

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic no. 1/2007 of 20 August 2007

(as rectified by Declaration of Rectification no. 96-A/2007 of 19 September 2007),

with the amendments made by

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic no. 1/2010 of 14 October 2010

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic no. 1/2017 of 21 April 2017, and

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic no. 1/2018 of 22 January 2018

TITLE I

Members of the Assembly of the Republic and parliamentary groups

CHAPTER I

Members of the Assembly of the Republic

SECTION I

Mandate of Members of the Assembly of the Republic

Article 1

Beginning and end of term of office

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

Article 2

Verification of credentials

1 - The Assembly of the Republic shall verify Members' credentials. To this end it shall take note of a prior opinion to be issued by the competent parliamentary committee or, in the absence thereof, by a credential verification committee, whose composition shall comply with the criteria laid down in Article 29.

2 - The verification of credentials shall consist of considering whether mandates are formally in order and considering the eligibility of Members of the Assembly of the Republic whose mandates have been challenged on the basis of a fact which has not been the object of a judicial decision that has transited in rem judicatam.

3 - The right to challenge pertains to any Member of the Assembly of the Republic and may be exercised until discussion of the opinion is concluded.

4 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic whose mandate is challenged has the right to defend himself before the competent parliamentary committee and before the Plenary, and to exercise his functions until the latter has passed a definitive decision by secret ballot.

5 - The Member of the Assembly of the Republic may speak for not more than fifteen minutes in order to exercise the right of defence provided for in the previous paragraph.

6 - In cases in which a challenge has been made, the time limit for preliminary investigation may not exceed thirty days, which may not be extended.

Article 3

Loss of seat

1 - Loss of seat shall occur:

a) In the cases provided for in the Statute of Members;

b) When the Member fails to take his seat in the Assembly by the fourth sitting thereof, or fails to attend four plenary sittings in any one legislative session, save for justified reasons.

2 - The justification of failures to attend referred to in subparagraph (1)(b) must be submitted to the President of the Assembly within a time limit of five days counting from the end of the fact that justified the failure.

3 - When it has proven knowledge of any of the facts referred to in paragraph (1), the Bureau shall first take note of the prior opinion issued by the competent parliamentary committee, in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of Members, and shall then declare the loss of seat.

4 - The Bureau shall notify the interested party of its decision, which shall be published in the *Journal of the Assembly of the Republic*.

5 - The Member of the Assembly of the Republic whose mandate is questioned has the right to be heard and to appeal to the Plenary at any time within the following ten days, and shall remain in office until the Plenary issues a definitive decision by secret ballot.

6 - Any other Member of the Assembly of the Republic also has the right to appeal within the same time limit, by means of a written and duly substantiated request, which shall be published in the *Journal*.

7 - The Plenary shall decide without prior debate, but the Member of the Assembly of the Republic whose mandate is questioned has the right to speak for a period of not more than fifteen minutes.

8 - Any decision by the Plenary to confirm a declaration of the loss of a seat, or to itself declare such a loss, is subject to appeal to the Constitutional Court under the terms of Article 223(2)(g) of the Constitution and the law governing the organisation, operation and procedure of the Constitutional Court.

SECTION II

Powers

Article 4

Powers of Members of the Assembly of the Republic

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic have the following powers in particular, which they may exercise individually or together, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure:

a) To submit draft revisions of the Constitution;

- b) To submit Member's bills, draft Rules of Procedure, draft resolutions, particularly with regard to referenda, and draft decisions, and to request that they be scheduled for debate;
- c) To take part and speak in parliamentary debates, in accordance with these Rules of Procedure;
- d) To ask the Government questions about any of its acts or those of the Public Administration, without prejudice to the provisions of the law governing matters regarding state secrets;
- e) To request and obtain the elements, information and official publications they deem useful to the exercise of their mandate from the Government or the organs of any public entity;
- f) To move the formation of parliamentary committees of inquiry;
- g) To submit draft amendments;
- h) To move that executive laws be considered with a view to their ceasing to be in force or their amendment;
- i) To move the emergency processing of any bill, draft resolution or draft decision, and the emergency consideration of any executive law with a view to its ceasing to be in force or its amendment;
- j) To make motions of no confidence in the Government;
- l) To take part in discussions and voting;
- m) To propose the formation of ad hoc parliamentary committees;
- n) To propose the holding of parliamentary hearings;
- o) To ask the Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality and legality of norms, in accordance with Articles 278 and 281 of the Constitution;
- p) To appeal to the Constitutional Court against any decision by the Plenary of the Assembly to confirm a declaration of the loss of a seat, or to itself declare such a loss, in accordance with Article 223(2)(g) of the Constitution and the law.

2 - In order to enable them to exercise their mandate properly, Members of the Assembly of the Republic have the following powers:

- a) To take their seats in the plenary chamber and parliamentary committee rooms and to speak in accordance with these Rules of Procedure;
- b) To perform specific functions in the Assembly;
- c) To propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure.

SECTION III

Rights and duties

Article 5

Rights and duties of Members of the Assembly of the Republic

The rights and duties of the Members of Assembly of the Republic are defined in the Constitution and the Statute of Members.

CHAPTER II

Parliamentary groups

Article 6

Formation of parliamentary groups

1 - The Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are elected for each party or coalition of parties may form a parliamentary group.

2 - Each parliamentary group shall be formed by means of a notification addressed to the President of the Assembly, which shall be signed by the Members of the Assembly of the Republic who compose the group and shall state the name of the group, its president, and its vice-presidents if any.

3 - Parliamentary groups shall notify the President of the Assembly of any change in their composition or leadership.

4 - The notifications referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 7

Organisation of parliamentary groups

1 - Each parliamentary group is free to decide how it is to be organised.

2 - The functions of President, Vice-President and member of the Bureau are incompatible with that of president of a parliamentary group.

Article 8

Powers of parliamentary groups

Each parliamentary group has the following powers:

a) To participate in Assembly committees in proportion to the number of its members, and to nominate its representatives on those committees;

b) To decide the order of business of a certain number of plenary sittings, in accordance with Article 64;

c) To cause the holding of emergency debates, which the Government shall attend, in accordance with Article 74;

d) In each legislative session, to cause the holding of two debates on a matter of general or sectoral policy, by calling upon the Government to attend the Assembly;

e) To cause the holding of debates on current affairs, in accordance with Article 72;

f) To exercise legislative initiative;

g) To make motions rejecting the Government's Programme;

h) To make motions of no confidence in the Government;

i) To move the formation of parliamentary committees of inquiry;

j) To issue oral explanations of vote after each final overall vote, in accordance with Article 155.

Article 9

Rights of parliamentary groups

Each parliamentary group has the following rights:

a) To elect its officers and decide its internal organisation and regulations;

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

Article 10

Sole party representatives

Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic who is a political party's sole representative shall be attributed the right to intervene as such, for implementation in accordance with these Rules of Procedure.

Article 11

Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are not registered with a parliamentary group

Members of the Assembly of the Republic who do not belong to any parliamentary group and are not sole representatives of a political party shall notify the President of the Assembly of the Republic of that fact and shall exercise their mandate as unregistered Members.

TITLE II

Organisation of the Assembly

CHAPTER I

President of the Bureau

SECTION I

President

DIVISION I

Status, role and election

Article 12

President of the Assembly of the Republic

1 - The President represents the Assembly of the Republic, directs and coordinates its work and exercises authority over all its staff and agents and over the security forces placed at the Assembly's service.

2 - The President of the Assembly of the Republic temporarily substitutes for the President of the Republic under the terms of Article 132 of the Constitution.

Article 13

Election of the President of the Assembly

1 - Nominations for President of the Assembly of the Republic must be signed by a minimum of one tenth and a maximum of one fifth of all the Members.

2 - Nominations shall be submitted to the serving President at least two hours before the moment at which the election takes place.

3 - The election shall take place during the first plenary sitting of each legislature.

4 - The candidate who obtains an absolute majority of the votes of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office is elected President of the Assembly.

5 - If none of the candidates obtains that number of votes, a second ballot shall immediately be held solely between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes and have not withdrawn their nomination.

6 - If no candidate is elected, the process shall recommence.

Article 14

Term of office of the President of the Assembly

1 - The President of the Assembly is elected for the legislature.

2 - The President of the Assembly may resign his office by notifying the Assembly accordingly, whereupon the resignation shall take immediate effect, without prejudice to its subsequent publication in the *Journal*.

3 - In cases in which the President of the Assembly resigns his office or the position falls vacant, a new election shall be held within a time limit of fifteen days.

4 - The election of the new President of the Assembly is valid for the remaining duration of the legislature.

Article 15

Substitution of the President of the Assembly

1 - When absent or unable to perform his functions, the President of the Assembly shall be substituted by one of the Vice-Presidents.

2 - In cases in which he is ill, prevented from performing his functions for more than seven days by official duties, or absent abroad, the President of the Assembly shall be substituted either by the Vice-President of the Assembly from the party to which he himself belongs, or by such other Vice-President as he, the President, nominates.

3 - Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, each Vice-President shall substitute for the President of the Assembly for a period corresponding to the quotient obtained by dividing the number of months in the legislative session by the number of Vice-Presidents.

4 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the Vice-Presidents shall begin to exercise the President of the Assembly's functions by descending order of the proportional share of the seats in the Assembly of the parties that proposed them for office.

DIVISION II

Competences of the President of the Assembly

Article 16

Competences with regard to the work of the Assembly

1 - The President of the Assembly has the following competences with regard to the work of the Assembly of the Republic:

- a) To represent the Assembly and chair the Bureau;
- b) To schedule plenary sittings and set the order of business, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 59 et sequitur;
- c) Once he has determined that they comply with these Rules of Procedure, to admit or reject bills, draft resolutions, draft decisions, motions and requests, without prejudice to the right of appeal to the Assembly;
- d) To submit the texts of bills and draft treaties or agreements for consideration by the competent parliamentary committees. If the topic concerns more than one parliamentary committee, he shall indicate which one of them shall be responsible for drawing up the opinion referred to in Article 129(1), whereupon the other or others shall provide the parliamentary committee so indicated with their contributions;
- e) To arrange the formation of parliamentary committees, supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure compliance with the time limits which the Assembly sets for them;
- f) To arrange the formation of parliamentary delegations, supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure that they contribute to the visibility abroad and prestige of the Assembly and the country;
- g) To inspire the formation of parliamentary friendship groups, mixed interparliamentary committees and other bodies that concern themselves with the dialogue between the Assembly and countries that are friends of Portugal, and to supervise and stimulate their work and make every effort to ensure compliance with the regulations governing the matter;
- h) To convene meetings with the chairmen of the parliamentary committees and subcommittees in order to inform himself about their work;
- i) To receive representations or petitions addressed to the Assembly and forward them to the competent parliamentary committees;
- j) To propose that Assembly sessions be suspended;
- l) To chair the Standing Committee;
- m) To chair the Conference of Leaders;
- n) To chair the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen;
- o) To ask the competent parliamentary committee for an opinion on conflicts of competence between parliamentary committees;
- p) To have the Assembly's resolutions published in the *Diario da Republica*, in accordance with Article 166(6) of the Constitution;
- q) To maintain order and discipline, and the security of the Assembly, to which end he may requisition and use such means as are necessary and take such measures as he deems fit;
- r) To order corrections in the *Journal*;
- s) To consider whether nominations that Members of the Assembly of the Republic submit for elected offices are in order, announce the results of the elections and proclaim the successful candidates elected;

- t) To superintend the staff in the Assembly's service;
- u) In general, to ensure that these Rules of Procedure and the Assembly's decisions are complied with.

2 - The President of the Assembly has the following competences for exercise after first consulting the Conference of Leaders:

- a) To arrange the creation of offices to serve the electorate in the constituencies;
- b) To establish protocol agreements and assistance protocols with universities;
- c) To superintend the Assembly of the Republic's website and the Parliament Channel;
- d) Exceptionally, to invite prominent Portuguese or foreign persons to sit in the plenary chamber and address the Assembly of the Republic.

3 - The President of the Assembly may delegate the exercise of his powers and competences to the Vice-Presidents by order published in the *Journal*.

Article 17

Competences with regard to plenary sittings

1 - The President of the Assembly has the following competences with regard to plenary sittings:

- a) To chair plenary sittings, declare them open, suspended and closed and direct their work;
- b) To give Members of the Assembly of the Republic and members of the Government the floor and ensure order during debates;
- c) To acquaint the Assembly in good time with the messages, information, explanations and invitations that are addressed to it;
- d) To put proposals, motions and requests that are admitted to discussion and the vote.

2 - The President of the Assembly may ask for clarifications and take the initiative of giving Members of the Assembly of the Republic the floor, whenever this becomes necessary for the proper conduct of the work.

3 - The President of the Assembly's decisions during plenary sittings may always be the object of complaint, as well as of appeal to the Plenary.

Article 18

Competences with regard to Members of the Assembly of the Republic

The President of the Assembly has the following competences with regard to Members of the Assembly of the Republic:

- a) To rule on justifications presented by Members of the Assembly of the Republic who fail to attend plenary sittings, in accordance with Article 3;
- b) To approve requests for temporary substitution, in accordance with the Statute of Members;
- c) To receive resignations of seats and have them published;
- d) To arrange for the competent parliamentary committee to take the steps needed to verify the credentials of Members of the Assembly of the Republic;
- e) To follow up motions, requests and questions submitted by Members of the Assembly of the Republic in accordance with Article 4;

f) To authorise official travel.

Article 19

Competences with regard to other entities

The President of the Assembly has the following competences with regard to other entities:

a) To send decrees of the Assembly of the Republic to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 134(b) of the Constitution;

b) Following their approval, to send international treaties to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 135(b) of the Constitution;

c) For the purposes provided for in Article 195 of the Constitution, to notify the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of the results of voting on motions rejecting the Government's Programme, and on motions of confidence or no confidence in the Government;

d) By agreement with the Government, to schedule the plenary sittings at which members of the Government will be present to reply to questions and requests for clarification from Members of the Assembly of the Republic;

e) To sign documents sent in the Assembly's name;

f) To head Assembly delegations to which he himself belongs.

DIVISION III

Conference of Leaders

Article 20

Modus operandi of the Conference of Leaders

1 - Whenever he deems it necessary for the proper functioning of the Assembly, the President of the Assembly shall meet the parliamentary group chairmen or their substitutes in order to consider the matters provided for in Article 16(1)(b) and others provided for in these Rules of Procedure.

2 - The Government has the right to be represented at the Conference of Leaders and may intervene in matters that are not exclusively related to the Assembly.

3 - Parliamentary group representatives have the same number of votes at the Conference of Leaders as the number of Members of the Assembly of the Republic they represent.

4 - In the absence of a consensus, the Conference of Leaders takes decisions by majority, subject to the presence of representatives of an absolute majority of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office.

DIVISION IV

Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen

Article 21

Modus operandi and competences of the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen

1 - The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall meet regularly in order to supervise the functional aspects of the activities of the parliamentary committees, as

well as to assess the general conditions pertaining to the legislative process and whether laws are being duly implemented.

2 - The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen is chaired by the President of the Assembly, who may delegate.

3 - The Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen especially has the competences:

a) To participate in the coordination of the parliamentary committees' functional organisation and technical support;

b) From the perspective of a proper drafting of laws and the efficiency of parliamentary work, to consider the general conditions pertaining to the legislative process;

c) To arrange for the drawing up at the beginning of each legislative session of a progress report on the passage and entry into force of laws and the consequent regulations, including compliance with the respective time limits;

d) With regard to laws that have been passed, to determine which shall be the object of a qualitative evaluation of their contents, of the resources allocated to their implementation, and of their practical effects.

4 - Without prejudice to the previous paragraph, parliamentary committees may ask the Member of the Assembly of the Republic who is acting as the respective rapporteur, or if it is impossible for him to do so, any Member on the parliamentary committee, for a report on the qualitative monitoring of the regulation and implementation of given legislation.

SECTION II

The Bureau of the Assembly

Article 22

Composition of the Bureau of the Assembly

1 - The President of the Assembly and the Vice-Presidents comprise the Presidency of the Assembly.

