

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA

2019



Parliament of Georgia

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Parliament of Georgia

Tbilisi
2019



ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. The Parliament of Georgia, Principles for the Activities of the Parliament of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia

1. The Parliament of Georgia (hereinafter referred to as — the Parliament) is the supreme representative body of the country, which exercises legislative power and determines the principal directions of the country's domestic and foreign policy, oversees the activities of the Government of Georgia as provided for by the Constitution of Georgia and exercises other powers determined by the Constitution.

2. The main principles of the work of the Parliament are:

- a) The supremacy of the interests of the people;
- b) Multiparty system;
- c) Ensuring representative proportionality;
- d) Free and collective discussion and resolution of issues;
- e) Consistent compliance with the laws of Georgia;
- f) Compliance with, and respect for, the universal norms of international law;
- g) Publicity; and
- h) Transparency and accessibility.

3. The Parliament works in Georgian, the state language of Georgia.

4. The Rules of Procedure of the Parliament (hereinafter referred to as — the Rules of Procedure) is a legislative act with power equal to law, which determines the powers, structure and rules of work of the Parliament.

Article 2. Palace of the Parliament

1. The Parliament is located in Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia. A temporary change to the Parliament's location for the purpose of calling a sitting or a session is permissible only in the state of emergency or martial law. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament makes any decision on any temporary change to the location of the Parliament.

2. The legal address of the Parliament is the Palace of the Parliament, Rustaveli Avenue N8. A temporary change to the Parliament's legal address for the purpose of calling a sitting or a session is permissible only by the decision of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament in objective factual circumstances where the proper functioning of the Palace of Parliament is impossible”.

3. The offices of Members of the Parliament and parliamentary officials carry the national flag and state emblem of Georgia.

4. The original Georgian Constitution and the book of honorable guests of the Parliament are kept in a place of honor in the Palace of the Parliament.

5. In order to introduce the history of the Palace of the Parliament to the public, the Palace of the Parliament shall be open to interested individuals.

6. For the purpose of ensuring the accessibility of the Palace of the Parliament for persons with disabilities, the Parliament shall ensure that the Palace of the Parliament is equipped with the necessary facilities and equipment.

Article 3. Parliamentary Rewards

1. The Order of Freedom of Georgia and Parliament Medal are established in the Parliament.

2. The Order of Freedom of Georgia shall be awarded to any citizen of Georgia or foreigner for a remarkable contribution to parliamentarianism.

3. Public servants of the Office of the Parliament are awarded with the Parliament Medal for a significant contribution to the implementation of parliamentary activities.

4. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, in agreement with the Bureau of the Parliament, decides whether a certain person is to be awarded with the Order of Freedom of Georgia and the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament decides on whether a certain person is to be awarded with the Parliament Medal.

5. Be the Order, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament determines the rule of awarding persons with the Medal of Freedom and Medal of Parliament, amount of cash award, descriptions of the Order of Freedom of Georgia and Medal of the Parliament.

Article 4. Calculation of Terms

1. The terms that are defined by the Constitution of Georgia in days, refer to calendar days.

2. Terms that are defined by these Rules of Procedure in days, refer to working days, except where terms are defined by the Constitution of Georgia and where calendar days are directly defined by law and the Rules of Procedure.

3. The terms defined by the Rules of Procedure are suspended during the period between sessions of the Parliament, except for particular cases stipulated in the Constitution of Georgia. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to make a decision on extending the terms during the period between sessions.

CHAPTER II

MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 5. Mandate of a Member of the Parliament

1. A Member of the Parliament (hereinafter — MP) is the principal subject of parliamentary activities. An MP represents the whole of Georgia, has a free mandate and cannot be recalled. While implementing his/her duties, s/he is not restricted by the regulations and tasks of the constituencies or political organizations that nominated him/her.

2. It is not permitted for the powers of an MP to be transferred to another person.

3. The free mandate of an MP does not exempt him/her from work with a constituency according to the rules determined by the Rules of Procedure and other responsibilities as provided for by the Rules of Procedure.

4. The MP has an MP's ID and wears a badge. The Bureau of the Parliament approves the regulations, samples and descriptions of them.

Article 6. Confirmation or Termination of Powers of an MP Ahead of Time

1. The Parliament, by decree, decides on the issue of the confirmation or termination of powers of an MP ahead of time. This decision of the Parliament may be appealed to the Constitutional Court of Georgia.

2. Powers of an MP are terminated ahead of time if s/he:

- a) Applies to the Parliament with his/her personal statement on the termination of powers;

b) Holds a position incompatible with the status of an MP or carries out incompatible activities;

c) If s/he misses more than half of the regular sittings during the regular session for impermissible reasons;

d) If s/he is found guilty with the court's judgment entered into force;

e) If s/he is recognized as a beneficiary of support and is placed in a relevant inpatient medical institution according to the court's judgement, or the court recognizes him/her as missing or dead;

f) Has passed away;

g) Loses Georgian citizenship;

h) The powers are terminated upon the judgement of the Constitutional Court of Georgia.

