall take their places in the chamber in the manner agreed by the President of the Assembly and the representatives of the parliamentary groups.
- 2- If no such agreement is reached, the Assembly shall decide the matter.
- 3- Seats shall be reserved in the chamber for the members of the Government.

Article 67
Roll call of Members

Members' presence at plenary sittings shall be recorded, and such recording shall obligatorily be done in person.

Article 68
Prohibition of unauthorised persons

The presence of persons without a seat in the Assembly or who are not on duty shall not be permitted when sittings are in progress.

Article 69
Continuous sittings

- 1- Sittings shall only be adjourned in the following cases:
 - a) By decision of the Plenary, at the motion of a parliamentary group;
 - b) By ruling of the President of the Assembly, in order to obviate the absence of a quorum, whereupon a further count shall be made when the President so decides;
 - c) By ruling of the President of the Assembly, in order to ensure that business proceeds smoothly.
- 2- If decided upon, adjournments of the type referred to by subparagraph a) of the previous paragraph shall not exceed thirty minutes.

Article 70

Day-to-day business and information

Once a sitting has been opened, the Bureau shall:

- a) Mention or read out any complaint that any Member or member of the Government with an interest in the matter has submitted in relation to omissions or inaccuracies in the *Journal*;
- b) Mention any bills, draft resolutions and motions that are in the Bureau's possession;
- c) Notify the Plenary of the President of the Assembly and the Bureau's rulings, as well as of any fact or situation that these Rules of Procedure require to be announced, or is of interest to the Assembly.

Article 71

Political statements

- 1- Each week, each parliamentary group shall possess the right to make one political statement with a maximum duration of six minutes.
- 2- Each legislative session, each Member who is a political party's sole representative shall possess the right to make three political statements, and each unregistered Member shall possess the right to make two political statements.
- 3- Parliamentary groups, unregistered members and Members who are political parties' sole representatives, who wish to exercise the right laid down by the previous paragraphs shall notify the Bureau accordingly by the commencement of the sitting in question.
- 4- In the event of any conflict in the order of such registrations, the Bureau shall ensure a weekly balance between the times for which the various parliamentary groups are given the floor.

- 5- Political statements shall be made immediately after the day-to-day business, save only in the cases provided for by Article 72(2).
- 6- Each parliamentary group shall have two minutes in which to request clarifications from the speaker, and the latter shall have the same amount of time in which to give explanations.

Article 72

Debates on current affairs

- 1- At the potestative request of a parliamentary group, once every fifteen days the Plenary may hold a debate on current affairs.
- 2- Debates on current affairs shall be held immediately after the day-to-day business, without prejudice to the existence of political statements by parliamentary groups.
- 3- In each legislative session, each parliamentary group may potestatively request the holding of debates on current affairs in accordance with the table of potestative rights set out in Annexe II.
- 4- The parliamentary group shall set the topic for debate and shall notify the President of the Assembly thereof by eleven a.m. in the event that the plenary meeting is to take place in the afternoon, or by six p.m. the day before in the event that it is to take place in the morning.
- 5- The President of the Assembly shall immediately notify the remaining parliamentary groups and the Government of the topic.
- 6- The Government shall obligatorily cause one of its members to represent it in the debate.
- 7- The debate shall be opened by the parliamentary group which set its topic, by means of a speech with a maximum duration of six minutes.
- 8- There shall then follow a period of requests for clarification and of debate, in which any Member and the Government may speak.

- 9- Each parliamentary group shall possess the right to speak for a total of five minutes in the debate and the Government for six minutes.
- 10- In addition to the potestative right referred to by paragraph (1) above, debates on current affairs may also be held at the joint initiative of three parliamentary groups in exchange for their weekly political statements, whereupon the presence of the Government shall not be obligatory.
- 11- In the form referred to by the previous paragraph, the debate shall commence with speeches from the parliamentary groups that requested it, in the order indicated by them, to be followed by the debate itself.

Article 73

Thematic debates

- 1- The President of the Assembly, parliamentary committees, parliamentary groups or the Government may propose the holding of a debate on a specific topic to the Conference of Leaders.
- 2- The dates on which such debates are held shall be set at least fifteen days in advance.
- 3- When such a debate is held as the result of a legal provision, within ten days the Assembly shall decide when to hold or schedule it.
- 4- The Government shall have the option whether to participate in such debates or not.
- 5- Prior to each debate, its proposer shall supply the Members, the parliamentary groups and the Government with a document that provides a framework for the debate, as well as other pertinent documentation concerning it.
- 6- When the initiative is taken by the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question, the committee shall consider the subject for debate and draw up a report which, where appropriate, shall contain the following elements:
 - a) A justification of the reasons for the debate and its timeliness;
 - b) The facts and situations that concern it;

- c) The legal and legal-theoretical framework for the topic of the debate;
- d) Conclusions.

Article 74
Emergency debates

- 1- Parliamentary groups and the Government may submit duly substantiated requests for the holding of emergency debates to the President of the Assembly.
- 2- Emergency debates shall be subject to consideration and approval by the first meeting of the Conference of Parliamentary Group Representatives following the request.
- 3- In the absence of a consensus on the scheduling of the date on which to hold the emergency debate, it shall be held at a plenary sitting during the week in which the Conference of Leaders approves it.
- 4- The debate shall be organised in two rounds, in such a way as to permit additional requests for clarification.
- 5- During each legislative session, each parliamentary group shall possess the right to schedule emergency debates in accordance with the table of potestative rights set out in Annexe II.
- 6- In cases in which a debate results from the exercise of the right referred to by the previous paragraph, the parliamentary group which proposed the debate shall also close it.

Article 75
Special votes

- 1- Members, parliamentary groups or the Bureau may propose votes of congratulation, protest, condemnation, greeting or condolence.
- 2- Members who wish to propose such a vote shall notify the Bureau of their intention by the commencement of the sitting in question.
- 3- As a rule, the discussion and vote shall take place at the commencement of each regulation voting period, and each parliamentary group shall possess the right to speak for two minutes.
- 4- In the event of more than one vote on different matters, each parliamentary group's time may be extended to four minutes and broken down in accordance with the way in which the group's presentation is organised.
- 5- In cases in which a vote has not been distributed at a previous plenary sitting, a minimum of ten Members or any parliamentary group may move that discussion and voting be adjourned until the next regulation voting period.

Section II
Speaking

Article 76
Members

- 1- Members shall be given the floor in order to:
 - a) Make political statements;
 - b) Present Members' bills, draft resolutions and draft decisions;
 - c) Exercise the right of defence in the cases provided for by Articles 2 and 3;
 - d) Participate in debates;
 - e) Question the Government on any of its acts or those of the Public Administration;
 - f) Make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions;
 - g) Make motions or requests;
 - h) Make or reply to requests for clarification;
 - i) React to offences to honour or due consideration or offer explanations in accordance with Article 84;
 - j) Lodge appeals;
 - l) Make protests or counter-protests;
 - m) Give explanations of vote.
- 2- Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, in each legislative session each Member shall possess the right to speak once for a maximum of ten minutes, which shall not be included in the time allotted to his parliamentary group.
- 3- The speeches referred to by the previous paragraph shall be made immediately following the last political statement, by order of registration, with alternation between Members of different parliamentary groups, without excluding Members who are sole party representatives or unregistered Members.

Article 77

Order in which speakers are called

- 1- Speakers shall be given the floor in the order in which they registered, but the President of the Assembly shall take steps to ensure that when others have also registered, Members from the same Parliamentary group, or members of the Government, are not called upon to speak one after the other.
- 2- Registered speakers may swap their positions on the list of speakers at any time.
- 3- The order of speakers shall be visible to the hemicycle.

Article 78

Speeches by members of the Government

- 1- Members of the Government shall be given the floor in order to:
 - a) Present government bills and draft resolutions, draft amendments and motions;
 - b) Participate in debates;
 - c) Reply to Members' questions about any of the acts of the Government or the Public Administration;
 - d) Make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions;
 - e) Make or reply to requests for clarification;
 - f) React to offences to honour or due consideration or offer explanations in accordance with Article 84;
 - g) Make protests or counter-protests.
- 2- At its own request, once a week the Government shall possess the right to the floor in order to make a statement, provided it gives the parliamentary groups prior notice of the topic via the President of the Assembly.
- 3- The speech referred to by the previous paragraph shall take place after the parliamentary groups' political statements and the speeches referred to by Article 76(3)

if any, shall not exceed six minutes, and shall be followed by a debate of no more than thirty minutes.

Article 79

Subject matter of speeches

- 1- Anyone who asks to speak shall declare his proposed subject matter.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall warn any speaker who strays from the subject matter on which he has been called to speak, and may withdraw the floor from him if he persists.

Article 80

Points of order and questions to the Bureau

- 1- Any Member who asks for the floor in order to make a point of order shall indicate the rule that has been infringed and shall restrict himself to such comments as are strictly necessary for the purpose.
- 2- Members may call upon the Bureau to answer questions when they have doubts concerning the latter's rulings or the conduct of proceedings.
- 3- Questions to the Bureau shall be neither justified, nor discussed.
- 4- Speakers who are given the floor in order to make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions shall speak for no more than two minutes.

Article 81
Motions to the Bureau

- 1- Only those requests to the Bureau that concern the procedure for presenting, discussing and voting on a given subject, or on the conduct of the sitting, shall be deemed to be motions to the Bureau.
- 2- Motions to the Bureau may be made in writing or orally.
- 3- The Bureau shall immediately announce written motions to the Bureau and have them distributed to the parliamentary groups.
- 4- Neither oral motions to the Bureau, nor the reading out of written motions to the Bureau if requested, shall exceed two minutes.
- 5- When a motion to the Bureau is admitted under the terms of Article 16(1)c, it shall be put to the vote immediately, without discussion.
- 6- Motions to the Bureau shall be put to the vote in the order in which they are made.
- 7- Oral explanations of vote shall not be permitted.

Article 82
Complaints and appeals

- 1- Any Member may complain against rulings by the President of the Assembly or the Bureau, and may appeal them to the Plenary.
- 2- A Member who so appeals may speak for no more than three minutes in order to substantiate his appeal.
- 3- In the case of an appeal submitted by more than one Member, only one of them may speak in order to substantiate it, regardless of whether or not they belong to the same parliamentary group.

- 4- When more than one appeal with the same object is submitted, only one Member from each of the parliamentary groups to which the appellants belong may speak in order to substantiate them.
- 5- One Member from each parliamentary group that has not pronounced itself under the terms of the previous paragraphs may also speak for a period of three minutes.
- 6- Oral explanations of vote shall not be permitted.

Article 83

Requests for clarification

- 1- Members who wish to ask for clarifications about matters which have been touched on by the speaker who is speaking and about which they are in doubt, shall register before the end of the speech to which the request relates, and such requests shall be made and answered in the order in which they are registered.
- 2- Questioners and the respondent shall each be given the floor for two minutes for each question. However, if he does not wish to speak after every individual questioner, the respondent shall not accumulate more than three minutes in response times.

Article 84

Reactions to offences to honour or due consideration

- 1- Whenever a Member or a member of the Government deems that expressions have been used which offend his honour or the consideration due to him, he may speak for a period of no more than two minutes in order to defend himself.
- 2- The speaker who proffered the offending expressions may speak for no more than two minutes in order to give explanations.
- 3- The President of the Assembly shall note requests to speak in self-defence pursuant to paragraph (1) above and shall call for such defences and the respective explanations at

the end of the debate in progress, without prejudice to the ability to call for them immediately if he deems that the situations in question especially warrant it.

- 4- In the event that a member of the leadership of a parliamentary group invokes the right to defend the consideration due to the whole group, or the Government invokes the right to defend itself, and the President of the Assembly deems that such an offence may indeed have been proffered, then the President shall immediately concede the floor.