2 - The Bureau of the Assembly is composed of the President of the Assembly, four Vice-Presidents, four Secretaries and four Vice-Secretaries.

3 - At plenary sittings the Bureau comprises the President of the Assembly and the Secretaries.

4 - In the absence of both the President of the Assembly and his substitute under the terms of Article 15, sittings are chaired by the other Vice-Presidents on a rotating basis or, in their absence, by the oldest Member of the Assembly of the Republic.

5 - When absent, the Secretaries are substituted by the Vice-Secretaries.

6 - When absent, the Vice-Secretaries are substituted by the Members of the Assembly of the Republic designated by the President of the Assembly.

Article 23

Election of the Bureau of the Assembly

1 - The Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries are elected by ballot for complete nominative lists.

2 - Each of the four largest parliamentary groups shall propose one Vice-President and, when it has one tenth or more of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic, at least one Secretary and one Vice-Secretary.

3 - Candidates who obtain an absolute majority of the votes of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office shall be deemed elected.

4 - If any candidate is not elected, a new ballot for his place on the list shall immediately be held at the same sitting, until the situation described in the following paragraph is achieved.

5 - Once the President and half the remaining members of the Bureau have been elected, the quorum needed for the Bureau to function shall be deemed to have been reached.

6 - Once the sitting has ended, even if the vacancies have not all been filled, but provided that it already includes the Vice-Presidents, the President shall notify the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of the Bureau's composition.

7 - The Bureau shall remain in office until the beginning of the next legislature.

Article 24

Term of office

1 - The Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries are elected per legislature.

2 - Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries may resign their office by making a written statement addressed to the Assembly, whereupon the resignation shall take immediate effect, without prejudice to its subsequent publication in the *Journal*.

3 - In cases in which a member of the Bureau resigns, his office falls vacant, or his mandate as Member of the Assembly of the Republic is suspended, a new member shall be elected by the fifth sitting of the Assembly immediately thereafter, in accordance with the regime laid down in paragraph (4) of the previous Article.

Article 25

General competences of the Bureau

1 - The Bureau has the competences:

- a) To declare that any Member of the Assembly of the Republic has lost his seat, in accordance with Article 3;
- b) To ensure that the secretarial services perform their duties in full;
- c) To establish the regulations governing entry to and presence in the public galleries;
- d) In general, to assist the President of the Assembly in the exercise of his functions.

2 - The Bureau may delegate the superintendence of the secretarial services to one of the Secretaries.

Article 26

The Bureau of the Assembly's competences with regard to plenary sittings

1 - The Bureau has the following competences with regard to plenary sittings:

- a) To incorporate oral and written initiatives submitted by Members of the Assembly of the Republic, parliamentary groups and the Government into the forms provided for in these Rules of Procedure;

b) To decide questions regarding the interpretation and completion of these Rules of Procedure;

c) To consider and decide complaints regarding the *Journal*.

2 - The Bureau's decisions may be the object of complaint and appeal to the Plenary.

Article 27

Vice-Presidents

The Vice-Presidents have the competences:

a) To advise the President of the Assembly in the performance of his functions;

b) To substitute for the President of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 15;

c) To exercise the powers and competences that the President of the Assembly delegates to them;

d) To act as deputy chairman of the Standing Committee;

e) To perform the functions involved in representing the Assembly that the President of the Assembly charges them with.

Article 28

Secretaries and Vice-Secretaries

1 - The Secretaries have the competences to ensure the Bureau's day-to-day business, particularly:

a) To verify who is present at plenary sittings, verify the quorum at any time, and record votes;

b) To establish the order of the matters that are to be put to the vote;

c) To organise the register of Members of the Assembly of the Republic and members of the Government who wish to speak;

d) To read out indispensable texts during plenary sittings;

e) To arrange the publication of the *Journal*;

f) When so delegated by the President of the Assembly, to sign correspondence sent in the name of the Assembly.

2 - The Vice-Secretaries have the competences:

a) To substitute for the Secretaries when they are absent or unable to perform their functions;

b) To serve as tellers.

CHAPTER II

Parliamentary committees

SECTION I

General provisions

Article 29

Composition of parliamentary committees

1 - The composition of parliamentary committees must be proportional to each parliamentary group's share of the seats in the Assembly.

2 - Parliamentary committee chairmanships shall be distributed as a whole among the parliamentary groups in proportion to the number of Members of the Assembly of the Republic in each group.

3 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph and without prejudice to the principle of proportionality, the parliamentary groups shall choose their chairmanships in order of priority, beginning with the parliamentary group with the largest share of the seats in the Assembly.

4 - The Assembly shall decide the number of members of each parliamentary committee and the distribution of seats among the different parliamentary groups upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.

5 - The decision referred to in the previous paragraph must mention which unregistered Members of the Assembly of the Republic and Members who are sole representatives of a political party are to be members of parliamentary committees.

6 - Exceptionally, in the light of their nature, parliamentary committees may possess a mixed composition with permanent and non-permanent members depending on the items on their orders of business. This composition shall comply with the following:

a) Permanent seats shall be distributed in compliance with the principle of representation in accordance with each parliamentary group's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly;

b) Each parliamentary standing committee shall appoint and mandate its non-permanent members, who shall enjoy all the rights of the permanent members, save the right to vote.

Article 30

Appointment of parliamentary committee members

1 - The appointment of Members of the Assembly of the Republic to sit on parliamentary committees is a competence of their parliamentary groups, which shall appoint them within the time limit set by the President of the Assembly.

2 - If any parliamentary group does not wish or is unable to appoint representatives, the vacancies shall not be filled by Members of the Assembly of the Republic from other parliamentary groups.

3 - Each Member of the Assembly of the Republic may only be an effective member of one parliamentary standing committee and a substitute member of another.

4 - Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, a Member of the Assembly of the Republic may be appointed as an effective member or a substitute member of:

a) Up to three parliamentary standing committees if, due to the number of Members of the Assembly of the Republic who belong to it, his parliamentary group is unable to have representatives on all the parliamentary committees;

b) Up to two parliamentary standing committees, if this is necessary in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of paragraph (1) of the previous Article.

5 - Substitute members enjoy all the rights of effective members, save that they only have the right to vote if they are substituting for an effective member.

6 - If their substitute member is absent or unable to perform his functions, effective members may occasionally have themselves substituted by other Members of the Assembly of the Republic from the same parliamentary group.

7 - Unregistered Members of the Assembly of the Republic shall indicate their options as to which parliamentary committees they wish to join and, after first consulting the Conference of Leaders and wherever possible in compliance with those options, the President of the Assembly shall designate the parliamentary committee or committees to which each such Member must belong.

Article 31

Exercise of functions

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic are appointed to parliamentary standing committees per legislature.

2 - A Member of the Assembly of the Republic shall cease to be a member of a parliamentary committee:

- a) If he ceases to belong to the parliamentary group that nominated him;
- b) If he so requests;

c) Whenever his parliamentary group replaces him on the parliamentary committee in question;

d) If he fails to attend four meetings of the parliamentary committee in a given legislative session, save for duly justified reasons.

3 - Parliamentary committee chairmen have the competence to justify the failures to attend of their effective members, in accordance with Article 3(2).

4 - On the basis of the information they possess, the parliamentary committee support services shall, on their own initiative, note on the attendance sheets any effective committee members who do not attend a meeting because they are engaged in parliamentary work provided for in Article 53, which absences shall not be deemed failures to attend.

Article 32

Parliamentary committee officers

1 - The officers of each parliamentary committee comprise a chairman and two or more deputy chairmen.

2 - The officers shall be elected at the parliamentary committee's first meeting, which shall be convened and chaired by the President of the Assembly, and at which each Member of the Assembly of the Republic has one vote.

3 - The President of the Assembly shall arrange for the steps needed to ensure that the provisions of Article 29(2) are complied with

4 - Each parliamentary committee must notify the President of the Assembly of the composition of its officers, and he shall have it published in the *Journal*.

Article 33

Subcommittees and working groups

1 - Each parliamentary committee may form subcommittees and working groups.

2 - The formation of subcommittees is subject to prior authorisation by the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen.

3 - Parliamentary committees have the competence to define the composition and scope of their subcommittees and working groups.

4 - The chairmanships of subcommittees shall be divided up between the parliamentary groups in accordance with Article 29(2). The choice of each chairmanship shall be guided by a principle of alternation, both between subcommittee chairmanships and with regard to the chairmanship of the parliamentary committee.

5 - Subcommittees shall present the conclusions on their work to the parliamentary committee.

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

SECTION II

Standing and ad hoc parliamentary committees

DIVISION I

Parliamentary standing committees

Article 34

List of parliamentary standing committees

1 - At the beginning of each legislature, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall decide the list of parliamentary standing committees and the specific competences of each one, without prejudice to any attribution of specific competences to parliamentary committees by law.

2 - Exceptionally, when so justified, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, or from a parliamentary group, the Plenary shall decide whether to alter the list of parliamentary standing committees or the division of competences between them.

Article 35

Competences of parliamentary standing committees

Parliamentary standing committees have the competences:

- a) To consider bills, draft amendments, treaties and agreements that are submitted to the Assembly, and to produce the competent opinions;
- b) To consider presentations of legislative initiatives, in accordance with Article 132;
- c) To vote on the details of texts that the Plenary has passed on the general principles, in accordance with, and within the limits laid down in, Article 168 of the Constitution and these Rules of Procedure;
- d) In accordance with the Constitution and the law and without prejudice to the competences of the Plenary, to monitor, consider and pronounce on Portugal's

participation in the process of constructing the European Union, and to draw up reports on the information referred to in Article 197(1)(i) of the Constitution;

- e) To consider petitions addressed to the Assembly;
- f) To inform themselves about political and administrative problems that fall within their areas of competence and, when the Assembly deems fit, to provide it with the elements needed to consider the acts of the Government and the Public Administration;
- g) To verify whether the Government and the Administration have complied with the Assembly's laws and resolutions, in which respect parliamentary standing committees may suggest the measures they deem appropriate to the Assembly;
- h) To propose to the President of the Assembly that the Plenary hold debates on topics that fall within the areas of competence of the parliamentary committee in question, so that the Conference of Leaders can judge their timeliness and interest;
- i) To draw up reports on matters that fall within their areas of competence;
- j) To draw up and pass their own regulations;
- l) To consider questions regarding mandates and these Rules of Procedure.

Article 36

Articulation between parliamentary committees, parliamentary delegations and parliamentary friendship groups

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

- a) Periodically arranging joint meetings;
- b) Considering the respective orders of business and reports in a timely manner;
- c) Promoting participation in their meetings and specific activities.

DIVISION II

Ad hoc parliamentary committees

Article 37

Formation of ad hoc parliamentary committees

1 - The Assembly of the Republic may form ad hoc parliamentary committees for any given purpose.

2 - Save for committees of inquiry, the initiative to form ad hoc parliamentary committees may be exercised by at least ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic or any parliamentary group.

Article 38

Competences of ad hoc parliamentary committees

Ad hoc parliamentary committees have the competence to consider the matters for which they were formed, and shall submit the respective reports within the time limits set by the Assembly.

CHAPTER III

The Standing Committee

Article 39

Modus operandi of the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee of the Assembly of the Republic functions during periods when the Assembly of the Republic is not in full session or is dissolved, and in the other cases provided for in the Constitution.

Article 40

Composition of the Standing Committee

1 - The Standing Committee is chaired by the President of the Assembly and is also composed of the Vice-Presidents and of Members of the Assembly of the Republic appointed by all the parliamentary groups, in accordance with the latter's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly.

2 - The precepts contained in Articles 29, 30 and 31 apply to the Standing Committee.

Article 41

Competences of the Standing Committee

1 - The Standing Committee has the competences:

- a) To monitor the activities of the Government and the Administration;
- b) Without prejudice to the specific powers of the President of the Assembly and the competent parliamentary committee, to exercise the Assembly's powers with regard to the mandates of the Members of the Assembly of the Republic;
- c) To arrange to call the Assembly whenever necessary;
- d) To prepare the opening of the legislative session;
- e) To consent to the President of the Republic's absence from Portuguese territory;
- f) To authorise the President of the Republic to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency, declare war and make peace;
- g) If necessary for the proper pursuit of their work, to authorise the functioning of parliamentary committees during periods when the legislative session is suspended;
- h) To decide complaints regarding inaccuracies in the texts of the final drafts of the Assembly's decrees and resolutions;
- i) To appoint parliamentary delegations;
- j) To draw up its own regulations.

2 - In the case provided for in subparagraph (f) of the previous paragraph, the Standing Committee shall arrange to call the Assembly in the shortest possible time, using any means of communication that enables the call to be made known and publicised effectively.

CHAPTER IV

Assembly of the Republic delegations

Article 42

Parliamentary delegations

1 - Parliamentary delegations may be standing or ad hoc in nature.

2 - Assembly of the Republic delegations must respect the principles laid down in Articles 29 and 30.

3 - When delegations cannot include representatives of all the parliamentary groups, their composition shall be determined by the Conference of Leaders or, in the absence of agreement, by the Plenary.

4 - When their mission is complete or, in the case of standing delegations, at the end of each legislative session, Assembly of the Republic delegations shall draw up a report containing the information needed to evaluate their purposes, which shall be sent to the President of the Assembly and, if he so decides, shall be presented in Plenary. The reports shall in any case be distributed to the parliamentary committees with competence for the matter in question and published in the *Journal*.

5 - Whenever it is justified to do so, standing delegations must draw up a report addressed to the President of the Assembly.

CHAPTER V

Parliamentary friendship groups

Article 43

Notion and object

1 - Parliamentary friendship groups are Assembly of the Republic bodies whose vocation is to engage in dialogue and cooperation with the Parliaments of the countries that are friends of Portugal.

2 - Parliamentary friendship groups shall promote the actions needed to intensify relations with the Parliament and parliamentarians of other states, particularly:

- a) The general exchange of knowledge and experiences;
- b) The study of bilateral relations and their place within the alliances and institutions in which both states participate;
- c) The publicising and promotion of common interests and objectives in the political, economic, social and cultural fields;
- d) The exchange of information and mutual consultations with a view to the possibility of articulating positions in international bodies of an interparliamentary nature, without prejudice to the full autonomy of each national group;
- e) Joint reflection on problems that involve the two states and their nationals, and the search for solutions that pertain to each state's legislative competence;
- f) The attachment of increased value to the historical and current role of emigrant communities from the two states, if any exist.

Article 44

Composition of parliamentary friendship groups

1 - The composition of parliamentary friendship groups must reflect the composition of the Assembly.

2 - Chairmanships and deputy chairmanships shall, as a whole, be divided between the parliamentary groups in proportion to the number of Members of the Assembly of the Republic in each group.

3 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph and without prejudice to the principle of proportionality, parliamentary groups shall choose their chairmanships in order of priority, beginning with the largest parliamentary group.

4 - The Assembly shall decide the number of the members of each parliamentary friendship group and the distribution of seats among the different parliamentary groups upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.

5 - The decision referred to in the previous paragraph must mention which unregistered Members of the Assembly of the Republic and Members who are sole representatives of a political party are to belong to parliamentary friendship groups.

6 - The competence to indicate which Members of the Assembly of the Republic are to belong to parliamentary friendship groups lies with the respective parliamentary groups and must be exercised within the time limit set by the President of the Assembly.

Article 45

List of parliamentary friendship groups

1 - The Plenary shall decide the list of parliamentary friendship groups at the beginning of each legislature, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders.

2 - Whenever it is justified to do so, and again upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall decide whether to create other parliamentary friendship groups.

Article 46

Powers of parliamentary friendship groups

Parliamentary friendship groups may in particular:

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

Article 47

General provisions regarding parliamentary friendship groups

The Assembly shall define the remaining matters regarding parliamentary friendship groups by resolution, particularly in terms of their organisation, modus operandi and support, as well as their programmes, budgets and activity reports.

TITLE III

Modus operandi

CHAPTER I

General rules governing the modus operandi

Article 48

Seat of the Assembly

- 1 - The Seat of the Assembly of the Republic is in Lisbon, at São Bento Palace.
- 2 - When so required by operational needs, the Assembly's work may be conducted at another location.