3. A written statement of an MP on the rejection of his/her powers is submitted to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, who immediately transfers it to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules. The committee examines the validity of the statement, studies the circumstances on which the statement was based, and within no fewer than 8 and no more than 15 days presents a relevant conclusion. Within 7 days of the submission of the statement on rejection of the powers to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the MP may request back his/her statement and continue exercising his/her authority.

4. Newly elected MPs shall quit work/activity incompatible with the status of an MP from the moment his/her powers are confirmed and within 7 days from the day his/her powers are confirmed s/he shall submit to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules a certificate confirming the quitting of the incompatible work/activity. In the event of this requirement being violated, the powers of the MP are terminated ahead of time as provided for by the Rules of Procedure.

5. If an MP carries out entrepreneurial activities, within 10 days of the disclosure of the fact, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall request the case-related documents, collect his/her explanations from the MP in question and prepare a relevant conclusion. If the MP's entrepreneurial activities are confirmed, the relevant conclusion is submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament that puts the issue of termination ahead of time of the authority of the MP on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting.

6. In the event of the Parliament appointing an MP to a position incompatible with the status of an MP, his/her powers will be terminated ahead of time with the same decision.

7. When giving Parliament's consent to the appointment of an MP to a position incompatible with the status of an MP, in the event of the Government giving a vote of confidence (if an MP is proposed for a position in the composition of the Government), in cases of electing, appointing or confirming an MP to a position incompatible with the status of an MP (except for the cases set forth in paragraph 6 of this article), the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules immediately reviews the case of alleged incompatibility and prepares a relevant conclusion.

8. If an MP does not participate in more than half of the regular sittings during the regular session, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules ascertains the reason(s) behind his/her absenteeism within 10 days from the regular sessions and in the event that the reason(s) is/are confirmed as unjustifiable, prepares a relevant conclusion.

9. If the court's judgment of a conviction against an MP has been entered into force, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules requests the adjudication within 15 days of its coming into force and immediately prepares a relevant conclusion.

10. When an MP passes away, the day after his/her death his/her powers are terminated ahead of time. When an MP passes away,

the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules requests a death certificate and prepares a relevant conclusion.

11. If an MP loses his/her Georgian citizenship, or the court recognizes him/her as missing, dead or as a beneficiary of support and/or has been placed in a relevant inpatient medical institution, within 10 days of the disclosure of the fact, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules requests documentary proof of the fact, examines its validity and prepares a relevant conclusion.

12. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules as set forth by the Rules of Procedure studies and discusses the issue of the confirmation or termination of powers of an MP ahead of time, except for the cases stipulated by article 86 of the Rules of Procedure, and prepares a relevant conclusion and submits it to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament adds to the agenda of the next plenary sitting the issue of the confirmation or termination ahead of time of the powers of an MP. Parliament shall immediately discuss the issue of the confirmation or termination ahead of time of powers of the MP. It is impermissible to vote on other issues on the agenda before Parliament makes a decision on the issue of the confirmation or termination ahead of time of the powers of the MP.

Article 7. “Compatibility of an MP’s Other Activities with his/her MP Status

1. The MP shall not hold a position of state service or engage in entrepreneurial activity.

2. The requirements of incompatibility of an MP’s entrepreneurial activity with his/her MP status do not invalidate the constitutionally recognized right to property of an MP. S/he may possess stocks, shares and other property.

3. An MP shall not have a right to:

a) Personally carry out reiterated profit-oriented activity for managing material values and financial resources;

b) Personally carry out the responsibilities of a member of a permanent managerial, supervisory, overseeing, inspecting and consulting body of an entrepreneurial subject.

4. An MP may carry out public activities. An MP may work in the sphere of science, education and art if this work does not involve carrying out administrative functions. Implementation of administrative functions implies having official authority to make administrative decisions on personnel, disciplinary and other issues at scientific, academic, and/or art establishments.

5. An MP may simultaneously carry out political party work, occupying any position in a Party and/or public organizations.

6. During his/her term of office, an MP is free from compulsory military service and from conscription into the military reserve.

7. In a state of war, an MP shall not have the right to avoid execution of his/her parliamentary activities to participate in military operations.

Article 8. General Powers of an MP

1. An MP has a right to:

a) Use any information that is necessary for exercising his/her powers, if a law does not provide otherwise;

b) While carrying out parliamentary oversight:

b.a) Enter freely into all state organizations except for cases determined by Georgian law;

b.b) Personally participate in discussions on the issues raised by him/her;

c) Exercise other powers as provided for by the Constitution of Georgia, the Rules of Procedure and normative acts.

2. An MP shall:

a) Attend the Parliament's plenary bureau, committee, faction, Temporary Investigative Commission or other temporary commission sittings and participate in their work;

b) Support adherence to the norms of Georgian legislation,

including the Rules of Procedure and, in cases where these are violated, demand a relevant response from the Parliament, its Chair (Speaker) or relevant committee;

c) Not use his/her powers and/or the possibilities affiliated with them for personal interests;

d) Not use or disclose for personal interests confidential information obtained or created during official activities;

e) Comply with the standards of conduct determined for state-political officials by the legislation and Code of Ethics of the Members of the Parliament.

