

CONGRESS
OF DEPUTIES

STANDING ORDERS
OF THE CONGRESS
OF DEPUTIES



MADRID

PRELIMINARY PART

Constituent meeting of Congress

68, 67, 62, 1 23, 99, 115 C 147 SO 168 C 5 SO	Section 1 Following a general election to the Congress, a constituent meeting of the House shall be held in accordance with Section 68.6 of the Constitution, on such day and at such time as specified in the Royal Decree issued to call the election.	Calling of the meeting
	Section 2 The constituent meeting shall be chaired initially by the oldest of the Members-elect present, assisted by the two youngest acting as Secretaries.	Provisional Bureau
36 SO	Section 3 1. The Chairperson shall open proceedings and one of the Secretaries shall read out the Royal Decree calling the election, the roll of Members-elect and any appeals lodged against the election results, specifying the Members-elect who may be affected by the decision on such appeals. 2. The Bureau of the Congress shall then be elected in accordance with the procedure described in Section 37 hereof.	Procedure at Meeting Election of final Bureau 37 SO
Oath or pledge of allegiance to the Constitution	Section 4 1. After the voting has concluded, those elected shall take an oath or pledge to observe the Constitution, for which purpose their names shall be called out in alphabetical order. The Speaker shall then declare Congress constituted, and shall adjourn the sitting. 2. The constitution of Congress shall be notified by the Speaker to the King, the Senate and the Government.	9 C 20, 59 SO
State opening of Parliament	Section 5 Within the period of fifteen days from the constituent meeting, the State opening of the parliamentary term shall be held.	1 SO

PART I

Status of Members

CHAPTER I

Rights of Members

Attendance of Sittings	Section 6 1. Members shall be entitled to attend and vote at plenary sittings of the House and at meetings of the Committees of which they are members. They may also attend, but may not vote at, the meetings of Committees of which they are not members.	67 C 40, 99, 69, SO
75 C 180, 185 SO	2. Members shall have the right to sit on at least one Committee, and to exercise the rights and perform the duties vested in them by these Rules.	Membership of Committees

Section 7

105, 109 C
44, 49,
202,
203, 99 SO

1. For the better fulfilment of their parliamentary duties, and with the prior knowledge of their respective Parliamentary Group, Members shall be entitled to request from administrative bodies all such information or documents as the latter may possess.

Request of
data and
reports

2. The request shall be submitted, in each case, through the Speaker, and the body shall make available the documentation so requested or shall give notice to the Speaker, within a term not exceeding thirty days and for conveyance in the most suitable manner to the applicant, of the legally justified reasons preventing the supply of such information.

Procedure

Section 8

71 C
99 SO

1. Members shall be paid a financial allowance enabling them to perform their duties efficiently and in a decorous manner.

Salary

2. They shall also be entitled to receive such benefits, exemptions and compensation for expenses as may be indispensable for the performance of their duties.

Other
Remunerations

3. All payments received by Members shall be subject to general tax regulations.

General tax system
applicable

4. The Bureau of Congress shall determine annually the amount of payments to be received by Members, and the forms thereof, within the relevant budgetary appropriations.

Bureau to lay down amount
of remunerations every year

Section 9

71 C
99 SO

1. Contributions to Social Security and to the Mutual Provident Fund by Members who, as a consequence of taking up their parliamentary duties, cease to render the services in connection with which they were registered under such schemes, shall be paid out of the Budget of the House.

Social
Security

Agreements
with Social
Security

2. The Congress may establish the necessary arrangements with the agencies responsible for the administration of Social Security to fulfil the provisions of the preceding paragraph and to register under the appropriate scheme those Members who so wish and who were not previously registered under Social Security.

Extension of Subs. 1 to
old age pensions in
some cases

3. The provisions of paragraph 1 hereof shall also apply to pension contributions in the case of civil servants who as a result of their parliamentary duties have been granted extended leave.

CHAPTER II

Parliamentary Privileges

Section 10

Freedom of
Speech

Members shall not be accountable, even after their mandate has expired, in respect of opinions expressed by them in the performance of their duties.

71 C

Section 11

Freedom
from arrest

During the period of their mandate, Members shall also enjoy immunity and may only be arrested in cases of *flagrante delicto*. They may not be indicted or persecuted without previous leave of Congress.

71 C
13, 14 SO

Measures to be taken by Speaker on arrest of a Member of Congress	Section 12	71, 66 C
	As soon as the arrest of a Member or the taking of any other judicial or police action against a Member that may prevent the performance of his or her mandate becomes known, the Speaker shall immediately adopt all such measures as may be necessary to safeguard the rights and privileges of the House and its Members.	
	Section 13	
11 SO	1. Upon receipt of a formal petition by a Court (<i>supplicatorio</i>) requesting leave of the House as referred to in Section 11, the Speaker, upon prior resolution of the Bureau, shall refer the petition within a term of five days to the Committee of Members' Status. No such petition not submitted and supported with the necessary documents in the manner required by the procedural laws in force shall be admitted.	Procedure for incrimination of members
	2. The Committee shall conclude its proceedings within a maximum term of thirty days after having heard the interested party. Evidence may be submitted in writing, within such term as the Committee shall appoint, or may take place orally before the Committee itself.	
	3. Once the Committee has concluded its task, the question shall be laid, with the necessary documentary support, at the first ordinary plenary sitting of the House.	
	Section 14	
21, 52, 105, 169, 101 SO	1. Within a term of eight days following the decision adopted on the floor of the House concerning the granting or refusal of the authorization requested, the Speaker shall convey the decision to the judicial authority, advising such authority of its obligation to notify the House of any orders and judgments that are pronounced and that may personally affect the member.	Decision on waiver of immunity
	2. The petition shall be deemed to be rejected if the House fails to pronounce thereon within a term of sixty calendar days reckoned during the session, from the date following receipt of the petition.	Tacit refusal to Waiver immunity
CHAPTER III Duties of Members		
	Section 15	
Duty to Attend sittings	Members have the duty to attend plenary sittings of the Congress and meetings of the Committees of which they are members.	55, 99 SO
	Section 16	
Duty to observe the Rules of Procedure And parliamentary courtesy	Members shall conform in their conduct to these Rules and observe parliamentary order, courtesy and discipline, as well as refrain from disclosing any proceedings which, as provided herein, may in exceptional circumstances be of a secret nature.	72 C 99, 103 C
		63, 64, 66, SO
	Section 17	
Members not to use their status in private activities	Members may not avail themselves of or declare their status as such for the conduct of any business, industrial or professional activity.	101 SO

Declaration of assets and remunerated activities

Section 18

Members shall register a Declaration of assets, in compliance with the terms of the General Electoral System Act.

Section 19

Duty to observe rules on disqualification

1. Members shall at all times observe the rules on disqualifications laid down in the Constitution and in the electoral law.

70 C

Procedure

2. The Committee of Members' Status shall submit to the full House its proposals regarding disqualification of each member within the following twenty days from full acquisition of the Member Status, or from the notification—which the Member shall compulsorily make—of any alteration in the statement made for the purpose of the provisions on disqualifications.

48 SO

3. After any such disqualification has been declared and notified, the member affected thereby shall be allowed eight days in which to opt between his seat and the incompatible office. If he fails to exercise this option within the said term, he shall be deemed to have relinquished his seat.

Member to opt between Incompatible positions

CHAPTER IV Acquisition, suspension and loss of Member Status

Section 20

18 C

1. Members proclaimed elect shall acquire full status of Members of Congress by complying with the following requirements:

Acquisition of full Member status

i) Lodging with the Office of the Secretary General the credential issued by the relevant electoral authority.

ii) Submitting a declaration of activities in compliance with the terms of the General Electoral System Act.

iii) Taking the oath or pledge to observe the Constitution at the first plenary sitting of Congress which they attend.

9 C
4 SO

2. The rights and privileges shall be effective from such time as the Members are proclaimed elect. However, if three plenary sittings of the House are held without the Member fully acquiring such status in accordance with the preceding paragraph, he or she shall have no rights or privilege until such acquisition occurs.

Suspension of rights and privileges

70 C

Section 21

1. A Member shall be suspended from his or her parliamentary rights and duties:

Suspension from membership

i) Where such suspension is appropriate by application of the rules on parliamentary discipline established herein.

101 SO

ii) Where the authorisation requested by a judicial authority has been granted by the House, and on the basis of a firm order of indictment, the Member is put into preventive detention, such suspension continuing for the duration of the detention.

14 SO

2. A Member shall be suspended in his or her parliamentary rights, privileges and obligations if a judgment of conviction that is final so decrees, or if the execution of such a judgment entails the impossibility of discharging parliamentary duties.

101, 106 SO

Section 22

Loss of
Membership

A Member shall lose his or her status as such owing to the following causes:

i) By a final judicial decision annulling his or her election or proclamation.

70 C

ii) By death or incapacity, the latter being declared by a final judicial decision.

115, 68 C

iii) By the termination of his or her mandate, due to expiration of the term thereof or dissolution of the House, without prejudice to the continuance in office of the principal and deputy members of the Permanent Deputation until the constitution of the new Congress.

78 C
56 SO

iv) By relinquishment of his or her mandate as member before the Bureau of Congress.

67 C
31 SO

PART II

Parliamentary Groups

Setting-up
of groups

54, 56, 53, 54,
56, 63, 67, 68,
84, 85,
101, 117,
139,
146, 180,
193, 195 SO

Section 23

1. A parliamentary group may be formed by a minimum of fifteen members. A Parliamentary Group may also be formed by members of one or more political parties which, although not reaching such minimum, have secured no fewer than five seats and at least fifteen per cent of the votes in the constituencies in which they have put up a candidate, or five per cent of the votes cast in the country as a whole.

6, 67, 78,
99
C
24, 25, 26, 40,
48, 49, 52, 53,

Trans. Prov. 2 SO

2. In no case may a separate parliamentary group be formed by members of the House belonging to the same party. Nor may a separate parliamentary group be formed by members who at the time of the elections belonged to political parties that did not oppose one another before the electorate.

Limitations

Section 24

1. The establishment of parliamentary groups shall be carried out within five days following the constituent meeting of Congress by means of a notice addressed to the Bureau.

Procedure to
set up a
group

2. The said notice, which shall be signed by all those wishing to form the group, shall state the name of the group and the names of all the members, of its spokesperson and of those members who may, if necessary, deputize for such spokesperson.

39 SO

Contents of
written notice

3. Members who belong to none of the parliamentary groups so established may associate with any of them by means of an application which, after having been accepted by the spokesperson of the group with which they wish to associate, shall be lodged with the Bureau of the House within the term specified in paragraph 1 hereof.

23 SO

Associate
members of
groups

4. Associates shall be counted for the determination of the minimum numbers laid down in the preceding article as well as for fixing the number of members of each group on the various Committees.

40 SO

Section 25

Mixed Group	<p>1. Members who, according to the provisions of preceding Sections, are not included in a parliamentary group within the term specified, shall form part of the Mixed Group.</p> <p>2. No Member may belong to more than one parliamentary group.</p> <p>Section 26</p>	<p>27, 75 SO</p> <p>23 SO</p> <p>23 SO</p>
Accession of new members	<p>Members who acquire their status as such subsequently to the constituent meeting of the Congress shall join a parliamentary group within five days from such acquisition. In order to do so, the acceptance of the spokesperson of the parliamentary group in question must be attested. Otherwise they shall be included in the Mixed Group.</p> <p>Section 27</p>	
Moving from one group to another	<p>1. Transfers from one parliamentary group to another, except for the Mixed Group, may only take place within the first five days of each session, and in all cases the provisions of the preceding section shall be applicable.</p> <p>2. If the membership of a parliamentary group, other than the Mixed Group, is reduced during the life of Parliament to less than one-half of the minimum required for the formation thereof, the group shall be dissolved and its members shall automatically become members of the Mixed Group.</p> <p>Section 28</p>	25, 75 SO
Dissolution of a group		
Congress to make facilities available to groups	<p>1. The Congress shall make available to parliamentary groups sufficient premises and material means and shall allocate them, out of its Budget, a fixed subsidy which shall be the same for all groups, and an additional subsidy which shall vary according to the number of members of each group. The amounts shall be settled by the Bureau of the House within the limits of the relevant budgetary appropriation.</p> <p>2. Parliamentary groups shall keep a specific account of the subsidy referred to in the preceding paragraph, which they shall make available to the Bureau of Congress upon request.</p> <p>Section 29</p>	99 SO
31 C		
75 SO	<p>All parliamentary groups, with the exceptions set forth herein, shall have exactly the same rights.</p>	Equal rights for all groups

PART III
Organization of Congress

CHAPTER I
The Bureau

DIVISION 1

*Functions of the Bureau
and its members*

72 C	<p>Section 30</p> <p>1. The Bureau is the body entrusted with the management of the House and vested with the collective representation thereof in all acts at which it is present.</p>	Nature
77, 86 SO	<p>2. The Bureau consists of the Speaker of Congress, four Deputy Speakers and four Secretaries.</p>	Members

Speaker to lead the Bureau	3. The Speaker directs and coordinates the action of the Bureau.	72 C 32 SO
Section 31		
Functions of Bureau. Organization	1. The Bureau shall have the following functions: i) To adopt such decisions and measures as are required for the arrangement of business and the internal regulation and management of the House.	
Drafting Budget of Congress	ii) To prepare a draft Budget of the House, supervise and oversee its implementation and submit to the full House, at the end of each year, a report as to its fulfilment.	72 C
Ordering expenses	iii) To order the expenses of the House, without prejudice to its rights to delegate authority in this connection.	
Assessing papers and records	iv) To assess parliamentary papers and documents, in accordance with the Standing Orders, and to declare the admissibility or inadmissibility thereof.	22, 109, 130, 174, 176, 194, 197, 43 SO
Deciding how to deal with papers	v) To decide upon the consideration of all parliamentary papers and documents in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders.	
Arranging proceedings of the full House and of Committees	vi) To arrange the general proceedings of the House, draw up the order of business of plenary sittings and of committees for each session and coordinate the business of the various bodies, upon previous consultation in each case with the Board of Spokesmen.	67 SO 39 SO
Other functions	vii) Any other functions entrusted to it hereunder, and all functions not entrusted to a specific body.	40, 53, 60, 62, 63, 69, 76, 90, 91, 101, 118, 119, 126, 127, 130, 136, 149, 150, 181 SO 39 SO
Reconsideration of decisions	2. If a Member or a parliamentary group disagrees with the decision adopted by the Bureau in the performance of the functions referred to in paragraphs (iv) and (v) of the foregoing subsection reconsideration of such decision may be requested. The Bureau shall finally decide, after having heard the Board of Spokesmen, by a resolution with a statement of the reasons thereof.	
Section 32		
64, 72, 78 99 C 30 SO	1. The Speaker shall represent the House, ensure progress of its business without hindrance, direct debates, maintain order during the same and order payments, without prejudice to delegation of his or her authority.	Speaker's nature and functions
72, 52 SO	2. It is the responsibility of the Speaker to observe the Standing Orders and ensure their observance, interpreting them in case of doubt and making good any omission therein. When in the performance of the latter duty he or she proposes to issue a general ruling, a favourable opinion shall be required of the Bureau and of the Board of Spokesmen.	Interpreting and, if necessary supplementing the Standing Orders
42, 67, 68, 70, 71, 73, 76, 96, 97, 104, 169 SO	3. The Speaker shall also perform all other duties vested in him or her by the Constitution, the laws and these Standing Orders.	Other duties
Section 33		
72 C 30, 39 SO	Deputy Speakers, in order of seniority, shall deputize for the Speaker and perform his or her duties in the event of vacancy, absence or incapacity. They shall also perform any other duties entrusted to them by the Speaker or the Bureau.	Deputy Speakers
Section 34		
72 C	The Secretaries shall supervise and authorize with the Speaker's approval the minutes of plenary sittings, of the Bureau and of the	

30, 56, 84,
86, 171 SO

Board of Spokesmen, as well as any certificates that may have to be issued; assist the Speaker in the sittings of the House to ensure order in debates and correct voting; cooperate in ensuring the unencumbered progress of business in the House in accordance with the Speaker's instructions and perform, in addition, any other duties entrusted to them by the Speaker or the Bureau.