Article 49

Legislative sessions and normal parliamentary term

- 1 - The legislative session lasts for one year beginning on 15 September.
- 2 - Without prejudice to suspensions which the Assembly of the Republic decides by a two-thirds majority of the Members present, the normal parliamentary term runs from 15 September to 15 June.
- 3 - Before the end of each legislative session, upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, who shall first consult the Conference of Leaders, the Plenary shall pass the schedule of parliamentary activities for the following legislative session.
- 4 - In the case provided for in Article 171(2) of the Constitution, the potestative rights established in these Rules of Procedure increase in proportion to the duration of the period in question, save for the provisions regarding calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly.

Article 50

Extraordinary parliamentary committee meetings

- 1 - Any parliamentary committee may function outside the normal parliamentary term and while the Assembly is suspended, if this is indispensable to the proper pursuit of its work and, with the consent of the majority of the members of the parliamentary committee, the Assembly so decides.
- 2 - In order to prepare the work of the forthcoming legislative session, the President of the Assembly may arrange for any parliamentary committee to be convened for the fifteen days before the beginning thereof.
- 3 - The provisions of paragraph (1) do not apply to the parliamentary committee with the competence to pronounce on matters regarding the verification of the credentials, loss of seat or immunity of Members of the Assembly of the Republic, as laid down in these Rules of Procedure or the Statute of Members.

Article 51

Calling the Assembly outside the normal parliamentary term

- 1 - Following a Plenary decision to extend the normal parliamentary term, or on the initiative of the Standing Committee or, if the latter is unable to function and there is a dire emergency, on the initiative of more than half of all the Members, the Assembly of the Republic may function outside the term laid down in Article 49(2).
- 2 - In cases in which the Assembly is called on the initiative of more than half the Members, the call must be made public by the appropriate means of communication.
- 3 - The President of the Republic may also call the Assembly on an extraordinary basis in order to address specific subjects.

Article 52

Suspension of plenary sittings

1 - During a full session, the Assembly may decide to suspend its plenary sittings for the purpose of parliamentary committee work.

2 - Such suspensions may not exceed ten days.

Article 53

Parliamentary work

1 - Plenary sittings, and meetings of the Standing Committee of the Assembly, parliamentary committees, subcommittees, working parties formed under the aegis of parliamentary committees, parliamentary groups, the Conference of Leaders, the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen and parliamentary delegations are deemed parliamentary work.

2 - The following are also deemed parliamentary work:

a) Participation by Members of the Assembly of the Republic in meetings of international organisations;

b) Parliamentary seminars arranged by parliamentary groups;

c) Other meetings convened by the President of the Assembly;

d) Parliamentary group meetings to prepare the legislature that are held between the elections to, and the first sitting of, the Assembly.

3 - The work of the parliamentary groups shall be conducted in accordance with each group's own regulations, which shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 54

Parliamentary days

1 - The Assembly shall function on every working day.

2 - Exceptionally, the Assembly shall also function on any day required by the Constitution or these Rules of Procedure, or when it so decides itself.

3 - When any time limit expires on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, it shall be transferred to the following parliamentary day.

Article 55

Convening sittings and meetings

1 - Save if they are scheduled at the previous sitting, plenary sittings shall be convened by the President of the Assembly at least twenty-four hours in advance.

2 - Without prejudice to the previous paragraph, plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings shall obligatorily be convened in writing and in such a way as to ensure that Members of the Assembly of the Republic are effectively made aware of them at least twenty-four hours in advance.

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

Article 56

Failures to attend plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic who fail to attend a plenary sitting or a parliamentary committee meeting shall be notified of that failure on the next working day.

2 - Failures to attend plenary sittings shall be published on the Assembly of the Republic's website, together with the nature of the respective justification, if any.

Article 57

Organisation and modus operandi of parliamentary work

1 - Parliamentary work shall be organised in such a way as to reserve periods for plenary sittings, for parliamentary committee and parliamentary group meetings, and for Members of the Assembly of the Republic to spend on constituency business.

2 - At the request of the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly may organise parliamentary work in such a way that Members of the Assembly of the Republic engage in political work with constituents for periods not exceeding one week, particularly during electoral processes, for the publicising and public discussion of matters of special importance.

3 - When asked to do so by any parliamentary group, the President may also suspend the work of the Assembly in order to enable the group to hold its parliamentary seminars and the respective party conferences.

4 - Plenary sittings shall take place on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings.

5 - Plenary sittings shall begin at ten a.m. if they take place in the morning, and at three p.m. if they take place in the afternoon.

6 - Parliamentary committee meetings shall take place on Tuesdays and on Wednesday mornings and, when necessary, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons once the plenary sittings have ended.

7 - When convenient for their work and subject to authorisation by the President of the Assembly, parliamentary committees may meet anywhere in Portuguese territory, and on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

8 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic's constituency business shall take place on Mondays.

9 - Thursday mornings are reserved for parliamentary group meetings.

10 - After first consulting the Conference of Leaders and without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph (4), the President of the Assembly may organise parliamentary work in such a way as to concentrate two days of Members of the Assembly of the Republic's constituency business into one week, and three days of parliamentary committee meetings and other parliamentary committee activities into the following week.

11 - The Assembly or the Conference of Leaders may exceptionally decide to schedule more than one sitting or meeting for the same day, as well as plenary sittings on days and at times other than those referred to in paragraphs (4) and (5).

Article 58

Quorum

1 - The Assembly of the Republic may only function in plenary sitting when at least one fifth of all the Members in full exercise of their office are present.

2 - The Plenary shall only take decisions when more than half of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office are present.

3 - Once the President of the Assembly has ordered that the quorum for sitting or for taking decisions be verified, the Members of the Assembly of the Republic shall be summoned to meet in Plenary. In cases in which there is no quorum, absences shall be noted for the purposes provided for in the general regime governing failures to attend, and the sitting shall immediately be declared closed.

4 - In the case provided for in the previous paragraph, unfinished items shall be added to the order of business for the next ordinary sitting, on which they shall take precedence, without prejudice to the priorities referred to in Articles 62 and 63, or to parliamentary groups' rights to set the order of business.

5 - Parliamentary committees shall only function and decide in the presence of more than half of all their members in full exercise of their office. The remaining rules governing their modus operandi must be laid down in their regulations.

CHAPTER II

Organisation of work and order of business

Article 59

Setting the order of business

1 - The President of the Assembly shall set the order of business at least fifteen days in advance, in accordance with the priorities defined in these Rules of Procedure.

2 - Before setting the order of business, the President of the Assembly shall consult the Conference of Leaders on an indicative basis. In the absence of a consensus, the Conference shall decide in accordance with Article 20(3) and (4).

3 - The decisions in which the President of the Assembly sets the order of business may be the object of appeal to the Plenary, which shall then take a definitive decision.

4 - Appeals against decisions in which the President of the Assembly sets the order of business are put to the vote without prior debate. However, the appellant may verbally present the grounds for his appeal for a time of no more than two minutes.

Article 60

Publicising the order of business

The President of the Assembly shall have orders of business publicised within a time limit of twenty-four hours of their being set.

Article 61

Ensuring the stability of the order of business

1 - The order of business may not be set aside or interrupted, save in the cases expressly provided for in these Rules of Procedure, or by decision of the Plenary with no votes against.

2 - The Plenary may decide to alter the sequence of the matters set for each sitting.

Article 62

Prioritisation of matters when setting the order of business

1 - When setting the order of business, the President of the Assembly shall respect the priorities and precedences laid down in the following paragraphs.

2 - The following matters possess absolute priority:

- a) Authorisation for the President of the Republic to declare war or make peace;
- b) Authorisation or confirmation of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency, in accordance with Article 161(I) of the Constitution, and consideration of the manner in which such a declaration has been applied, pursuant to Article 162(b) of the Constitution;
- c) Consideration of the Government's Programme;
- d) Voting on motions of confidence or no confidence in the Government;
- e) Passage of laws regarding the major options of national plans or the State Budget;
- f) General policy debates caused by calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly, pursuant to Article 180(2)(d) of the Constitution.

3 - The following matters possess relative priority:

- a) Reconsideration in the event of a veto by the President of the Republic, in the cases provided for in Article 136 of the Constitution;
- b) Passage of laws and approval of treaties on matters that fall within the Assembly of the Republic's exclusive legislative competence;
- c) Consideration of Portugal's participation in the process of constructing the European Union;
- d) Authorisation for the Government to contract and grant loans and engage in other lending operations, other than floating debt operations, and to set the upper limit for guarantees to be given by the Government in each year;
- e) Consideration of the accounts of the state and of the other public entities laid down by law;
- f) Consideration of executive laws passed under legislative authorisation;
- g) Debates and voting on the political and administrative statutes of autonomous regions;
- h) The grant of amnesties and general pardons;
- i) Passage of laws and approval of treaties on matters that fall within the Assembly of the Republic's partially exclusive legislative competence;
- j) Consideration of annual and final reports on the execution of plans;
- l) Consideration of executive laws;
- m) Passage of laws and approval of treaties on other matters.

4 - Legislative initiatives shall be incorporated into the order of business in the order of the date and time of the issue of the respective opinion or, in cases in which no opinion exists, of their admission, with due regard to the proportional share of the seats in the Assembly held by each parliamentary group and the principle of alternation.

5 - With regard to other matters, the order of business shall be set in accordance with the date and time of the issue of the respective opinion or, when no such opinion exists, of their submission.

6 - The President of the Assembly shall also include consideration of the following matters on the order of business:

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

Article 63

Priority at the request of the Government or parliamentary groups

1 - The Government and parliamentary groups may request that priority be given to matters of national interest that require urgent resolution.

2 - After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall decide whether to assign priority. Parliamentary groups and the Government may appeal the decision to the Plenary.

3 - Priority requested by the Government or parliamentary groups may not prejudice the provisions of paragraph (2) of the previous Article.

Article 64

Right of parliamentary groups to set the order of business

1 - In each legislative session, parliamentary groups have the right to set the order of business of plenary sittings in accordance with the table of potestative rights contained in Annexe II.

2 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are sole representatives of a political party have the right to set the order of business for one plenary sitting in each legislature.

3 - Each of the sittings provided for in the previous paragraphs may entail:

a) One legislative initiative, without prejudice to the ability of the Conference of Leaders, with the agreement of the holder of the right to set the order of business, to schedule other, related initiatives from the same or any other parliamentary group; or

b) A political debate, in which the Government may participate.

4 - When an order of business that is set in accordance with the present Article is based on a legislative initiative, the time limit provided for in Article 136 is not applicable and the legislative initiative's proposer may opt to present it to the Plenary.

5 - Exercise of the right provided for in the present Article shall be announced to the President of the Assembly, at the Conference of Leaders, by the fifteenth of the month,

so that it may take effect in the following month, in accordance with the provisions of Article 59.

6 - Proposers of the schedulings referred to in subparagraph (3)(a) have the right to move that the general principles be put to the vote on the day of the order of business itself.

7 - In the case provided for in the previous paragraph, if the general principles of the bill are passed, the parliamentary group or the Member of the Assembly of the Republic that proposed it has the right to secure the voting on the details and the final overall voting within a time limit of at most thirty days.

CHAPTER III

Plenary sittings

SECTION I

Holding sittings

Article 65

Holding plenary sittings

1 - Parliamentary committee meetings may not take place during plenary sittings, save for exceptional authorisation by the President of the Assembly.

2 - Whenever parliamentary committee meetings do take place at the same time as a plenary sitting, the President of the Assembly must publicly announce the fact to the Plenary and must obligatorily have the parliamentary committee work interrupted in order to enable the Members of the Assembly of the Republic to exercise their right to vote in Plenary.

Article 66

Plenary seating arrangements

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic shall take their places in the chamber in the manner agreed by the President of the Assembly and the representatives of the parliamentary groups.

2 - In the absence of agreement, the Assembly shall decide.

3 - Seats shall be reserved in the chamber for the members of the Government.

Article 67

Roll call of Members of the Assembly of the Republic

The presence of Members of the Assembly of the Republic at plenary sittings shall be recorded, and the recording shall obligatorily be done by the Members in person.

Article 68

Prohibition of unauthorised persons

The presence of persons who do not have a seat in the Assembly or who are not on duty is not permitted when sittings are in progress.

Article 69

Continuous sittings

1 - Sittings may only be interrupted in the following cases:

- a) By decision of the Plenary, upon a motion from a parliamentary group;
- b) By decision of the President of the Assembly, in order to obviate a situation in which there is no quorum, whereupon a new count shall be made when the President so orders;
- c) By decision of the President of the Assembly, in order to ensure that work proceeds smoothly.

2 - If decided upon, interruptions of the type referred to in subparagraph (a) of the previous paragraph may not exceed thirty minutes.

Article 70

Day-to-day business and information

Once a sitting has been opened, the Bureau shall:

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

Article 71

Political statements

1 - Each week, each parliamentary group has the right to make one political statement with a maximum duration of six minutes.

2 - Each legislative session, each Member of the Assembly of the Republic who is a political party's sole representative has the right to make three political statements, and each unregistered Member has the right to make two political statements.

3 - Parliamentary groups, unregistered Members of the Assembly of the Republic and Members who are political parties' sole representatives, who wish to exercise the right laid down in the previous paragraphs must notify the Bureau accordingly by the beginning of the sitting in question.

4 - In cases in which there is a conflict in the order of such registrations, the Bureau shall ensure a weekly balance between the times for which the various parliamentary groups are given the floor.

5 - Political statements are made immediately after the day-to-day business, save in the cases provided for in Article 72(2).

6 - Each parliamentary group shall have two minutes in which to request clarifications from the speaker, and the latter the same amount of time in which to give explanations.

Article 72

Debates on current affairs

1 - Upon a potestative motion by a parliamentary group, once every fifteen days there may be a debate on current affairs.

2 - Debates on current affairs take place immediately after the day-to-day business, without prejudice to the existence of political statements by parliamentary groups.

3 - In each legislative session, each parliamentary group may potestatively move the holding of debates on current affairs in accordance with the table of potestative rights contained in Annexe II.

4 - The parliamentary group shall set the topic for debate and shall notify the President of the Assembly thereof by eleven a.m. in cases in which the plenary sitting is to take place in the afternoon, or by six p.m. the day before in cases in which it is to take place in the morning.

5 - The President of the Assembly shall immediately have the remaining parliamentary groups and the Government notified of the topic.

6 - The Government shall obligatorily have one of its members represent it in the debate.

7 - The debate shall be opened by the parliamentary group that set the topic, by means of a speech with a maximum duration of six minutes.

8 - There shall then follow a period of requests for clarification and of debate, in which any Member of the Assembly of the Republic and the Government may speak.

9 - Each parliamentary group shall dispose of an overall time of five minutes for the debate and the Government shall dispose of six minutes.

10 - In addition to the potestative right referred to in paragraph (1), debates on current affairs may also be held on the joint initiative of three parliamentary groups in exchange for their weekly political statements, whereupon the presence of the Government is not obligatory.

11 - In the format referred to in the previous paragraph, the debate shall begin with speeches from the parliamentary groups that moved it, in the order indicated by them, to be followed by the debate itself.

Article 73

Thematic debates

1 - The President of the Assembly, parliamentary committees, parliamentary groups or the Government may propose the holding of a debate on a specific topic to the Conference of Leaders.

2 - The dates on which such debates take place must be set at least fifteen days in advance.

3 - When such a debate takes place as the result of a legal provision, within a time limit of at most ten days the Assembly shall decide to hold or schedule it.

4 - The Government has the option to participate in such debates or not.

5 - Before each debate, its proposer shall supply the Members of the Assembly of the Republic, the parliamentary groups and the Government with a document that provides a framework for the debate, as well as other pertinent documentation with regard to it.

6 - When the initiative is exercised by the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question, the committee shall consider the subject for debate and draw up a report which, where appropriate, shall contain the following elements:

- a) A justification of the reasons for the debate and its timeliness;
- b) The facts and situations that concern it;
- c) The legal and legal-doctrinal framework for the topic of the debate;

d) Conclusions.