Article 85

Protests and counter-protests

- 1- Each parliamentary group may only make one protest against any given speech.
- 2- Two minutes shall be permitted for each such protest.
- 3- Protests shall not be permitted against requests for clarification or the respective replies, or in relation to explanations of vote.
- 4- Counter-protests shall be made immediately after the protest to which they refer and shall not exceed one minute.

Article 86

No speaking during votes

Once a vote has been called, no Member may speak until the result has been announced, except in order to make motions and requests concerning the voting procedure.

Article 87

Explanations of vote

- 1- At the end of each vote, each individual Member and each parliamentary group shall possess the right to make a written statement explaining his or its vote.
- 2- Oral explanations of vote in relation to motions rejecting the Government's Programme, motions of confidence or no confidence, and final votes on the Major Options of National Plans and the State Budget, shall not exceed five minutes.
- 3- Written explanations of vote shall be delivered to the Bureau, without fail within three working days of the vote to which they relate.

Article 88

Members of the Bureau

If members of the Bureau wish to speak during plenary sittings at which they are performing their functions, they shall not then return to such functions until the end of the debate or of any vote that is called in relation thereto.

Article 89

Speaking

- 1- Speakers shall address themselves to the President and the Assembly and shall stand.
- 2- A speaker shall not be interrupted without his consent, although oral expressions of agreement, disagreement or the like shall not be deemed interruptions.
- 3- The President of the Assembly shall caution any speaker who strays from the subject under discussion or whose speech becomes insulting or offensive, and may withdraw the floor from him.

- 4- The President of the Assembly may call upon a speaker to sum up his subject when the time permitted by these Rules of Procedure is coming to an end.

Article 90

Organisation of debates

- 1- The Conference of Leaders shall decide the total time allotted to each debate and how it is to be distributed.
- 2- The time spent on requests for clarification and the respective replies, and on protests and counter-protests, shall be included in the time allotted to the parliamentary group to which the Member in question belongs.

Section III

Decisions and votes

Article 91

Decisions

All decisions shall be taken during the regulation voting period, save only when they concern votes provided for by Article 75 and, due to their nature, urgency or timeliness, they ought to be considered and put to the vote at another time and there is a consensus to that effect, or when they concern formal opinions on the substitution of Members or on urgent judicial business.

Article 92

Requirements and conditions for votes

- 1- Decisions shall be taken by more than one vote and, save only in cases especially provided for by the Constitution or these Rules of Procedure, shall require the presence of the majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office, which must have been verified in advance using the electronic voting mechanism and must have been announced by the Bureau.
- 2- Abstentions shall not count for the purpose of calculating a majority.
- 3- The Bureau shall immediately announce the result of each vote and shall expressly state whether the applicable requirements laid down by the Constitution and these Rules of Procedure have been fulfilled.
- 4- Decisions that have no effect outside the Assembly and solely concern its proceedings or the coordination of its work shall be valid subject to the existence of the quorum required for the Assembly to sit.

Article 93

Votes

- 1- Each Member shall possess one vote.
- 2- All Members present shall vote, without prejudice to the right to abstain.
- 3- Neither proxy nor postal votes shall be permitted.
- 4- The President of the Assembly shall only exercise his right to vote when he sees fit to do so.

Article 94
Forms of voting

- 1- Voting shall take one of the following forms:
 - a) Standing and sitting, which shall be the usual form of voting;
 - b) Electronic voting;
 - c) Roll call;
 - d) Secret ballot.
- 2- Alternative votes shall not be permitted.
- 3- In votes by standing and sitting, the Bureau shall calculate the results in accordance with each parliamentary group's share of the seats in the Assembly and shall specify both the number of individual votes that were made against a parliamentary group line and their influence on the overall result, if any.
- 4- In cases in which the Constitution requires a qualified majority, votes shall also be made using electronic voting.
- 5- Electronic voting shall be organised in such a way as to make it possible to know the quantified overall result and to record the individual vote of each Member.

Article 95

Voting times

- 1- Voting shall take place during the last plenary sitting of each week in which the order of business includes the discussion of matters that require the Members to make decisions.
- 2- If the sitting occurs in the morning, voting shall take place at midday; if it occurs in the afternoon, it shall take place at six p.m.
- 3- After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly may set another voting time, which shall be publicised at least a week in advance.
- 4- Before voting takes place, the President of the Assembly shall have the call bell rung and shall cause such parliamentary committees as are in session to be notified.

Article 96

List of forthcoming votes

- 1- The Bureau of the Assembly shall be responsible for drawing up a list of forthcoming votes, which shall be distributed to all Members:
 - a) By six p.m. on Wednesday, when voting takes place on a Friday;
 - b) At least twenty-four hours in advance, when voting takes place on other days.
- 2- Following the time limits referred to by the previous paragraph, the list shall only be amended if no parliamentary group opposes the amendment.
- 3- The list of forthcoming votes shall contain a detailed list of all the votes that are to take place, whenever possible including those concerning formal opinions issued by the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the application of the Statute of Members.

Article 97
Secret ballots

Secret ballots shall be held for:

- a) Elections and appointments;
- b) Such decisions as these Rules of Procedure or the Statute of Members require to be made in this form.

Article 98
Voting by roll call and voting subject to count

- 1- One tenth of all the Members may move that votes on the following items be held by roll call:
 - a) Authorisation to declare war or make peace;
 - b) Authorisation and confirmation of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency;
 - c) Charges against the President of the Republic;
 - d) The granting of amnesties and general pardons;
 - e) Reconsideration of decrees or resolutions that the President of the Republic has vetoed.
- 2- Any other matter may be put to the vote by roll call if the Assembly or the Conference of Leaders so decides.
- 3- In votes by roll call, Members shall be called to vote in alphabetical order and their votes shall also be recorded electronically.
- 4- Votes may be subject to a count and shall then be recorded electronically in situations that require a qualified majority and in cases in which the Conference of Leaders has so stipulated in advance, or the Assembly so stipulates upon a motion by at least ten Members.

- 5- The decisions provided for by paragraphs (2) and (4) above shall be taken under the terms of Article 94(3).

Article 99

Tied votes

- 1- When a vote results in a tie, the item in question shall be resubmitted for discussion.
- 2- If the tie concerns a vote that was not preceded by discussion because no one asked to speak, the vote shall be repeated at the next sitting, when discussion shall be permitted.
- 3- A tied second vote shall constitute the item's rejection.

Chapter IV

Parliamentary committee meetings

Article 100

Convening meetings and order of business

- 1- Parliamentary committee meetings shall be convened by the committee itself or by its chairman.
- 2- The order of business shall be set by the parliamentary committee or, after first consulting the representatives of parliamentary groups sitting on the committee, by its chairman.

Article 101

Participation by or presence of other Members

- 1- In the event that a parliamentary committee is considering a Members' bill or draft resolution, the Members responsible for drafting it may take part in the committee's meetings, without voting rights.
- 2- Any other Member may attend meetings and, if the parliamentary committee allows it, may take part in the proceedings, without voting rights.
- 3- Members may send written observations to parliamentary committees on matters for which the committee in question is responsible.

Article 102

Participation by members of the Government and other persons and bodies

- 1- Members of the Government may take part in parliamentary committee proceedings at the request of the committee in question, or on their own initiative.
- 2- Parliamentary committees may ask any citizen to take part in their proceedings, particularly including:
 - a) Staff and senior officials of the state's direct administrative services;
 - b) Staff and senior officials of the state's indirect administrative services and the state-owned business sector, and persons engaged under contract thereto.
- 3- Parliamentary committees may allow the persons and bodies referred to by subparagraph a) of the previous paragraph to take part in their proceedings, subject to authorisation by the respective ministers.
- 4- The chairman of the parliamentary committee in question shall be responsible for taking the steps provided for by this Article and shall notify the President of the Assembly thereof.

Article 103

Parliamentary committee powers

- 1- Parliamentary committees may request the taking of, or may themselves take, any steps needed for the successful performance of their functions, particularly as regards:
 - a) Conducting studies;
 - b) Requesting information or formal opinions;
 - c) Asking any citizen to give evidence;
 - d) Holding parliamentary hearings;
 - e) Requisitioning and contracting specialists to assist them with their work;
 - f) Conducting information and study missions.
- 2- All documents which are under analysis or have already been analysed by parliamentary committees and which do not contain classified information shall be made available on the Assembly's website.
- 3- Journalists shall possess the right to access to all the documents distributed to each parliamentary committee meeting, unless they contain classified information.

Article 104

Parliamentary hearings

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic may hold individual or collective parliamentary hearings, which shall take place in parliamentary committee when the committee in question so decides.
- 2- Ministers shall be heard at hearings of the applicable parliamentary committees at least four times in each legislative session, in accordance with a schedule to be set at a Conference of Leaders by the first week of the legislative session in question.

- 3- Any of the persons referred to by Article 102 may be heard at parliamentary hearings.
- 4- In each legislative session, each parliamentary group may potestatively require the presence of members of the Government and of the persons referred to by Article 102(2)b, in accordance with the table of potestative rights set out in Annexe II.
- 5- The potestative rights referred to by the previous paragraph shall not be used on more than two consecutive occasions in relation to the same member of the Government.

Article 105

Cooperation between parliamentary committees

Two or more parliamentary committees may meet in joint session in order to consider matters of common interest; however, no decisions shall be taken at such sessions.

Article 106

Parliamentary committee regulations

- 1- Each parliamentary committee shall draw up its own regulations.
- 2- In the absence of such regulations or if the regulations prove inadequate, the provisions of these Rules of Procedure shall apply by analogy.

Article 107

Parliamentary committee minutes

- 1- Every parliamentary committee meeting shall be the object of minutes which state who was present and who absent and give a summary of the matters discussed, the position taken by Members and parliamentary groups, the result of votes, and any individual or collective explanations of vote.
- 2- When a parliamentary committee so decides, its meetings may be recorded in full or in part.
- 3- The minutes of public parliamentary committee meetings shall be published in full on the Assembly of the Republic's website.
- 4- If any member of the parliamentary committee in question so requests, Members who vote shall be named and their vote recorded in the minutes.

Article 108

Parliamentary committee activity plans and reports

- 1- At the end of each legislative session, each parliamentary committee shall draft a proposed activity plan for the following legislative session, together with the applicable budget proposal, and shall submit it for consideration by the President of the Assembly, who shall consult the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen.
- 2- The chairman of each parliamentary committee shall draft its activity plan for the first legislative session of each legislature and the respective budget proposal within fifteen days of his taking office.
- 3- At the end of each legislative session, each parliamentary committee shall inform the Assembly as to the situation and progress of its proceedings by means of a report for which its chairman shall be responsible; such reports shall be published in the *Journal*,

and the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall propose the manner in which they are to be considered.

Article 109

Parliamentary committee facilities and administrative support

- 1- Parliamentary committees shall dispose of their own facilities at the Seat of the Assembly.
- 2- Each parliamentary committee shall be supported in its work by the appropriate administrative staff and assistants, as laid down by law.

Chapter V

Publicising the Assembly's proceedings and acts

Section I

Publicising the Assembly's proceedings

Article 110

Publicising sittings and meetings

- 1- Plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings shall be public.
- 2- Exceptionally, parliamentary committees may meet in camera, whenever so warranted by the classified nature of the matters under consideration.

Article 111

Cooperation with the media

- 1- Seats in the plenary chamber shall be reserved for duly accredited representatives of the media, for the performance of their functions.
- 2- If the seats reserved for representatives of the media are all taken, the Assembly's staff shall arrange for them to attend plenary sittings in other available places.
- 3- The Bureau shall arrange for the texts of the items under discussion and speeches to be distributed to the representatives of the media.