Secretaries

Section 35

Secretary-General
(Head Clerk
of the House)

1. Meetings of the Bureau shall be called by the Speaker and shall be counselled by the Clerk (*Letrado de las Cortes*) appointed as Secretary- General, who shall draw up the minutes of meetings and shall ensure, under the supervision of the Speaker, the implementation of its decisions.

67, 72, 79
C
20, 39, 45,
65,
92, 60 SO

Appointment
of the
Secretary-General

2. The Secretary General shall be appointed by the Bureau of the House, upon the Speaker' proposal among Clerks with more than five years of actual service.

DIVISION 2

Election of members of the Bureau

Section 36

Election of
the Bureau

1. Congress shall elect the members of the Bureau in its constituent sitting.

72 C

Bureau to be
elected again

2. A new election of members of the Bureau shall be held if the decisions pronounced on appeals lodged against the election results involve a change in more than ten per cent of the seats. Such election shall take place after the new Members have acquired full status.

3 SO

Section 37

Election of
Speaker

1. In the election of the Speaker, each member shall write a single name on the ballot paper. The candidate having obtained the votes of the overall majority of members of the House shall be elected. If no candidate obtains such a majority on the first ballot, the election shall be repeated among the two candidates who have achieved the highest number of votes, and the candidate who obtains more votes shall then be elected.

72 C
3, 41, 56 SO

2. The four Deputy Speakers shall be elected simultaneously. Each member shall write a single name on the ballot paper. The four candidates obtaining the highest number of votes shall be elected in that order. The four Secretaries shall be elected in the same manner.

Election of
Deputy
Speakers

88, 204 SO

3. In the event of a tie, successive ballots shall be held among the tied candidates until the tie is broken.

Ballots to be held
in case of tie

Section 38

72 C

Any vacancies occurring in the Bureau during the parliamentary term shall be filled by election in plenary sitting as provided for in the preceding Section, the provisions of which shall be adjusted to fit the actual number of vacancies to be filled.

Vacancies in
Bureau

CHAPTER II

The Board of Spokesmen (*Junta de Portavoces*)

Section 39

67, 78 C
31, 67, 40, 50, 52, 53,
118, 89, 147, 150, 151,
161, 171, 177, 149 SO
110 C
55, 62, 63, 67, 70, 86,
112, 33, 34, 35,
SO
67 SO

1. Spokespersons of parliamentary groups shall make up the Board of Spokesmen. Meetings of the Board shall be chaired by the Speaker of Congress. The Speaker shall convene such meetings on his own initiative or at the request of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the Members of the House.

Members of the Board

2. Meetings of the Board of Spokesmen shall be notified to the Government so that, if it sees fit, it can send a representative who may, if necessary, be accompanied by an assistant.

Government entitled to send a representative to meetings

Attendance

3. Meetings of the Board of Spokesmen must be attended by at least one Deputy Speaker, one of the Secretaries of the House and the Secretary-General. The spokesmen or their substitutes may be accompanied by a member of their group, who will not be entitled to vote.

24 SO

Decisions always by weighted vote

4. The decisions of the Board of Spokesmen shall always be adopted by applying the principle of weighted vote.

88 SO

CHAPTER III

Committees

DIVISION 1

Committees. General rules

Section 40

Membership

1. Except where otherwise provided, committees shall consist of such number of members designated by each parliamentary group as shall be determined by the Bureau of Congress, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen and in proportion to the number of each group in the House.

75 C
6, 24, 39,
47,
48, 50, 56,
68 SO

Replacements

2. Parliamentary groups may replace one or more of their members on a committee by any other member or members of the same group, upon prior written notice to the Speaker of Congress. If the substitution is for a specific matter, debate or meeting only, notice shall be given verbally or in writing to the Chairman of the committee and if in such notice it is stated that the substitution is a purely contingent one, then the Chairman shall admit as a member of the committee either the substitute or the original member.

70 SO

110 C
44 SO

3. Members of the Government may attend and speak at committee meetings but may only vote at meetings of committees of which they are members.

Members of Government may attend, but not vote

Section 41

37, 67, 77,
110 SO

Subject to the exceptions provided for herein, committees elect among their members a bureau (Mesa) composed of a Chairperson, two Vice-Chairs and two Secretaries. The election shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions governing the election of the Bureau of Congress, with due allowance for the different number of posts to be filled.

Bureau of Committee Election of the same

Section 42

61 C

1. Committees shall be convened by the Chairperson, in agreement with the Speaker, on his own initiative or at the request of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the Committee members.

Committees convened by Chair

32 SO	<p>2. The Speaker may convene and chair any committee meeting, but he or she shall only be entitled to vote at the meetings of committees of which he or she is a member.</p>	Speaker entitled to convene and preside over any committee
Section 43		
31 SO	<p>1. Committees shall have cognizance of the bills or business entrusted to them, in accordance with their respective jurisdiction, by the Bureau of Congress.</p> <p>2. The Bureau of Congress, on its own initiative or at the request of an interested committee, may resolve that on questions falling within the principal jurisdiction of one committee, another committee or committees shall report previously.</p> <p>3. Committees must conclude the consideration of any business within a maximum term of two months, except in cases in which the Constitution or these Standing Orders set a different term, or the Bureau of the House, having regard to such exceptional circumstances as may exist, resolves to extend or reduce such term.</p>	Committees to deal with bills sent to them by Bureau
Time-limit for Committee's report		Prior report by other committees
		113 SO
Section 44		
Information and papers	<p>Committees may request, through the Speaker:</p> <p>i) Such information and documentation as they may require from the Government and administrative bodies, subject to the provisions of Section 7, paragraph 2.</p>	109 C 110 C 7 SO DF 5 SO
Attendance of members of Government	<p>ii) The attendance of members of the Government to report on matters relating to their respective Department.</p>	40, 202, 203 SO
Attendance of other Authorities	<p>iii) The attendance of authorities and civil servants competent by reason of the subject-matter of the debate in order that they report to the committee.</p>	52 SO
Attendance of other persons	<p>iv) The attendance of persons competent in the subject-matter for the purposes of reporting to and advising the committee.</p>	52 SO
Section 45		
Clerks of the House	<p>The Clerks shall furnish to committees, and in particular to their Bureaus and reporting sub-committees, the necessary technical and legal advice for the accomplishment of the tasks entrusted thereto, and shall draw up the appropriate reports reflecting any resolutions adopted.</p>	35, 55 SO

DIVISION 2

Standing Committees

60 SO	<p>Section 46 (modified by the Plenary Sitting on June 19th 2018)</p> <p>1. There shall be the following Standing Legislative Committees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constitutional Committee 2. Foreign Affairs Committee 3. Justice Committee 4. Defence Committee 5. Treasury Committee 6. Budget Committee 7. Home Affairs Committee 8. Public Works Committee 9. Education and Vocational Training Committee 10. Work, Migrations and Social Security Committee 11. Industry, Trade and Tourism Committee 12. Agriculture, Fishing and Food Committee 13. Territorial Policy and Public Function Committee 	List of Legislative Committees
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14. Ecological Transition Committee
15. Culture and Sports Committee
16. Economy and Business Committee
17. Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare Committee
18. Science, Innovation and Universities Committee
19. International Cooperation for Development Committee
20. Equality Committee
21. Committee on Comprehensive Policies for the Disabled

2. Other Standing Committees are those required to be set up by a legal provision, and they shall be the following:

- i) Rules
- ii) Members' Status
- iii) Petitions

3. The Standing Committees referred to in the preceding paragraphs shall be set up within ten days following the constituent meeting of the Congress.

Setting-up of Committees within 10 days

Section 47

72 C
Final Prov.
2 SO
40 SO

The Rules Committee shall consist of the Speaker, who shall chair the Committee, the remaining members of the Bureau of Congress and the members appointed by parliamentary groups in accordance with the provisions of Section 40 hereof.

Rules Committee

Section 48

Committee on Members' Status

1. The Committee on Members' Status shall consist of one member from each parliamentary group. It shall have a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary who shall be representatives, in that order, of the three largest parliamentary groups at the beginning of the parliamentary term.

40 SO

Committee to prepare decisions of full House on Members' Status

2. The Committee shall act as the body responsible for preparing the resolutions of the full House when the latter, pursuant to these Standing Orders, is to pronounce on matters affecting the status of Members, except where the proposal rests with the Speaker or the Bureau.

71 C
18, 64,
101 SO

Committee's proposals to be sent up to the full House

3. The Committee shall lay before the full House, properly arranged in articles and giving reasons therefor, the proposals agreed upon by its members.

63 SO

Section 49

Petitions Committee

1. The provisions of subsection 1 of the preceding Section shall be applicable to the Committee on Petitions.

Procedure on each petition

2. The Committee shall examine each individual or collective petition received by Congress and may resolve upon the reference thereof, as may be appropriate and through the Speaker of the House, to:

77 C

i) The Defender of the People (Ombudsman).

54 C

ii) The committee of Congress that is considering the matter in question.

iii) The Senate, the Government, the Courts, the Public Prosecutor, the Selfgoverning Community, Provincial Council, Canarian insular Council (Cabildo) or Town Council concerned.

7 SO

Committee may shelve petition

3. The Committee may also resolve, if the reference provided for in the preceding paragraph is not appropriate, on the shelving of the petition with no further action.

4. In all cases the petition shall be acknowledged and the resolution shall be notified to the petitioner.

Shelving decision to be notified to petitioner

Section 50

39, 40 SO

1. The full House, upon the proposal of the Bureau following consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, may resolve upon the appointment of other Standing Committees for the duration of the parliamentary term in which the resolution is taken.

Other Standing Committees may be set up by full House

2. The resolution to set up such a committee shall lay down the criteria governing the distribution of responsibilities between the committee so created and such other committees, if any, as may be affected thereby.

3. The dissolution of the committees referred to in this Section may be resolved upon by the same procedure as specified in subsection 1 hereof.

DIVISION 3

Ad Hoc Committees

Section 51

207 SO

Ad Hoc Committees are committees set up for a specific task. They are dissolved upon the conclusion of the business entrusted to them, and in any event at the end of the parliamentary term.

Section 52

76 C

1. Upon the proposal of the Government, the Bureau, two parliamentary groups or one fifth of the members of the House, the full House may resolve to set up a Committee of Enquiry into any matter of public interest.

Procedure for setting up an Enquiry Committee

Schedule of Business

2. Enquiry Committees shall draw up an agenda and may appoint reporting sub-committees among their members and require, through the Speaker, any person to give evidence. Requirements shall be issued in compliance with the Law described in Section 76.2 of the Constitution, and will in any case meet the following requirements:

44 SO

a) A requirement to give evidence, including the particular subjects to be reported on, must be issued a fortnight in advance. Shorter notice may be given in case of emergency, but will never be under three days.

b) In the written notice, the person in question shall be informed of his or her rights and duties. The person giving evidence may be accompanied and assisted by the person of his or her choice.

Procedure

3. The Speaker, after having heard the Committee, may, when necessary, dictate the appropriate rules of procedure. In an Enquiry Committee, decisions shall always be adopted on the basis of a weighted vote.

32, 63, 64, SO

Findings to be discussed by full House

4. The findings of these committees, which shall not be binding upon the courts nor affect judicial decisions, shall be set forth in a report for discussion on the floor of the House. The Speaker, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, shall be entitled to arrange the debate, grant the floor and determine the amount of time to be allocated to each speaker.

76 C

39 SO

Publication of findings	<p>5. The findings approved by the full House shall be published in the Official Parliamentary Bulletin (<i>Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Generales</i>) and notified to the Government, without prejudice to the possibility of their being sent by the Bureau of the House to the Public Prosecutor for the institution, if appropriate, of legal proceedings.</p> <p>6. At the request of the parliamentary groups proposing the conclusions, any dissenting opinions rejected shall also be published in the Official Parliamentary Bulletin.</p>	<p>96 SO</p> <p>97 SO</p> <p>76 C 101, 105, 169 SO</p> <p>Dissenting opinions also to be published</p>
31, 39 SO	<p>Section 53</p> <p>The appointment of ad hoc committees other than those provided for in preceding Section, and the possible mixed or joint nature thereof in relation to other existing Committees, may be resolved upon by the Bureau of the House on its own initiative, on that of two parliamentary groups or of one fifth of the members of Congress, and after consultation with the Board of Spokesmen.</p>	<p>Other non standing committees</p>
<p>CHAPTER IV</p> <p>Plenary Sitzings</p>		
67, 75, 79 23 SO	<p>Section 54</p> <p>Plenary sittings shall be convened by the Speaker, on his or her own initiative or at the request of a least two parliamentary groups or one fifth of Members of Congress.</p>	<p>Convocation</p>
15, 70 SO	<p>Section 55</p> <p>1. Members shall take their seats in accordance with their membership of parliamentary groups and shall always occupy the same seats.</p> <p>2. There shall be a special bench for members of the Government.</p> <p>3. Access to the House shall only be allowed, in addition to the above-mentioned persons, to the personnel of the <i>Cortes Generales</i> in the discharge of their duties and to persons expressly authorised by the Speaker.</p>	<p>Arrangement of seats</p> <p>Special Government Bench</p> <p>Limitations to access to Assembly Hall</p>
<p>CHAPTER V</p> <p>Permanent Deputation</p>		
<p>Chairmanship</p> <p>Membership</p>	<p>Section 56</p> <p>1. The Permanent Deputation shall be chaired by the Speaker and consist of a minimum of twenty-one members, who shall represent parliamentary groups in proportion to their numerical importance.</p>	
Principal and Deputy members	<p>2. The number of members shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of Section 49.1. Each parliamentary group shall appoint the number of principal members to which it is entitled, and an equal number of deputies.</p>	
Bureau of Committee	<p>3. The Permanent Deputation shall elect among its members two Vice-Chairmen and two Secretaries, in accordance with the rules for the election of the Bureau of Congress with due allowance for the different number of posts to be filled.</p>	
Convocation of Committee		

4. The Permanent Deputation shall be convened by the Speaker on his own initiative or at the request of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the members of the Deputation.

Section 57

Functions of Permanent Deputation	It shall be the responsibility of the Permanent Deputation to safeguard the powers of the House when not in session, and in addition:	78 C
	1. In the event of dissolution or expiry of the mandate of Congress,	
	a) To assume all the authority in relation to Decree-Laws (Decretos-leyes) that is vested in the Congress under Section 86 of the Constitution.	86 C 151 SO
165 SO	b) To exercise the powers with respect to states of alert, emergency and siege vested in the House under Section 116 of the Constitution.	116 C 152 a
73 C 61 SO	2. In the intervals between sessions, to exercise the initiative provided for in Section 73.2 of the Constitution.	