Article 74

Emergency debates

1 - Parliamentary groups and the Government may submit duly substantiated requests for the holding of emergency debates to the President of the Assembly.

2 - Requests for emergency debates shall be subject to consideration and approval by the first meeting of the Conference of Leaders following the submission of the request.

3 - In the absence of a consensus on the scheduling of the date on which to hold it, the emergency debate shall take place at a plenary sitting during the week in which the Conference of Leaders approves it.

4 - The debate shall be organised in two rounds, in such a way as to permit additional requests for clarification.

5 - During each legislative session, each parliamentary group has the right to schedule emergency debates in accordance with the table of potestative rights contained in Annexe II.

6 - In cases in which a debate results from the exercise of the right referred to in the previous paragraph, the parliamentary group that proposed the debate shall also close it.

Article 75

Special votes

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic, parliamentary groups, and the Bureau may propose votes of congratulation, protest, condemnation, greeting or condolence.

2 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic who wish to propose such a vote must notify the Bureau of their intention by the beginning of the sitting.

3 - As a rule, the discussion and voting shall take place at the beginning of each voting period defined in these Rules of Procedure, and each parliamentary group shall have two minutes in which to speak.

4 - In cases in which there is more than one vote on different matters, each parliamentary group's time may be extended to four minutes and broken down in accordance with the way in which its presentation is organised.

5 - In cases in which a vote has not been distributed at a previous plenary sitting, a minimum of ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic or any parliamentary group may move that discussion and voting be adjourned until the next voting period defined in these Rules of Procedure.

SECTION II

Speaking

Article 76

Speeches by Members of the Assembly of the Republic

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic shall be given the floor in order:

a) To make political statements;

b) To present Members' bills, draft resolutions and draft decisions;

c) To exercise the right of defence in the cases provided for in Articles 2 and 3;

- d) To participate in debates;
- e) To question the Government about any of its acts or those of the Public Administration;
- f) To make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions;
- g) To make motions or requests;
- h) To make or reply to requests for clarification;
- i) To react to offences to honour or due consideration or offer explanations in accordance with Article 84;
- j) To lodge appeals;
- l) To make protests or counter-protests;
- m) To give explanations of vote.

2 - Without prejudice to the provisions of the previous paragraph, in each legislative session each Member of the Assembly of the Republic has the right to speak once for a maximum of ten minutes, which shall not be included in the time allotted to his parliamentary group.

3 - The speeches referred to in the previous paragraph shall be made immediately following the last political statement, by order of registration, with alternation between Members of the Assembly of the Republic from different parliamentary groups, without excluding Members who are sole party representatives or unregistered Members.

Article 77

Order in which speakers are given the floor

1 - Speakers shall be given the floor in the order in which they registered, but the President of the Assembly shall arrange it in such a way that when others have also registered, Members of the Assembly of the Republic from the same parliamentary group, or members of the Government, are not called upon to speak one after the other.

2 - Registered speakers are authorised to swap their positions on the list of speakers at any time.

3 - The order of speakers must be visible to the hemicycle.

Article 78

Speeches by members of the Government

1 - Members of the Government shall be given the floor in order:

- a) To present government bills and draft resolutions, draft amendments and motions;
- b) To participate in debates;
- c) To reply to questions from Members of the Assembly of the Republic about any of the acts of the Government or the Public Administration;
- d) To make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions;
- e) To make or reply to requests for clarification;
- f) To react to offences to honour or due consideration or offer explanations in accordance with Article 84;
- g) To make protests or counter-protests.

2 - At its own request, once a week the Government may speak in order to make a statement, provided it gives the parliamentary groups prior notice of the topic via the President of the Assembly.

3 - The speech referred to in the previous paragraph shall take place after the parliamentary groups' political statements and the speeches referred to in Article 76(3) if any, may not exceed six minutes, and shall be followed by a period of debate with a duration of no more than thirty minutes.

Article 79

Purposes of speaking

1 - Anyone who asks for the floor must declare the proposed purpose.

2 - When a speaker strays from the purpose for which he has been called to speak, the President of the Assembly shall warn him, and may withdraw the floor if he persists with the attitude in question.

Article 80

Points of order and questions to the Bureau

1 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic who asks for the floor in order to make a point of order shall indicate the norm that has been infringed and shall restrict himself to such comments as are indispensable for the purpose.

2 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic may call upon the Bureau to answer questions when they have doubts regarding the latter's decisions or the way in which work is being conducted.

3 - There shall be no justification or discussion of questions to the Bureau.

4 - Speakers who are given the floor in order to make points of order or call upon the Bureau to answer questions may not speak for more than two minutes.

Article 81

Motions to the Bureau

1 - Only those requests to the Bureau that concern the procedure for presenting, discussing and voting on any subject, or on the modus operandi of the sitting, are deemed to be motions to the Bureau.

2 - Motions to the Bureau may be made in writing or orally.

3 - The Bureau shall immediately announce written motions to the Bureau and distribute them to the parliamentary groups.

4 - Neither oral motions to the Bureau, nor the reading out of written motions to the Bureau if requested, may exceed two minutes.

5 - When any motion to the Bureau is admitted under the terms of Article 16(1)(c), it shall be put to the vote immediately, without discussion.

6 - Motions to the Bureau shall be put to the vote in the order in which they are made.

7 - Oral explanations of vote are not permitted.

Article 82

Complaints and appeals

1 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic may complain against decisions by the President of the Assembly or the Bureau, and may appeal them to the Plenary.

2 - A Member of the Assembly of the Republic who so appeals may speak for a period of no more than three minutes in order to substantiate his appeal.

3 - In the case of an appeal submitted by more than one Member of the Assembly of the Republic, only one of them may speak in order to substantiate it, regardless of whether or not they belong to the same parliamentary group.

4 - When there is more than one appeal with the same object, only one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each of the parliamentary groups to which the appellants belong may speak in order to substantiate them.

5 - One Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group that has not pronounced itself under the terms of the previous paragraphs may also speak for a period of three minutes.

6 - There shall be no oral explanations of vote.

Article 83

Requests for clarification

1 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic who wish to ask for clarifications about matters which have been touched on by the speaker who is speaking and about which they are in doubt, must register before the end of the speech to which the request relates, and questions shall then actually be formulated and answered in the order in which the requests were registered.

2 - Questioners and the respondent shall each be given the floor for two minutes for each question. However, if he does not wish to speak after every individual questioner, the respondent may not accumulate more than three minutes in response times.

Article 84

Reactions to offences to honour or due consideration

1 - Whenever a Member of the Assembly of the Republic or a member of the Government deems that expressions have been used which offend his honour or the consideration due to him, he may speak for a period of no more than two minutes in order to defend himself.

2 - The speaker who proffered the expressions that are deemed to be offensive may give explanations for a period of no more than two minutes.

3 - The President of the Assembly shall note requests to speak in self-defence pursuant to paragraph (1), and shall grant the floor and the opportunity to give the respective explanations at the end of the debate in progress, without prejudice to the ability to grant them immediately if he deems that the situations in question especially warrant it.

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

Article 85

Protests and counter-protests

1 - Each parliamentary group is only permitted one protest against any given speech.

2 - The time permitted for each such protest is two minutes.

3 - Protests against requests for clarification or the respective replies, or with regard to explanations of vote, are not permitted.

4 - Counter-protests shall be made immediately after the protest to which they refer and may not exceed one minute.

Article 86

Prohibition on speaking during voting

Once a vote has been called, no Member of the Assembly of the Republic may speak until the result has been proclaimed, except in order to make motions and requests with regard to the voting procedure.

Article 87

Explanations of vote

1 - At the end of each vote, each individual Member of the Assembly of the Republic and each parliamentary group has the right to make a written statement explaining his or its vote.

2 - Oral explanations of vote with regard to motions rejecting the Government's Programme, to motions of confidence or no confidence, and to final votes on the major options of national plans and the State Budget, may not exceed five minutes.

3 - Written explanations of vote must without fail be delivered to the Bureau by the third working day following the voting that gave rise to them.

Article 88

Speeches by members of the Bureau

If members of the Bureau wish to speak during a plenary sitting at which they are exercising their functions, they may not then return to those functions until the end of the debate or of any voting with regard thereto.

Article 89

Form of speeches

1 - Speakers shall address themselves to the President and the Assembly and must stand.

2 - Speakers may not be interrupted without their consent, although oral expressions of agreement, disagreement or the like are not deemed interruptions.

3 - The President of the Assembly shall caution any speaker who strays from the subject under discussion or whose speech becomes insulting or offensive, and may withdraw the floor from him.

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

Article 90

Organisation of debates

1 - When these Rules of Procedure do not stipulate it, the Conference of Leaders shall decide the total time allotted to each debate and how it is to be distributed.

2 - The time spent on requests for clarification and replies, and on protests and counter-protests, shall be included in the time allotted to the parliamentary group to which the Member of the Assembly of the Republic in question belongs.

SECTION III

Decisions and voting

Article 91

Decisions

All decisions shall be taken during the voting period defined in these Rules of Procedure, save when they are on the special votes provided for in Article 75 and, due to their nature, urgency or timeliness, they must be considered and put to the vote at another time and there is a consensus to that effect, or when they are on opinions regarding the substitution of Members of the Assembly of the Republic or urgent judicial business.

Article 92

Requisites and conditions for voting

1 - Decisions shall be taken using the plurality system and, save in cases especially provided for in the Constitution or these Rules of Procedure, require the presence of the majority, as laid down by law, of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office, which must have been verified in advance using the electronic voting mechanism and must have been announced by the Bureau.

2 - Abstentions do not count for the purpose of calculating a majority.

3 - The Bureau shall immediately announce the result of each vote, and shall expressly state whether the applicable requisites laid down in the Constitution and these Rules of Procedure have been fulfilled.

4 - Decisions that have no effect outside the Assembly and solely concern its proceedings or the coordination of its work are valid on condition that the quorum required for the Assembly to sit exists.

Article 93

Votes

1 - Each Member of the Assembly of the Republic has one vote.

2 - No Member of the Assembly of the Republic who is present may refrain from voting, without prejudice to the right to abstain.

3 - Neither proxy nor postal votes are permitted.

4 - The President of the Assembly shall only exercise his right to vote when he sees fit to do so.

Article 94

Forms of voting

1 - Voting shall take one of the following forms:

a) Standing and sitting, which constitutes the usual form of voting;

b) Electronic voting;

c) Roll call;

d) Secret ballot.

2 - Voting for alternatives is not permitted.

3 - In voting by standing and sitting, the Bureau shall calculate the results in accordance with each parliamentary group's share of the seats in the Assembly and shall specify both the number of individual votes that were made against a parliamentary group line and their influence on the result, if any.

4 - In the cases in which the Constitution requires a qualified majority, voting shall also take place using electronic voting.

5 - Electronic voting must be organised in such a way as to make it possible to know the quantified overall result and to record the way in which each individual vote is cast.

Article 95

Voting times

1 - Voting shall take place during the last plenary sitting of each week at which the order of business includes the discussion of matters that require the Members of the Assembly of the Republic to make decisions.

2 - If the sitting occurs in the morning, voting shall take place at midday; if it occurs in the afternoon, voting shall take place at six p.m.

3 - After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly may set another voting time, which must be publicised at least a week in advance.

4 - Before voting, the President of the Assembly shall have the call bell rung and shall have parliamentary committees that are in session notified.

Article 96

List of forthcoming votes

1 - The Bureau of the Assembly is responsible for drawing up the list of forthcoming votes, which must be distributed to all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic:

- a) By six p.m. on Wednesday, when voting takes place on a Friday;
- b) Twenty-four hours in advance, when voting takes place on other days.

2 - After the expiry of the time limits referred to in the previous paragraph, the list may only be amended if no parliamentary group is opposed.

3 - The list of forthcoming votes must contain a detailed breakdown of all the votes that are to take place, whenever possible including those regarding opinions issued by the parliamentary committee with competence for the application of the Statute of Members.

Article 97

Secret ballots

Secret ballots shall be held for:

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

Article 98

Voting by roll call and voting subject to count

1 - At the request of one tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic, voting on the following matters shall be held by roll call:

- a) Authorisation to declare war or make peace;
- b) Authorisation and confirmation of a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency;
- c) Charges against the President of the Republic;
- d) The grant of amnesties and general pardons;
- e) Reconsideration of decrees or resolutions that have been the object of a presidential veto.

2 - Any other matter may be put to the vote by roll call if the Assembly or the Conference of Leaders so decides.

3 - In voting by roll call, Members of the Assembly of the Republic shall be called to vote in alphabetical order and their votes shall also be recorded electronically.

4 - In addition to the situations that require a qualified majority, voting may be subject to a count, whereupon it shall be recorded electronically in cases in which the Conference of Leaders has so stipulated in advance, or the Assembly so decides upon a motion by at least ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

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

Article 99

Tied votes

1 - When voting results in a tie, the matter in question shall be resubmitted for discussion.

2 - If the tie occurred in voting that was not preceded by discussion because no one asked to speak, the voting shall be repeated at the next sitting, when discussion shall be permitted.

3 - A tied second vote is equivalent to rejection.

CHAPTER IV

Parliamentary committee meetings

Article 100

Convening meetings and order of business

1 - The meetings of each parliamentary committee shall be convened by the committee itself or by its chairman.

2 - The order of business shall be set by the parliamentary committee or, after first consulting the parliamentary group representatives on the committee, by its chairman.

Article 101

Collaboration or presence of other Members of the Assembly of the Republic

1 - When a parliamentary committee is considering a Member's bill or draft resolution, the Members of the Assembly of the Republic who proposed it may take part in the committee's meetings, without the right to vote.

2 - Any other Member of the Assembly of the Republic may attend meetings and, if the parliamentary committee authorises it, may take part in its work, without the right to vote.

3 - Members of the Assembly of the Republic may send written observations to parliamentary committees on matters that fall within the committee's areas of competence.

Article 102

Participation by members of the Government and other entities

1 - Members of the Government may take part in the work of parliamentary committees at the request of the committee in question, or on their own initiative.

2 - Parliamentary committees may ask any citizen to take part in their work, particularly including:

- a) Staff and senior officials of the state's direct administration;
- b) Staff and senior officials of the state's indirect administration and the state-owned business sector, and persons engaged under contract thereto.

3 - Parliamentary committees may allow the entities referred to in subparagraph (a) of the previous paragraph to take part in their work, subject to authorisation by the respective ministers.

4 - The steps provided for in this Article shall be undertaken via the chairman of the parliamentary committee, who shall notify the President of the Assembly thereof.

Article 103

Parliamentary committee powers

1 - Parliamentary committees may request the taking of, or may themselves take, any steps needed for the proper exercise of their functions, particularly as regards:

- a) Conducting studies;
- b) Requesting information or opinions;
- c) Asking any citizens to give evidence;
- d) Holding parliamentary hearings;
- e) Requisitioning and contracting specialists to assist them in their work;
- f) Undertaking information or study missions.

2 - All documents that are under analysis or have already been analysed by parliamentary committees and do not contain classified material shall be made available on the Assembly's website.

3 - Journalists have the right of access to all the documents distributed for each parliamentary committee meeting, except if they contain classified material.

Article 104

Parliamentary hearings

1 - The Assembly of the Republic may hold individual or collective parliamentary hearings, which shall take place in parliamentary committee by decision of the committee in question.

2 - Ministers must be heard at hearings of the respective parliamentary committees at least four times in each legislative session, in accordance with a schedule to be set at a Conference of Leaders by the first week of the legislative session in question.

3 - Any of the entities referred to in Article 102 may be heard at parliamentary hearings.

4 - In each legislative session, each parliamentary group may potestatively require the presence of members of the Government and of the entities referred to in Article 102(2)(b), in accordance with the table of potestative rights contained in Annexe II.

5 - The potestative rights referred to in the previous paragraph may not be used on more than two consecutive occasions in relation to the same member of the Government.

Article 105

Collaboration between parliamentary committees

Two or more parliamentary committees may meet together in order to consider subjects of common interest, but may not take decisions.

Article 106

Parliamentary committee regulations

1 - Each parliamentary committee shall draw up its own regulations.