Article 112

Journal of the Assembly of the Republic

- 1- The Assembly's official journal shall be the *Journal of the Assembly of the Republic (Diário da Assembleia da República)*.
- 2- By passage of a resolution, the Assembly shall particularly lay down the *Journal's* organisation, content, the way in which it is drawn up and its table of contents.
- 3- All the series of the *Journal* shall be published in full on the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 113

Electronic dissemination

All acts and documents whose publication in the *Journal* is obligatory, as well as all documents whose production is required and the procedures for which are laid down by these Rules of Procedure, shall be made available on the Assembly's website and Intranet on a real-time basis.

Article 114
Information

For the information of Members, the media and the general public, and acting in consultation with the Secretary-General, the Bureau shall take steps to ensure:

- a) The distribution prior to each plenary sitting of a bulletin containing the order of business and other information concerning parliamentary activities;
- b) After first consulting the respective committee officers, the annual publication in special editions, of reports drawn up under the aegis of the various parliamentary committees;
- c) Other initiatives intended to expand knowledge of the Assembly of the Republic's wide range of activities.

Section II
Publicising the Assembly's acts

Article 115
Publication in Series 1 of the *Diário da República*

- 1- The President of the Assembly shall send such acts of the Assembly of the Republic as the law may require to be published in Series 1 of the *Diário da República* (Official Gazette) to the National Press as soon as possible.
- 2- Any Member or parliamentary group may request that the text of acts published in the *Diário da República* be corrected. The President of the Assembly shall consider such requests and, after first consulting the Bureau, shall send corrections to the National Press within a time limit which is compatible with the legal time limit for the publication of corrections.

Article 116

Publication of decisions in the *Journal of the Assembly of the Republic*

- 1- Decisions of the Assembly of the Republic, the Standing Committee, the Bureau of the Assembly and the Conference of Leaders shall be committed to writing, shall comply with an initial format and shall be signed by the President of the Assembly.
- 2- Decisions that are not required to take any of the forms provided for by Article 166 of the Constitution shall be identified, numbered as part of a sequence relating to calendar years and the bodies from which they emanate, and published in Series 2 of the *Journal*.

Chapter VI

Report on the activities of the Assembly of the Republic

Article 117

Frequency and content

- 1- The Bureau shall be responsible for the publication at the commencement of each legislative session of a report on the Assembly of the Republic's work during the previous legislative session.
- 2- Such reports shall particularly contain a summary description of the legislative and supervisory control initiatives that were submitted or presented and the respective procedural details, and shall list all the other acts in which the Assembly engaged during the fulfilment of its responsibilities.

Title IV
Forms of procedure

Chapter I
Legislative procedure

Section I
Common legislative procedure

Division I
Initiative

Article 118
Power to initiate legislation

Power to initiate legislation shall lie with Members, parliamentary groups and the Government and also, where autonomous regions are concerned, with the respective Legislative Assemblies, as well as, subject to the terms and conditions laid down by law, with groups of registered electors.

Article 119
Forms of initiative

- 1- Initiatives that give rise to new legislation shall take the form of Members' bills when taken by Members or parliamentary groups, and government bills when taken by the Government or by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions.
- 2- Supervening initiatives shall take the form of draft amendments.

Article 120
Restrictions on initiatives

- 1- No bill or draft amendment shall be admitted if:
 - a) It is in breach of the Constitution or the principles enshrined therein;
 - b) It does not specify the exact meaning of any changes to be made to the legislative system.
- 2- No Member, parliamentary group, Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, or group of registered electors shall submit bills or draft amendments that involve increasing the state's expenses or reducing its revenues for the current financial year, as provided for by the Budget.
- 3- In the event that a bill is definitively rejected, it shall not be resubmitted during the same legislative session.

Article 121
Renewal of initiatives

- 1- Bills that are not put to the vote in the legislative session in which they are submitted shall not require resubmission in the following legislative sessions, save only if the legislature itself comes to an end.
- 2- Government bills shall lapse upon the resignation or removal of the Government, or, when the initiative was taken by the Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, when the respective legislature comes to an end.

Article 122

Cancellation of initiatives

- 1- Once a bill or draft amendment has been admitted, its proposer or proposers may withdraw it at any time until it is put to a vote on the general principles.
- 2- If another Member or the Government adopts as his or its own a bill that the proposer or proposers wish to withdraw, the bill shall continue to follow the procedure laid down by these Rules of Procedure as a bill submitted by the adopting Member or the Government.

Article 123

Exercise of initiative

- 1- No Members' bill shall be signed by more than twenty Members.
- 2- Government bills shall be signed by the Prime Minister and the ministers responsible for the matter in question and shall mention that they have been passed by the Council of Ministers.
- 3- Government bills submitted by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions shall be signed by the presidents thereof.

Article 124

Formal requirements for bills

- 1- Bills shall:
 - a) Be drafted in the form of Articles, which may be divided into paragraphs and subparagraphs;
 - b) Be named in a way that briefly reflects their main purpose;
 - c) Be preceded by a short justification or exposé of the reasons for the bill.

- 2- In the case of government bills, the requirement referred to by subparagraph c) of the previous paragraph shall mean that, as far as possible, the following information shall be presented in brief:
 - a) A description of the social, economic, financial and political situations to which the bill applies;
 - b) Information on the benefits and consequences of its implementation;
 - c) A digest of the current legislation on the matter in question.
- 3- Government bills shall be accompanied by such studies, documents and formal opinions as served to substantiate them.
- 4- Bills which do not fulfil the requirements of subparagraph a) of paragraph (1) above shall not be admitted.
- 5- Failures to comply with the requirements of subparagraphs c) and d) of paragraph (1) above shall entail the need for the said failures to be made good within five days or, in the case of a bill submitted by a Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, within such time limit as the President of the Assembly sets.

Article 125

Procedure

- 1- Bills shall be delivered to the Bureau for the purpose of admission by the President of the Assembly and publication in the *Journal*, in accordance with the Constitution and these Rules of Procedure.
- 2- In the event that he decides to reject it, the President of the Assembly shall notify the proposer or first signatory of each bill of his decision within forty-eight hours.
- 3- Bills and draft amendments shall be registered and numbered by order of delivery to the Bureau.
- 4- Bills shall be identified at the top by number, legislature and legislative session.

- 5- If their proposers so indicate, Member's bills may also state at the top the name of the parliamentary group that is proposing them or of the first Member to sign them, whereupon they shall be called by that name in all the applicable procedures.

Article 126

Appeals

- 1- Once a bill has either been admitted and sent to the competent parliamentary committee, or been rejected, the President shall notify the Assembly accordingly.
- 2- Any Member may lodge a written and duly substantiated appeal against the President of the Assembly's ruling by the end of the following sitting.
- 3- In the event that an appeal is lodged, the President of the Assembly shall submit it for consideration by the parliamentary committee for forty-eight hours.
- 4- The parliamentary committee shall issue a duly substantiated formal opinion, which shall be scheduled to be put to the vote at the plenary sitting following the expiry of the time limit referred to by the previous paragraph.
- 5- The formal opinion shall be read out and put to the vote in Plenary. Save only if the Conference of Leaders decides to increase the amount of time available for debate, each parliamentary group may speak for no more than two minutes on the subject.

Article 127

Nature of draft amendments

- 1- Draft amendments may take the form of draft alterations, replacements, additions or eliminations.
- 2- Draft alterations shall be deemed those which, whilst maintaining all or part of the text under discussion, restrict, expand or modify its meaning.

- 3- Draft replacements shall be deemed those which contain one or more provisions that differ from those that were previously presented.
- 4- Draft additions shall be deemed those which, whilst maintaining the original text and its meaning, contain additional new material.
- 5- Draft eliminations shall be deemed those which are intended to eliminate the provision under discussion.

Article 128

Draft resolutions

- 1- Draft resolutions shall be discussed in the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question and put to the vote in plenary sitting.
- 2- Draft resolutions shall be discussed in plenary sitting whenever a parliamentary group so requests.

Division II

Consideration of bills in parliamentary committee

Article 129

Referral of bills

- 1- Once a bill has been admitted, the President of the Assembly shall refer its text to the competent parliamentary committee for consideration and issue of a formal opinion.
- 2- In the event that the President of the Assembly sends a text of the type referred to by the previous paragraph to more than one parliamentary committee, he shall indicate which one of them shall be responsible for drawing up and passing the formal opinion.
- 3- When a bill's importance or specialist subject matter so warrants, the Assembly may form an ad hoc parliamentary committee to consider it.

Article 130

Determination of the competent parliamentary committee

When a parliamentary committee disagrees with the President of the Assembly's ruling as to the competent parliamentary committee, it shall notify the President of the Assembly thereof within five working days, so that he may reconsider the order in question.

Article 131

Technical notes

- 1- The Assembly's staff shall draw up a technical note for each bill.
- 2- Whenever possible, such technical notes shall particularly contain:
 - a) An analysis of the bill's compliance with the due requirements in formal and constitutional terms and under these Rules of Procedure;
 - b) A legal and legal-theoretical framework for the bill's topic, including at the European and international levels;
 - c) A list of other pending Portuguese and Community initiatives on the same subject matters;
 - d) Verification of compliance with the law governing the form of bills;
 - e) A succinct analysis of the facts, situations and states-of-affairs concerned;
 - f) A historical overview of any problems raised;
 - g) Consideration of the consequences of the bill's passage and the likely costs of its implementation;
 - h) References to contributions from persons and bodies with an interest in the matters concerned, particularly any formal opinions they may have issued on the topic.
- 3- The Assembly's staff shall send each technical note to the competent parliamentary committee within fifteen days of the date of the order admitting the bill.

- 4- Each technical note shall be attached as an annexe to the formal opinion drawn up by the parliamentary committee and shall accompany the legislative initiative throughout the legislative process.

Article 132

Presentation in parliamentary committee

- 1- Once a bill has been admitted, its proposer or one of its proposers shall possess the right to present it before the competent parliamentary committee.
- 2- Such presentations shall be followed by a period in which the proposer or one of the proposers provides the Members who are present at the parliamentary committee meeting with clarifications.

Article 133

Referral of draft amendments

The President of the Assembly may also refer any draft amendment that affects the principles and logic of a bill to the parliamentary committee that has issued the formal opinion on the bill in question.

Article 134
Labour legislation

- 1- In the case of labour legislation, the parliamentary committee shall take steps to ensure that the bill is considered for the purposes of Articles 54(5)d and 56(2)a of the Constitution.
- 2- Within a time limit to be set by the parliamentary committee, and as laid down by law, workers' committees, trade unions and employers' associations may send the parliamentary committee such suggestions as they deem fit and may request that their representatives be heard.
- 3- For the purposes of the provisions of the previous paragraphs, such bills shall be published in advance in separate electronic issues of the *Journal*.
- 4- The date of the separate issue shall be that of its publication, which shall be the same as that on which it is advertised, which date shall be deemed to be the day on which the separate issue becomes available on the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 135
Formal opinions

- 1- The officers of each parliamentary committee shall appoint the Member who is to be responsible for drafting each formal opinion.
- 2- When so warranted, the officers of the parliamentary committee may appoint more than one Member to be responsible for parts of the bill.
- 3- The appointment of Members who are to be responsible for drafting the formal opinion shall:
 - a) Seek to ensure a balanced distribution between the members of the parliamentary committee;
 - b) Particularly consider Members who are not proposers of the initiative;

- c) Take account of any express wish on the part of a particular Member.

Article 136

Time limit for consideration and issue of formal opinions

- 1- The parliamentary committee shall pass its duly substantiated formal opinion and send it to the President of the Assembly within thirty days counting from the date of the admissibility order.
- 2- At the request of the competent parliamentary committee, the time limit referred to by the previous paragraph may be extended by thirty days by ruling of the President of the Assembly.
- 3- Failure to pass a formal opinion shall not prejudice the course of the applicable initiative's legislative process.
- 4- The President of the Assembly shall cause the formal opinion or opinions to be published in the *Journal*.