Section 58

Meetings of the Permanent Deputation and the functioning thereof shall be governed by the rules set out herein with respect to plenary sittings.

Functioning of the Permanent Deputation

Section 59

Following a general election, the Permanent Deputation shall inform Congress once it is constituted, of the business that it has transacted and of any decisions adopted.

Report to full Congress after new general election

78 C
4 SO

CHAPTER VI

Human and material resources

Section 60

72 C 35, 45 SO	1. The Congress shall have available the necessary personal and material means and facilities for the conduct of its business, and in particular technical, documentary and advisory services.	Technical facilities
46 SO	2. The Budget Committee shall especially be provided with a suitable allocation of personal and material means of its own to enable it to furnish relevant technical advice on those aspects of legislative proceedings bearing upon revenue and public expenditure.	Special facilities to be made available to the Budget Committee
31 SO	3. The schedule of individual posts, and the determination of the duties of each post, shall be drawn up by the Bureau of Congress.	Bureau to draw up schedule of posts and description of tasks

PART IV

General arrangement of business

CHAPTER I

Sessions and sittings

Section 61

Sessions

1. Congress shall meet annually in two ordinary sessions from September to December and from February to June.

73 C

Extraordinary sessions

2. Outside these periods, Congress may only hold extraordinary sessions at the request of the Government, the, Permanent Deputation or the overall majority of Members of the House. The request must specify the agenda proposed for the extraordinary session.

73 C
57 SO, 90 SO

3. The Speaker shall convene the extraordinary session whenever called upon to do so, pursuant to the Constitution, by the persons mentioned in the preceding paragraph and in accordance with the agenda proposed to him or her. In any event, Congress shall remain sitting until such time as the agenda for which it was convened is concluded.

67 SO

Section 62

Ordinary sitting days

1. As a general rule, sittings shall be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of each week.

67, 71 SO

Extraordinary sitting days

2. They may, however, be held on other days:

i) By a decision adopted on the floor of the House of in a committee on the initiative of the Speaker or the Chairman, as the case may be, or of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the Members sitting in the House or on the committee.

ii) By a decision of the Bureau accepted by the Board of Spokesmen.

Section 63 (modified by the Plenary Sitting on October 29th, 2009)

80 C
64 SO

Sittings of the full House shall be public with the following exceptions:

Exceptions to public sittings

71, 101,
169 SO

i) When transacting business relating to the decorum of the House or of its Members or to the suspension of a Member.

48, 52 SO

ii) When debating proposals, reports or findings tabled by the Committee of Member's Status not concerning parliamentary disqualifications.

31, 39,
23 SO

iii) When so decided on the floor of the House by the overall majority of its members, on the initiative of the Bureau of the Government, of two parliamentary groups or of one fifth of Members of Congress. When a request for a secret sitting is submitted, the question shall be put without a debate and the sitting shall continue in the form resolved upon.

Section 64

63, 98 SO

1. Committee meetings shall not be public. However, they may be attended by duly accredited representatives of the media, except when they are secret.

Committee meetings not public

2. Committee meeting, including enquiry committees, shall be secret when so decided by the overall majority of their members, on the initiative of the Chair, the Government, two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of their members.

Secret committee meetings

48, 52 SO

3. Meetings and proceedings of the Committee of Members' Status shall, in all cases, be secret.

4. Meetings held by Enquiry Committees to draw up their agenda or prepare decisions for the Plenum, for internal deliberation, or meetings of sub-committees, shall not be public. Information, reports or documents laid before Committees for the exercise of their functions shall also be secret when so stated in Law, or on the agreement of the Committee itself. Inversely, Enquiry Committee meetings held to hear evidence shall comply with Sub-section 1 above, except in the following cases:

a) When the subject matter has been classified as reserved or secret in compliance with the current law.

b) When the Committee considers the subject matter is related to legal proceedings under way that have been declared secret.

Section 65

Minutes of full House sittings and of committee meetings

1. Sittings of the full House and committee meetings shall be recorded in the minutes, which shall give a brief description of the matters debated, the speakers, any other issues that have arisen and the resolution adopted.

34, 35 SO

2. The minutes shall be signed by one of the Secretaries with the approval of the Speaker or Chairman, as the case may be, and shall be available for examination by members at the Office of the Head Clerk (Secretary General). If no objection is raised to the contents within ten days of the sitting, the minutes shall be deemed to be approved; otherwise they shall be submitted to the decision of the body concerned at its next sitting.

Section 66

Senators' right to attend

Senators may attend plenary sittings and committee meeting that are not secret.

CHAPTER II

Agenda

Section 67

Drawing-up of agenda of full House

1. The agenda of plenary sittings shall be drawn up by the Speaker in agreement with the Board of Spokesmen.

32, 39, 61, 62 SO

41, 31, 31 SO

2. The agenda of committees shall be drawn up by their respective bureau, in consultation with the Speaker, taking into account the order of business arranged by the Bureau of Congress.

Agenda of committees

110, 89 C 39, 55, 133 SO

3. The Government may request that at a specific sitting certain business be accorded priority, provided it has been complied with the proper formalities enabling it to be included on the agenda.

Request by Government for priority

68 SO

4. On the initiative of a parliamentary group or the Government, the Board of Spokesmen may resolve, for reasons of urgency and subject to unanimity, to include certain business on the agenda that has not yet fulfilled the due procedures.

Inclusion of urgent business

Section 68

32, 23 SO

1. The agenda of a plenary sitting maybe altered by a resolution of the full House upon the Speaker's proposal or at the request of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the Members of the House.

Changes in agenda of full House

40 SO

2. The agenda of a committee may be altered by decision of the committee, upon the proposal of its Chairman or at the request of two parliamentary groups or one fifth of the members sitting on the committee.

Changes in a committees agenda

67 SO

3. In both cases, whenever the inclusion of an item of business is suggested, it must have fulfilled the proper formalities enabling it to be included.

CHAPTER III

Debates

Section 69

Prior distribution of papers relating to subject matter

No debate may start without prior distribution to all members entitled to attend the plenary sitting or the committee meeting, as the case may be, at least forty-eight hours in advance, of the report, opinion or documents which is to serve as the basis of such debate, unless otherwise resolved by the Bureau of the House or of the committee, with proper justification.

6 SO

Section 70

Right to speak

1. No member may speak without having requested and obtained the right to do so from the Chair. If a member called upon to speak is found not to be present, he shall be deemed to have waived his right to take the floor.

32, 80 SO

Conditions and limitations

Speeches to be personal

2. Speeches shall be made personally and aloud. The speaker may address the House from the rostrum or from his seat.

55 SO

No interruption allowed

3. No-one may be interrupted while speaking except by the Chair to advise him or her that his or her time has run out, to call him or her order, to withdraw the right to speak or to call to order the House or any member thereof, or the public.

32 SO

102 SO

103, 104 SO

Passing the floor to other members

4. Members who have asked for the floor to like effect may assign to each other their turn to speak. Subject to prior notice to the Chair and for a specific case, any member entitled to speak may be replaced by another member of the same parliamentary group.

40 SO

Members of Government may speak at any time

5. Members of the Government may take the floor whenever they request, without prejudice to the powers vested in the Chair for the organisation of debates.

110, 39, 73, 118 SO

32, 102 SO

6. Once the time allocated to a member has run out, the Chair after having twice called upon him to conclude, shall withdraw from him the right to address the House.

Withdrawal of floor after time has elapsed

Section 71

63, 103 SO

1. When in the course of a debate allusions are made which, in the opinion of the Chair, entail value judgments or inaccuracies concerning the person or conduct of a Member, the person referred to may be granted the floor for a period of time not exceeding three minutes during which, without going into the substance of the question under debate, he or she may strictly reply to the references made. If the member oversteps this allocation of time, the Speaker shall immediately withdraw his or her right to continue speaking.

Personal allusion to Members

62 SO

2. Allusions may only be responded to in the same sitting or in the next.

Reply

32, 63, 103 SO

3. If the allusion affects the decorum or dignity of a parliamentary group, the Chair may grant the floor to a representative thereof for

Allusions affecting the decorum of the House

the same time and subject to the same conditions as laid down in paragraphs 1 and 2 hereof.

Section 72

9 C, 32 SO

1. At any stage in the debate a member may call for the observance of the Standing Orders. To this end, he shall quote the section or sections the application of which he demands. No debate whatsoever shall be allowed in this connection and the decision adopted by the Chair in view of the allegation so made shall be accepted.

Points of order.
Calls for the observance
of Rules

2. Any Member may also request, during the discussion or before a vote is taken, the reading of such rules or documents as he or she may deem conducive to the clarification of the matter at issue. The Chair may reject any such readings which it deems irrelevant or unnecessary.

Request to
read out legal
provisions or
documents

Section 73

Reply and rectification
to previous arguments

1. In all debates a speaker whose arguments are contradicted by another speaker or speakers shall be entitled to reply or rectify, once only, for a maximum time of five minutes.

118, 183, 184,
188, 195 SO

Arrangement of debate and
voting by Speaker
unaffected by these provisions

2. The application of these Rules to any debate shall be deemed to be without prejudice to the powers of the Chair to conduct the debate and the voting, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, and, assessing the importance thereof, to increase or reduce the number and duration of the opportunities to speak granted to parliamentary groups or members, as well as to accumulate, taking into account circumstances of groups and subject-matters, all those allocations of time to which, in a given matter, any single parliamentary group may be entitled.

70, 118, 103,
192, 195 SO

Section 74

One turn for,
one turn against,
in every debate

In the absence of a specific provision, it shall be understood that in any debate a speech for and a speech against shall be allowed. The time allotted to any speaker in a discussion of any matter or question, unless otherwise herein provided, shall not exceed ten minutes.

112, 126, 122, 131,
150, 151, 161, 168 SO

Section 75

Speeches of
the Mixed
Group

1. Speeches of the Mixed Group may be made by a single member and for the same length of time as other parliamentary groups, on condition that all members thereof so agree and convey to the Speaker of Congress, through their spokesmen or the member deputising for him, the decision so adopted.

169 SO

25, 27, 29
SO

2. Failing such agreement, no member belonging to the Mixed Group may speak, during the time allotted to parliamentary groups, for more than one-third of the total time allocated to each parliamentary group, and no more than three such members may speak. If the allocation of time resulting from the division of the total by three does not equal or exceed five minutes, then the time allocated shall be one-half instead of one-third, and the number of members entitled to speak shall be two instead of three.

3. If there is disagreement as to who is to speak, the Chair shall decide on the spot on the basis of actual differences of position, and may refuse to grant any allocation of time to members of such group.

4. In all general allocations of time to parliamentary groups, the Mixed Group shall be the first to speak.

Section 76

31, 32 SO

The closure of a debate at any time may be decided by the Chair in agreement with the Bureau when it considers that a matter has

been sufficiently debated. It may also so decide upon request by the spokesman of a parliamentary group. With respect to the request for closure, one speech for and one against, each for a maximum of five minutes, may be allowed.

Section 77

30, 41 SO

If the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker or the Secretaries of the House, or the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen or Secretaries of a Committee, wish to take part in the debate, they shall leave their seat on the Bureau and shall not resume it until the discussion of the matter concerned has concluded.

Speaker, Chairman or other members of Bureau taking part in House debates

CHAPTER IV

Voting

Section 78

Quorum of Attendance

1. For the passage of resolutions, the full House and its bodies shall be assembled in accordance with these Standing Orders and with the attendance of the majority of their members.

79 C
79 SO

Postponement of voting if there is no *quorum*

2. If at voting time, or after a vote has been taken, it is found that the quorum referred to in the preceding paragraph is not present, the voting shall be postponed for a maximum period of two hours. If after the lapse of this time it again proves impossible for a vote to be validly taken, the matter shall be referred to the decision of the appropriate body at its next sitting.

Section 79 (modified by the Plenary Sitting on July 21th, 2011)

Majority requirements for validity of decisions

1. In order to be valid, resolutions must be carried by a single majority of members of the appropriate body in attendance, without prejudice to special majorities provided for in the Constitution, Organic Acts or these Standing Orders.

79 C
79 SO

Vote to be personal. No delegation

2. A Member's vote is personal and may not be delegated. No Member may vote on resolutions affecting his status as such.

67 C, 79 C

No interruptions in voting

3. Members of the Chamber expressly authorized by the Bureau to participate in a vote, even if absent, will be counted as present.

70, 55 SO

Section 80

Voting may not be interrupted for any reason whatsoever. During the course of the voting, the Speaker shall not grant the floor and no member may enter or leave the House.

Section 81

Fixing of voting time

In the cases considered herein, and in such other cases as, due to their special nature or importance, the Speaker may so decide, votes shall be taken at a fixed time previously announced by the Speaker. If at the time appointed the debate has not concluded, the Speaker shall appoint a new time for voting.

131, 169 SO

Section 82 (modified by the Plenary Sitting on July 21th, 2011)

Voting may be:

i) By assent to the Speaker's proposal.

Forms of voting

- ii) Ordinary.
- iii) Public, by roll call.
- iv) Secret.

2. In the event of pregnancy, maternity, paternity or serious sickness preventing a Member of Parliament from carrying out his or her functions and considered sufficiently justified taking into account the special circumstances, the Bureau may authorize in a motivated document the Member to cast his or her vote through the telematic procedure with identity verification, in plenary sessions, in a voting, that cannot be subject to fragmentation or modification, and which will be foreseeable in respect to the manner and moment when it will take place.

For such purpose, the Member will issue the due application by means of a document addressed to the Bureau, which will inform him or her of its decision, specifying, if necessary, the voting and time period he or she will be allowed to cast the vote through this procedure. The vote casted through this procedure will have to be personally verified by means of a system established to this end by the Bureau and held by the Presidency of the Chamber prior to the beginning of the voting.

Section 83

82 SO

The proposal made by the Speaker shall be deemed adopted by assent if, when put to the House, no objection or opposition is raised.

Proposal accepted by assent

Section 84

82 SO

Ordinary voting may be conducted, at the discretion of the Speaker, in either of the following ways:

Different ways of ordinary voting

34, 23 SO

1. By those in favour standing up first, those against next and lastly those who abstain. The Speaker shall order the Secretaries to count the votes if he is in any doubt as to the outcome, or if, even after the result has been announced, any parliamentary group so requests.

87 SO

2. By an electronic process recording each member's vote, and the total result of the voting.

Section 85

82 SO

1. Voting shall be public by roll call or secret when so required by these Standing Orders, or when requested by two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of Members of the House or the committee's members. In the event that more than one request is made, to opposite effects, the request for a secret ballot shall prevail. In no case shall voting be secret on legislative procedure or in those cases in which resolutions must be passed according to the principle of weighted voting.

Public voting by roll call.
Secret voting

23 SO

Public vote for investiture of Prime Minister, for censure and for confidence

2. Voting on investiture of the Prime Minister, motions of censure and questions of confidence shall in all cases be public by roll call.