2 - In the absence of such parliamentary committee regulations or if they prove inadequate, the provisions of these Rules of Procedure shall apply by analogy.

Article 107

Parliamentary committee minutes

1 - Every parliamentary committee meeting shall be the object of minutes that must state who was present and who absent and give a summary of the subjects discussed, the position taken by Members of the Assembly of the Republic and parliamentary groups, the result of voting, and any individual or collective explanations of vote.

2 - When a parliamentary committee so decides, its meetings may be recorded in full or in part.

3 - The minutes of public parliamentary committee meetings shall be published in full on the Assembly of the Republic's website.

4 - If any member of the parliamentary committee so requests, Members of the Assembly of the Republic who vote shall be referred to by name and their votes recorded in the minutes.

Article 108

Parliamentary committee activity plans and reports

1 - At the end of each legislative session, each parliamentary committee shall draw up its draft activity plan for the following legislative session, together with the respective draft budget, and shall submit them for consideration by the President of the Assembly, who shall consult the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen.

2 - The chairman of each parliamentary committee must draw up the committee's activity plan for the first legislative session and the respective draft budget within a time limit of fifteen days after taking office.

3 - At the end of each legislative session, each parliamentary committee shall inform the Assembly about the situation and progress of its work by means of a report, the competence for which shall lie with its chairman; such reports shall be published in the *Journal*, and the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen shall be responsible for proposing the manner in which they are to be considered.

Article 109

Parliamentary committee facilities and support

1 - Parliamentary committees shall dispose of their own facilities at the Seat of the Assembly.

2 - The work of each parliamentary committee shall be supported by the appropriate administrative staff and assistants, as laid down by law.

CHAPTER V

Publicising the Assembly's proceedings and acts

SECTION I

Publicising the Assembly's work

Article 110

Publicising sittings and meetings

1 - Plenary sittings and parliamentary committee meetings are public.

2 - Exceptionally, parliamentary committees may meet in camera, when this is justified by the classified nature of the matters under consideration.

Article 111

Cooperation with the media

1 - Seats in the plenary chamber shall be reserved for duly accredited representatives of the media, for the exercise of their functions.

2 - If the seats reserved for representatives of the media are all taken, the Assembly's departments and services shall arrange for them to attend plenary sittings in other available places.

3 - The Bureau shall arrange for the texts of the subjects under discussion and speeches to be distributed to the representatives of the media.

Article 112

Journal of the Assembly of the Republic

1 - The Assembly's official journal is the *Journal of the Assembly of the Republic (Diário da Assembleia da República)*.

2 - By passing a resolution, the Assembly shall in particular lay down the *Journal's* organisation, content, the way in which it is drawn up and its table of contents.

3 - All the series of the *Journal* shall be published in full on the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 113

Electronic dissemination

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

Article 114

Information

For the information of the Members of the Assembly of the Republic, the media and the general public, and acting in articulation with the Secretary-General, the Bureau shall arrange for:

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

SECTION II

Publicising the Assembly's acts

Article 115

Publication in Series 1 of the *Diário da República*

1 - The President of the Assembly shall send the acts of the Assembly of the Republic whose publication in Series 1 of the *Diário da República* is required by law to the National Press as soon as possible.

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

Article 116

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

1 - The decisions of the Assembly of the Republic, the Standing Committee, the Bureau of the Assembly and the Conference of Leaders shall be committed to writing, shall comply with an initial format and shall be signed by the President of the Assembly.

2 - Decisions that are not required to take any of the forms provided for in Article 166 of the Constitution shall be identified, numbered as part of a common sequence relating to calendar years and the entities from which they emanate, and published in Series 2 of the *Journal*.

CHAPTER VI

Report on the activities of the Assembly of the Republic

Article 117

Frequency and content

1 - The Bureau is responsible for the publication at the beginning of each legislative session of a report on the Assembly of the Republic's activities during the previous legislative session.

2 - The report shall particularly contain a summary description of the legislative and supervisory or monitoring initiatives that were submitted or presented and the respective procedural details, and shall list all the other acts in which the Assembly engaged in the exercise of its competences.

TITLE IV

Forms of procedure

CHAPTER I

Legislative procedure

SECTION I

Common legislative procedure

DIVISION I

Initiative

Article 118

Power of initiative

The competence to exercise the initiative that gives rise to law lies with Members of the Assembly of the Republic, parliamentary groups and the Government, as well as, where autonomous regions are concerned, with the respective Legislative Assemblies, and also, subject to the terms and conditions laid down by law, with groups of registered electors.

Article 119

Forms of initiative

1 - The initiative that gives rise to law shall take the form of a Member's bill when exercised by Members of the Assembly of the Republic or parliamentary groups, and a government bill when exercised by the Government or by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions.

2 - Supervening initiatives shall take the form of draft amendments.

Article 120

Limits on initiative

1 - No bill or draft amendment shall be admitted if:

- a) It is in breach of the Constitution or the principles enshrined therein;
- b) It does not concretely define the sense of any changes to be made to the legislative order.

2 - No Member of the Assembly of the Republic, parliamentary group, Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region or group of registered electors may submit bills or draft amendments that involve increasing the state's expenses or reducing its revenues for the current financial year, as provided for in the Budget.

3 - Bills that are definitively rejected may not be resubmitted in the same legislative session.

Article 121

Resubmission of initiatives

1 - Bills that are not put to the vote in the legislative session in which they are submitted need not be resubmitted in the following legislative sessions, save if the legislature itself ends.

2 - Government bills lapse upon the resignation or removal of the Government or, when the initiative was exercised by the Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, when the respective legislature ends.

Article 122

Cancellation of initiatives

1 - Once any bill or any draft amendment has been admitted, its proposers may withdraw it at any time until it is put to a vote on the general principles.

2 - If another Member of the Assembly of the Republic, or the Government, adopts as his or its own the bill or draft amendment that the proposers wish to withdraw, the initiative shall follow the terms of these Rules of Procedure applicable to a bill submitted by the adopting entity.

Article 123

Exercise of initiative

1 - No Member's bill may be signed by more than twenty Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

2 - Government bills shall be signed by the Prime Minister and the ministers with competence for the matter in question and must mention that they have been passed by the Council of Ministers.

3 - Government bills with regard to which the initiative was exercised by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions shall be signed by the respective presidents.

Article 124

Formal requisites for bills

1 - Bills must:

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

2 - The requisite referred to in subparagraph (c) of the previous paragraph means that, with regard to government bills and as far as possible, the following items shall be presented in brief:

- a) A descriptive memorandum on the social, economic, financial and political situations to which the bill applies;
- b) Information on the benefits and consequences of its implementation;
- c) A digest of the current legislation on the subject.

3 - Government bills must be accompanied by the studies, documents and opinions that substantiated them.

4 - Bills that do not fulfil the provisions of subparagraph (1)(a) shall not be admitted.

5 - Failure to fulfil the requisites laid down in subparagraphs (1)(c) and (d) shall entail the need for the failure to be made good within a time limit of five days or, in the case of a government bill submitted by a Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, within a time limit to be set by the President of the Assembly.

Article 125

Procedure

- 1 - Bills shall be delivered to the Bureau for the purpose of admission by the President of the Assembly and publication in the *Journal*, in accordance with the Constitution and these Rules of Procedure.
- 2 - If he decides to reject a bill, the President of the Assembly must notify the proposer or first signatory of his decision within a time limit of forty-eight hours.
- 3 - Bills and draft amendments shall be registered and numbered by order of delivery to the Bureau.
- 4 - Bills shall be identified at the top by number, legislature and legislative session.
- 5 - If their signatories so indicate, Member's bills may also state at the top the name of the parliamentary group that is proposing them or of the first Member of the Assembly of the Republic to sign them, whereupon they must be called by that name in all the applicable procedures.

Article 126

Appeals

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

Article 127

Nature of draft amendments

- 1 - Draft amendments may take the form of draft alterations, replacements, additions or eliminations.
- 2 - Those which, whilst maintaining all or part of the text under discussion, restrict, expand or modify its meaning are deemed draft alterations.
- 3 - Those which contain provisions that differ from those that were previously presented are deemed draft replacements.
- 4 - Those which, whilst maintaining the original text and its meaning, contain added new material are deemed draft additions.
- 5 - Those which are intended to eliminate the provision under discussion are deemed draft eliminations.

Article 128

Draft resolutions

1 - Draft resolutions shall be discussed in the competent parliamentary committee and put to the vote in plenary sitting.

2 - Whenever a parliamentary group so requests, the discussion shall always take place in plenary sitting.

DIVISION II

Consideration of bills in parliamentary committee

Article 129

Referral of bills

1 - Once any bill has been admitted, the President of the Assembly shall refer its text to the competent parliamentary committee for consideration and issue of an opinion.

2 - In cases in which the President of the Assembly refers the text referred to in the previous paragraph to more than one parliamentary committee, he must indicate which one is to be the parliamentary committee with responsibility for drawing up and passing the opinion.

3 - When the bill's importance and specialist subject matter so warrant, the Assembly may form an ad hoc parliamentary committee to consider it.

Article 130

Determination of the competent parliamentary committee

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

Article 131

Technical note

1 - The Assembly's departments and services shall draw up a technical note for each bill.

2 - Whenever possible, the technical note shall particularly contain:

a) An analysis of the bill's compliance with the applicable formal and constitutional requisites and those provided for in these Rules of Procedure;

b) A legal and legal-doctrinal framework for the bill's topic, including at the European and international levels;

c) A list of other pending Portuguese and Community initiatives on the same matters;

d) Verification of compliance with the law governing the form of bills;

e) A succinct analysis of the facts, situations and realities concerned;

f) A historical overview of any problems raised;

g) Consideration of the consequences of the bill's passage and the likely costs of its implementation;

h) The gender impact assessment report, drawn up under the terms of the relevant legal system;

i) References to contributions from entities with an interest in the matters concerned, particularly any opinions they have issued on the topic.

3 - The Assembly's departments and services shall send the technical note to the competent parliamentary committee within a time limit of fifteen days of the date of the order admitting the respective bill.

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

Article 132

Presentation in parliamentary committee

1 - Once a bill has been admitted, its proposer or one of its proposers has the right to present it before the competent parliamentary committee.

2 - The presentation shall be followed by a period in which the proposer or one of the proposers provides the Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are present at the parliamentary committee meeting with clarifications.

Article 133

Referral of draft amendments

The President of the Assembly may also refer any draft amendment that affects the principles and logic of the text to which it refers to the parliamentary committee that has pronounced itself on the bill in question.

Article 134

Labour legislation

1 - In the case of labour legislation, the parliamentary committee shall arrange for the bill to be considered for the purposes of Articles 54(5)(d) and 56(2)(a) of the Constitution.

2 - Within a time limit set by the parliamentary committee, as laid down by law, workers' committees, trade unions and employers' associations may send it such suggestions as they deem fit and may request that their representatives be heard.

3 - For the purposes of the provisions of the previous paragraphs, such bills shall be published in advance in separate electronic issues of the *Journal*.

4 - The date of each separate issue shall be that of its publication, which shall be the same as that on which it is announced, which date shall be deemed to be the day on which it becomes available on the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 135

Drawing up opinions

1 - The officers of each parliamentary committee have the competence to appoint the Member of the Assembly of the Republic who is to be responsible for drafting each opinion.

2 - When so warranted, the officers of the parliamentary committee may appoint more than one Member of the Assembly of the Republic to be responsible for parts of a bill.

3 - The appointment of Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are to be responsible for drafting an opinion must:

- a) Seek to ensure a balanced distribution between the members of the parliamentary committee;
- b) Particularly consider Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are not proposers of the initiative;
- c) Take account of any express wish on the part of a particular Member of the Assembly of the Republic.

Article 136

Time limit for consideration and issue of opinions

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

Article 137

Content of opinions

- 1 - The opinion issued by the parliamentary committee with the competence to consider a bill shall comprise four parts:
 - a) Part I, which is for the recitals;
 - b) Part II, which is for the personal opinion of the Member of the Assembly of the Republic who drew up the opinion;
 - c) Part III, which is for the conclusions;
 - d) Part IV, which is for the annexes.
- 2 - The opinion must obligatorily contain parts I and III, which shall be the object of decision by the parliamentary committee, and must also include the technical note referred to in Article 131 in one of the annexes contained in part IV.
- 3 - Part II shall be optional, shall be the sole responsibility of its author and may not be the object of voting, modification or elimination.
- 4 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic may have his, or any parliamentary group may have its, political positions annexed to the opinion in part IV.

Article 138

Bills regarding the same subject matters

- 1 - If, by halfway through the period allotted to the parliamentary committee for the issue of its opinion, one or more other bills on the same matter are referred to it, the parliamentary committee must consider all the bills together, without prejudice to the issue of separate opinions.

2 - In circumstances other than that provided for in the previous paragraph, precedence shall be given to the issue of an opinion or opinions on the text or texts that were received first.

Article 139

Replacement texts

1 - The parliamentary committee may submit replacement texts with regard to both the general principles and the details, without prejudice to the bills to which they refer, when the latter are not withdrawn.

2 - The general principles of a replacement text and of the text of the bill shall be discussed together and, when the discussion ends, the texts shall be successively put to the vote in the order in which they were submitted.

Article 140

Public discussion

1 - The competent parliamentary committee may propose to the President that because their subject matter is of special importance, bills be put to public discussion, in accordance with Article 134(3) and (4).

2 - Whenever bills concern matters of disability, the competent parliamentary committee must arrange to consult the federations and confederations that are representative of the sector.

3 - The provisions of the previous paragraphs shall not prejudice any initiatives that parliamentary committees with competence for the matter in question deem fit to undertake in such a way as to gather contributions from interested parties, particularly by means of parliamentary hearings or via the Assembly of the Republic's website.

Article 141

Consultation of ANMP and ANAFRE

Whenever bills concern local authorities, or in the case of other initiatives that warrant doing so, the competent parliamentary committee must arrange to consult the National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (ANMP) and the National Association of Parishes (ANAFRE).

DIVISION III

Consultation of self-government organs of autonomous regions

Article 142

Consultation of self-government organs of autonomous regions

In the case of an initiative that addresses subject matter regarding autonomous regions, the President of the Assembly shall arrange for the self-government organs of the autonomous regions to consider it for the purposes of the provisions of Article 229(2) of the Constitution.

DIVISION IV

Discussion and voting on bills

SUBDIVISION I

General provisions

Article 143

The rule

1 - Bills that are admitted by the Bureau shall obligatorily be discussed and put to the vote on the general principles in accordance with the time limits set and provided for in these Rules of Procedure.

2 - Bills whose proposer informs the President of the Assembly in writing by the end of the meeting at which the opinion is passed in the general principles phase by the competent parliamentary committee, that he does not wish to see the initiative discussed and put to the vote on the general principles in accordance with the time limits set in these Rules of Procedure, are excepted from the previous paragraph.

3 - The effect provided for in the previous paragraph may be revoked at any time at the proposer's request.

4 - When more than one bill addresses the same matters, they must be discussed and put to the vote together, on condition that they were admitted at least ten days before the date scheduled for the discussion.

Article 144

Prior knowledge of bills

1 - No bill may be considered in parliamentary committee or scheduled for discussion at a plenary sitting without first being distributed to the Members of the Assembly of the Republic and the parliamentary groups.

2 - No bill may be discussed at a plenary sitting without first being published in the *Journal* at least five days in advance.

3 - However, in emergency cases the Conference of Leaders may, by a two-thirds majority weighted in accordance with the number of Members of the Assembly of the Republic represented at the Conference, reduce the requirement for prior publication to no less than forty-eight hours.

4 - The provisions of the previous paragraphs shall not prejudice any consensus at the Conference of Leaders that the discussion in parliamentary committee or in plenary sitting can take place with dispensation of the established time limits.

5 - Discussion with regard to authorisation to declare war or to make peace or to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency may take place regardless of compliance with any time limit.

Article 145

Beginning and times of debates in Plenary

1 - Debates in plenary sitting on bills that have been considered in parliamentary committee shall begin with speeches by their proposers.

2 - Parliamentary groups and the Government shall each be given the floor in the debate for three minutes.