Article 137

Content of formal opinions

- 1- Formal opinions issued by the parliamentary committee with responsibility for considering a bill shall comprise four parts:
 - a) Part I, which shall contain the recitals;
 - b) Part II, which shall contain the personal opinion of the Member who drew up the formal opinion;
 - c) Part III, which shall contain the conclusions;
 - d) Part IV, which shall contain the annexes.

- 2- Formal opinions shall obligatorily include parts I and III, which shall be the object of decision by the parliamentary committee, and shall also include the technical note referred to by Article 131 in one of the annexes contained in part IV.
- 3- Part II shall be optional, shall be the sole responsibility of its author and shall not be the object of a vote or modifications or be eliminated.
- 4- Any Member may cause his, or any parliamentary group may cause its, political positions to be annexed to the formal opinion in part IV.

Article 138

Bills concerning the same subject matter

- 1- If, by halfway through the period allocated to the parliamentary committee for the issue of its formal opinion, one or more other bills on the same matter are referred to it, the parliamentary committee shall consider all the bills together, without prejudice to the issue of separate formal opinions on each one.
- 2- In circumstances other than that provided for by the previous paragraph, precedence shall be given to the issue of a formal opinion or opinions on the text or texts that were received first.

Article 139

Replacement texts

- 1- The parliamentary committee may submit replacement texts in relation to both the general principles and the details, without prejudice to the original bills to which they refer, assuming that they are not withdrawn.
- 2- The general principles of a replacement text and of the text of the bill shall be discussed together, and when the discussion ends, the texts shall be put to the vote in the order in which they were submitted.

Article 140
Public discussion

- 1- In the event that their subject matter is of special importance, the competent parliamentary committee may propose to the President of the Assembly that bills be put to public discussion, in accordance with Article 134(3) and (4).
- 2- The provisions of the previous paragraph shall not prejudice such initiatives as parliamentary committees with responsibility for the matters in question deem fit to undertake in such a way as to gather contributions from interested parties, particularly by means of parliamentary hearings or via the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 141
Consultation of ANMP and ANAFRE

Whenever bills concern local authorities, or in the case of other initiatives that warrant doing so, the competent parliamentary committee shall take steps to consult the National Association of Municipal Authorities (ANMP) and the National Association of Parishes (ANAFRE).

Division III

Consultation of governing bodies of autonomous regions

Article 142

Consultation of governing bodies of autonomous regions

In the case of initiatives that address subject matter concerning autonomous regions, the President of the Assembly shall take steps to ensure that the governing bodies of the autonomous regions in question consider them for the purposes of Article 229(2) of the Constitution.

Division IV

Discussion and voting on bills

Subdivision I

General provisions

Article 143

The rule

- 1- Bills which are admitted by the Bureau shall obligatorily be discussed and put to the vote on the general principles in accordance with the time limits set and provided for by these Rules of Procedure.
- 2- The previous paragraph shall not apply to bills whose proposer informs the President of the Assembly in writing by the end of the meeting at which the formal opinion is passed in the general principles phase by the competent parliamentary committee, that he does not wish to see the initiative discussed and put to the vote on the general principles in accordance with the time limits set by these Rules of Procedure.

- 3- The effect provided for by the previous paragraph may be revoked at any time at the proposer's request.
- 4- When more than one bill addresses the same subject matter, they shall be discussed and put to the vote together, on condition that they were admitted at least ten days prior to the date scheduled for the discussion.

Article 144

Prior knowledge of bills

- 1- No bill shall be considered in parliamentary committee or scheduled for discussion at a plenary sitting without first being distributed to the Members and the parliamentary groups.
- 2- No bill shall be discussed at a plenary sitting without first being published in the *Journal* at least five days in advance.
- 3- However, in the event of an emergency the Conference of Leaders may, by a two-thirds majority weighted in accordance with the number of Members represented at the Conference, reduce the requirement for prior publication to a minimum of forty-eight hours in advance.
- 4- The provisions of the previous paragraphs shall not prejudice any consensus at the Conference of Leaders that the discussion in parliamentary committee or in plenary sitting can take place without observance of the established time limits.
- 5- Discussion concerning an authorisation to declare war or to make peace or to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency may take place without the observance of any time limit.

Article 145

Commencement and times of debate in Plenary

- 1- Debates in plenary sitting on bills that have been considered in parliamentary committee shall commence with speeches by their proposers.
- 2- Parliamentary groups and the Government shall each be given the floor of the debate for three minutes.
- 3- Unregistered members and Members who are sole representatives of a political party shall each be ensured the floor for one minute.
- 4- The proposers of the bill shall each dispose of one more minute.
- 5- In cases of combined scheduling, the proposers of initiatives that were admitted by the date on which the scheduling took place shall each dispose of one more minute.
- 6- In the following situations the Conference of Leaders shall set an overall time for debate in accordance with the table of times set out in Annexe I:
 - a) In the cases provided for by Articles 64 and 169;
 - b) Upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, on condition that no parliamentary group opposes it;
 - c) When the debate concerns matters on which the Assembly of the Republic has exclusive or special rights to legislate and a parliamentary groups so requests;
 - d) At the request of the Government.
- 7- For the purposes of the previous paragraph the Conference of Leaders shall obligatorily opt for one of the tables of times set out in the Annexe referred to by the previous paragraph.
- 8- In cases of combined scheduling, the proposers of initiatives that were admitted by the date on which the scheduling took place shall dispose of the same time as the largest parliamentary group.

- 9- Floor time taken up by points of order, questions to the Bureau, motions and requests, appeals and reactions to offences to honour shall not be included in the time assigned to each parliamentary group or the Government.

Article 146

Motions for reconsideration in parliamentary committee

Until the vote is announced and subject to the consent of the proposer, any parliamentary group or at least ten Members may move that the text of a bill be reconsidered by any parliamentary committee by a time limit which shall be set, whereupon the provisions of Article 144 shall not apply.

Subdivision II

Discussion and voting on the general principles of bills

Article 147

Object of discussion on the general principles

- 1- Discussion on the general principles shall address the principles and logic of each bill.
- 2- When a particular division of a bill is sufficiently autonomous, the Assembly may decide to put the said division to a separate discussion.

Article 148

Object of votes on the general principles

- 1- Votes on the general principles shall be put in relation to each bill.
- 2- When a particular division of a bill is sufficiently autonomous, the Assembly may decide to put the said division to a separate vote.

Article 149

Time limits for discussion and voting on the general principles

Bills shall be debated and put to the vote on the general principles in Plenary within eighteen plenary sittings of the approval of the formal opinion referred to by Article 136, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 62(4).

Subdivision III

Discussion and voting on the details of bills

Article 150

The rule in discussion and voting on the details

- 1- Save only the provisions of Article 168(4) and (5) of the Constitution and of these Rules of Procedure, the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall be responsible for the discussion and voting on the details.
- 2- Discussion and voting on the details shall take place within such time limit as the President of the Assembly sets when he announces that a parliamentary committee is to consider the bill.
- 3- The President of the Assembly may reconsider the time limit referred to by the previous paragraph, if requested to do so by the parliamentary committee in question.

Article 151

Mandate by the Plenary

- 1- The Plenary of the Assembly may at any time decide to mandate itself to put all or part of a text to the vote on the details.
- 2- The decision provided for by the previous paragraph shall only be made upon a request by at least ten Members or a parliamentary group.

Article 152

Object of discussion and voting on the details

- 1- Discussion on the details shall address each Article. The Assembly may decide that more than one Article be discussed simultaneously or, on the grounds of the complexity of the subject matter or of any draft amendments, that the text be discussed paragraph by paragraph.
- 2- Votes on the details shall be put separately in relation to each article, paragraph and subparagraph.

Article 153

Draft amendments

- 1- At the commencement of the discussion on the details, the chairman of the competent parliamentary committee shall set the time limits for the submission of draft amendments and for the distribution of the list and the date of votes.
- 2- Any Member may submit draft amendments and defend them, even if he is not a member of the competent parliamentary committee.

Article 154
Order of voting

- 1- Votes shall be put in the following order:
 - a) Draft eliminations;
 - b) Draft replacements;
 - c) Draft alterations;
 - d) The text as discussed, with any changes that have already been passed;
 - e) Draft additions to a text that has already been put to the vote.
- 2- When there are two or more draft amendments of the same type, they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they were submitted.

Subdivision IV
Final overall votes

Article 155
Final overall votes

- 1- Once the details have been discussed and put to the vote, a final overall vote shall be held.
- 2- If a text is passed in committee, it shall then be sent to the Plenary for a final overall vote at the second sitting following its publication in the *Journal* or its distribution in separate copies to the parliamentary groups.
- 3- Final overall votes shall not be preceded by discussion. Each parliamentary group may give an oral explanation of vote lasting no more than two minutes, without prejudice to the right of any Member or parliamentary group to submit a written explanation of vote in accordance with Article 87.

- 4- In the event that several final overall votes are put one after the other, the oral explanations of vote referred to by the previous paragraph shall only be given at the end of all those votes, as follows:
- a) One explanation of vote, for two minutes each, up to a maximum of two declarations;
 - b) One four-minute explanation of vote for the remaining votes.

Division V
Final texts of bills

Article 156

Final text

- 1- Once a bill has been passed, the competent parliamentary committee shall be responsible for drafting its final text.
- 2- The parliamentary committee shall not modify the thinking behind the legislation and shall restrict itself to perfecting the systematisation of the text and its style, and passage of all such improvements shall require no votes against.
- 3- The final text shall be drafted within such time limit as the Assembly or its President sets or, if no such limit is set, within five days.
- 4- When the drafting of the final text is complete, it shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 157

Complaints against inaccuracies

- 1- Any Member may submit complaints against inaccuracies until the third working day following the date on which the text of the final draft is published in the *Journal*.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall rule on complaints within twenty-four hours, whereupon the Members who lodged them may appeal to the Plenary or the Standing Committee at any time until the sitting immediately following the announcement of his decision.

Article 158

Definitive text

A text shall be deemed definitive when no complaints about it have been made or when any complaints have been ruled or decided upon.

Division VI

Enactment and reconsideration of decrees of the Assembly

Article 159

Decrees of the Assembly of the Republic

Once a bill has been passed it shall be termed a decree of the Assembly of the Republic and shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

Article 160

Reconsideration of decrees that are the object of a political veto

- 1- In the event that the President of the Republic exercises his veto pursuant to Article 136 of the Constitution, the bill in question shall be reconsidered as from the fifteenth day following reception of the notice of the duly substantiated veto, at a sitting that the President of the Assembly shall convene on his own initiative, or on that of one tenth of all the Members.
- 2- The only speakers in the discussion shall be one of the proposers of the bill and one Member from each parliamentary group, each of whom shall speak only once.
- 3- Voting shall be on confirmation of the decree of the Assembly of the Republic or on draft amendments thereto.
- 4- In the event of the submission of draft amendments, only the articles that are the object thereof shall be put to the vote.
- 5- The text of decrees that are not amended shall not require referral to the competent parliamentary committee for the purpose of drafting a final text.

Article 161

Effects of the decision

- 1- If the Assembly confirms the original vote in accordance with Article 136(2) and (3) of the Constitution, the decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment, which shall then take place within eight days of its reception.
- 2- If the Assembly amends the text, the new decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.
- 3- If the Assembly does not confirm the original vote, the legislative initiative in question shall not be resubmitted in the same legislative session.

Article 162

Reconsideration of decrees that are the object of a veto for unconstitutionality

- 1- In the event that the President of the Republic vetoes a decree pursuant to Article 279 of the Constitution, the provisions of Article 160 shall apply, save only the exceptions laid down by the present Article.
- 2- In the event that the Constitutional Court pronounces the unconstitutionality of one or more rules, the vote shall be put in relation to their expunction, their reformulation, or their confirmation.
- 3- If the Assembly so decides, a decree which is the object of the reformulation or expunction of the unconstitutional rules may be referred to the competent parliamentary committee for the purpose of drawing up a final draft.