Section 86

Procedure in public vote

In public voting by roll call, the Secretary shall call upon Members by name and they shall reply "yes", "no" or abstention. The call shall be made in alphabetical order of first surnames, beginning with a

34 SO

by roll call	member whose name is drawn by lot. The Government and the Bureau shall vote last.	39, 30 SO
	Section 87	
Secret vote and forms thereof	<p>1. A secret ballot shall be held:</p> <p>i) By an electronic process recording the total outcome of the voting, but omitting the identity of voters.</p> <p>ii) By ballot papers when the election of persons is involved, when so decided by the Speaker and when this form of voting has been specified in the request for a secret ballot.</p> <p>2. To carry out the voting referred to in subparagraph 2 of preceding subsection, members shall be called by name to the table at which the Bureau sits to put their ballot paper into the appropriate box.</p>	<p>89 SO</p> <p>80 C 84, 85 SO</p> <p>169, 204, 205, 206 SO</p>
	Section 88	
Ties in votes at plenary sittings	<p>1. If any voting results in a tie, a second vote shall be taken, and if the tie is repeated, the voting shall be suspended for such period as the Speaker may deem reasonable. Once this period has elapsed, the vote shall be repeated and if a tie again occurs, the report, article, amendment, dissenting opinion or proposal in question shall be deemed to have been rejected.</p>	37, 204 SO
39 SO	<p>2. In committee votes, no tie shall be deemed to exist when there is a possibility of breaking the tie by allowing for the number of votes represented by each group in the full House, provided all members of the committee belonging to the same parliamentary group have voted in the same way.</p>	Ties in voting at committees
	Section 89	
118, 156 SO	<p>1. Once a vote or a series of votes on the same question has been taken, each parliamentary group shall be allocated a maximum time of five minutes in which to explain its vote.</p> <p>2. In the case of public bills, private members' bills and international treaties or agreements, vote may only be explained after the conclusion of the voting, unless this has been divided into clearly differentiated parts for the purpose of the debate, in which case the explanation may be given after the last vote on each part. In the cases considered in this paragraph, the Chair may extend the time allocation to ten minutes.</p>	<p>Explanations of vote</p> <p>Explanations of vote on bills and international treaties</p>
87 SO	<p>3. No explanation of vote shall be allowed if the voting has been secret or if all the parliamentary groups have had the opportunity to take part in the preceding debate.</p>	Cases in which no explanation of vote is allowed
39 SO	<p>Nevertheless, in the latter case, a parliamentary group that has taken part in the debate and as a consequence thereof has changed its vote, shall be entitled to explain the change.</p>	

Calculation of terms and lodging of documents

Section 90

Computation
of terms

1. Unless otherwise provided, terms expressed in days in these Standing Orders shall be counted as business days and those expressed in months shall be reckoned from date to date.

Non-session periods
not to be counted

2. The calculation shall not include days on which Congress is not sitting, unless the business in question is included in the agenda of an extraordinary session. The Bureau of Congress shall determine the days that are to be specially set aside for the sole purpose of complying with the necessary formalities to enable such a session to be held.

61 SO

31 SO

Section 91

Extension or
reduction of
terms

1. The Bureau may resolve upon the extension or reduction of the terms laid down in these Rules.

31, 113 SO

2. Apart from exceptional cases, extensions shall not exceed the length of the term itself nor reductions one half.

94 SO

Section 92

Tabling of documents
and entry in Register

1. The tabling of documents with the Register of the Secretary-General of Congress may be made on such days and at such times as the Bureau shall appoint.

35 SO

2. Documents delivered to the Post Office within the term allowed shall be accepted, provided the requirements laid down for this purpose in the Administrative Procedure Act are complied with.

CHAPTER VI

Urgent Procedure

Section 93

90, 86 C
151 SO

1. At the request of the Government, two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of the Members, the Bureau may resolve that certain business be transacted by the urgent procedure.

Decision of Bureau
to use urgent procedure

2. If the resolution is adopted while a formality is in progress, the urgent procedure shall apply to the formalities subsequent thereto.

Section 94

91 SO

Without prejudice to the provisions of Section 91 hereof, terms shall have one-half of the duration established for ordinary terms.

Terms cut by
one half

CHAPTER VII

Publications of Congress and publicity of its business

Section 95

The following shall be the official publications of the Congress.

97 SO

i) The Official Parliamentary Bulletin, Congress Section.

List of official
Congress
publications

96 SO

ii) The Journal of Debates (*Diario de Sesiones*) of Plenary Sitings of Congress, of the Permanent Deputation and of Committees.

Section 96

95 SO

1. In the Journal of Debates all proceedings and resolutions adopted on the floor of the House, in the Permanent Deputation and in Committees that are not secret in character shall be printed in full, with details of any other issues arising.

Contents of
Journal
of Debates

Minutes
of secret
sittings

2. Minutes of secret sittings shall be taken down in shorthand, the sole copy of which shall be kept in the Office of the Speaker. This copy may be consulted by Members with prior agreement of the Bureau. The resolutions adopted shall be published in the Journal of Debates, unless the Bureau decides that they are confidential, without prejudice to the provisions of subsections 5 and 6 of Section 52 hereof.

80 C, 32 SO

52 SO

Section 97

Official
Parliamentary
Bulletin

1. The Official Parliamentary Bulletin, Congress Section, shall print the texts and documents whose publication is required by these Standing Orders is necessary for purposes of due information and appropriate parliamentary examination, or is ordered by the Speaker.

52 SO

95, 97 SO

32 SO

Reproduction
of documents
by other
means

2. For reasons of urgency, the Speaker may order, for the purpose of debate and voting and without prejudice to the subsequent printing thereof in the Official Bulletin, that the documents referred to in the preceding paragraph be reproduced by some other mechanical means and distributed to members belonging to the body that is to debate them.

32 SO

Section 98

The Bureau to give
Information to mass
media

1. The Bureau shall adopt such measures as are appropriate in each case to provide information to the media on the activities of the various bodies of Congress.

64 SO

Credentials for
Representatives of mass
Media

2. The Bureau shall also regulate the granting of credentials to photographers and reporters representing the various media in order that they may have access to the premises allocated to them within the parliamentary precincts and to the sittings which they are allowed to attend.

64 SO

72 C

3. Without the express authorization of the Speaker, no one may make film or sound recordings of the sittings held by the bodies of the House.

Film and sound
recordings

CHAPTER VIII

Maintenance of order

DIVISION 1

Penalties for breach of Members' duties

Section 99

6, 7, 8, 9 SO	1. A Member may be deprived, by resolution of the Bureau, of some or all of the rights granted to him under Sections 6 to 9 of these Standing Orders in the following cases:	Forfeiture of Member's rights as penalty
15 SO	i) If he repeatedly or notoriously fails, of his own free will, to attend sittings of the full House or of committees.	
16 SO	ii) If he fails to keep the duty of secrecy established in Section 16 hereof.	
28, 101 SO	2. The resolution of the Bureau, which shall state the reasons therefor, shall specify the scope and duration of the penalties, which may also extend to a proportional part of the allowance contemplated in Section 28 hereof.	Resolution to state Reasons for penalty inflicted

Section 100

104 SO	Prohibition to attend one or two meetings and the immediate expulsion of a member may be imposed by the Speaker on the terms laid down in these Rules.	Barring members From attendance Expulsion
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Section 101

Suspension of Membership by the full House	1. Temporary suspension of the status of Member of Congress may be resolved upon by the full House, on grounds of parliamentary discipline, in the following cases:	21, 106, 107 SO
	i) If, after the penalty contemplated in Section 99 has been imposed and complied with, the Member persists in his attitude.	99 SO
	ii) If the Member carries weapons within the parliamentary precincts.	
	iii) If the Member, having been expelled from the Assembly Hall, refuses to leave it.	
	iv) If the Member is in breach of Section 17 hereof.	17 SO
Proposals of Bureau to be discussed in secret sitting of the House	2. The proposals made by the Bureau of the House in the first three cases of the preceding subsection and by the Committee of Members' Status in the fourth case, shall be submitted to consideration and decision by the full House in a secret sitting. In the debate, parliamentary groups may speak through their spokesmen and the House shall resolve forthwith.	31, 48 SO 63 SO
Reference to Judicial authorities	3. If the cause of the penalty may, in the opinion of the Bureau, constitute a criminal offence, the Speaker shall convey the incriminating facts to the judicial authority having jurisdiction.	21, 52, 05, 169 SO

DIVISION 2

Calls to Order

Section 102

Member

called to keep to the point	1. Speakers shall be requested to keep to the point whenever they have digressed therefrom or reverted to a question that has already been debated and voted.	70 SO
70 SO	2. The Speaker shall withdraw the right to address the House from any Member whose attention he has had to call for a third time in the same speech.	Withdrawal of the right to speak
Section 103		
70 SO	Members and speakers shall be called to order:	Calls to order
63, 71, 104, 192 SO	1. If they utter words or make statements that are offensive to the decorum of the House or its Members, of State institutions or of any person or entity.	
73, 118 SO	2. If in their speeches they fail to observe the rules established for the expeditious progress of the debates.	
16 SO	3. If by interruptions or otherwise they disturb the order of the sittings.	
70 SO	4. If, after the right to address the House has been withdrawn from them, they attempt to continue to avail themselves of such right.	
Section 104		
70, 32, 100 SO	1. A Member or speaker who has been called to order three times in the same sitting, having been warned the second time of the consequences of a third call, shall if necessary, have the right to speak withdrawn from him and the Speaker may, without debate, impose upon him the penalty of not attending the rest of the sitting.	Penalties and procedure for adoption of the same
72 C 32 SO	2. If the Member fails to comply with the request to leave the Assembly Hall, the shall adopt such measures as he deems appropriate to effect the expulsion. In this case, and without prejudice to the provisions of Section 101, the Speaker may, in addition, impose upon him the prohibition of attending the next sitting.	Measures to be adopted in case of refusal by a member to leave the House
101, 100 SO	3. In the case considered in paragraph 1 of preceding Section, the Speaker shall call upon the Member or speaker to withdraw the offences uttered and shall order them not to be recorded in the Journal of Debates. Refusal to comply with this request may give rise to further calls to order, with the consequences provided for in the previous paragraphs of the section.	Member to withdraw offensive words
DIVISION 3		
<i>Order within the parliamentary precincts</i>		
Section 105		
Maintenance of order	In the exercise of disciplinary authority under Section 72.3 of the Constitution, the Speaker shall ensure maintenance of order within the precincts of the House and in all its premises, to which end he may adopt all such measures as he sees fit, including the committing to the courts of any persons disturbing such order.	72 C
		14, 21, 52, 101, 107, 169 SO
Section 106		
Serious disorder	Any person who, within the parliamentary precincts, in or outside a meeting, and whether or not a Member of Congress, arouses a serious disturbance by his conduct in word or deed, shall be immediately expelled. If he is a member, the Speaker shall in addition suspend him immediately from his status as such for a term of up to one month, and the House may, upon the proposal of the Bureau and	72 C

in accordance with the provisions of Section 101, resolve to extend or increase the penalty.

21, 101 SO

Order to be kept in the public gallery

Section 107

1. The Speaker shall ensure, during public sittings, the maintenance of order in the public gallery.

72 C

2. Any person who in the said gallery gives voice to expressions of approval or disapproval, causes a disturbance or fails to observe proper behaviour, shall be immediately expelled from the premises by order of the Speaker, who shall, whenever he or she sees fit, direct the Security Guards of the House to make the appropriate record in case the actions committed may constitute a criminal offence or misdemeanour.

Disorders and expulsion of persons causing disorder

52, 101, 105 SO

PART V

Legislative procedure

CHAPTER I

Initiative of Bills

Section 108

Initiative of Bills in Congress is vested in:

Initiative of Bills

87 C

109 SO

i) The Government.

125 SO

ii) The Senate, in accordance with the Constitution and its own Rules of Procedure.

127 SO

iii) Legislative Assemblies of Selfgoverning Communities, in accordance with the Constitution and their respective Statute of Devolution and Rules of Procedure.

127 SO

iv) The citizens, in accordance with Section 87.3 of the Constitution and the Organic Law implementing the same.

126 SO

v) Congress itself, on the terms provided for herein.

CHAPTER II

Ordinary legislative procedure

DIVISION 1

Government bills

I. Tabling of amendments

Section 109

Governments Bills to be tabled with an explanatory memorandum and the necessary supporting information

Bills submitted by the Government shall have an explanatory memorandum and the necessary supporting information attached to them so as to make possible a decision thereon. The Bureau of Congress shall cause the bill to be published, set a date for the opening of the period during which amendments may be proposed and refer the bill to the appropriate committee.

88 C
108, 126,
128 31,
131 SO

Section 110

Amendments

1. After a bill has been published, Members and parliamentary groups shall be allowed a term of fifteen days in which to propose amendments thereto, in writing addressed to the bureau of the committee. The document containing the amendments must be signed by the spokesman, or person deputising for him, of the parliamentary group to which the Member belongs, merely for purposes of information. The omission of this formality may be made good prior to the beginning of committee discussion.

84 C
197, 137,
126, 130,
41 SO

Types of amendment

2. Amendments may relate to the whole text of the bill or to certain sections.

23 SO

Amendments
112 SO

3. Amendments to the whole bill shall be those questioning the timeliness, principles or spirit of the bill and calling for its return to the Government, or proposing a complete alternative text. Such amendments may only be submitted by parliamentary groups.

to the whole
Bill

112 SO

4. Amendments to sections may be for deletion, modification or addition. In the two latter cases, they must include the specific wording proposed.

Amendments
to Sections of
the bill only

114, 117 SO

5. To this end, and in general for all purposes of legislative procedure, each additional, final, repealing or transitional provision of a bill shall be regarded as a section, as well as the title of the bill, the headings of the various parts into which it is divided, the systematic arrangement of section and the memorandum.

Each part of
the bill to be
regarded as a
section

Section 111

134 C
133 SO

1. Consideration of amendments to a bill entailing an increase in budgetary appropriations or a reduction in budgetary revenue shall require Government's authorization.

Government's
agreement for
-amendments
entailing
increases in
expenditure
or cuts in
revenue

To this end, the reporting sub-committee entrusted with the drafting of the report shall refer to the Government, through the Speaker, any amendments which in its view may fall under the provisions of the preceding paragraph.

3. The Government shall give a reply with a statement of the reasons thereof within a term of fifteen days, after the expiry of which term it shall be deemed that the Government's silence signifies authorization.

4. The Government may express its opposition to the consideration of amendments entailing an increase in budgetary appropriations or a reduction in budgetary revenue at any stage during the transaction of such amendments, if it has not been consulted in the manner specified in the foregoing subsections.