3 - Unregistered Members of the Assembly of the Republic and Members who are sole representatives of a political party shall each be ensured the floor for one minute.

4 - The proposers of bills shall each dispose of one more minute.

5 - In cases of combined scheduling, the proposers of initiatives that were admitted by the date on which the scheduling took place shall each dispose of one more minute.

6 - In the following situations the Conference of Leaders shall set an overall time for the debate in accordance with the table of times contained in Annexe I:

- a) In the cases provided for in Articles 64 and 169;
- b) Upon a proposal from the President of the Assembly, on condition that no parliamentary group opposes it;
- c) When the debate concerns matters for which the Assembly of the Republic has exclusive or partially exclusive legislative competence and a parliamentary group requests it;
- d) At the request of the Government.

7 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the Conference of Leaders must obligatorily opt for one of the normal tables of times contained in the Annexe referred to in the previous paragraph.

8 - In cases of combined scheduling, the proposers of initiatives that were admitted by the date on which the scheduling took place shall dispose of the same time as the largest parliamentary group.

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

Article 146

Motions for reconsideration in parliamentary committee

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

SUBDIVISION II

Discussion and voting on the general principles of bills

Article 147

Object of discussion on the general principles

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

Article 148

Object of voting on the general principles

- 1 - Votes on the general principles shall be put in relation to each bill.
- 2 - When a division of a bill is autonomous enough to warrant it, the Plenary may decide to put the division to a separate vote.

Article 149

Time limits for discussion and voting on the general principles

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

SUBDIVISION III

Discussion and voting on the details of bills

Article 150

The rule in discussion and voting on the details

1 - Save for the provisions of Article 168(4) and (5) of the Constitution and of these Rules of Procedure, the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question shall be responsible for the discussion and voting on the details.

2 - The discussion and voting on the details shall take place within the time limit which the President of the Assembly sets when he announces that a parliamentary committee is to consider the bill.

3 - The President of the Assembly may reconsider the time limit referred to in the previous paragraph, if asked to do so by the parliamentary committee in question.

Article 151

Mandate by the Plenary

1 - The Plenary of the Assembly may at any time decide to mandate itself to put all or part of a text to the vote on the details.

2 - The decision provided for in the previous paragraph shall be dependent on the existence of a motion made by at least ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic or a parliamentary group.

Article 152

Object of discussion and voting on the details

1 - The discussion on the details shall address each Article. The Assembly may decide that more than one Article be discussed simultaneously or, on the grounds of the complexity of the subject matter or of any draft amendments, that the text be discussed paragraph by paragraph.

2 - Votes on the details shall be put separately in relation to each article, paragraph and subparagraph.

Article 153

Draft amendments

1 - At the beginning of the discussion on the details, the chairman of the competent parliamentary committee shall set the time limits for the submission of draft amendments and for the distribution of the list of votes and the date thereof.

2 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic may submit draft amendments and defend them, even if he is not a member of the competent parliamentary committee.

Article 154

Voting order

1 - Voting shall be conducted in the following order:

a) Draft eliminations;

- b) Draft replacements;
- c) Draft alterations;
- d) The text as discussed, with any amendments that have already been passed;
- e) Draft additions to a text that has already been put to the vote.

2 - When there are two or more draft amendments of the same nature, they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they were submitted.

SUBDIVISION IV

Final overall voting

Article 155

Final overall voting and oral explanations of vote

1 - Once discussion and voting on the details have ended, final overall voting shall take place.

2 - If a text is passed in parliamentary committee, it shall be sent to the Plenary for final overall voting at the second sitting following its publication in the *Journal* or its distribution in separate copies to the parliamentary groups.

3 - Final overall voting is not preceded by discussion. Each parliamentary group may give an oral explanation of vote for a time of no more than two minutes, without prejudice to the right of any Member of the Assembly of the Republic or parliamentary group to submit a written explanation of vote in accordance with Article 87.

4 - If several final overall votes are put one after the other, the oral explanation of vote referred to in the previous paragraph shall only be given at the end of all those votes, as follows:

- a) One explanation of vote, for two minutes each, up to a maximum of two explanations;
- b) One four-minute explanation of vote for the remaining votes.

DIVISION V

Final text of bills

Article 156

Final text

1 - Once a bill has been passed, the competent parliamentary committee shall be responsible for drafting its final text.

2 - The parliamentary committee may not modify the thinking behind the legislation and must restrict itself to perfecting the systematisation of the text and its style by means of a decision with no votes against.

3 - The final text shall be drafted within the time limit set by the Assembly or its President or, if no such limit is set, within a time limit of five days.

4 - When the drafting of the final text is concluded, it shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 157

Complaints against inaccuracies

1 - Any Member of the Assembly of the Republic may submit complaints against inaccuracies until the third working day following the date on which the text of the final draft is published in the *Journal*.

2 - The President shall decide complaints within a time limit of twenty-four hours, whereupon the Members of the Assembly of the Republic who made them may appeal to the Plenary or the Standing Committee at any time until the sitting or meeting immediately following the announcement of the decision.

Article 158

Definitive text

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

DIVISION VI

Enactment and reconsideration of decrees of the Assembly

Article 159

Decrees of the Assembly of the Republic

Bills that have been passed are called decrees of the Assembly of the Republic and shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

Article 160

Reconsideration of decrees that are the object of a political veto

1 - In cases in which the President of the Republic exercises his veto pursuant to Article 136 of the Constitution, the bill shall be reconsidered as from the fifteenth day following that on which the message containing the duly substantiated veto is received, at a sitting which the President of the Assembly shall convene on his own initiative, or on that of one tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

2 - The only speakers in the discussion shall be one of the proposers of the bill and one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group, each of whom shall speak only once.

3 - Voting may be on confirmation of the decree of the Assembly of the Republic, or on draft amendments thereto.

4 - In cases in which draft amendments are submitted, voting shall only be on the articles that are the object thereof.

5 - The text of decrees that are not amended shall not require referral to the competent parliamentary committee for the purpose of drafting a final text.

Article 161

Effects of decision

1 - If the Assembly confirms the original vote in accordance with Article 136(2) and (3) of the Constitution, the decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment, which shall then take place within a time limit of eight days counting from its reception.

2 - If the Assembly makes amendments, the new decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

3 - If the Assembly does not confirm the original decree, the legislative initiative may not be resubmitted in the same legislative session.

Article 162

Reconsideration of decrees that are the object of a veto due to unconstitutionality

1 - In cases in which the President of the Republic vetoes a decree pursuant to Article 279 of the Constitution, the provisions of Article 160 shall apply, with the exceptions contained in the present Article.

2 - The vote may be put in relation to the expunction of the norm or norms that the Constitutional Court has pronounced unconstitutional, to the reformulation of the decree, or to its confirmation.

3 - If the Assembly so decides, a decree that is the object of reformulation or the expunction of the unconstitutional norms may be referred to the competent parliamentary committee for the purpose of drawing up a final draft.

Article 163

Sending for enactment

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

2 - If the Assembly makes amendments, the new decree shall be sent to the President of the Republic for enactment.

SECTION II

Special legislative procedures

DIVISION I

Passage of the statutes of autonomous regions

Article 164

Initiative in matters regarding politico-administrative statutes

1 - The legislative initiative in matters regarding politico-administrative statutes of autonomous regions is an exclusive competence of the respective Legislative Assemblies, in accordance with Article 226 of the Constitution.

2 - Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions, Members of the Assembly of the Republic and the Government may submit draft amendments.

Article 165

Consideration in parliamentary committee, discussion and voting

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

Article 166

Passage without amendments

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

Article 167

Passage with amendments or rejection

1 - If a draft statute is passed with amendments or is rejected, it shall be returned to the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region for reconsideration and the issue of an opinion.

2 - Once the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region's opinion has been received, it shall be submitted to the competent parliamentary committee of the Assembly of the Republic.

3 - Any amendments suggested in the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region's opinion may be included in a replacement text, or be the object of draft amendments for submission to the Plenary.

4 - The Assembly of the Republic shall then discuss the draft statute and make its final decision.

Article 168

Supervening amendments

The regime provided for in the previous Articles is applicable to amendments to statutes.

DIVISION II

Consideration of government bills initiated by Legislative Assemblies of autonomous regions

Article 169

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

1 - The Legislative Assemblies of the Azores and Madeira autonomous regions have the right to the inclusion of two government bills proposed by them on the order of business in each legislative session.

2 - The President of the Assembly of the Republic shall be notified of the exercise of the right provided for in the previous paragraph by the fifteenth day of the month, so that it may take effect the following month, in accordance with Article 59.

3 - The proposing Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region may also request that government bills scheduled under the terms of the present Article be put to the vote on the general principles on the same day as the bills are discussed.

4 - The President of the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region must send the request referred to in the previous paragraph to the President of the Assembly. Such requests shall preclude exercise of the right enshrined in Article 146.

5 - In the cases provided for in the present Article, if the government bill is passed on the general principles, the details shall be put to the vote and the bill to a final overall vote within a time limit of thirty days.

Article 170

Consideration of legislative proposals from autonomous regions in parliamentary committee

1 - Representatives of the proposing Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region may participate in the parliamentary committee meetings at which the details of legislative proposals from the autonomous region are discussed.

2 - For the purpose provided for in the previous paragraph, the competent parliamentary committee must notify the President of the Assembly of the Republic that discussion of the details of a legislative proposal from an autonomous region has been included on its order of business, at least eight days before the date of the meeting.

3 - Once he has received the notification referred to in the previous paragraph, the President of the Assembly of the Republic shall inform the Legislative Assembly of the autonomous region of the date and time of the meeting.

DIVISION III

Authorisation and confirmation of declarations of a state of siege or a state of emergency

SUBDIVISION I

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

Article 171

Assembly sitting

1 - If the President of the Republic asks the Assembly of the Republic for authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency pursuant to Articles 19, 134(d) and 138 of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall arrange for the request to be immediately considered by the Plenary or, in cases in which the Assembly is not sitting and it is impossible for it to sit immediately, by the Standing Committee.

2 - Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 41(2), consideration of a request for authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency shall be included on the order of business, and the plenary sitting shall be scheduled or the Standing Committee convened, regardless of any time limit or formalities provided for in these Rules of Procedure.

Article 172

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

1 - The debate shall be based on the message from the President of the Republic which, in accordance with Article 19 of the Constitution, shall constitute the request for authorisation to declare a state or siege or a state of emergency.

2 - The debate may not exceed one day and priority in the grant of the floor shall be given to the Prime Minister, for one hour, and to one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group, for thirty minutes each.

3 - Upon a motion from the Government or any parliamentary group, the debate may be closed as soon as one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each party has spoken.

4 - The provisions contained in the previous paragraphs apply, mutatis mutandis, to debates in the Standing Committee.

Article 173

Voting on authorisation

Voting shall be on the grant of authorisation.

Article 174

Form of authorisation

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

SUBDIVISION II

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

Article 175

Confirmation of authorisation granted by the Standing Committee

Whenever the Standing Committee grants authorisation to declare a state of siege or a state of emergency, it shall immediately call the Assembly to sit as soon as possible, for the purpose of confirmation of the authorisation.

Article 176

Duration of debate on confirmation

The debate may not exceed one day, and the provisions of Article 172 apply, mutatis mutandis.

Article 177

Voting on confirmation

Voting shall be on confirmation.

Article 178

Form

1 - Confirmation shall take the form of a law.

2 - Refusal of confirmation shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 179

Renewal of authorisation

In cases in which the President of the Republic asks for renewal of the Assembly of the Republic's authorisation for a declaration of a state of siege or a state of emergency, the provisions contained in the previous Articles apply, mutatis mutandis.

SUBDIVISION III

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

Article 180

Consideration of implementation

1 - Within fifteen days of the end of a state of siege or a state of emergency the President of the Assembly of the Republic shall, in accordance with the Constitution, arrange for the Plenary to consider the manner in which the declaration was implemented.

2 - The provisions contained in Article 172 apply to the debate, mutatis mutandis.

DIVISION IV

Authorisation to declare war or make peace

Article 181

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

1 - When the President of the Republic asks the Assembly of the Republic for authorisation to declare war or make peace pursuant to Article 135(c) of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall arrange for the request to be immediately considered by the Plenary or, in cases in which the Assembly is not sitting and it is impossible for it to sit immediately, by the Standing Committee.

2 - Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 41(2), consideration of the request for authorisation to declare war or make peace shall be included on the order of business, and the plenary sitting shall be scheduled or the Standing Committee convened, regardless of any time limit or formalities provided for in these Rules of Procedure.

Article 182

Debate on authorisation to declare war or make peace

1 - The debate may not exceed one day and shall be opened and closed by speeches by the Prime Minister with a maximum duration of one hour each.

2 - One Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group has the right to speak in the debate.

3 - The Government or any parliamentary group may move that the debate be closed as soon as one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each party has spoken.

4 - The provisions of the previous paragraphs apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to debates in the Standing Committee.

Article 183

Voting on authorisation to declare war or make peace

Voting shall be on the grant of authorisation.

Article 184

Form of authorisation to declare war or make peace

Authorisation shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 185

Immediate calling of the Assembly

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

Article 186

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

The debate may not exceed one day, and the provisions of Article 182 apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

DIVISION V

Authorisations to legislate

Article 187

Object, purpose, extent and duration

1 - The Assembly of the Republic may authorise the Government to issue executive laws, in accordance with Article 165 of the Constitution.

2 - The law granting authorisation must define the object, purpose, extent and duration thereof.

3 - The duration of an authorisation to legislate may be extended for a given period, by means of a new law.

Article 188

Initiative with regard to authorisations to legislate and information

1 - The original initiative with regard to authorisations to legislate is an exclusive competence of the Government.

2 - If the Government has conducted public consultations with regard to the prior draft of an executive law, for information purposes it must attach the prior draft to the government bill seeking authorisation to legislate, accompanied by statements of position from the different entities with an interest in the matter.

CHAPTER II

Consideration of executive laws

Article 189

Motions to consider executive laws

1 - Motions to consider executive laws with a view to causing them to cease to be in force or amending them must be signed by ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic and be submitted to the Bureau in writing within the thirty days following the publication of the executive law in question, not counting periods in which the Assembly of the Republic's proceedings are suspended.

2 - The motion must indicate the executive law and the date of its publication and, in the case of an executive law issued under the terms of an authorisation to legislate, the respective law. It must also contain a succinct statement of the grounds for the motion.

3 - The rules contained in Articles 125 and 126 apply to the motion's admission, *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 190

Time limit for consideration of executive laws

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

Article 191

Suspension of force

1 - Once a motion to consider an executive law issued under the terms of an authorisation to legislate has been submitted and if one or more draft amendments are proposed, the Assembly may pass a resolution suspending the force of all or part of the executive law until either the law that amends it is published, or all the draft amendments are rejected.

2 - The suspension shall expire after ten plenary sittings, if the Assembly has not issued its final pronouncement by then.

Article 192

Consideration of the general principles of executive laws

1 - Executive laws shall be considered in plenary sitting.

2 - The debate shall be opened by one of the proposers of the motion, and the Government has the right to speak.

3 - The Conference of Leaders shall set the overall time for the debate, to which end it shall opt for one of the tables of times contained in Annexe to these Rules of Procedure.

4 - Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph (2), consideration of the executive law may be conducted in the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question, on condition that no parliamentary group opposes it.

Article 193

Voting and form

1 - Voting on the general principles shall be on the cessation of force.

2 - Cessation of force shall take the form of a resolution.

Article 194

Cessation of force

In cases of cessation of force, the executive law shall cease to be in force on the day on which the resolution is published in the *Diário da República*, and may not be published again during the same legislative session.

Article 195

Revalidation

The resolution shall specify whether the cessation of force means that any rules that were repealed by the legislative act in question are revalidated.

Article 196

Amendment of the executive law

1 - If the cessation of the executive law's force is not passed and one or more draft amendments have been submitted, the executive law and the respective draft amendments shall be referred to the competent parliamentary committee for discussion and voting on the details, save if the Assembly decides that they be analysed in Plenary.

2 - Draft amendments may be submitted until the end of the discussion on the general principles, without prejudice to the submission of new proposals regarding articles that are to be the object of discussion and voting on the details.