Article 163

Sending for enactment

- 1- If the Assembly expunges the unconstitutional rules, or confirms the decree by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and the said majority is greater than an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office, the decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.
- 2- If the Assembly makes amendments, the new decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

Section II
Special legislative procedures

Division I
Passage of the statutes of autonomous regions

Article 164
Initiative in matters concerning politico-administrative statutes

- 1- The power to initiate legislation concerning politico-administrative statutes of autonomous regions shall lie exclusively with the respective Legislative Assemblies, in accordance with Article 226 of the Constitution.
- 2- Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions, Members and the Government may propose draft amendments.

Article 165
Consideration in parliamentary committee, discussion and voting

Consideration in parliamentary committee, discussion and voting shall be conducted in accordance with the general provisions governing legislative procedure.

Article 166
Passage without amendment

If a draft statute is passed without amendment, the decree of the Assembly of the Republic shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

Article 167

Passage with amendments or rejection

- 1- If a draft statute is passed with any amendment, or is rejected, it shall be returned to the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region in question for reconsideration and the issue of a formal opinion.
- 2- Once the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region's formal opinion has been received, it shall be submitted to the competent parliamentary committee of the Assembly of the Republic.
- 3- Any amendments suggested in the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region's formal opinion may be included in a replacement text, or be the object of draft amendments for submission to the Plenary.
- 4- The Assembly of the Republic shall then discuss the draft statute and make its final decision.

Article 168

Supervening amendments

The rules laid down by the previous Articles shall apply to amendments to statutes.

Division II

Consideration of government bills initiated by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions

Article 169

Right of Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions to set the order of business

- 1- The Legislative Assemblies of the Azores and Madeira autonomous regions shall possess the right to the inclusion of two government bills drafted by them on the order of business in each legislative session.
- 2- The President of the Assembly of the Republic shall be notified of the exercise of the right provided for by the previous paragraph by the fifteenth day of the month, in order for it to take effect the following month, in accordance with Article 59.
- 3- The proposing Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region may also request that government bills scheduled under the terms of this Article be put to the vote on the general principles on the same day as the bills are discussed.
- 4- The President of the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region shall send the request referred to in the previous paragraph to the President of the Assembly of the Republic. Such requests shall preclude exercise of the right enshrined in Article 146.
- 5- In the cases provided for by this Article, if the government bill is passed on the general principles, the details shall be put to the vote and the bill to a final overall vote within thirty days.

Article 170

Consideration of legislative proposals from autonomous regions in parliamentary committee

- 1- Representatives of the proposing Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region may participate in parliamentary committee meetings at which the details of legislative proposals from the autonomous region are discussed.
- 2- For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the competent parliamentary committee shall notify the President of the Assembly of the Republic that discussion of the details of a legislative proposal from an autonomous region has been included on its order of business, at least eight days prior to the date of the meeting in question.
- 3- Once he has received the notification referred to by the previous paragraph, the President of the Assembly of the Republic shall inform the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region of the date and time of the meeting.

Division III

Authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency and confirmation

Subdivision I

Assembly sitting to authorise declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency

Article 171

Assembly sitting

- 1- In the event that the President of the Republic asks the Assembly of the Republic to authorise the declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency pursuant to Articles 19, 134d and 138 of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall take steps to ensure that the request is immediately considered by the Plenary or, in the event that the Assembly is not sitting and it is impossible to call it immediately, by the Standing Committee.
- 2- Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 41(2), consideration of such a request for authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency shall be included on the order of business, and the Plenary sitting shall be scheduled or the Standing Committee convened, regardless of any time limit or formalities laid down by these Rules of Procedure.

Article 172

Debate on authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency

- 1- The debate shall be based on a message from the President of the Republic which, in accordance with Article 19 of the Constitution, shall constitute the request for authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency.
- 2- The debate shall not last for more than one day and priority in the grant of the floor shall be given to the Prime Minister, for one hour, and to one Member from each parliamentary group, for thirty minutes each.
- 3- The Government or any parliamentary group may move that the debate be closed as soon as one Member from each party has spoken.
- 4- The provisions of the previous paragraphs shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to debates in the Standing Committee.

Article 173

Vote to grant authorisation

The vote shall be on a motion to grant authorisation.

Article 174

Form of authorisation

Authorisation shall take the form of a law when granted by the Plenary and a resolution when granted by the Standing Committee.

Subdivision II

Confirmation of declarations of a state of siege or a state of emergency

Article 175

Confirmation of authorisations granted by the Standing Committee

Whenever the Standing Committee grants authorisation for the declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency, it shall immediately call the Assembly to sit at the earliest possible date, for the purpose of confirmation of the authorisation.

Article 176

Duration of debates on confirmation

The debate shall last for no more than one day, and the provisions of Article 172 shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 177

Vote to grant confirmation

The vote shall be on a motion to confirm.

Article 178

Form

- 1- Confirmation shall be granted in the form of a law.
- 2- Refusal to confirm shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 179

Renewal of authorisation

In the event that the President of the Republic asks for renewal of the Assembly of the Republic's authorisation of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency, the provisions of the previous Articles shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

Subdivision III

Consideration of the application of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency

Article 180

Consideration of application

- 1- Within fifteen days of the end of a state of siege or a state of emergency the President of the Assembly of the Republic shall, in accordance with the Constitution, take steps to ensure that the Plenary considers the manner in which the said declaration was applied.
- 2- The provisions of Article 172 shall apply to the debate, *mutatis mutandis*.

Division IV

Authorisation to declare war or make peace

Article 181

Assembly sitting to consider a request for authorisation to declare war or make peace

- 1- In the event that the President of the Republic asks the Assembly of the Republic to authorise the declaration of war or the making of peace pursuant to Article 135c of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall take steps to ensure that the request is immediately considered by the Plenary or, in the event that the Assembly is not sitting and it is impossible to call it immediately, by the Standing Committee.
- 2- Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 41(2), consideration of such a request for authorisation to declare war or make peace shall be included on the order of business, and the plenary sitting shall be scheduled or the Standing Committee convened, regardless of any time limit or formalities laid down by these Rules of Procedure.

Article 182

Debate on authorisation to declare war or make peace

- 1- The debate shall not last for more than one day and shall be opened and closed by speeches by the Prime Minister of no more than one hour each.
- 2- One Member from each parliamentary group shall possess the right to speak in the debate.
- 3- The Government or any parliamentary group may move that the debate be closed as soon as one Member from each party has spoken.
- 4- The provisions of the previous paragraphs shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to debates in the Standing Committee.

Article 183

Vote to grant authorisation to declare war or make peace

The vote shall be on a motion to grant authorisation.

Article 184

Form of authorisation to declare war or make peace

Authorisation shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 185

Immediate calling of the Assembly

Whenever the Standing Committee grants authorisation for the declaration of war or the making of peace, it shall immediately call the Assembly to sit at the earliest possible date, for the purpose of confirmation of the authorisation.

Article 186

Debate on confirmation of a declaration of war or the making of peace

The debate shall last for no more than one day, and the provisions of Article 182 shall apply, mutatis mutandis.

Division V
Authorisations to legislate

Article 187

Object, purpose, extent and duration

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic may authorise the Government to issue executive laws in accordance with Article 165 of the Constitution.
- 2- The law granting such authorisation shall define the object, purpose, extent and duration thereof.
- 3- The duration of an authorisation to legislate may be extended for a given period, by means of a new law.

Article 188

Initiation of authorisations to legislate and information

- 1- The power to initiate authorisations to legislate shall lie exclusively with the Government.
- 2- In the event that the Government has conducted a public consultation process on the prior draft of an executive law, for information purposes it shall attach the prior draft to the government bill seeking authorisation to legislate, accompanied by statements of position from the different persons and bodies with an interest in the matter.

Chapter II
Consideration of executive laws

Article 189
Motions for consideration of executive laws

- 1- Any ten Members may subscribe motions to consider executive laws with a view to causing them to cease to be in force or amending them. Such motions shall be submitted to the Bureau in writing within thirty days of the publication of the executive law in question, excluding periods in which the Assembly of the Republic's proceedings are adjourned.
- 2- The motion shall indicate the executive law and the date of its publication and, in the case of an executive law issued under the terms of an authorisation to legislate, the respective law. It shall also contain a succinct statement of the grounds for the motion.
- 3- The rules laid down by Articles 125 and 126 shall apply to the motion's admission, *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 190
Time limit for consideration of executive laws

If the executive law that is to be the object of consideration was issued under the terms of an authorisation to legislate, the President of the Assembly shall schedule its debate by the sixth sitting following submission of the motion for its consideration.

Article 191
Suspension of force

- 1- Once a motion to consider an executive law issued under the terms of an authorisation to legislate has been submitted and if one or more draft amendments are proposed, the Assembly may pass a resolution suspending the force of all or part of the executive law until either the law that amends it is published, or all the draft amendments are rejected.
- 2- Such suspensions shall expire after ten plenary sittings, if the Assembly has not issued its final pronouncement by then.

Article 192
Consideration of the general principles of executive laws

- 1- Executive laws shall be considered in plenary sitting.
- 2- The debate shall be opened by one of the proposers of the motion, and the Government shall possess the right to speak.
- 3- The Conference of Leaders shall set the overall time for the debate, to which end it shall opt for one of the tables of times set out in Annexe 1 to these Rules of Procedure.
- 4- Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph (2) above, executive laws may be considered by the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question, if no parliamentary group opposes it.

Article 193
Voting and form

- 1- The vote on the general principles shall be put in relation to the cessation of force.
- 2- Cessation of force shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 194
Cessation of force

In the event that the executive law is to cease to be in force, it shall so cease on the day on which the resolution is published in the *Diário da República*, and the executive law in question shall not be published again during the same legislative session.

Article 195
Revalidation

The resolution shall specify whether the cessation of force means that any rules which were repealed by the legislation in question are to be revalidated.

Article 196
Amendment of executive laws

- 1- If the cessation of the executive law's force is not passed and one or more draft amendments have been proposed, the executive law and the draft amendments shall be referred to the competent parliamentary committee for discussion and voting on the details, save only if the Assembly decides that they be analysed by the Plenary.
- 2- Draft amendments may be submitted at any time until the end of the discussion on the general principles, without prejudice to the submission of new proposals concerning articles that are to be discussed and put to a vote on the details.
- 3- If amendments are passed in parliamentary committee, the Assembly shall put them to a final overall vote at the next plenary sitting, whereupon the executive law shall be amended as laid down by the law containing the amendments.
- 4- If all the draft amendments are rejected and the executive law is under suspension at the time, for the purposes of Article 169(2) of the Constitution the President of the

Assembly shall send a declaration of termination of suspension for publication in the *Diário da República*.

- 5- If the parliamentary committee rejects all the draft amendments, the consideration process shall be deemed to have lapsed, the Plenary shall immediately be informed accordingly, and the applicable declaration shall be sent for publication in the *Diário da República*.
- 6- If, once a motion to consider has been made, the Assembly does not pronounce or, if a decision to make amendments has been made, the Assembly has not passed the applicable law by the end of the current legislative session and 15 plenary sittings have taken place, the process shall be deemed to have lapsed.

Article 197

Repeal of executive laws

- 1- If at any time the Government repeals the executive law which is under consideration, the respective process shall automatically be terminated.
- 2- If such a repeal occurs during the debate on the details, any Member may adopt the executive law in question as a Member's bill in accordance with Article 122(2).