Government's
opposition to
the consideration
of such
amendments

II. Debates on the whole bill in plenary sitting

Section 112

Procedure	<p>1. A debate on the whole bill on the floor of the House shall be held when amendments to the whole bill have been tabled within the period provided for herein. The Chairman of the committee, in this case, shall convey to the Speaker any amendments to the whole bill that have been proposed, for entry in the agenda of the plenary sitting in which they are to be debated.</p>	74, 110 SO
	<p>2. The debate on the whole bill shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders for debates of this nature, although for each of the amendments proposed an opportunity shall be granted to speak for and against.</p>	
Vote on amendments after discussion	<p>3. Once the discussion has concluded, the Speaker shall put to the vote the amendments to the whole bill that have been defended, starting with those proposing the return of the bill to the Government.</p>	
	<p>4. If Congress in plenary sitting resolves that the bill be referred back, it shall stand rejected and the Speaker shall notify the Government accordingly. If not, it shall be forwarded to the committee for continuation of proceedings.</p>	39 SO
Adoption of alternative text by the full House	<p>5. If Congress in plenary sitting adopts an amendment proposing an alternative text, this shall be referred to the appropriate committee and published in the Official Parliamentary Bulletin, and a new period shall be appointed for the tabling of amendments, which may refer solely to sections of the bill.</p>	97 SO 110 SO
	III. Deliberation in Committee	
	<h3>Section 113</h3>	
114 SO	<p>1. After the debate on the whole bill has concluded, where such a debate has been held, and in any event after the expiration of the term allowed for the tabling of amendments, the committee shall appoint among its members one or more rapporteurs who on the basis of the text and of amendments proposed to its sections, shall make a report within the next fifteen days.</p>	Rapporteurs
43 SO 91 SO	<p>2. Without prejudice to the provisions of Section 43.3, hereof, the bureau of the committee may extend the term allowed for the issuing of the report, where the importance or complexity of the bill so requires.</p>	Extension of term for reporting
	<h3>Section 114</h3>	
113 SO	<p>1. Upon conclusion of the report by the reporting sub-committee (Ponencia) the debate in committee shall proceed section by section. In connection with each section, the amenders and members of the Committee may speak.</p>	Debate of Committee on the report
110 SO	<p>2. Amendments proposed in connection with the Explanatory Memorandum shall be discussed at the end of the sections if the committee resolves to include said Memorandum as a preamble to the bill.</p>	Amendments in connection with the Memorandum Compromise amendments And amendments of correction
118 SO	<p>3. During the discussion of a section, the bureau may admit for consideration new amendments tabled in writing by a member of the committee, provided they are intended to bring about a compromise agreement between amendments already submitted and the text of the section. Amendments seeking correction of technical, terminological or grammatical errors or inaccuracies shall also be admitted for consideration.</p>	

Section 115

Debates in committee

1. In conducting the debates in committee, the Chairman and the bureau shall exercise the functions conferred by these Standing Orders upon the Speaker and the Bureau.

73, 118,
192,
195 SO

Allocation of the floor by the Chairman

2. The Chairman of the committee, in consultation with the bureau thereof, may allot each speaker a maximum time for the discussion of each section and each intervention in the light the number of requests for the floor and the total allocation of time for the conclusion of the report.

Section 116

Committee's report to be forwarded to Speaker

The report of the committee, signed by the Chairman and by one of the Secretaries, shall be forwarded to the Speaker for the purpose of such further consideration as may be appropriate.

IV. Deliberation on the floor of the House

Section 117

Amendments submitted to the full House

Within forty-eight hours of conclusion of the report, parliamentary groups shall make known by notice addressed to the Speaker any dissenting opinions and amendments defended by them and voted upon in the committee, but not included in the report, if they intend to defend them again on the floor of the House.

23 SO

110 SO

Section 118

Submissions of initiative and presentation of report

1. The debate may begin with the presentation of the Government's initiative by a member thereof and with the presentation of the report by a committee member, if the committee has so decided. These speeches may not exceed fifteen minutes.

126 SO

70, 73, 89 SO

2. The Speaker, after having consulted the Bureau and the Board of Spokesmen, may:

Conduct of proceedings by Speaker

103, 115, 192, 195 SO

i) Arrange the debates and votes by sections or by subject-matters, groups of sections or amendments, where advisable on account of the complexity of the text, homogeneity or interconnection of aims of the amendments or for greater clarity in the political contrast of different positions.

ii) Fix in advance the maximum time for the debating of a bill, distributing it accordingly among the various speakers and proceeding, once the time has run out, to take any votes that may remain pending.

114, 119 SO

3. In the course of the debate the Speaker may admit amendments aimed at the correction of technical, terminological or grammatical errors or inaccuracies. Compromise amendments between those already tabled and the text of the report may only be admitted for consideration if no parliamentary group opposes the admission thereof and such admission entails withdrawal of the amendments to which the compromise refers.

Admission by Speaker of Merely technical, linguistic or grammatical amendments. Compromise amendments

Section 119

114, 118,
31 SO

After the debate on a bill has concluded, if, as a consequence of the adoption of a dissenting opinion or an amendment, or of the voting of the articles, the resulting text may prove to be inconsistent or obscure in any respect, the Bureau may, on its own initiative or at the request of the committee, send the text passed by the full House back to the committee, solely in order that the committee, within one

Text to be sent to a Committee

131 SO

month, may prepare a harmonious draft respecting the decisions of the full House. The text so drafted shall be submitted for final decision to the Plenum, which shall adopt or reject it as a whole, by a single vote.

V. Deliberation on resolutions of the Senate

Section 120

Reference of adopted Bill to Speaker of Senate

After a bill has been passed by Congress, the Speaker shall forward it to the Speaker of the Senate, together with the background information thereon and the papers drafted in the course of its passage through the House.

90 C
150 SO

Section 121

Bills from Senate to be examined by full Congress

Bill passed by Congress and vetoed or amended by the Senate shall be submitted for further consideration to the floor of the Congress.

90 C

Section 122

Procedure in case of veto by Senate

1. Where the Senate has exercised its veto against a bill, the debate shall conform to the provisions for debates on a whole text. Upon conclusion of the debate, the text initially adopted by the Congress shall be put to the vote and if ratified by the favourable vote of the overall majority of members of the House, the veto shall be lifted.

90 C
74 SO

2. If it does not obtain such a majority, the bill shall be put to the vote after two months have elapsed from the exercising of the veto. If on this further vote the bill secures a single majority of the votes cast, the veto shall also be lifted; otherwise the bill shall stand rejected.

Section 123

Debate and vote of Amendments adopted by Senate

Amendments proposed by the Senate shall be debated and put to the vote and those carried by a single majority of the votes cast shall be incorporated in the text passed by Congress.

90 C

DIVISION 2

Private Members' Bills

Section 124

84, 87, 89 C

Private Members' Bills shall be submitted together with an Explanatory Memorandum and the necessary supporting information enabling a decision to be adopted thereon.

Bills to be submitted with Memorandum and supporting documents

Section 125

89 C
108 SO

Private Members Bills which, in accordance with the Constitution, have been taken into consideration by the Senate, shall be transacted by Congress as such private Members' bills, excluding the formality of taking into consideration.

Private Members' Bills already passed by Senate

Section 126

108 SO

1. Private Members' bills in Congress may be adopted in the initiative of: (1) a Member, with the signature of fourteen other members of the House; (2) a parliamentary group with the sole signature of its spokesman.

Private Members' Bills originating in Congress

2. Once the initiative has been exercised, the Bureau of the House shall order the publication of the bill and its reference to the

Bill to be published and sent to the Government

	Government, to enable the latter to express its opinion as to whether or not it should be taken into consideration, as well as its approval or otherwise as to its further examination if it entails an increase in budgeted appropriations or a reduction in the budgeted revenue.	
134 C	3. If thirty days elapse without the Government having expressly refused to grant its assent to the consideration thereof, the bill may then be included in the agenda of the Plenum for its taking into consideration.	Bill to be included in the agenda if Government does not explicitly withhold its assent to consideration
	4. Before the debate is opened, the Government's position, if any, shall be read out.	
Debate on the Bill	The debate shall be conducted according to the rules for debates on the whole text of a Bill.	74 SO
Decision of full House whether to take the Bill «in consideration»	5. The Speaker shall then ask whether or not the House will take the bill into consideration. If the reply is yes, the Bureau of the House shall resolve on the reference of the bill to the appropriate committee and the opening of the relevant period for the tabling of amendments, but except in the case contemplated in Section 125, amendments to the whole bill recommending the return thereof shall not be admissible. The bill shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure contemplated for Government bills, and its presentation to the full House shall be made by one of the proposers or by a member of the group exercising the initiative.	31 SO 110 SO
Further proceedings		109, 118 SO
	Section 127	
Bill proposed by Self-governing Communities	Bill proposed by Self-governing Communities and by popular initiative shall be examined by the Bureau to ascertain that the legal prerequisites have been fulfilled. If they meet such requirements, they shall be dealt with in accordance with the rules of the preceding section, except that in the case of bills submitted on the initiative of a Self-governing Community's Legislative Assembly, the presentation of the bill for the purpose of the taking into consideration thereof shall rest with the Delegate of that Community.	87 C 108, 31 SO
	DIVISION 3	
	<i>Withdrawal of Government Bills and of private Members' Bills</i>	
	Section 128	
Withdrawal of Government's Bills	The Government may withdraw their bills at any stage of their passage through Congress as long as the House has not yet adopted a final resolution thereon.	88 C 109 SO
	Section 129	
89 C 126 SO	The initiative for the withdrawal of a nongovernmental bill by its promoter shall be fully effective per se, if adopted before Congress has resolved to take it into consideration. Once such resolution has been adopted, withdrawal shall only be effective if accepted in a plenary sitting.	Withdrawal of private Members' Bills

CHAPTER III

Special rules of legislative procedure

DIVISION 1

Organic Bills

Section 130

136, 154 SO 31 SO 81 C	<p>1. Bills to which the Bureau, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, gives the status of Organic Statutes, shall be transacted as such in accordance with the provisions of Section 81.1 of the Constitution, and having examined the motivated opinion expressed by the Government, the promoter or the appropriate reporting sub-committee at the report stage.</p> <p>2. After the report has been concluded, and provided that the question has not been raised previously, the committee may request the Bureau of Congress to examine whether or not the bill is an Organic Statute. The Bureau, with the opinion, where applicable, of the reporting sub-committee, shall decide as to the appropriate classification. If the bill is classified as an Organic Statute after the debate in committee has begun, the proceedings shall start again from the beginning of such debate.</p>	Classification by Bureau 31 SO
Amendments	<p>3. Amendments involving matters reserved for an Organic Act but which have been proposed in respect of an ordinary bill may only be admitted for consideration by resolution of the Bureau of the Congress, upon consultation with the appropriate reporting subcommittee, and where applicable, the rules of the preceding subsection shall be observed.</p>	110 SO
Ordinary legislative procedure to be applied	<p>Section 131</p> <p>1. Organic Bills shall be dealt with by the ordinary legislative procedure, with the special provisions laid down in this Section.</p>	109 SO
Overall majority of Congress required	<p>2. The passage of such bills shall require the favourable vote of the overall majority of Members of Congress in a final vote taken on the whole text. The voting shall be announced in advance by the Speaker and if said majority is obtained, the bill shall be forwarded to the Senate. If, on the other hand, overall majority is not achieved the bill shall be referred back to the committee, which is to issue a further report within a term of one month.</p>	81 C 81, 132, 169 SO 119 C
Rules for debate on the whole text of ordinary Bills to be applied	<p>3. The debate on the new report shall take place according to the rules governing debates on a whole text. If the affirmative vote of the overall majority of Members of Congress is obtained, the bill shall be forwarded to the Senate, and if not it shall be deemed rejected.</p>	74 SO
Senates veto or amendments	<p>Section 132</p> <p>If the Senate exercises its veto or makes amendments to an Organic Bill, the rules for the ordinary legislative procedure shall be observed, with the following two exceptions:</p>	90 C
131 SO	<p>1. The ratification of the initial text, and the consequent lifting of the veto, shall in all cases require the affirmative vote of the overall majority of Members of Congress.</p>	Exceptions to ordinary procedure
81 C	<p>2. The text resulting from the inclusion of amendments made by the Senate and passed by the Congress shall be put to the vote as a whole. If the overall majority of Members of the House vote in favour, it shall be definitively passed as it stands. If not, the initial text adopted by the Congress shall be ratified and all the amendments proposed by the Senate shall be rejected.</p>	
<p>DIVISION 2</p> <p><i>Finance Bill</i></p>		
134C 135 SO 67, 182,	<p>Section 133</p> <p>1. Ordinary legislative procedure applies, except as provided in this Section, to examination and passage of the Finance Bill.</p>	Ordinary legislative procedure applicable Priority

188 SO	2. Consideration of the Finance Bill shall take precedence over the other business of Congress.	Amendments involving increase in appropriations
111 SO	3. Amendments to the Finance Bill involving an increase in appropriations under any heading may only be admitted for consideration if, in addition to meeting the general requirements, they propose a reduction of the same amount under the same heading.	
118 SO	4. Consideration of amendments to the Finance Bill involving a reduction in revenue shall require the approval of the Government.	Amendments implying cuts in revenue
	Section 134	
112 SO	1. The debate on the whole text of the Finance Bill shall take place on the floor of the House. In this debate, the overall amounts of the statements marking up the Budget shall be determined. Once the debate has concluded, the bill shall be forwarded immediately to the Budget Committee.	General Discussion
	2. The debate on the draft Budget itself shall relate to its sections and to the schedule of appropriations. Any other documents that may have been attached to such schedule may also be examined.	114 SO
Arrangement of debate	3. The Chairman of the committee and the Speaker, in consultation with the respective Bureau, may arrange the debates and voting in such manner as shall be best suited to the structure of the Budget.	115 SO
Final debate on chapters and sections	4. The final debate of the Finance Bill, in plenary sitting, shall be conducted by differentiating between the sections of the bill as a whole and each of its headings.	
	Section 135	
Budget of other Public entities	The provisions of this Division shall be applicable to consideration and passage of the budgets of public corporations which are required by law to be passed by the <i>Cortes</i> .	133 SO
	DIVISION 3 <i>Statutes of Devolution</i>	
	I. Ordinary procedure	
	Section 136	
Examination of Bill and Annexes by Bureau of the House	1. When a draft Statute prepared in accordance with the procedure contemplated in Sections 143, 144, 146 and the First Transitional Provision of the Constitution is received by Congress, the Bureau shall proceed to examine the text and the documentation submitted, in order to check on the fulfilment of the requirements laid down by the Constitution.	Trans. Prov. 143, 144, 146, TP 1 and 6 C 31 SO
130 SO	2. If the Bureau is satisfied that said requirements have been complied with, the draft Statute shall be dealt with as an Organic Bill.	Bill to be handled as organic Bill
	3. If the Bureau decides that any constitutionally required formality has not been fulfilled, or that the draft presents some defect of form, this fact shall be notified to the Legislative Assembly that has prepared it and consideration shall be postponed until the requirement is fulfilled or the defect made good.	Suspension of procedure
	II. Procedure pursuant to Section 151 of the Constitution	
	Section 137	
151, Trans. Prov. 2 C	1. If the draft Statute has been prepared in accordance with the procedure described in Section 151.2 of the Constitution, and after it has been admitted for consideration by the Bureau in accordance	Drafting in accordance with Sect. 151.2 of Constitution

110 SO	with the provisions of the preceding Section, a period of fifteen days shall commence to run during which any grounds of disagreement therewith may be brought forward, provided however that such statements are supported by at least one parliamentary group.	Motives for disagreement
151 C	2. At the same time, the Speaker shall notify this decision to the proposing Assembly and shall invite it to appoint, if it has not already done so, for the purposes provided in Sect. 151.2.2 of the Constitution, a Delegation, which shall not exceed the number of members of the Constitutional Committee, elected among the members of the Assembly, with adequate representation being afforded to parliamentary groups present in that Assembly.	Delegation of proposing Assembly
139 SO	Section 138	
Computation of terms	1. The term of two months referred to in Sect. 151.2.2 of the Constitution shall be reckoned as from the date of expiration of the term allowed for the presentation of grounds of disagreement. 2. The reckoning of the period shall conform to the Sixth Transitional Provision of the Constitution.	151 C 90 SO Trans. Prov. 6 C
Rapporteurs in Constitutional Committee	Section 139	
	1. On the same day on which the reckoning of the term of two months contemplated in the preceding section is due to begin, the Constitutional Committee, duly convened for his purpose, shall appoint among its members a reporting sub-committee, affording adequate representation thereon to all the parliamentary groups composing Congress.	113 SO 23 SO
Rapporteurs appointed by delegation of the proposing Assembly	2. At the same time, the Delegation of the proposing Assembly shall appoint among its members a reporting sub-committee the number of whose members shall not exceed that of the sub-committee of the Constitutional Committee.	137 SO
Joint examination by both working parties	Section 140	
	1. Under the authority of the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee, both reporting sub-committees shall proceed jointly to examine the grounds of disagreement raised against the draft Statute.	139 SO
Procedure	2. The joint sub-committee shall attempt to reach an agreement within one month from its appointment, and propose the drafting of a final text. This text shall be put to the separate vote of each of the subcommittees. Agreement shall be deemed to exist if the majority of each such-committee, expressed as a weighted vote based on the number of members of each parliamentary group or political party, respectively, votes in favour of the proposal text.	
	3. The joint reporting sub-committee may request the attendance of representatives of the Government for the purpose of providing information which may contribute to a better study of the draft Statute. For the same purpose, it may request the attendance of experts who have assisted the proposing Assembly.	Request of information from Government
	4. The proceedings of the joint reporting sub-committee shall be written up in minutes.	Minutes
	Section 141	
	1. Upon completion of its work, and in any event after the term referred to in paragraph 2 of the preceding section has elapsed, the joint reporting sub-committee shall submit its report to the Constitutional Committee and to the Delegation of the proposing Assembly, specifying the texts on which there is agreement, those on which disagreement exists and the dissenting opinions, if any.	Report by joint reporting subcommittee
		Joint meeting of

Constitutional Committee
and delegation of
proposing Assembly

2. The report of the joint sub-committee, together with the agreed texts, differing text, if any, and dissenting opinions, shall be published and immediately referred to a joint meeting of the Constitutional Committee and the Delegation of the proposing Assembly, held under the authority of the Chairman of the Committee.