3 - If amendments are passed in parliamentary committee, the Assembly shall put them to a final overall vote at the next plenary sitting, and the executive law shall be amended as laid down in the law containing the amendments.

4 - If all the draft amendments are rejected and the force of the executive law is suspended at the time, for the purposes of Article 169(2) of the Constitution the President of the Assembly shall send a declaration of termination of suspension for publication in the *Diário da República*.

5 - If the parliamentary committee rejects all the draft amendments, the consideration process shall be deemed to have lapsed, the Plenary shall immediately be informed of the fact, and the respective declaration shall be sent for publication in the *Diário da República*.

6 - If, once a motion to consider has been made, the Assembly does not pronounce or, if a decision to make amendments has been made, the Assembly has not passed the applicable law by the end of the current legislative session and fifteen plenary sittings have taken place, the process shall be deemed to have lapsed.

Article 197

Repeal of the executive law

1 - If at any time the Government repeals the executive law that is under consideration, the respective process shall automatically be terminated.

2 - If the repeal occurs during the debate on the details, any Member of the Assembly of the Republic may adopt the executive law as a Member's bill, in accordance with Article 122(2).

CHAPTER III

Approval of treaties and agreements

Article 198

Initiative with respect to matters regarding treaties and agreements

1 - The Government shall send treaties and agreements that are subject to approval by the Assembly of the Republic under the terms of Article 161(i) of the Constitution, to the Assembly of the Republic.

2 - The President of the Assembly shall have the respective texts published in the *Journal*, and shall refer them for consideration to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question and, where appropriate, to one or more other parliamentary committees.

3 - When the treaty or agreement concerns autonomous regions, under the terms of Article 227(1)(t) of the Constitution, its text shall be referred to the respective self-government organs so that the latter can pronounce themselves on them.

Article 199

Scrutiny of treaties and agreements in parliamentary committee

1 - If no other time limit is requested by the Government or set by the President of the Assembly, the parliamentary committee shall issue its opinion within thirty days.

2 - Exceptionally, for important reasons regarding the national interest, the Government may request that the parliamentary committee meeting be held in camera.

Article 200

Discussion and voting on treaties and agreements

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

2 - The overall voting shall take place in Plenary.

Article 201

Effects of voting on treaties and agreements

1 - If a treaty or an agreement is approved, it shall be sent to the President of the Republic for ratification or for signature of the resolution approving it, respectively.

2 - The President of the Assembly shall have the resolution approving or rejecting the treaty or agreement published in the *Diário da República*.

Article 202

Resolutions approving treaties or agreements

The resolution approving a treaty or agreement shall contain the respective text.

Article 203

Reconsideration of norms contained in treaties

1 - In cases in which the Constitutional Court pronounces any of the norms contained in a treaty unconstitutional, the resolution approving the treaty shall require confirmation by a two-thirds majority of the Members of the Assembly of the Republic present and the said majority must be greater than an absolute majority of all the Members in full exercise of their office.

2 - When the norm in the treaty that has been submitted for reconsideration concerns autonomous regions, under the terms of Article 227(1)(t) of the Constitution, the President shall ask the respective self-government organs to pronounce themselves on the matter as a matter of urgency.

3 - The new consideration shall take place at a sitting which the President of the Assembly shall schedule on his own initiative or on that of one tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office, and which shall take place as from the fifteenth day following reception of the duly substantiated message from the President of the Republic.

4 - Save if the Conference of Leaders decides otherwise, only one member of the Government and one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group shall speak in the discussion, and only once each.

5 - The discussion and voting shall be solely on confirmation of approval of the treaty.

6 - If the Assembly confirms the original vote, the treaty shall be sent back to the President of the Republic for the purposes of Article 279(4) of the Constitution.

Article 204

Resolutions with amendments

1 - If the treaty admits reservations, a second resolution by the Assembly confirming it may amend the first resolution that originally approved the treaty, in such a way as to formulate new reservations or modify those that had already been formulated.

2 - In the case provided for in the previous paragraph, the President of the Republic may request a prior assessment of the constitutionality of any the norms contained in the treaty.

CHAPTER IV

Procedures regarding public finances

SECTION I

Major options of national plans and reports on the execution of plans, State Budget, General State Accounts and other public accounts

DIVISION I

General provisions with respect to matters regarding public finances

Article 205

Presentation and distribution

1 - The government bills regarding the major options of plans and the State Budget for each financial year, the General State Accounts and other public accounts shall be presented to the Assembly of the Republic within the time limits set by law.

2 - Whenever either of the government bills, the General State Accounts or other public accounts are admitted, the President of the Assembly shall order their publication in the *Journal* and their immediate distribution to the Members of the Assembly of the Republic and the parliamentary groups.

3 - The government bills, General State Accounts or other public accounts shall be referred to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question, for it to draw up a report, and to the remaining parliamentary committees for the purposes of drawing up an opinion.

4 - The opinions that the Court of Auditors or the Economic and Social Council sends to the Assembly shall also be published in the *Journal* and referred to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question.

Article 206

Scrutiny

1 - The other parliamentary committees shall each draw up their opinion and send it to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question within the following time limits:

- a) Fifteen days, with respect to government bills regarding the major options of plans;
- b) Fifteen days, with respect to the government bill regarding the State Budget;
- c) Twenty days, with respect to the General State Accounts.

2 - The aforementioned parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question shall draw up the final report and send it to the President of the Assembly within the following time limits:

- a) Twenty-five days, with respect to government bills regarding the major options of plans;
- b) Twenty days, with respect to the government bill regarding the State Budget;
- c) Thirty days, with respect to the General State Accounts.

3 - The Assembly's departments and services shall conduct a technical analysis of the government bill regarding the State Budget and of the General State Accounts, to be broken down by areas of governance, and shall send it to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question within the following time limits:

- a) Ten days, with respect to the government bill regarding the State Budget;
- b) Ninety days, with respect to the General State Accounts.

4 - The time limits laid down in the present Article shall be counted from the date on which the government bill regarding the Major Options of the Plan and the government bill regarding the State Budget, the General State Accounts and other public accounts are delivered, except with respect to subparagraphs (1)(c) and (2)(c), when the time

limits shall be counted from the date of the delivery of the competent opinion of the Court of Auditors.

5 - For the purposes of subparagraph (1)(b), the members of the Government must send the competent parliamentary committees a written memorandum about the draft budgets for the areas they oversee, preferably before the meeting provided for in the following paragraph.

6 - For the purposes of consideration of the government bill regarding the Budget, the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question shall meet within the time limits provided for in paragraphs (1) and (3). The attendance of the ministers with responsibility for the Finance and Social Security areas shall be obligatory, and the meeting shall be open to participation by all Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

Article 207

Terms of the plenary debate

1 - The duration of the overall time for the plenary debate on the government bill regarding the Major Options of the Plan, the government bill regarding the State Budget for each financial year, the General State Accounts and other public accounts shall be defined at the Conference of Leaders.

2 - The debate shall open and close with a speech from the Government.

3 - Each parliamentary group has the right to make a statement before the debate is closed.

4 - The debate referred to in paragraph (2) shall take place under the terms set by the Conference of Leaders, which shall comply with the provisions of Article 90.

DIVISION II

Accounts of other public entities

Article 208

Consideration of accounts of other public entities

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

DIVISION III

National plans and execution reports

Article 209

Presentation and consideration

1 - The Government shall present national plans and reports on their execution to the Assembly of the Republic within the time limits laid down by law.

2 - The President of the Assembly shall refer the text of reports on the execution of plans to the Economic and Social Council, for the purposes of the provisions of the respective law.

3 - The provisions of the previous Articles are applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the consideration of national plans and reports on their execution.

DIVISION IV

State Budget

Article 210

Discussion and voting on the principles of the State Budget

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

Article 211

Discussion and voting on the details of the State Budget

- 1 - Consideration of the details of the State Budget shall last for a maximum of twenty days and shall, following consultation of the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Chairmen, be organised and undertaken by the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question, in such a way as to successively discuss the budget of each ministry, and the respective members of the Government shall speak therein.
- 2 - The discussion of each ministry's budget shall take place at a joint meeting of the committee referred to in the previous paragraph and the parliamentary committee or committees with competence for the matter in question.
- 3 - The debate on the details of the articles in the government bill and of the respective draft amendments shall take place in the Plenary of the Assembly of the Republic, and shall last for a minimum of three and a maximum of four days.
- 4 - The voting on the details of the articles in the government bill, of the budget charts and of the respective draft amendments shall take place in the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question.
- 5 - Once the debate and the voting on the details have been concluded, each parliamentary group, by ascending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and the Government, which shall speak last, have the right to make statements before the final overall voting.
- 6 - After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall set the times allotted to each parliamentary group, to which end he shall take account of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and to the Government.
- 7 - Parties may move that the Plenary mandate articles in the State Budget and draft amendments to itself, in which respect application of the provisions of Article 151 shall be dispensed with up to the limit defined in the table contained in Annexe III.

Article 212

Final overall voting on and final text of the State Budget

- 1 - The government bill shall be the object of final overall voting.
- 2 - The parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question shall be responsible for drafting the final text, to which end it shall dispose of a time limit of ten days.

SECTION II

Other debates on public finances

Article 213

Debates on public finance policies

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

CHAPTER V

Procedures for guidelines and political monitoring

SECTION I

Consideration of the Government's Programme

Article 214

Sitting for presentation of the Government's Programme

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

Article 215

Consideration of the Government's Programme

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

Article 216

Debate on the Government's Programme

- 1 - The debate on the Government's Programme shall begin when the clarifications provided for in the previous Article have ended or, at the request of any Member of the

Assembly of the Republic, within a maximum time limit of forty-eight hours following distribution of the text of the Programme.

2 - The Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate, in accordance with Article 90.

3 - The debate shall end with a speech by one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group, and by the Government, which shall close it.

4 - The sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the Government's Programme.

Article 217

Rejection of the Government's Programme and confidence motion

1 - Until the debate is closed, and without prejudice to the debate itself, any parliamentary group may move that the Programme be rejected, or the Government may ask for passage of a motion of confidence.

2 - Once the debate has been closed, at the same sitting and following an interval of no more than one hour if requested by any parliamentary group, motions to reject the Programme and of confidence in the Government shall be put to the vote.

3 - Motions of rejection or confidence may be withdrawn at any time before they are put to the vote.

4 - If more than one motion to reject the Programme is made, they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they are made, without prejudice to the possibility of each one's individual failure.

5 - Rejection of the Government's Programme requires an absolute majority of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office.

6 - For the purposes of Article 195 of the Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic of the passage of any motion to reject or of the failure of any confidence motion.

SECTION II

Confidence motions

Article 218

Assembly sitting for consideration of a confidence motion

1 - If, in accordance with Article 193 of the Constitution, the Government asks the Assembly of the Republic to pass a confidence motion with regard to a statement of general policy or any important matter of national interest, discussion shall begin on the third parliamentary day following submission of the request for a confidence motion to the President of the Assembly.

2 - If the Assembly of the Republic is not in full session, such a request by the Government shall merely determine that the Plenary be called by prior decision of the Standing Committee pursuant to Article 41.

Article 219

Debate on a confidence motion

1 - The debate may not exceed three days, and the sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the confidence motion.

2 - The rules contained in Article 90 are applicable to the discussion of confidence motions.

3 - The rules contained in Article 215 and Article 216(2) also apply.

4 - The Government may withdraw the confidence motion at any time before the end of the debate.

Article 220

Voting on a confidence motion

1 - Once the debate has been closed and, if any parliamentary group so requests, after an interval of one hour, the confidence motion shall be put to the vote at the same sitting.

2 - If the confidence motion is not passed, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic of the fact for the purposes of the provisions of Article 195 of the Constitution.

SECTION III

Motions of no confidence

Article 221

Initiative with regard to a motion of no confidence

One quarter of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office or any parliamentary group may, in accordance with Article 194 of the Constitution, make motions of no confidence in the Government with regard to the execution of its Programme or to any important matter of national interest.

Article 222

Debate on a motion of no confidence

1 - The debate shall begin on the third parliamentary day following the submission of the motion of no confidence and may not exceed three days, and the sole item on the order of business shall be the debate on the motion of no confidence.

2 - The debate shall be opened and closed by the first signatory of the motion.

3 - The Prime Minister has the right to speak immediately after and before the speeches provided for in the previous paragraph.

4 - The Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate, in accordance with Article 90.

5 - The motion of no confidence may be withdrawn at any time before the end of the debate, but in this case the debate shall count for the purpose provided for in Article 180(2)(d) of the Constitution.

Article 223

Voting on a motion of no confidence

1 - Once the debate has been closed and, if any parliamentary group so requests, after an interval of one hour, the motion of no confidence shall be put to the vote.

2 - The motion of no confidence shall only be deemed passed if it receives an absolute majority of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office.

3 - If the motion of no confidence is not passed, its signatories may not make another such motion during the same legislative session.

4 - In cases in which a motion of no confidence is passed, the President of the Assembly shall notify the President of the Republic of the fact for the purposes of the provisions of Article 195 of the Constitution and shall send the motion for publication in the *Diário da República*.

SECTION IV

Governmental debates

Article 224

Prime-ministerial debates

1 - The Prime Minister shall attend the Plenary for a session of questions from Members of the Assembly of the Republic once a fortnight, on dates which the President of the Assembly shall set after first consulting the Government and the Conference of Leaders.

2 - The question session shall adopt one of two alternative formats:

a) In the first, the debate shall be opened by an initial speech by the Prime Minister, which shall last for a period of no more than ten minutes and shall be followed by a phase of a single round of questions from Members of the Assembly of the Republic;

b) In the second, the debate shall begin with a phase of a single round of questions from Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

3 - Each parliamentary group shall dispose of an overall time in which to put its questions, which it may use in one or more speeches.

4 - Each question shall immediately be followed by the Prime Minister's response.

5 - The Prime Minister shall dispose of an overall time for responses which shall be equal to that of each of the parliamentary groups that question him.

6 - In the format referred to in subparagraph (2)(a), the parliamentary groups that are not represented in the Government shall speak in descending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, and shall be followed by the parliamentary groups that are represented in the Government in ascending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly.

7 - In the format referred to in subparagraph (2)(b), the parliamentary groups shall speak in descending order of their proportional shares of the seats in the Assembly, albeit priority shall be granted in accordance with the table contained in Annexe II.

8 - In the format referred to in subparagraph (2)(b), the Prime Minister may ask one of the ministers present to complete his own response, or to respond, to any given question.

9 - The overall times of the debates and their distribution are set out in the table of times contained in Annexe I.

10 - In the format referred to in subparagraph (2)(a), the Government, and in the format referred to in subparagraph (2)(b), the parliamentary groups, shall notify the Assembly of the Republic and the Government respectively of the topics of their speeches at least twenty-four hours in advance.

Article 225

Ministerial debates

1 - Each minister must attend the Plenary at least once in each legislative session, for a session of questions from Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

2 - The debate shall address all the matters covered by the areas that are subject to oversight by the minister, who may be accompanied for the purpose by his ministerial team.

3 - After first consulting the Government and the Conference of Leaders and at least one month in advance, the President of the Assembly shall set the dates for holding the debates referred to in the previous paragraph.

4 - The maximum duration of each debate shall be one hundred and twenty minutes, and the Conference of Leaders shall be responsible for determining the distribution of questions in accordance with each parliamentary group's proportional share of the seats in the Assembly.

5 - The maximum duration of each question shall be two minutes, to be immediately followed by the minister's reply, which shall also last for a maximum of two minutes, whereupon the questioner has the right of response for a maximum of one minute.

SECTION V

Calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly

Article 226

Sittings for the Government to attend the Assembly

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

Article 227

Debates caused by calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly

1 - The debate shall be opened by a speech by a Member of the Assembly of the Republic from the parliamentary group that made the call and by a speech by a member of the Government.

2 - The Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate, in accordance with Article 90.