Chapter III
Passage of treaties and agreements

Article 198
Initiative in matters concerning treaties and agreements

- 1- The Government shall send treaties and agreements that are subject to passage by the Assembly of the Republic under the terms of Article 161i of the Constitution, to the Assembly of the Republic.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall cause the respective texts to be published in the *Journal*, and shall refer them for consideration to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question and, where appropriate, to one or more other parliamentary committees.
- 3- When a treaty or agreement concerns autonomous regions under the terms of Article 227(1)t of the Constitution, its text shall be referred to the respective governing bodies for the purpose of pronouncement.

Article 199
Scrutiny of treaties and agreements in parliamentary committee

- 1- If no other time limit is requested by the Government or set by the President of the Assembly, the parliamentary committee shall issue its recommendations within thirty days.
- 2- Exceptionally, for important reasons concerning the national interest, the Government may request that the parliamentary committee meetings be held in camera.

Article 200

Discussion and voting on treaties and agreements

- 1- Discussion on the general principles and the details of treaties and agreements shall take place in the competent parliamentary committee, unless any parliamentary group moves that it take place in Plenary.
- 2- The final overall vote shall take place in Plenary.

Article 201

Effects of votes on treaties and agreements

- 1- If a treaty or an agreement is passed, it shall be sent to the President of the Republic for ratification or signature of the resolution passing it, respectively.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall cause the resolution passing or rejecting the treaty or agreement to be published in the *Diário da República*.

Article 202

Resolutions passing treaties or agreements

The resolution passing a treaty or agreement shall contain the text thereof.

Article 203

Reconsideration of rules in treaties

- 1- In the event that the Constitutional Court pronounces any of the rules set out in a treaty unconstitutional, the resolution passing the treaty shall require confirmation by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and the said majority must be greater than an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.
- 2- When the rule in the treaty that has been submitted for reconsideration concerns autonomous regions under the terms of Article 227(1)t of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall call on the respective governing bodies to pronounce on the matter as a matter of urgency.
- 3- Such new consideration shall take place at a sitting which the President of the Assembly shall schedule on his own initiative or on that of one tenth of all the Members in full exercise of their office, and which shall take place as from the fifteenth day following reception of the duly substantiated message from the President of the Republic.
- 4- Save only if the Conference decides otherwise, only one member of the Government and one Member from each parliamentary group shall take part in the discussion, and only once each.
- 5- The discussion and vote shall be solely on confirmation of passage of the treaty.
- 6- If the Assembly confirms the first vote, the treaty shall be sent back to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 279(4) of the Constitution.

Article 204

Resolutions with amendments

- 1- If the treaty admits reservations, a second resolution by the Assembly confirming it may amend the first resolution that originally passed the treaty, in such a way as to formulate new reservations or modify those that had already been formulated.
- 2- In the case provided for by the previous paragraph, the President of the Republic may request a prior assessment of the constitutionality of any the rules laid down by the treaty.

Chapter IV
Procedures concerning public finances

Section I
**Major Options of National Plans and reports on the execution of Plans, State Budget,
General State Accounts and other public accounts**

Division I
General provisions concerning public finances

Article 205
Presentation and distribution

- 1- The government bills concerning the Major Options of National Plans and the State Budget for each financial year, the General State Accounts and other public accounts shall be presented to the Assembly of the Republic within the time limits set by law.
- 2- Whenever either of the government bills, the General State Accounts or other public accounts are admitted, the President of the Assembly shall order their publication in the *Journal* and their immediate distribution to the Members and the parliamentary groups.
- 3- The government bills, the General State Accounts and other public accounts shall be referred to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question, which shall draw up a report thereon, and to the remaining parliamentary committees for each to draw up a formal opinion.
- 4- Such formal opinions as the Audit Court or the Economic and Social Council sends to the Assembly shall also be published in the *Journal* and referred to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question.

Article 206

Scrutiny

- 1- The parliamentary committees shall draw up their formal opinions and send them to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question within the following time limits:
 - a) Fifteen days, with respect to government bills concerning the Major Options of National Plans;
 - b) Fifteen days, with respect to the government bill concerning the State Budget;
 - c) Twenty days, with respect to the General State Accounts.
- 2- The aforementioned parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall draw up the final report and send it to the President of the Assembly within the following time limits:
 - a) Twenty-five days, with respect to government bills concerning the Major Options of National Plans;
 - b) Twenty days, with respect to the government bill concerning the State Budget;
 - c) Thirty days, with respect to the General State Accounts.
- 3- The Assembly's staff shall conduct a technical analysis of the government bill concerning the State Budget and of the General State Accounts, to be broken down by area of governance, and shall refer it to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question within the following time limits:
 - a) Ten days, with respect to the government bill concerning the State Budget;
 - b) Ninety days, with respect to the General State Accounts.
- 4- The time limits laid down by the present Article shall be counted from the date on which the government bill concerning the Major Options of the National Plan and the government bill concerning the State Budget, the General State Accounts and other public accounts are presented, save only in relation to paragraphs (1)c and (2)c, when

the time limits shall be counted from the date of the delivery of the applicable formal opinion issued by the Audit Court.

- 5- For the purposes of paragraph (1)b above, the members of the Government shall each send the competent parliamentary committees a written memorandum about the draft budgets for the areas they oversee, preferably prior to the meeting provided for by the following paragraph.
- 6- Within the time limits provided for by paragraphs (1) and (3) above, for the purposes of the consideration of the government bill concerning the Budget, the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall meet and shall obligatorily be attended by the ministers with responsibility for the Finance and Social Security areas. Such meetings shall be open to participation by all Members.

Article 207

Terms of the plenary debate

- 1- The overall time for the plenary debate on the government bill concerning the Major Options of the National Plan, the government bill concerning the State Budget for each financial year, the General State Accounts and other public accounts shall be defined at the Conference of Leaders.
- 2- The debate shall open and close with a speech from the Government.
- 3- Each parliamentary group shall possess the right to make a statement before the debate is closed.
- 4- The debate referred to by paragraph (2) above shall take place under the terms set by the Conference of Leaders, which shall observe the applicable part of the provisions of Article 145.

Division II
Accounts of other public bodies

Article 208
Consideration of accounts of other public bodies

Those provisions of the previous Articles which refer to the procedure for considering the General State Accounts shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the consideration of the accounts of other public bodies that are required by law to submit their accounts to the Assembly of the Republic.

Division III
National Plans and execution reports

Article 209
Presentation and consideration

- 1- The Government shall present National Plans and reports on their execution to the Assembly of the Republic within the time limits laid down by law.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall refer the text of reports on the execution of the Plans to the Economic and Social Council, for the purposes of the provisions of the respective law.
- 3- The provisions of the previous Articles shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the consideration of National Plans and reports on their execution.

Division IV
The State Budget

Article 210

Discussion and voting on the principles of the State Budget

- 1- Once the time limit for consideration by the parliamentary committees has been reached, the government bill shall be debated and put to the vote on the general principles at a plenary sitting convened exclusively for this purpose.
- 2- After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall set the number of plenary sittings, the overall time for the debate, and the distribution of that time.
- 3- The debate on the general principles of the State Budget shall last for a minimum of two and a maximum of three days and shall be subject to the provisions of Article 145.
- 4- The debate shall open and close with a speech from the Government.
- 5- Each parliamentary group shall possess the right to make a statement on the bill before the debate is closed.
- 6- At the end of the debate, the government bill concerning the State Budget shall be put to the vote on the general principles.

Article 211

Discussion and voting on the details of the State Budget

- 1- The parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall discuss and vote on the details of such articles of the government bill and draft amendments as the law does not obligatorily require to be put to the vote in Plenary, for a maximum of twenty days.
- 2- After first consulting the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen, the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall organise and conduct the debate in such a way as to successively discuss the budget of each ministry, and the respective members of the Government shall speak therein.
- 3- The discussion of each ministry's budget shall take place at a joint meeting of the parliamentary committee referred to by the previous paragraph and the parliamentary committee or committees with responsibility for the matter in question.
- 4- In cases in which the details are put to the vote in Plenary, the debate shall not exceed two days.
- 5- Once the debate and the vote on the details have ended, each parliamentary group, by ascending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and the Government, which shall speak last, shall possess the right to make statements prior to the final overall vote.
- 6- After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall set the times allocated to each parliamentary group, to which end he shall take account of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and to the Government.

Article 212

Final overall vote and final text of the State Budget

- 1- The government bill shall be put to a final overall vote.
- 2- The parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question shall draft the final text within a time limit of ten days.

Section II

Other debates on public finances

Article 213

Debates on public finance policies

- 1- Debates on public finance policies shall take place at meetings of the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question, save only when the law provides, or when, after first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly decides, otherwise.
- 2- The debate shall open and close with a speech from the Government.
- 3- The Government shall submit the supporting documents for the debate to the Assembly within such time limits as are set therefore.

Chapter V
Procedures governing guidelines and political monitoring

Section I
Consideration of the Government's Programme

Article 214
Sitting for presentation of the Government's Programme

- 1- In agreement with the Prime Minister, the President of the Assembly shall schedule the Assembly sitting at which the Government presents its Programme pursuant to Article 192 of the Constitution.
- 2- If the Assembly of the Republic is not in full session, the President of the Assembly shall obligatorily call it.
- 3- The debate shall not exceed three days of consecutive sittings.

Article 215
Consideration of the Government's Programme

- 1- The Government shall submit its Programme to the Assembly of the Republic for consideration by means of a statement by the Prime Minister.
- 2- Once the presentation has ended, there shall be a period in which Members may submit requests for clarification.

Article 216

Debate on the Government's Programme

- 1- The debate on the Government's Programme shall commence when the clarifications requested under the terms of the previous Article have ended or, at the request of any Member, within forty-eight hours of the distribution of the text of the Programme.
- 2- The Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate in accordance with Article 145.
- 3- The debate shall end with a speech by one Member from each parliamentary group and by the Government, which shall close it.
- 4- The sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the Government's Programme.

Article 217

Rejection of the Government's Programme and motion of confidence

- 1- Until the debate is closed, and without prejudice to the debate itself, any parliamentary group may make a motion that the Programme be rejected, or the Government may move a motion of confidence.
- 2- Once the debate has been closed, at the same sitting and following an interval of no more than one hour if requested by any parliamentary group, motions to reject the Programme or to express confidence in the Government shall be put to the vote.
- 3- Motions of rejection or confidence may be withdrawn at any time before they are put to the vote.
- 4- If more than one motion to reject the Programme is made, they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they are so made, without prejudice to the possibility of each one's individual rejection.

- 5- Rejection of the Government's Programme shall require an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.
- 6- For the purposes of Article 195 of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic of the passage of any motion to reject or of the failure of any motion of confidence.

Section II

Motions of confidence

Article 218

Assembly sitting for consideration of a motion of confidence

- 1- If, in accordance with Article 193 of the Constitution, the Government asks the Assembly of the Republic to pass a motion of confidence in relation to a statement of general policy or any important matter of national interest, discussion shall commence on the third parliamentary day following submission of the motion of confidence to the President of the Assembly.
- 2- If the Assembly of the Republic is not in full session, such a motion by the Government shall merely determine that the Plenary be called by prior decision of the Standing Committee pursuant to Article 41

Article 219

Debates on motions of confidence

- 1- The debate shall not exceed three days, and the sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the motion of confidence.
- 2- The rules laid down by Article 145 shall apply to the discussion of motions of confidence.
- 3- The rules laid down by Article 215 and Article 216(3) shall also apply.
- 4- The Government may withdraw the motion of confidence at any time prior to the end of the debate.

Article 220

Voting on motions of confidence

- 1- Once the debate has been closed and, in the event that any parliamentary group so requests, after an interval of one hour, the motion of confidence shall be put to the vote at the same sitting.
- 2- If the motion of confidence is not passed, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic accordingly for the purposes of the provisions of Article 195 of the Constitution.