Section 142

1. In the joint Committee referred to in the preceding Section, fifteen minutes shall be granted for the defence of the agreed text, differing texts if any, and dissenting opinions. Likewise, such rectifying speeches as the Chairman of the Committee shall deem appropriate may also be made.

Debate in
Joint
Committee

Voting

2. After all the speakers have concluded, each text shall be put to a separate vote of the Committee and of the Delegation of the Assembly, and the existence or non-existence of agreement shall be ascertained.

Procedure in the event of
disagreement between
Committee and Delegation

3. In the event of disagreement, each side may propose that the question be referred back to the joint reporting sub-committee in order that, within such term as is fixed, they attempt to achieve agreement by means of the procedure contemplated in Section 140.

Section 143

Final voting
on the whole
text

1. After the discussion and voting of Sections has concluded, a vote shall be taken on the whole text, in which the Committee and the Delegation shall again pronounce separately. If the result of the voting bears out the agreement of both bodies, previous disagreements, if any, shall be deemed to have been overcome and the resulting text shall be delivered to the Speaker for further consideration.

Procedure in case of no
agreement having been
reached

2. If no agreement is reached, this fact shall be declared and the result shall be notified to the Speaker for the purposes of paragraph 5 of Sect. 151.2 of the Constitution.

151 C

Section 144

Vote of ratification by
Congress in plenary
sittings

Upon receipt of notification from the Government as to the approval by referendum of a draft Statute, it shall be put to the vote on the floor of the Congress, following a debate conducted in accordance with the rules for debates on a whole text.

151 C

III. Reform of Statutes

Section 145

By Organic
Act

The reform of a Statute of Devolution transacted in accordance with the rules therein established, shall require passage by an Organic Act.

147 C
148 C
152 C

DIVISION 4

Constitutional review and reform

Section 146

87 C
166 C
167 C

1. The bills for constitutional amendments referred to in Sections 166 and 167 of the Constitution shall be dealt with in accordance with the rules laid down herein for bills, although private members' bills shall require signature by two parliamentary groups or by one-fifth of the members of Congress.

Constitutional
Review

23 SO

Initiative

2. The text passed by the House shall be put to a final vote and in order to be carried shall require the affirmative vote of three fifths of the members of Congress.

Final voting on the floor of the House

3. If there is no agreement between Congress and Senate, an attempt shall be made to achieve the same by means of a joint Committee composed of an equal number of representatives of each House. If this Committee meets agreement, a vote shall be taken on the resulting text, in which the majority referred to in the preceding paragraph must be obtained.

Joint Committee in the event of disagreement between Congress and Senate

4. If agreement is not achieved by means of the procedure in the preceding paragraph, then, provided the text has obtained the affirmative vote of the overall majority of the Senate, the Congress may adopt the amendment by a two-third majority.

Final adoption by Congress

Section 147

168 C
56 C

1. Bills proposing total revision of the Constitution, or amendments affecting the Preliminary Part; Chapter two, Division 1, of Part I, or Part II of Constitution, shall be submitted to the floor of the House for a debate which shall be conducted in accordance with the rules for debates on the whole legislative text.

Total review

Voting on the principle of review

2. Upon conclusion of the debate, a vote shall be taken. If the principle of revision is voted for by two-thirds of the members of Congress, the Speaker shall notify the Senate thereof.

Dissolution of both Houses of Parliament

3. If in the Upper House a majority of two thirds of Senators also vote in favour, the Speaker of Congress shall notify the Prime Minister, who shall submit a Royal Decree for de dissolution of the *Cortes Generales* to the King for his Royal sanction.

New Parliament to vote on ratification of proposed review

4. Upon the constitution of the new Cortes the decision taken by the dissolved Parliament shall be submitted to ratification. If the resolution of Congress is favourable, it shall be notified to the Speaker of the Senate.

1 SO

Notification of ratification to Government

5. The reform of the Constitution having been approved by the *Cortes Generales*, the Speaker of the Congress shall give notice thereof to the Prime Minister for the purposes of Section 168.3 of the Constitution.

109 SO

DIVISION 5

Full legislative authority of Committees

Section 148

Presumption of the full House's assent for delegation to committees

1. The decision of Congress delegating full legislative authority to committees shall be presumed for all bills that may constitutionally be delegated, but such delegation shall not extend to the debate and voting on the whole text or the taking into consideration thereof, without prejudice to the provisions of the following section.

75 C

Procedure

2. The procedure applicable to consideration of these bills shall be the ordinary legislative procedure, excluding the formality of final deliberation and voting on the floor of the House.

88 SO

Section 149

75 C

1. Congress may reserve for deliberation and final voting on the floor of the House the bills referred to in the preceding article, by adopting a decision to this effect in the plenary sitting in which the debate on the whole text is held, pursuant to Section 112 of these Rules, or in which the taking into consideration of a private member's bill is decided. In all other cases, and before the debate in committee takes place, the full House may reserve for itself final adoption, upon

Recall by full Congress of Bills delegated to committees

112 SO

31, 39 SO the proposal of the Bureau after consultation with the Board of Spokesmen. The motion for recall shall be put to the vote without prior debate.

75, 90 C 2. Committees shall have no jurisdiction to take full legislative cognizance of bills that have been vetoed or amended by the Senate, where the vetoes or amendments have been passed in plenary sitting thereof.

Exclusive jurisdiction of full Congress for Bills vetoed or amended by Senate

DIVISION 6

Consideration of a Bill in single reading

Section 150

31, 39 SO 1. When the nature of a Government Bill or of a private member's bill under consideration makes it advisable, or the simplicity of its formulation so permits, the full House, upon the proposal of the Bureau and having consulted the Board of Spokesmen, may resolve that it be considered directly and in single reading.

Decision on one reading only by full Congress

74 SO 2. If this decision is adopted, a debate shall be held in accordance with the rules for debates on a whole text with the whole of the text being put to a single vote.

Debate on the whole text

Final result 3. If the result of the vote is favourable, the text shall stand adopted and be forwarded to the Senate. Otherwise, it shall stand rejected.

120 SO

PART VI

Control over Government provisions having the force of an Act

Section 151

Ratification or annulment of Royal Decree-Laws Term. Procedure

1. The debate and voting on the ratification or annulment of a Royal Decree-Law shall be carried out on the floor of the House, or in the Permanent Deputation, within thirty days from its promulgation, pursuant to Section 86.2 of the Constitution.

86, 57 C

Nevertheless, a Decree-Law may be included on the agenda for debate voting as soon as it has been printed in the Official Gazette.

Submission and debate on the floor of the House

2. A member of the Government shall explain to the House the reasons that have required its promulgation and the ensuing debate shall be conducted in accordance with the rules governing debates on a whole text.

39 SO
74 SO

Voting

3. After the debate has concluded, a vote shall be taken in which the affirmative votes shall be deemed favourable to ratification and the negative votes favourable to annulment

Possibility of a further procedure as ordinary governmental Bill

4. Upon the ratification of a Royal Decree-Law, the Speaker shall enquire whether any parliamentary group wishes it to be dealt with as a bill. If so, the question shall be put to the decision of full Congress. If the House pronounces in favour, the urgency procedure for bills shall be followed and amendments calling for the return of the whole text shall not be admissible.

109, 93 SO

78 C
57 SO

5. The Permanent Deputation may, where necessary, consider as bills, and deal with them by the urgency procedure, any Decree-Laws which the Government may issue during the periods between parliamentary terms.

Powers of Permanent Deputation to this procedure

6. The decision on the ratification or annulment of a Royal Decree-Law shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Publication of final decision

Section 152

82 to 86 C	As soon as it has made use of the delegation contemplated in Section 82 of the Constitution, the Government shall address the relevant notice to Congress containing the text in sections, or consolidated text drawn up as a result thereof, which shall be published in the Official Parliamentary Bulletin.	Control of legislative delegations
97 SO		

Section 153

82 C	1. When, pursuant to the provisions of Section 82.6 of the Constitution, the enabling Acts direct that additional control of delegated legislation shall be exercised by Congress, the provisions of this section shall be observed.	Procedure
110 SO	2. If, within one month following publication of the articulated or consolidated text, no Member or no parliamentary group raises objections, Government shall be deemed to have made a proper use of the legislative delegation.	Implicit approval of use of delegation by Government
113 SO	3. If within the said term any objection is raised to the use of the delegation in a document addressed to the Bureau of Congress, the latter shall refer such document to the relevant committee, which shall report on the question within such term as is appointed for this purpose.	Objections to use of delegation by Government
	4. The report shall be debated on the floor of the House in accordance with the general rules on legislative procedure.	Debate of report on the matter
	5. Legal effects of control shall be those contemplated in the enabling Act.	Effects of control

PART VII

Granting of authorizations and other acts of Congress having direct legal effect

CHAPTER I

International treaties

Section 154

Authorization by Organic Act for the entering into International treaties	The conclusion of treaties vesting in an international organization or institution the exercise of authority deriving from the Constitution, shall require prior passage by the <i>Cortes Generales</i> of an enabling Organic Act which shall be transacted and adopted in accordance with the Rules for this category of Acts.	93 C
		130 SO

Section 155

Other treaties requiring prior Authorization by Parliament	1. The grant of the State's consent to the acceptance of binding obligations under treaties or agreements shall require prior authorization of the <i>Cortes Generales</i> in cases contemplated in Sect. 94.1 of the Constitution.	94 C
	2. The Government shall request such authorization from the <i>Cortes Generales</i> by forwarding to Congress the relevant decision of the Cabinet, together with the text of the treaty or agreement and a memorandum justifying the request and the reservations and declarations, if any, which the Government may intend to enter. Congress shall pronounce both as to the granting of the authorization	109 SO

and as to the entering of the reservations and declarations proposed by the Government.

Term for submission of request

3. The request referred to in the preceding subsection shall be submitted by the Government to Congress within ninety days following the Cabinet's decision, a term which, in justified cases, may be extended to one hundred and eighty days. In the latter event, upon the expiry of the initial ninety days, the Government shall be required to send a notification to Congress, giving documentary justification for the delay.

43 SO

Term for Congress decision

4. Congress shall take a decision within sixty days.

Section 156

89 SO

1. The consideration by Congress of the granting of authorization shall conform to the ordinary legislative procedure, subject to the special rules contained in this Chapter.

Procedure

110 SO

2. Proposals submitted by members and parliamentary groups shall be considered as amendments to a whole text in the following cases:

Proposals to be dealt with as if relating to the whole text.

i) When advocating the refusal or postponement of the authorization requested.

ii) When proposing reservations or declarations not contained in the treaty or agreement.

110 SO

3. Proposals submitted by members and parliamentary groups shall be considered as amendments to section in the following cases:

Proposals to be dealt with as relating «to sections»

i) When they call for deletion, addition or amendment of the reservations or declarations which the Government intends to enter.

ii) When they call for reservations or declarations not contained in the treaty or the agreement.

Section 157

95, 161 C

1. If, during consideration of a treaty or agreement by Congress, doubts are raised as to the constitutionality of any of its clauses, the full House on the initiative of two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of its members, may resolve to lodge with the Constitutional Court the petition provided for in Section 95.2 of the Constitution.

Reference of treaty to Constitutional Court

Suspensive effect of reference

2. The consideration of the treaty or agreement shall go into abeyance and may only be resumed if the opinion of the Court is in favour of the constitutionality of the clauses contained therein.

Effects of declaration of Unconstitutionality by Court

3. If the Court holds that the treaty or agreement contains clauses contrary to the Constitution, then consideration thereof may not proceed unless a constitutional revision is carried out first.

Section 158

Divergences between Congress and Senate

Any divergences between the Congress and the Senate as to the granting of consent to conclude treaties or agreements pursuant to Section 94.1 of the Constitution shall, wherever possible, be resolved by means of a joint committee set up as provided for in Section 74.2 of the Constitution, which shall present a text to be put to the vote of both Houses. If not approved in this manner, Congress shall decide by overall majority.

74 C
Final
Prov. 3 SO

Section 159

Foreign Affairs Committee to be informed of treaties referred to in Section 94.2

Notice shall be given immediately to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, for its information, of Government's

94 C

of Constitution communications in compliance with Section 94.2 of the Constitution, and of texts of the relevant treaties or agreements.

Section 160

Procedure for denunciation of treaties

In case of denunciation of a treaty or agreement, the same procedure as established for the granting of consent to the acceptance of obligations under such treaty of agreement shall apply.

96 C

CHAPTER II

Consultative referendum

Section 161

92 C

1. Prior authorization by Congress shall be required for any draft Decree submitted by the Prime Minister to the King for the calling of a consultative referendum on any political issue of exceptional importance.

Authorization by Congress

74 SO

2. The notice or communication addressed to this end by the Prime Minister to Congress shall be debated on the floor of the House. The debate shall conform to the rules for debates on a whole text.

Debate on the floor of the House

39 SO

3. The decision of Congress shall be notified by the Speaker to the Prime Minister.

Notification to Prime Minister

CHAPTER III

States of alert, emergency and siege

Section 162

55, 116 C
57 SO

1. When the Government declares a state of alert, it shall immediately forward to the Speaker a communication attaching the text of the Decree adopted in Cabinet. Notice shall be given of this communication to the appropriate committee, which may request such information and documentation as it sees fit.

Prior authorization by Congress

2. If the Government seeks to extend the term of fifteen days referred to in Section 116.2 of the Constitution, it shall request the authorization of Congress before the expiry of that term.