SECTION VI

Debates on the state of the Nation

Article 228

Sittings for debates on the state of the Nation

1 - In each legislative session there shall be a general policy debate on a date to be set by agreement between the President of the Assembly and the Government, who shall choose one of the last ten sittings in the legislative session. The debate shall begin with a speech on the state of the Nation by the Prime Minister, who shall be subject to questions from the parliamentary groups. There shall then be a general debate, which shall be closed by the Government.

2 - The Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate, in accordance with Article 90.

SECTION VII

Questions and requests

Article 229

Submission and treatment of questions and requests

1 - Questions and requests submitted under the terms of Article 156(d) and (e) of the Constitution shall be numbered and published, and the President of the Assembly shall send them to the competent entity.

2 - The questions and requests must clearly identify the entity to which they are addressed and which has the competence to provide clarifications.

3 - The Government and the Public Administration must respond with the urgency warranted by the question, and response times must not exceed thirty days.

4 - Whenever the Government or the Public Administration are unable to respond within the time limit so set, they must inform the President of the Assembly of this fact and also submit the respective substantiation in writing.

5 - The questions, requests and responses, together with the respective dates and the time limits laid down in these Rules of Procedure, must appear on the Assembly's website.

Article 230

Unanswered questions and requests

1 - The questions and requests that have not been answered within the time limit provided for in paragraph (3) of the previous Article shall be published in chronological order in the *Journal* and on the Assembly of the Republic's website, in the first week of each month.

2 - Such publication must set apart cases covered by paragraph (4) of the previous Article, which shall be accompanied by the respective substantiation, as well as cases in which the response has been given after the applicable time limit.

SECTION VIII

Hearings of persons designated for appointment to senior state offices

Article 231

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

In cases in which the law grants the Assembly of the Republic the competence to hear persons who are designated for appointment as the heads of independent Regulatory Authorities or the holders of senior state offices, the hearing shall take place in the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question.

SECTION IX

Petitions

Article 232

Exercise of the right to petition

1 - The right to petition provided for in Article 52 of the Constitution shall be exercised before the Assembly of the Republic, as laid down by law.

2 - The Assembly of the Republic must consider petitions and draw up final reports thereon within the time limits laid down by law.

3 - When the law requires that a petition be considered in Plenary, the debate shall begin with the presentation of the parliamentary committee's report, followed by a speech by a representative of each parliamentary group, who shall speak for the time set by the Conference of Leaders in accordance with Article 145(7).

SECTION X

Parliamentary inquiries

Article 233

Object of parliamentary inquiries

1 - The purpose of parliamentary inquiries is to assess compliance with the Constitution and the laws and consider the acts of the Government and the Administration.

2 - Any motion or proposal that would tend to lead to the holding of an inquiry must indicate the latter's grounds and delimit its scope, failing which the President may summarily dismiss the request or proposal.

Article 234

Formation of committees, initiative and conduct of inquiries

Parliamentary committees of inquiry shall be formed, the initiative leading to the inquiry itself shall be processed, and the inquiry shall be conducted, as laid down by law.

Article 235

Consideration of parliamentary inquiries

1 - The Assembly shall pronounce on any motion or proposal to hold an inquiry by the fifteenth day following that of the motion or proposal's publication in the *Journal* or distribution in separate copies to the parliamentary groups.

2 - One of the motion or proposal's signatories, the Prime Minister or another member of the Government, and a representative of each parliamentary group, shall speak in the debate.

Article 236

Decisions to hold an inquiry and reports

1 - When the Assembly is required to decide on the holding of an inquiry, once the decision has been made an ad hoc parliamentary committee shall be formed for the purpose, as laid down by law.

2 - The Plenary shall set the date by which the parliamentary committee must submit the report, in accordance with, and within, the limits laid down by law.

3 - If the report is not submitted within the time limit that is set, the parliamentary committee must substantiate the failure to comply and ask the Plenary to extend the time limit in accordance with, and within, the limits laid down by law.

Article 237

Powers of parliamentary committees of inquiry

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

SECTION XI

Ombudsman's reports and recommendations

Article 238

Ombudsman's annual report

1 - Following its receipt, the Ombudsman's annual report shall be referred to the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question.

2 - The parliamentary committee shall examine the report within sixty days of receiving it, and must request the complementary information and clarifications it deems necessary.

3 - For the purposes of the previous paragraph, the parliamentary committee may ask the Ombudsman to attend it.

Article 239

Consideration of the Ombudsman's annual report in Plenary

1 - The parliamentary committee shall issue a duly substantiated opinion, which it shall send to the President of the Assembly for publication in the *Journal*.

2 - The President of the Assembly shall include consideration of the Ombudsman's report on the order of business for no later than the thirtieth day following receipt of the opinion.

3 - The debate shall be a general one, in accordance with Article 145(7).

Article 240

Special Ombudsman's reports

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

Article 241

Ombudsman's recommendations

When the Ombudsman addresses recommendations for legislation to the Assembly, the said recommendations and any accompanying documents shall be sent to the parliamentary groups for the purposes they deem fit, and shall be published in the *Journal*.

SECTION XII

Reports from other entities

Article 242

Other reports submitted to the Assembly

The provisions of the previous Section are applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the reports that must by law be submitted to the Assembly of the Republic.

CHAPTER VI

Procedures with regard to other entities

SECTION I

Procedures with regard to the President of the Republic

DIVISION I

Installation of the President of the Republic

Article 243

Assembly sitting for installation of the President of the Republic

- 1 - The Assembly of the Republic shall sit especially for the installation of the President of the Republic, in accordance with Article 127 of the Constitution.
- 2 - If the Assembly is not in full session, the Standing Committee or, if it is impossible for the latter to do so and there is a dire emergency, more than half of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic, shall exercise the initiative to call it.

Article 244

Formalities regarding installation of the President of the Republic

- 1 - Once the sitting has been opened, the President of the Assembly shall suspend it in order to receive the President of the Republic elect and the guests.
- 2 - Once the sitting has resumed, the President of the Assembly shall have the minutes of the calculation of the general result of the election read out by one of the Secretaries of the Bureau.
- 3 - The President of the Republic elect shall swear the pledge laid down in Article 127(3) of the Constitution, and the national anthem shall then be sung.
- 4 - The President of the Republic and the President of the Assembly shall sign the record of the installation.

Article 245

Acts following installation of the President of the Republic

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

DIVISION II

Consent to the President of the Republic's absence from Portuguese territory

Article 246

Consent to absence

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

Article 247

Scrutiny of consent to absence in parliamentary committee

Immediately upon receipt of the message from the President of the Republic and if the Assembly is in full session, the President of the Assembly shall arrange to convene the parliamentary committee with competence for the matter in question, and shall set it a time limit for the issue of an opinion.

Article 248

Discussion of consent to absence

The discussion in plenary sitting shall be based on the President of the Republic's message, and one Member of the Assembly of the Republic from each parliamentary group, and the Government, have the right to speak.

Article 249

Form of the act of consent to absence

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

DIVISION III

Resignation of the President of the Republic

Article 250

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

1 - In cases in which the President of the Republic resigns, the Assembly shall sit within a time limit of forty-eight hours of receipt of the message provided for in Article 131 of the Constitution, in order to take note thereof.

2 - There shall be no debate.

DIVISION IV

Charges against the President of the Republic

Article 251

Assembly sitting for charges against the President of the Republic

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

Article 252

Formation of special parliamentary committee

The Assembly must form a special parliamentary committee for the purpose of drawing up a report within the time limit set for it.

Article 253

Discussion and voting

1 - Once he has received the parliamentary committee's report, the President of the Assembly shall schedule a plenary sitting within the following forty-eight hours in order to address it.

2 - At the end of the debate, the President of the Assembly shall put the question of whether to instigate proceedings to the vote, passage of which shall require a decision taken by a two-thirds majority of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic in full exercise of their office.

SECTION II

Lifting immunity from criminal prosecution from members of the Government

Article 254

Discussion and voting on suspension of members of the Government

1 - If criminal proceedings are brought against any member of the Government and an indictment order or equivalent is definitively issued against him, the Assembly shall decide whether or not the member of the Government in question must be suspended so that the proceedings may go ahead, save in cases in which the crime is punishable by a maximum of more than three years' imprisonment.

2 - The decision provided for in the present Article shall be preceded by an opinion from a parliamentary committee formed especially for the purpose, shall be taken by secret ballot, and its passage shall require an absolute majority of the Members of the Assembly of the Republic present.

SECTION III

Appointment of holders of offices outside the Assembly

Article 255

Election of holders of offices outside the Assembly

The Assembly of the Republic shall elect the holders of those offices outside the Assembly whose appointment falls within its areas of competence, as laid down in the Constitution or by law.

Article 256

Submission of nominations

1 - Nominations shall be submitted by a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty Members of the Assembly of the Republic.

2 - Nominations shall be submitted to the President of the Assembly at least thirty days before the date of the election, together with each candidate's curriculum vitae and a declaration of acceptance of the nomination.

3 - During the period between the submission of nominations referred to in the previous paragraph and the date of the election, the Assembly, acting via the competent parliamentary committee, shall hear each of the candidates.

Article 257

Hearings of candidates for offices outside the Assembly

Before their appointment, the Assembly of the Republic shall arrange to hear candidates for the following offices outside the Assembly, whose holders it has the competence to appoint:

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

Article 258

Voting on the election of holders of offices outside the Assembly

1 - Without prejudice to the provisions of the Constitution, the candidate who obtains more than half of the validly cast votes shall be deemed elected.

2 - If none of the candidates obtains this number of votes, there shall be a second round of voting, solely with regard to the two candidates who received the most votes and whose nominations have not been withdrawn.

Article 259

Proportional representation system

1 - Whenever the proportional representation system is applied, the election shall be for complete lists, using d'Hondt's highest-average method.

2 - When a candidate who is already, or who later becomes, an ex officio member of the entity to which the election refers is elected, the first unelected candidate on the respective list shall be called upon to take office.

Article 260

Re-opening of process

In cases in which no candidates are elected to given vacancies, the process in relation to those vacancies shall be re-opened within a time limit of at most fifteen days.

CHAPTER VII

Procedure regarding monitoring, consideration and pronouncement within the scope of the process of constructing Europe

SECTION I

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

Article 261

General provisions within the scope of the process of constructing Europe

1 - The Assembly of the Republic shall issue opinions on matters that fall within the sphere of its exclusive legislative competence and are pending decision at European Union bodies and shall do so in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, and shall monitor and consider Portugal's participation in the construction of the European Union, as laid down by law.

2 - For the purposes of the provisions of the previous paragraph, the Assembly and the Government shall engage in a regular consultation process, as laid down by law.

CHAPTER VIII

Emergency procedure

Article 262

Object of emergency procedure

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

Article 263

Decision on the existence of an emergency

1 - The competence to exercise the initiative to move the adoption of an emergency procedure lies with any Member of the Assembly of the Republic, any parliamentary group, the Government and, with regard to any bill initiated by the Legislative Assembly of an autonomous region, the Legislative Assembly.

2 - The President of the Assembly shall refer the motion for an emergency procedure to the competent parliamentary committee, which shall consider it and draw up a duly substantiated opinion within a time limit of forty-eight hours.

3 - Once the opinion has been drawn up, the Plenary shall pronounce itself as to whether there is an emergency, and the Conference of Leaders shall organise the debate in accordance with Article 145(7).

Article 264

The parliamentary committee's opinion on the emergency

1 - The parliamentary committee's opinion shall indicate how the legislative procedure for the bill or draft resolution for which an emergency procedure has been requested should be organised, to which end it may propose:

- a) That scrutiny in parliamentary committee be dispensed with, or that the respective time limit be reduced;
- b) That the number of speeches by, and the duration of the floor granted to, Members of the Assembly of the Republic and the Government be reduced;
- c) That referral of the text to the parliamentary committee for final drafting be dispensed with, or that the respective time limit be reduced.

2 - If the parliamentary committee does not submit any proposal for the organisation of the legislative procedure, the Conference of Leaders shall decide its format in accordance with Article 90.

Article 265

Supplemental rule in cases in which an emergency procedure is declared

Once an emergency procedure has been declared, and if nothing is decided pursuant to the previous Article, the details of the legislative procedure shall be as follows:

- a) The time limit for scrutiny in parliamentary committee shall be at most five days;
- b) The time limit for the final draft is two days.

TITLE V

Provisions regarding these Rules of Procedure

Article 266

Interpretation and completion of these Rules of Procedure

1 - The Bureau has the competence to interpret and complete these Rules of Procedure, subject to appeal to the Plenary, and to this end may consult the competent parliamentary committee whenever it deems it necessary.

2 - When given in writing, the Bureau's decisions on the interpretation and completion of these Rules of Procedure shall be published in the *Journal*.

Article 267

Amendments to these Rules of Procedure

1 - On the initiative of any Member, the Assembly of the Republic may amend these Rules of Procedure.

2 - Draft Rules of Procedure must comply with the rules laid down in Article 120(1) and Articles 124 et sequitur.

3 - Once any draft Rules of Procedure have been admitted, the President of the Assembly shall refer the text to the competent parliamentary committee for discussion and voting.

4 - The Rules of Procedure, including the amendments passed in parliamentary committee, are subject to final overall voting, and passage requires an absolute majority of the Members of the Assembly of the Republic who are present.

5 - Whenever these Rules of Procedure are the object of any revision or amendment, the competent parliamentary committee shall draft the final text in accordance with Article 156.

6 - Following incorporation of the amendments in their correct places, the Rules of Procedure shall be published anew in the *Diário da República*.

TITLE VI

Final and transitional provisions

Article 268

Transitional provisions

1 - The Conference of Leaders shall decide the composition of the standing parliamentary committees by 15 September 2007, in accordance with Articles 29 and 30.

2 - The provisions of Article 143 do not apply to legislative initiatives admitted before the date on which the present Rules of Procedure enter into force.

Article 269

Revocatory norm

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

Article 270

Annexes to these Rules of Procedure

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

- a) The tables of times, as Annexe I;
- b) The tables of potestative rights, as Annexe II;
- c) The table of Plenary mandates in matters regarding voting on the details of the State Budget, as Annexe III.

Article 271

Entry into force

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

ANNEXE I

Tables of times

Table for common legislative procedure

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

(see original document)

Proposers of initiatives shall each dispose of one more minute.

Normal tables

(see original document)

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

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

Special tables

1 - Prime-ministerial debates:

(see original document)

2 - Other special tables. - After first consulting the Conference of Leaders, the President of the Assembly shall establish the tables of times for the remaining debates, namely:

The Government's Programme;

Confidence motions;

Motions of no confidence;

Calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly;

The major options of national plans;

The State Budget;

The General State Accounts and other public accounts;

The state of the Nation;

Emergency debates;

Thematic debates.

ANNEXE II

1 - Tables of potestative rights per legislative session:

Calls upon the Government to attend the Assembly:

Each parliamentary group - two calls;

Emergency debates:

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one debate;

Up to one tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two debates;

For each additional tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two more debates;

Setting the order of business:

Parliamentary groups represented in the Government:

For each tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one sitting;

Parliamentary groups represented in the Government:

Up to ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one sitting;

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two sittings;

Up to one fifth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - four sittings;

For each additional tenth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two more sittings;

Debates on current affairs:

Up to five Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one debate;

Up to ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two debates;

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - three debates;

Up to one fifth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - four debates;

One fifth or more of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - five debates;

Potestative rights in parliamentary committees:

Up to five Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one;

Up to ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two;

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - three;

Up to one fifth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - four;

One fifth or more of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - five.

2 - Table of potestative rights per legislature:

Prime-ministerial debates (in the format laid down in Article 224[2][b]):

Up to five Members of the Assembly of the Republic - one debate;

Up to ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two debates;

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - three debates;

Up to one fifth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - four debates;

One fifth or more Members of the Assembly of the Republic - five debates.

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

ANNEXE III

(as referred to in Article 211[7] of the Rules of Procedure)

Mandates in matters regarding the State Budget:

Up to five Members of the Assembly of the Republic - two mandates;

Up to ten Members of the Assembly of the Republic - five mandates;

Up to fifteen Members of the Assembly of the Republic - seven mandates;

Up to one fifth of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - ten mandates;

One fifth or more of all the Members of the Assembly of the Republic - twelve mandates.