Section III
Motions of no confidence

Article 221
Initiation of motions of no confidence

Under the terms of Article 194 of the Constitution, one quarter of all the Members in full exercise of their office or any parliamentary group may move motions of no confidence in the Government in relation to the implementation of its Programme or to any important matter of national interest.

Article 222
Debates on motions of no confidence

- 1- The debate shall commence on the third parliamentary day following the submission of the motion of no confidence and shall not exceed three days, and the sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the motion of no confidence.
- 2- The debate shall be opened and closed by the first signatory of the motion.
- 3- The Prime Minister shall possess the right to speak immediately following and prior to the speeches provided for by the previous paragraph, respectively.
- 4- The rules laid down by Article 145 shall apply to the debate.
- 5- The motion of no confidence may be withdrawn at any time before the end of the debate, but in this event the debate shall count for the purposes of Article 180(2)d of the Constitution.

Article 223

Voting on motions of no confidence

- 1- Once the debate has been closed and, in the event that any parliamentary group so requests, after an interval of one hour, the motion of no confidence shall be put to the vote.
- 2- The motion of no confidence shall only be deemed passed if it receives an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.
- 3- If the motion of no confidence is not passed, its signatories may not make another such motion during the same legislative session.
- 4- In the event that a motion of no confidence is passed, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic accordingly for the purposes of Article 195 of the Constitution and shall send the motion for publication in the *Diário da República*.

Section IV

Governmental debates

Article 224

Prime-ministerial debates

- 1- The Prime Minister shall attend the Plenary for a session of Members' questions once a fortnight, on dates which the President of the Assembly shall set after first consulting the Government and the Conference of Leaders.
- 2- Question sessions shall adopt one of two formats:
 - a) In the first, the debate shall be opened by an initial speech by the Prime Minister, which shall last for no more than ten minutes and shall be followed by a phase of a single round of Members' questions;

b) In the second, the debate shall commence with a phase of a single round of Members' questions.

- 3- Each parliamentary group shall dispose of an overall time in which to pose its questions, which it may use in one or more speeches.
- 4- Each question shall immediately be followed by the Prime Minister's response.
- 5- The Prime Minister shall dispose of an overall time for responses which shall be equal to that of each of the parliamentary groups that question him.
- 6- In the format referred to by subparagraph a) of paragraph (2) above, parliamentary groups which are not represented in the Government shall speak in descending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and shall be followed by the parliamentary groups which are represented in the Government in ascending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly.
- 7- In the format referred to by subparagraph b) of paragraph (2) above, parliamentary groups shall speak in descending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, albeit priority shall be granted in accordance with the table set out in Annexe II.
- 8- In the format referred to by subparagraph b) of paragraph (2) above, the Prime Minister may ask one of the ministers present to complete his own response to, or to respond to, any given question.
- 9- The overall times of the debates and their distribution are set out in the table of times in Annexe I.
- 10- In the format referred to by subparagraph a) of paragraph (2) above, the Government, and in the format referred to by subparagraph b) of paragraph (2) above, parliamentary groups, shall inform the Assembly of the Republic and the Government respectively of the topics of their speeches at least twenty-four hours in advance.

Article 225
Ministerial debates

- 1- Each minister shall attend the Plenary at least once in each legislative session, for a session of questions from Members.
- 2- The debate shall address all the matters covered by the areas which are subject to oversight by the minister, who may be accompanied for the purpose by his ministerial team.
- 3- After first consulting the Government and the Conference of Leaders and at least one month in advance, the President of the Assembly shall set the dates for holding the debates referred to by the previous paragraph.
- 4- Each debate shall last for a maximum of one hundred and twenty minutes, and the Conference of Leaders shall be responsible for determining the distribution of questions in accordance with each parliamentary group's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly.
- 5- Each question shall last for a maximum of two minutes and shall immediately be followed by the minister's response, which shall also last for a maximum of two minutes, whereupon the questioner shall possess the right to respond to the minister's reply for a maximum of one minute.

Section V

Calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly

Article 226

Sittings for the Government to attend the Assembly

In the event that the right provided for by Article 180(2)d of the Constitution is exercised, the general policy debate shall commence by the tenth day following publication in the *Journal* of the call upon the Government to attend the Assembly, or its distribution in separate copies.

Article 227

Debates caused by calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly

- 1- The debate shall be opened by a speech by a Member from the parliamentary group which made the call and by a speech by a member of the Government.
- 2- The rules laid down by Article 145 shall apply to the debate.

Section VI
Debates on the State of the Nation

Article 228
Sittings for debates on the State of the Nation

- 1- In each legislative session there shall be a general policy debate on a date which shall be set by agreement between the President of the Assembly and the Government, who shall choose one of the last ten sittings in the legislative session. Such debates shall commence with a speech on the State of the Nation by the Prime Minister, who shall be subject to questions from parliamentary groups. There shall then be a general debate, which shall be closed by the Government.
- 2- Debates on the State of the Nation shall take place on terms that the Conference shall lay down in accordance with Article 145.

Section VII
Questions and requests

Article 229
Submission and treatment of questions and requests

- 1- Questions and requests made under the terms of Article 156d and e of the Constitution shall be numbered and published, and the President of the Assembly shall send them to the person or body responsible for the matter in question.
- 2- Questions and requests shall clearly identify the person to whom or the body to which they are addressed and who or which is responsible for providing the appropriate clarifications.
- 3- The Government and the Public Administration shall respond with the urgency warranted by the question, and such response times shall not exceed thirty days.
- 4- Whenever the Government or the Public Administration is unable to respond within the time limit so set, they shall inform the President of the Assembly of this fact and shall also submit the applicable substantiation in writing.
- 5- All questions, requests and responses, together with the dates thereof and the applicable time limits laid down by these Rules of Procedure, shall appear on the Assembly's website.

Article 230

Unanswered questions and requests

- 1- Questions and requests which have not been answered within the time limit laid down by paragraph (3) of the previous Article shall be published in chronological order in the *Journal* and on the Assembly of the Republic's website.
- 2- Such publication shall set apart cases covered by paragraph (4) of the previous Article, which shall be accompanied by the respective substantiation, as well as cases in which the response has been given after the applicable time limit.

Section VIII

Hearings of persons designated for appointment to senior state offices

Article 231

Conduct of hearings of persons designated for appointment to senior state offices

The hearing of such persons who are designated for appointment as the heads of independent Regulatory Authorities or as the holders of senior state offices as the law may require to be heard by the Assembly of the Republic, shall be conducted by the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question.

Section IX

Petitions

Article 232

Exercise of the right to petition

- 1- The right to petition provided for by Article 52 of the Constitution shall be exercised before the Assembly of the Republic, as laid down by law.
- 2- The Assembly of the Republic shall consider petitions and draw up final reports thereon within the time limits laid down by law.
- 3- When the law requires that a petition be considered in Plenary, the debate shall commence with the presentation of the competent parliamentary committee's report, followed by a speech by a representative of each parliamentary group, which shall last for such time as the Conference of Leaders shall set in accordance with Article 145.

Section X

Parliamentary inquiries

Article 233

Object of parliamentary inquiries

- 1- The object of parliamentary inquiries shall be to assess compliance with the Constitution and the laws and to consider the acts of the Government and the Public Administration.
- 2- Any request or proposal which would tend to lead to the holding of an inquiry shall indicate the substantiation therefore and delimit the scope thereof, failing which the President of the Assembly may summarily dismiss it.

Article 234

Formation of committees, initiative and conduct of inquiries

Parliamentary committees of inquiry shall be formed, and the initiative leading to the inquiry itself and the conduct thereof shall take place, in accordance with the law.

Article 235

Consideration of parliamentary inquiries

- 1- The Assembly shall pronounce on any request or proposal to hold an inquiry within fifteen days of the request or proposal's publication in the *Journal* or distribution in separate copies to the parliamentary groups.
- 2- One of the request or proposal's subscribers, the Prime Minister or another member of the Government, and a representative of each parliamentary group shall speak in the debate.

Article 236

Decisions to hold an inquiry and reports

- 1- When the Assembly is required to decide upon the holding of an inquiry, once the decision has been made an ad hoc parliamentary committee of inquiry shall be formed in accordance with the law.
- 2- The Plenary shall set the date by which the parliamentary committee is to present the report, in accordance with, and within, the limits laid down by law.
- 3- If the report is not presented by the said date, the parliamentary committee shall substantiate the delay and ask the Plenary to extend the time limit in accordance with, and within, the limits laid down by law.

Article 237

Powers of parliamentary committees of inquiry

Parliamentary committees of inquiry shall enjoy the investigative powers of the judicial authorities and any other powers and rights provided for by law.

Section XI

Ombudsman's reports and recommendations

Article 238

Ombudsman's annual reports

- 1- Upon its receipt, the Ombudsman's annual report shall be referred to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question.
- 2- The parliamentary committee shall examine the report within sixty days of receiving it and shall request such complementary information and clarifications as it deems necessary.
- 3- For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the parliamentary committee may ask the Ombudsman to attend it.

Article 239

Consideration of the Ombudsman's annual reports in Plenary

- 1- The parliamentary committee shall issue a duly substantiated formal opinion and shall send it to the President of the Assembly for publication in the *Journal*.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall include consideration of the Ombudsman's report in the order of business for no later than the thirtieth day following receipt of the said formal opinion.

3- The debate shall be a general one and the rules laid down in Article 145 shall apply.

Article 240

Special Ombudsman's reports

In the event that the Ombudsman approaches the Assembly because the Public Administration is failing to act in accordance with his recommendations or is refusing to cooperate as requested, the President of the Assembly shall send the respective communication and any attached documents to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question and to the parliamentary groups, and shall order their publication in the *Journal*.

Article 241

Ombudsman's recommendations

In the event that the Ombudsman addresses recommendations for legislation to the Assembly, the said recommendations and any attached documents shall be sent to the parliamentary groups for such purposes as they deem fit, and shall be published in the *Journal*.

Section XII

Reports from other persons and bodies

Article 242

Other reports submitted to the Assembly

The provisions of the previous Section shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to such reports as the law may require to be submitted to the Assembly of the Republic.

Chapter VI
Procedures concerning other bodies

Section I
Procedures concerning the President of the Republic

Division I
Installation of the President of the Republic

Article 243
Assembly sitting for installation of the President of the Republic

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic shall hold a special sitting for the installation of the President of the Republic, pursuant to Article 127 of the Constitution.
- 2- If the Assembly is not in full session, the Standing Committee or, when the Standing Committee is unable to do so and in the event of a dire emergency, more than half of all the Members, shall call it.

Article 244
Formalities concerning installation of the President of the Republic

- 1- Once the sitting has been opened, the President of the Assembly shall adjourn it in order to receive the President of the Republic elect and the guests.
- 2- When the sitting has been resumed, the President of the Assembly shall cause the notice of the overall election result to be read out by one of the Secretaries of the Board.

- 3- The President of the Republic elect shall swear the pledge set out in Article 127(3) of the Constitution and the national anthem shall then be sung.
- 4- The President of the Republic and the President of the Assembly shall sign the installation document.

Article 245

Acts following installation of the President of the Republic

- 1- Once the installation document has been signed, the President of the Assembly shall deliver a speech welcoming the new President of the Republic.
- 2- If he so wishes and pursuant to Article 133d of the Constitution, the President of the Republic shall reply in the form of a message to the Assembly.
- 3- Once the President of the Republic has spoken, the President of the Assembly shall declare the meeting closed and the national anthem shall again be sung.