Prior authorization for extension of initial term

3. Groups may submit proposals as to the scope and the conditions in force during the extension until two hours prior to the beginning of the sitting in which the granting of the authorization requested is to be debated.

Proposals by Parliamentary groups

Debate on the floor of the House

4. The debate shall take place in plenary sitting and begin with the explanation by a member of the Government of the reasons justifying the request for an extension of the state of alert, and conform to the rules for debate on a whole text.

Final vote

5. When the debate has concluded, the request and the proposals submitted shall be put to the vote, and the decision of the House shall be notified to the Government.

Section 163

Prior authorization of Congress for declaration of state of emergency

1. If the Government seeks to declare a state of emergency, or to extend a state of emergency already declared, it shall require prior authorization of Congress, for which purpose it shall send the relevant notification, which is to be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the preceding Section.

55, 116 C
57 SO

Authorization to specify extent and duration

2. In any event, the authorization of a state of emergency shall expressly specify the effects thereof, the area to which it is to apply

and its duration, which may not exceed thirty days, but which may be extended for a further equal period subject to the same requirements.

Section 164

Procedure for authorization of state of siege

1. If the Government proposes the declaration of a state of siege (martial law), the debate on the floor of the House shall conform to the rules laid down in Section 162.

55, 116 C
57 SO

Authorization to define scope and duration

2. A state of siege shall be declared within the area, for the duration and on the conditions specified in such proposal as obtains the vote of the overall majority of the members of Congress in plenary sitting.

Notification of final decision to Prime Minister

3. The Speaker shall notify the Prime Minister and shall cause the decision of the House to be published in the Official Gazette.

Section 165

57 SO

1. In the cases considered in the three preceding Sections, the matter shall immediately be laid before the full House, convened for the purpose if not sitting, even at a time of recess.

Immediate debate on the floor of the House

78 C

2. If, after the Congress has been dissolved or its term has expired, a situation giving rise to any of such states occurs, the powers vested by this Chapter in the full House shall be assumed by the Permanent Deputation.

Role of Permanent Deputation when Congress dissolved

CHAPTER IV

Acts of Congress in relation to Self-governing Communities

Section 166

146 C

1. When the notification of an agreement between Self-governing Communities, relating to the administration and provision of public services thereof, is received in Congress, the Bureau shall refer it to the Constitutional Committee for the purposes provided in the relevant Statutes of Devolution.

Agreements between Self-governing Communities about public services. Procedure or examination

145 C

2. Upon receipt of a communication from the Senate granting or refusing authorization for a cooperation agreement between Self-governing Communities, in cases other than those considered in the preceding paragraph, the Bureau shall resolve upon reference thereof to the Constitutional Committee, which is to issue the relevant report for debate on the floor of House in accordance with the procedure for debate on a whole text.

Procedure in cases other than those provided for in paragr. 1

3. If the decision of Congress agrees with that of the Senate, the Speaker shall notify if to the Presidents of the Communities concerned. If it is contrary, he shall notify the Speaker of Senate for the appointment of the Joint Committee provided for in Sect. 74.2 of the Constitution, which shall prepare a text to be put to the vote in both Houses. If this is not approved in such manner, Congress shall decide by overall majority.

Final decision

Section 167

Control of legislative delegations to Self-governing Communities

The form of control established in an Act of the State promulgated pursuant to the provisions of Sect. 150.1 of the Constitution, shall be carried out, as regards Congress, in accordance with provisions of Sect. 153 hereof.

150C

153 SO

Section 168

Decision on the need to Issue harmonization laws

Procedure

1. The necessity for the State, when so required by the general interest, to issue laws setting forth the necessary principles for harmonizing the legislative provisions of Self-governing Communities, even for matters in which jurisdiction is vested in such Communities, shall be resolved upon by the overall majority of Members of Congress, in a debate conducted according to the rules

150 C

	governing debates on a whole text. The debate may be brought in upon the proposal of the Government, of two parliamentary groups of one-fifth of members.	74 SO
Notification to Senate	2. The decision of the House shall be notified by the Speaker to the Speaker of the Senate, for the purpose of compliance with Sect. 150.3 of the Constitution.	150 C
Certain amendments Not admissible	3. In the subsequent passage through Congress of harmonization bills, amendments that are contrary to a previous decision of the House adopted under subsection 1, shall be inadmissible.	

CHAPTER V

Indictment of members of the Government for treasonable offences or crimes against the security of the State

Section 169

102 C 63, 32 SO	1. After the initiative referred to in Section 102.2 of the Constitution has been exercised in writing and signed by a number of Congressmen representing not less than one quarter of the Members of Congress, the Speaker shall convene a secret sitting of the full House to debate and vote thereon.	Secret plenary sitting after the initiative of indictment
74 SO	2. The debate shall conform to the rules for debates on a whole text. The person affected by the proposed indictment shall have the right to speak at any stage in the debate. The voting shall be carried out by the procedure described in Section 87.1, paragraph 2, of these Rules, and the Speaker shall announce in advance the time at which it will take place.	Rules of debate
87 SO		Voting
81, 131 SO 14, 21 SO 102 C 52, 101, 105 SO	3. If the initiative of indictment is confirmed by the overall majority of the Members of Congress, the Speaker shall notify the result to the President of the Supreme Court, for the purposes of Section 102.1 of the Constitution. If not, the initiative shall be deemed to have been rejected.	Effects of the passage of the initiative of indictment

PART VIII

Granting and withdrawal of confidence

CHAPTER I

Investiture

Section 170

Proposal of a candidate for Prime Minister	In compliance with Section 99 of the Constitution, once the nomination of a candidate as Prime Minister has been received in the Congress, the Speaker shall convene a plenary sitting.	99 C
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Section 171

Candidate to submit his programme	1. The sitting shall begin with the reading out of the nomination by one of the Secretaries.	34 SO
	2. The nominated candidate shall then explain, without limitation as to time, the political programme of the Cabinet he or she intends to form and shall request the confidence of the House.	99 C
Debate	3. After a suspension by the Speaker, a representative of each parliamentary group having requested the floor shall have the opportunity to speak for thirty minutes.	174 SO
Right of speech by Prime Minister and each of the	4. The nominated candidate may speak as often as he or she shall request. When the candidate replies individually to any speaker, the latter shall have the opportunity to speak again for ten minutes. If the candidate replies in general to the representatives of	39 SO

other speakers	parliamentary groups, the latter shall be entitled to a ten minutes rejoinder.	
Vote	5. The voting shall be carried out at the time appointed by the Speaker. If the nominated candidate obtains the vote of the overall majority of Members of Congress, confidence shall be deemed granted. If he or she fails to obtain such majority, a new vote shall then be taken forty-eight hours later and confidence shall be deemed to be granted if a single majority is obtained before this further vote is taken, the candidate shall be entitled to speak for a maximum time of ten minutes, and parliamentary groups for five minutes each, to make known their position.	81, 85, 131, 169 SO
99 C		
62 C	6. Once Congress has granted its confidence to the candidate in accordance with the preceding subsection, the Speaker shall notify the King for the purpose of the candidate's appointment as Prime Minister.	Notification to the King
	Section 172	
	1. If, in the voting referred to in the preceding section, Congress has not granted its confidence, further nominations shall be considered by the same procedure.	Successive proposals
64, 99 C	2. After two months have elapsed from the first vote of investiture without any nominated candidate having secured the confidence of the Congress, the Speaker shall submit to the King's signature a Decree dissolving the <i>Cortes Generales</i> and calling new elections and shall notify the Speaker of the Senate accordingly.	Dissolution of Parliament
CHAPTER II		
The question of confidence		
	Section 173	
112 C, 171 SO	The Prime Minister, after deliberation in Cabinet, may put to the Congress the question of confidence in his or her programme or in a general policy statement.	Putting the question of confidence to the Congress
	Section 174	
Writ with statements of reasons for putting the question	1. The question of confidence shall be raised in a reasoned written statement submitted to the Bureau of Congress enclosing the relevant Cabinet certificate.	
	2. Once the statement has been admitted for consideration by the Bureau, the Speaker shall notify the same to the Board of Spokesmen and convene a plenary sitting.	31 SO
Rules of debate	3. The debate shall be conducted in accordance with the rules laid down for the debate of investiture. The Prime Minister and, where applicable, members of Government, shall be allowed the same opportunities to speak as provided for the candidate.	171 SO
Vote	4. Upon conclusion of the debate, the motion of confidence shall be put to the vote at such time as shall have been previously announced by the Speaker. The question of confidence may not be voted until twenty-four hours have elapsed from its tabling.	81, 85, 131, 169, 177 SO
Confidence granted by single majority	5. Confidence shall be deemed to have been granted if the vote of a single majority of Members is obtained.	
Notification to the King	6. Whatever the result of the voting, the Speaker shall notify the King and the Prime Minister.	114 C

CHAPTER III
The motion of censure

Congress entitled to censure of Government	<p>Section 175</p> <p>1. The Congress may demand political responsibilities of the Government by the adoption of a motion of censure.</p> <p>2. The motion must be tabled by at least one-tenth of members, in a statement with the reasons thereof addressed to the Bureau, and must nominate a candidate for the office of Prime Minister who has accepted such candidature.</p>	113 C
Conditions of Motion		
113 C		
	<p>Section 176</p> <p>1. After having verified that the motion of censure meets the requirements specified in the preceding section, the Bureau shall admit the same for consideration and notify its presentation to the Prime Minister and to the spokesperson of parliamentary groups.</p> <p>2. Within two days following the tabling of a motion of censure, alternative motions may be tabled, which shall meet the same requirements as specified in Section 175.2, and shall be subject to the same admission procedures as laid down in the preceding paragraph.</p>	Bureau to verify on motion
31 SO		Alternative motions admissible within two days
	<p>Section 177</p> <p>1. The debate shall begin with the defence of the motion of censure by one of the signatory Members, who shall be allowed to speak without any limitation of time. Next, and also without limitation as to time, the candidate nominated in the motion as Prime Minister shall have the opportunity to speak, in order to explain the political programme of the Cabinet he intends to form.</p> <p>2. Following the suspension ordered by the Speaker, one representative of each of the parliamentary groups of the House having asked for the floor may speak for thirty minutes. All speakers shall be given an opportunity to reply or rectify for ten minutes.</p> <p>3. If more than one motion of censure has been tabled, the Speaker, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, may resolve on the joint debate of all such motions included on the agenda, but they shall be voted separately in the order of they were tabled.</p>	Debate
39 SO		Right to speak of each parliamentary group
	<p>4. The motion or motions of censure shall be put to the vote at such time as shall have been previously announced by the Speaker, which may not be sooner than five days from the lodging of the first motion with the General Register.</p>	Joint debate and separate voting of concurring motions
Final vote		81, 85, 131, 169, 174 SO 113 C
Motion passed by overall majority	<p>5. The adoption of a motion of censure shall require in all cases the affirmative vote of the overall majority of Members of Congress.</p> <p>6. If one motion of censure is passed, the remaining motions that have been tabled shall not be put to the vote.</p>	
Lapsing of all other motions of censure		
	<p>Section 178</p> <p>If Congress adopts a motion of censure, the Speaker shall immediately notify the King and the Prime Minister. The candidate to the office of Prime Minister nominated in the motion shall be deemed to have been granted the confidence of the House for the purposes of Section 99 of the Constitution.</p>	114 C
Notification to King and to Prime Minister of passing of motion		99 C
	<p>Section 179</p>	

Limitations to submission of new motions by same signatories

None of the signatories of a motion of censure that is rejected may sign another such motion during the same session. For these purposes, a motion tabled in a recess between sessions shall be counted as a motion tabled in the next session.

113 C

PART IX

Interpellations and questions

CHAPTER I

Interpellations

111 C
6, 23 SO

Section 180

Members and parliamentary groups may interpellate the Cabinet and each of its members.

By Members and parliamentary groups

Section 181

1. Interpellations shall be submitted in writing to the Bureau of the Congress and shall be concerned with the reasons for, or intentions underlying, the conduct of the Executive in matters of general policy, whether of the Cabinet itself or of any Ministerial Department.

Object of interpellation. Submission to be in writing

31, 192 SO

2. The Bureau shall examine the document and in the event of its content being inappropriate to an interpellation, as described in the foregoing subsection, shall convey this fact to its sponsor for the conversion thereof into a question for oral or written answer.

Verification by Bureau

Section 182

1. After fifteen days have elapsed from the publication of the interpellation, it may be included in the agenda of a plenary sitting.

Inclusion in the agenda of full House

67, 133,
188,
194 SO

2. Priority in the entry of interpellations in the agenda shall be given to those lodged by members of parliamentary groups or parliamentary groups themselves who, in the session in question, have not taken full advantage of the quota consisting of one interpellation for every ten members or fraction thereof belonging to a group. In addition to this criterion, the order in which interpellations were tabled shall also be considered. No agenda may contain more than one interpellation by the same parliamentary group.

Priority

Conversion of interpellation into a question for written answer

3. Upon the closure of a session, any outstanding interpellations shall be dealt with as questions for written reply to be answered before the beginning of the next session, unless the interpellating member or parliamentary group indicates his or its wish to hold over the interpellation until the next session.

Section 183

Debate on interpellation

1. Interpellations shall be dealt within plenary sitting, an opportunity being given to the interpellant to explain the same, to the Cabinet to reply, and to each party to rejoin. Initial speeches may not exceed ten minutes nor rejoinders five.

73 SO

Right to speak of each parliamentary group

2. Following speeches by the interpellant and by the person who is to reply, a representative of each parliamentary group, except for the group moving the interpellation may speak for five minutes to make known the group's position.

Section 184

Motions resulting from an interpellation

1. Any interpellation may give rise to a motion in which Congress makes known its position.

111 C

Tabling and discussion of such motions	<p>2. The interpellating parliamentary group, or the group to which the signatory of the interpellation belongs, shall table the motion on the day following that on which the interpellation was debated on the floor of the House. After admission by the Bureau, the motion shall be entered in the agenda of the next plenary sitting, and any amendments may be lodged up to six hours before the time appointed for the beginning of that sitting. The Bureau shall admit the motion if it is consistent with the interpellation.</p>	Rules of debate
73, 193 SO	<p>3. The debate and voting shall be conducted in accordance with the rules for motions.</p>	
	Section 185	
111 C	<p>Members of Congress may put questions to the Cabinet and to any of its members.</p>	Right of individual Members to put questions
	Section 186	
	<p>1. Questions shall be submitted in writing to the Bureau of Congress.</p>	Question to be in writing
192 SO	<p>2. Questions that are exclusively of interest to persons submitting the same or to any other individual person, or questions involving strictly legal consultation, shall not be admitted.</p>	Limits as to the content
	<p>3. The Bureau shall examine the document and shall admit the question if it conforms to the provisions of this Chapter.</p>	Examination by Bureau
	Section 187	
	<p>Unless otherwise stated, it shall be deemed that the person submitting the question requests a written answer, and if an oral reply is requested and nothing further is specified, it shall be deemed that such reply is to be given in the appropriate committee.</p>	Types of questions
	Section 188	
Questions for oral reply in plenary sitting	<p>1. When an oral reply in a plenary sitting is sought, the text requesting the same may concise and precisely set forth a single question inquiring as to a certain fact, situation or item of information, whether the Government has taken or is going to take certain action in connection with a given matter, or whether the Government is going to forward any document to the Congress or inform it on any point. Notices containing such questions shall be submitted in advance within the term appointed by the Bureau, which shall in no case be more than one week nor less than forty-eight hours.</p>	
Priority criteria	<p>2. Questions shall be included in the agenda with priority being given to those raised by Members who have not yet submitted questions on the floor of the House in the same session. Without prejudice to this criterion, the Speaker, in consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, shall specify the number of questions to be placed on the agenda of each plenary sitting, and the criterion for distribution among members of each parliamentary group.</p>	67, 113,182, 194 SO
Procedure	<p>3. In the debate, after the question has been put concisely by the Member, the Government shall reply thereto. The Member may then rejoin or ask a further question, and following the Government's further reply the debate shall conclude. The time shall be allocated by the Speaker between the Members concerned, but in no case may the consideration of the question exceed five minutes. When the time allocated to any Member has run out, the Speaker shall automatically grant the floor to the next person entitled to speak, or pass on to the next question.</p>	73 SO
	<p>4. The Government may, on reasonable grounds, request at any time, and once only with respect to each question, that it be deferred to the agenda of the next plenary sitting. Subject to this exception,</p>	

any questions presented and not included on the agenda, as well as those included and not considered, must be repeated for them to be maintained until the next plenary sitting.