Division II

Consent to the President of the Republic's absence from the country

Article 246

Consent to absence

- 1- The President of the Republic shall request the Assembly of the Republic's consent to his absencing himself from Portuguese territory by addressing a message to the Assembly pursuant to Articles 129 and 133d of the Constitution.
- 2- If the Assembly is not in full session, the Standing Committee shall grant consent pursuant to Article 179(3)e of the Constitution.
- 3- The message shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 247

Scrutiny of consent to absence in parliamentary committee

Immediately upon receipt of the message from the President of the Republic and in the event that the Assembly is in full session, the President of the Assembly shall take steps to convene the parliamentary committee with responsibility for the matter in question, and shall set it a time limit for the issue of a formal opinion.

Article 248

Discussion of consent to absence

The President of the Republic's message shall serve as the basis for discussion at a plenary sitting, at which one Member from each parliamentary group and the Government shall possess the right to speak.

Article 249

Form of the act of consent to absence

The Assembly's decision shall take the form of a resolution.

Division III
Resignation of the President of the Republic

Article 250

Assembly sitting in the event of resignation of the President of the Republic

- 1- In the event that the President of the Republic resigns, the Assembly shall sit within forty-eight hours of receipt of the message provided for by Article 131 of the Constitution in order to take note thereof.
- 2- There shall be no debate.

Division IV
Charges against the President of the Republic

Article 251

Assembly sitting for charges against the President of the Republic

For the purposes of Article 130(2) of the Constitution, the Assembly shall sit within forty-eight hours of the making of any motion signed by one fifth of all the Members in full exercise of their office.

Article 252
Formation of special parliamentary committee

The Assembly shall form a special parliamentary committee, which shall draw up a report within such time limit as it is set.

Article 253

Discussion and voting

- 1- Once he has received the parliamentary committee's report, the President of the Assembly shall schedule a plenary sitting within forty-eight hours in order to address it.
- 2- At the end of the debate, the President of the Assembly shall call a vote on whether to instigate proceedings, passage of which shall require a two-thirds majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.

Section II

Lifting immunity from criminal prosecution from members of the Government

Article 254

Discussion and vote on suspension of members of the Government

- 1- In the event that criminal proceedings are brought against any member of the Government and an indictment order or any equivalent thereof is definitively issued against him, the Assembly shall decide whether or not he is to be suspended so that the proceedings may go ahead, save only in cases in which the crime is punishable by a maximum of more than three years' imprisonment.
- 2- The decision provided for by this Article shall be preceded by a formal opinion from a parliamentary committee that shall be formed especially for the purpose. The motion shall be put to a secret ballot and its passage shall require an absolute majority of the Members present.

Section III
Designation of holders of offices outside the Assembly

Article 255
Election to offices outside the Assembly

The Assembly of the Republic shall hold elections for those offices outside the Assembly to which it possesses the power of appointment, as laid down by the Constitution or by law.

Article 256
Submission of nominations

- 1- Nominations shall be submitted by a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty Members.
- 2- Nominations shall be presented to the President of the Assembly at least thirty days prior to the date of the election, together with each candidate's curriculum vitae and a declaration by him agreeing to be a candidate.
- 3- During the period between the presentation of nominations referred to by the previous paragraph and the date of the election, the Assembly, acting in the shape of the competent parliamentary committee, shall hear each candidate.

Article 257

Hearings of candidates for offices outside the Assembly

Prior to their appointment, the Assembly of the Republic shall take steps to hear candidates for the following offices outside the Assembly, whom it is responsible for designating:

- a) The members of the Supreme Council of the Public Prosecutors' Office;
- b) 10 Constitutional Court Justices;
- c) The Ombudsman;
- d) The President of the Economic and Social Council;
- e) Seven members of the Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 258

Voting on the election of holders of offices outside the Assembly

- 1- Without prejudice to the provisions of the Constitution, the candidate who obtains more than half of the validly cast votes shall be deemed elected.
- 2- If none of the candidates obtains this number of votes, the two candidates who received the most votes and have not withdrawn from the election shall be the object of a second vote.

Article 259

Proportional representation system

- 1- Whenever the proportional representation system is used for the election, the vote shall be for a complete list, using d'Hondt's highest-average rule.

- 2- In the event of the election of a candidate who is already, or who later becomes, an ex officio member of the body in question, the first unelected candidate on the list with the most votes shall be called on to take office.

Article 260

Re-opening of proceedings

In the event that no candidate is elected to a given vacancy, the proceedings in relation to that vacancy shall be re-opened within at most fifteen days.

Chapter VII

Procedure concerning monitoring, consideration and pronouncement within the context of the process of constructing Europe

Section I

Monitoring, consideration and pronouncement within the context of the process of constructing Europe

Article 261

General provisions within the context of the process of constructing Europe

- 1- The Assembly of the Republic shall issue formal opinions on such matters that fall within the sphere of its exclusive legislative responsibility as may be pending decision at European Union bodies and are in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, and shall monitor and consider Portugal's participation in the construction of the European Union, as laid down by law.
- 2- For the purposes of the provisions of the previous paragraph, the Assembly and the Government shall engage in a regular consultation process, as laid down by law.

Chapter VIII
Emergency proceedings

Article 262
Object of emergency proceedings

Any bill or draft resolution may be the object of emergency proceedings.

Article 263
Decisions as to the existence of an emergency

- 1- Any Member, any parliamentary group, the Government and, in the case of a bill submitted by the Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, the said Legislative Assembly, shall possess the power to request emergency proceedings.
- 2- The President of the Assembly shall refer the request for emergency proceedings to the competent parliamentary committee, which shall consider it and draw up a duly substantiated formal opinion within forty-eight hours.
- 3- Once the formal opinion has been drawn up, the Plenary shall pronounce itself as to whether the matter is indeed an emergency and the Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate thereon in accordance with Article 145(6).

Article 264

Formal opinion of the parliamentary committee on the emergency

- 1- The parliamentary committee's formal opinion shall indicate how the legislative procedure for the bill or draft resolution for which emergency proceedings have been requested should be organised, and may propose:
 - a) That scrutiny in parliamentary committee be dispensed with, or that the time limit therefore be shortened;
 - b) That the number and duration of speeches by Members and the Government be reduced;
 - c) That referral of the text to the parliamentary committee for final drafting be dispensed with, or that the time limit therefore be shortened.
- 2- If the parliamentary committee does not submit a proposal for the organisation of the legislative procedure, the Conference of Leaders shall decide its format in accordance with Article 145.

Article 265

Supplemental rule in the event that emergency proceedings are declared

In the event that emergency proceedings are declared and nothing is decided pursuant to the previous Article, the legislative proceedings shall be organised as follows:

- a) The time limit for scrutiny in parliamentary committee shall be a maximum of five days;
- b) The time limit for final drafting shall be two days.

Title V
Provisions concerning these Rules of Procedure

Article 266
Interpretation and construction of these Rules of Procedure

- 1- The Bureau shall interpret and construct these Rules of Procedure, and to this end may consult the competent parliamentary committee whenever it so deems fit. Its decisions shall be subject to appeal to the Plenary.
- 2- When given in writing, the Bureau's decisions on the interpretation and construction of these Rules of Procedure shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 267
Amendments to these Rules of Procedure

- 1- At the initiative of any Member, the Assembly of the Republic may amend these Rules of Procedure.
- 2- Draft amendments to these Rules of Procedure shall abide by the rules laid down by Article 120(1) and Articles 124 et sequitur.
- 3- When any draft amendment is admitted, the President of the Assembly shall refer the text to the competent parliamentary committee for discussion and voting.
- 4- The Rules of Procedure, including such amendments as are approved in parliamentary committee, shall be subject to a final overall vote and their passage shall require an absolute majority of the Members present.
- 5- Whenever these Rules of Procedure are revised or amended, the competent parliamentary committee shall draft the final text in accordance with Article 156.
- 6- Following incorporation of the amendments in their correct places, these Rules of Procedure shall be republished in the *Diário da República*.

Title VI
Final and transitional provisions

Article 268
Transitional provisions

- 1- The Conference of Leaders shall decide the composition of the standing parliamentary committees by 15 September 2007, in accordance with Articles 29 and 30.
- 2- The provisions of Article 143 shall not apply to legislative initiatives admitted prior to the date on which the present Rules of Procedure enter into force.

Article 269
Revocatory rule

Assembly of the Republic Resolution no. 4/93 of 2 March 1993, as amended by Assembly of the Republic Resolutions nos. 15/96 of 2 May 1996, 3/99 of 20 January 1999, 75/99 of 25 November 1999, and 2/2003 of 17 January 2003, is hereby repealed.

Article 270
Annexes to these Rules of Procedure

The following shall form an integral part of these Rules of Procedure:

- a) The tables of times, as Annexe I;
- b) The tables of potestative rights, as Annexe II.

Article 271
Entry into force

These Rules of Procedure shall enter into force on 1 September 2007.

Passed on 19 July 2007

THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC,

(Jaime Gama)

ANNEXE I

Tables of times

Table for Common Legislative Procedure

Each Parliamentary Group and the Government shall dispose of three minutes.

	PS	PSD	PCP	CDS	BE	PEV	Total
D	3	3	3	3	3	3	18

Proposers of legislative initiatives shall each dispose of 1 more minute.

Normal tables

	PS	PSD	PCP	CDS	BE	PEV	Total
A	30	25	10	10	8	6	89
B	20	16	9	9	7	6	67
C	10	9	6	6	5	3	39
D	3	3	3	3	3	3	18

- 1- Proposers of initiatives and the Government shall dispose of the same amount of time as the parliamentary group with the largest share of the seats in the Assembly.

- 2- When there is to be a combined debate on more than one legislative initiative, the provisions of the previous paragraph shall apply exclusively to initiatives that were admitted prior to the date of the scheduling of the initiative which gave rise to the combined scheduling.

Special tables

1. Prime-ministerial debates

PARLIAMENTARY GROUP	Time	PRIME MINISTER
Initial speech		10 (in the format laid down by Article 224(2)a)
PS	9	9
PSD	9	9
PCP	6	6
CDS	6	6
BE	5	5
PEV	3	3

Debate	Overall time
Format laid down by Article 224(2)a	86
Format laid down by Article 224(2)b	76

2. Other special tables

After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall establish the tables of times for the remaining debates, namely:

- . The Government's Programme
- . Motions of confidence
- . Motions of no confidence
- . Calls on the Government to attend the Assembly
- . The Major Options of National Plans
- . The State Budget
- . The General State Accounts and other public accounts
- . The State of the Nation
- . Emergency debates
- . Thematic debates

ANNEXE II

1. Tables of potestative rights per legislative session

Calls on the Government to Attend the Assembly:

Each parliamentary group	2 calls
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Emergency Debates:

Up to 15 Members – 1 debate

Up to one tenth of all the Members – 2 debates

For each additional tenth of all the Members – 2 more debates

Setting the Order of Business:

Parliamentary groups represented in the Government

For each tenth of all the Members – 1 meeting

Parliamentary groups not represented in the Government

Up to 10 Members – 1 meeting

Up to 15 Members – 2 meetings

Up to one fifth of all the Members – 4 meetings

For each additional tenth of all the Members – 2 more meetings

Debates on Current Affairs:

Up to 5 Members – 1 debate

Up to 10 Members – 2 debates

Up to 15 Members – 3 debates

Up to one fifth of all the Members – 4 debates

One fifth or more of all the Members – 5 debates

Potestative rights in parliamentary committees:

Up to 5 Members – 1

Up to 10 Members – 2

Up to 15 Members – 3

Up to one fifth of all the Members – 4

One fifth or more of all the Members – 5

2. Table of potestative rights per legislature

Prime-ministerial Debates (in the format laid down by Article 224(2)b):

Up to 5 Members – 1 debate

Up to 10 Members – 2 debates

Up to 15 Members – 3 debates

Up to one fifth of all the Members – 4 debates

One fifth or more of all the Members – 5 debates

Note: This distribution of potestative rights corresponds to a series that repeats itself throughout the legislature.