Section 189

1. Questions with respect to which an oral answer in committee is sought may be entered in the agenda after seven days have elapsed from their publication.

Questions for oral reply in committee

2. They shall be dealt with in accordance with subsection 3 of the preceding section, except that ten minutes shall be allotted for speakers to rise and reply to questions, and five minutes for their respective rejoinders. Questions may be answered by Secretaries of State and Under-Secretaries.

Procedure

3. At the end of a session, any outstanding questions shall be considered as questions for written reply to be answered prior to the beginning of the next session.

Conversion of outstanding questions into question for written reply

Section 190

1. Written reply to questions must be given within twenty days following their publication, a term which may be extended, upon a reasoned request from the Government and by resolution of the Bureau, for an additional period of up to twenty days.

Questions for written reply. Answers

2. If Government fails to submit a reply within this period, the Speaker, at the request of the questioner, shall cause the question to be entered in the agenda of the next meeting of the appropriate committee, where it shall be treated as an oral question. This decision shall be notified to the Government.

Conversion into oral question to be answered in Committee

CHAPTER III

Common rules

Section 191

Question time

In weeks when there is an ordinary plenary sitting, a minimum of two hours shall be set aside, as a general rule, for questions and interpellations.

Section 192

Grouping of questions and Interpellations by Speaker

1. The Speaker shall be entitled to group interpellations and questions on the agenda together for simultaneous debate of he or she considers they relate to the same or connected subject matters.

73, 118, 195 SO

Limits to admissibility

2. The Bureau, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, may declare not admissible for consideration questions or interpellations the text of which comes under the cases described in Section 103.1 hereof.

181, 186, 103 SO

PART X

Non-legislative motions

Section 193

Motions for resolution

Parliamentary groups may put forward motions for Congress to pass resolutions of a non-legislative nature.

66 C 23 SO

Section 194

31 SO

1. Such motions shall be submitted in writing to the Bureau of Congress, which shall decide as to their admissibility, cause them to be published, where appropriate, and resolve upon their consideration on the floor of the House or in appropriate committee,

Motions to be in writing. Bureau to decide on them and to classify them

110 SO	<p>depending upon the intention expressed by the proposing group and the importance of the matter.</p> <p>2. After a motion has been published, amendments may be tabled by parliamentary groups up to six hours before the beginning of the sitting in which they are to be debated.</p> <p>3. For the entry of motions on the agenda of a plenary sitting, the provisions of Section 182.2 hereof, relating to interpellations, shall be observed.</p>	<p>Amendments by parliamentary groups</p> <p>Priority criteria</p>
67, 133, 182, 188 SO	<p>Section 195</p> <p>1. A non-legislative motion shall be the subject of a debate in which, first of all, the parliamentary group having tabled the motion, then the representatives of each of the parliamentary groups that have submitted amendments, and finally of those who have not done so, may speak. Once these speeches have concluded, the motion, together with amendments accepted by the promoter, shall be put to the vote.</p> <p>2. The Chairman of the committee or the Speaker of Congress may group motions on the same or similar subjects together for the purposes of discussion.</p>	<p>Procedure for debate of non-legislative motions</p> <p>Grouping together of related non-legislative motions</p>
73 SO	<p>1. A non-legislative motion shall be the subject of a debate in which, first of all, the parliamentary group having tabled the motion, then the representatives of each of the parliamentary groups that have submitted amendments, and finally of those who have not done so, may speak. Once these speeches have concluded, the motion, together with amendments accepted by the promoter, shall be put to the vote.</p>	<p>Procedure for debate of non-legislative motions</p>
23 SO	<p>1. A non-legislative motion shall be the subject of a debate in which, first of all, the parliamentary group having tabled the motion, then the representatives of each of the parliamentary groups that have submitted amendments, and finally of those who have not done so, may speak. Once these speeches have concluded, the motion, together with amendments accepted by the promoter, shall be put to the vote.</p>	<p>Procedure for debate of non-legislative motions</p>
73, 118, 192 SO	<p>2. The Chairman of the committee or the Speaker of Congress may group motions on the same or similar subjects together for the purposes of discussion.</p>	<p>Grouping together of related non-legislative motions</p>

PART XI

Examination and debate of Government communications, programmes or plans and other reports

CHAPTER I

Government communications

Section 196

Debate on the floor of the House or in committee
Reply by Government.
Rejoinder by speakers

1. When the Government submits to Congress a communication for debate, which may take place in the Plenum or in committee, the debate shall be opened by a member of the Government, after which a representative of each parliamentary group may take the floor for a maximum of fifteen minutes.
2. Members of the Government may reply to questions raised either separately, jointly or in groups of related topics. All speakers shall be allocated a maximum time of ten minutes each in which to reply.

Section 197

Motions for resolution by Parliamentary groups

Limits to motions for resolution

1. Upon conclusion of the debate, a period of thirty minutes shall be allowed in which parliamentary groups may table draft resolutions to the Bureau. The Bureau shall admit all such motions as are consistent with the subject under debate.
2. Proposals so admitted may be defended for a maximum of five minutes. The Speaker may allocate the same amount of time for opposition after the defence of each motion.
3. Draft resolutions shall be voted upon in the order of their tabling, except for those which entail total rejection of the contents of the Government's communication, which shall be voted upon in the first place.

110 SO

CHAPTER II

Examination of programmes and plans submitted by the Government

Section 198

1. If the Government submits a programme or plan requiring a decision by Congress, the Bureau shall cause it be referred to the appropriate committee.

Reference by
Bureau to appropriate
committee

2. The bureau of the committee shall make arrangements for consideration of such programme and shall allocate time thereto. The committee shall designate, where applicable, a reporting sub-committee to study the programme or plan in question. The debate in committee shall conform to the preceding Chapter, provided however that the term for submission of motions for resolution shall be three days, if the Bureau of Congress has decided that such motions shall be debated on the floor of the House.

Procedure

CHAPTER III

Examination of reports laid before Congress

Section 199

Annual report by
Auditing Court

1. Upon receipt of the annual report of the Auditing Court, Congress shall proceed as provided in the preceding section.

136 C

Request for information and
papers to Auditing Court

2. The Speaker, in agreement with the Bureau and after having consulted the Board of Spokesmen, at the request of a committee, may direct the Auditing Court in the cases provided for in the Organic Art governing that Court, to forward to the House reports, documents or records on a given matter.

Section 200

Report by the
Defender of the
People
(Ombudsman)

1. Upon receipt of the annual report or of any extraordinary report of the Defender of the People, and after its placing on the agenda, the Defender of the People shall deliver an oral summary thereof to the full House or, as the case may be, to the Permanent Deputation. Following this explanation, one representative of each parliamentary group may take the floor for fifteen minutes to make known its position.

54 C

Requests of
information to the
Defender of
the People

2. Members of Congress, parliamentary groups and committees may request in writing, through the Speaker, stating the reasons therefor, the intervention of the Defender of the People to investigate or clarify decisions, resolutions and specific actions taken by Public Administration and affecting a citizen or group or citizens.

Section 201

Other
reports

All other reports which, by virtue of a constitutional or legal provision, must be submitted to the Cortes or to Congress, shall be transacted as provided for in Sections 196 and 197 hereof, excluding the introductory speech of the Government, and may or may not give rise, depending on their nature, to the putting of motions for resolutions.

CAPTER IV

Information by the Government

Section 202

110, 109 C
44, 7, 203
SO

1. Members of the Government, at their own request or when so requested by the relevant committee, shall appear before such committee to hold an informative sitting.

General informative sitting Initiative to convene such sittings

2. The sitting shall be conducted in the following stages: oral explanation by the Minister, adjournment for a maximum time of forty-five minutes to enable Members and parliamentary groups to prepare their questions or comments, and subsequent reply thereto by the member of the Cabinet.

Right of members of Cabinet to be assisted by authorities and officials

3. Members of the Cabinet may be accompanied for this purpose by authorities and officials from their department.

Section 203

110, 109 C
44, 7, 202
SO

1. Members of the Cabinet, at their own request or by a resolution of the Bureau of Congress and the Board of Spokesmen, shall appear before the full House or any of the committees to report on a given matter. The initiative for the adoption of such resolutions shall rest with two parliamentary groups or one-fifth of Members of the House or of the committee, as the case may be.

Appearance of members of the Government to give evidence on specific matters Initiative

Procedure

2. Following oral explanation by the Government, the representatives of each parliamentary group may speak for ten minutes to make their positions known, put questions or make remarks, which shall be answered by the Government, without subsequent voting.

Special turn for Members

3. In exceptional cases, the Speaker may, in agreement with the Bureau and after having consulted the Board of Spokesmen, allocate time for Members to put succinct questions or request clarifications on the information furnished. To this end, the Speaker shall fix a maximum number or duration of speeches.

PART XII

Nominations and appointments

Section 204

Members of General Council of the Judicial Power and judges of the Constitutional Court

1. The nomination of the four members of the General Council of the Judicial Power and of the four members of the Constitutional Court, referred to respectively in Sections 122.3 and 159.1 of the Constitution, shall be resolved upon in plenary sitting of Congress.

122, 159 C

Nominations by Parliamentary groups

2. Each parliamentary group may propose up to four candidates for each institution, and shall be allocated a maximum time of five minutes in which to defend such nominations.

Up to four names by group

3. Members may write up to four names on the ballot paper.

87 SO

Election by three-fifth majority

4. Both for the General Council of the Judicial Power and for the Constitutional Court, the four candidates having obtained the highest number of votes shall be elected, provided each has obtained three-fifths of total membership of the Congress.

5. If on the first vote the four positions are not filled in accordance with the requirements specified in the preceding paragraph, further votes shall be taken in which the number of candidates may be progressively reduced, starting from a number not exceeding twice the number of vacancies to be filled. In this further voting, a number of candidates may be entered on the ballot papers equal to that of the positions to be filled. The Speaker may, if circumstances so warrant, suspend the voting for a reasonable time.

Successive votes in the event of no sufficient majority in first vote

37, 88 SO

6. Any ties that may be significant for the purposes of a nomination shall be decided by taking a further vote between those candidates who have obtained an equal number of votes.

Ties

Section 205

54 C
87 SO

1. The system provided for in the preceding Section, adapted to the actual number of positions to be filled and to other legal requirements, shall be applicable in cases in which a legal provision requires the nomination, acceptance or appointment of any persons by a qualified majority of members of Congress.

Other proposals for appointments requiring qualified majority

2. Proposals for the nomination of the six members of the General Council of the Judiciary Power selected by the Congress amongst judges and magistrates of all judicial categories shall comply to the following rules:

a) Candidates, up to a maximum of thirty-six, shall be proposed by the judges and magistrates, according to the terms described in the Organic Act of the Judiciary.

b) Candidates proposed in accordance with subsection a) shall be put to the Plenary, once the Bureau has verified they comply with the requirements set down in the Constitution and the Law. Attendance of the candidates at this stage is not required.

c) Parliamentary Groups may speak to explain their position for a maximum of five minutes.

d) Votes will be cast according to subsections 4 and 6 of Section 204. Members may write up to six names on the ballot paper.

Section 206

Appointments requiring only single majority

In the event that other persons are to be elected without the requirement of a qualified majority, the election shall be made in plenary sitting in such form as the Bureau of Congress, upon consultation with the Board of Spokesmen, shall propose, if so accepted by the full House. If a direct election is to be made by the full House, the proposal of the Bureau shall contain a formula of restricted suffrage, based on the number of appointments to be made and on membership of the House.

87 SO

PART XIII

Business pending upon expiry of the term of Congress

Section 207

Pending items lapse

Upon the dissolution of Congress or at the expiry of its term, all business pending examination and decision by the House shall lapse, except for such business as must constitutionally be transacted by the Permanent Deputation.

115, 68 C

REPEALS

Provisional Rules of Procedure hereby repealed

The Provisional Rules of Procedure of Congress, of October 13, 1977, and the provisions issued to implement them, are hereby repealed.

FINAL PROVISIONS

First

These Standing Orders shall come into force on the day of their publication in the «Official Parliamentary Bulletin». They shall also be published in the «Official Gazette».

9 C

Commencement

Second

The reform of these Standing Orders shall be carried out by means of the procedure for private members' bills initiated by

72 C
47 SO

Procedure for review

Congress. Its adoption shall require a final vote on the whole text by overall majority.

Third

72, 74, 94,
145, 158 C

In all matters relating to the *Cortes Generales*, or requiring joint sessions or the setting up of joint bodies of Congress and Senate, the Rules of Procedure of Parliament referred to in Section 72 of the Constitution shall be applicable, without prejudice to the present Standing Orders, Which shall apply in all respects not described therein or requiring separate consideration or voting by Congress.

Applicability in certain cases of the Rules of the *Cortes Generales*

Fourth

72 C

The rights, duties, situations, functions and responsibilities of the personnel in the employment of Congress shall be as determined in the Parliamentary Staff Regulations.

Parliamentary Staff Regulations

Fifth

185 SO

Oral questions in committee and requiring a written answer, relating to matters falling within the responsibility of the Spanish Radio and Television Authority, shall be answered directly by the Director-General or by the Board of Directors, subject to the same rules as are contained herein for questions to the Government.

Questions relating to Spanish Television Authority

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

First

Pending business to be transacted under these Rules

1. The transaction of any business pending before Congress upon the commencement of these Standing Orders shall conform to the provisions hereof with respect to pending procedures.

Exception to general rule of preceding subsection

2. Nevertheless, legislative proceedings in which the term for tabling of amendments has concluded prior to the commencement of these Standing Orders, shall continue in accordance with the procedures laid down in the provisional Rules of Procedure of Congress.

Second

Appl. Of Section 23 to parliamentary groups

The provisions of Section 23 shall be applicable as from the parliamentary term following entry into force of these Standing Orders.

23 SO

Third

Adaptation of existing Committees

The adaptation of existing Committees to the provisions of these Standing Orders shall be carried out within a term of fifteen days as from the commencement thereof.

Fourth

Constitutional oath or pledge by present Members

Members who already hold office at the entry into force of these Standing Orders shall comply with the requirement established in Sect. 20.1 iii) at the first plenary sitting they attend.

20 SO