3. As provided for by the Law of Georgia on “Conflict of Interests and Corruption in Civil Service,” an MP shall fill out a declaration of his/her property and submit it to the Legal Entity of Public Law — Civil Service Bureau. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules periodically, and in cases of need, analyzes the information on the declaration of property of an MP submitted by the relevant bodies. If necessary, the committee submits the issue for discussion at the plenary sitting of the Parliament.

4. Parliamentary Official shall receive an MP without impediment at the latter’s request.

5. An MP who is not a member of any faction, the Majority or the Minority is considered as an independent MP.

Article 9. Right to Enter Penitentiary Establishment without Special Permission

1. An MP shall be granted the right to enter a penitentiary establishment functioning on the territory of Georgia without special permission based on a request made by him/her, a relevant committee or the Temporary Investigative Commission and by the order of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament has the right to enter any penitentiary establishment without special permission.

Article 10. Parliamentary Positions for MPs

1. The governing officials of the Parliament are:
 - a) Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament;
 - b) First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament;
 - c) Deputy Chairs of the Parliament;
 - d) Committee Chair;
 - e) Leaders of the Majority and the Minority; Faction Chair;
 - f) Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission and other temporary commissions;
 - g) First Deputy Committee Chair and Deputies;
2. An MP may be elected to only one other position except the position s/he is holding in the Majority, the Minority, faction and Temporary Investigative Commission and other temporary commission. Election of an MP to an incompatible position causes termination ahead of time of his/her powers in his/her current position as an MP.

Article 11. Principles Regarding Processing of a Criminal Case Against an MP

1. An MP can be detained or arrested, his/her apartment, car, and/or working place can be searched or a search of his/her person can be conducted only with the Parliament's preliminary consent. Apprehending him/her committing a crime is an exemption that shall be immediately reported to the Parliament. If Parliament does not give its consent within 48 hours, the detained or arrested MP shall be immediately released. A suggestion to carry out investigative activities is submitted to the Parliament by the Prosecutor General of Georgia. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and the Committee on Legal Issues study the validity of the submitted suggestion, consider the suggestion within 5 days and submit a written conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau adds the issue on the agenda of the next plenary sitting of the Par-

liament. After discussing the issue on the floor, Parliament adopts the decree.

2. If an MP is caught committing a crime in the period between sessions, the issue is considered as set forth in paragraph 2 of Article 44 of the Constitution of Georgia.

3. Only the Prosecutor General of Georgia can arraign criminal proceedings against an MP, and the Parliament must be immediately informed about such proceedings.

4. If the Parliament consents to the detainment or arrest of an MP, the powers of the detained or arrested MP are suspended according to the Parliament's decree for the period of detention or arrest. If the criminal case is dropped or the court renders a judgment of acquittal with rehabilitative grounds, the period, during which the MP was detained or arrested, will be included in the general term of office of an MP in accordance with the decree of the Parliament and s/he will be given relevant compensation for the period of detention or arrest.

5. If the powers of an MP were terminated ahead of time on the grounds of a valid court judgement of conviction that was later changed by a judgment of acquittal, the period during which the MP was detained or arrested will be included in the general term of office of the MP in accordance with the decree of the Parliament and s/he will be given relevant compensation.

6. In cases defined under paragraphs 4 and 5 of this article, the MP's powers are restored if the term of authority of the Parliament, which s/he was a member of, has not concluded and in cases defined under paragraph 5 of this Article — if the powers of his/her replacement are not known. If the powers of the MP cannot be restored, the the term of authority of the relevant convocation of the Parliament shall be included in the general term of office of the Member of the MP and s/he will be given a relevant compensation.

Article 12. Special Labor Guarantees of MPs

1. An MP receives 30 calendar days of vacation during the year. S/he may use the vacation optionally between sessions either fully or divided into two parts.

2. An MP with obvious disabilities is given car (adapted according to his/her requirements) and is assigned an assistant.

3. An MP is authorized to have an assistant. The number of assistants an MP can have is limited within the scope of available expenditure.

4. An MP uses a diplomatic passport until the termination of his/her authority.

Article 13. Ensuring Security of MPs

Conditions allowing for the execution of an MP's powers without impediment are ensured. If there is enough information proving that the life and/or health of an MP is threatened, based on the statement of the MP and in accordance with the legislation of Georgia, the Special State Protection Service of Georgia and other relevant state bodies ensure the security of him/her as envisaged in Georgian legislation.

Article 14. Remuneration of the MPs

1. The limits established by Annex 3 of the Law of Georgia On Remuneration in Public Institutions applies to the remuneration of MPs.

2. MPs are given the following remuneration:

a) The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament — 6740 GEL;

b) The First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament — 6400 GEL;

c) The Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament — 6340 GEL;

d) Leader of the Majority and the Minority; Committee Chair — 5540 GEL;

- e) Faction Chair — 5470 GEL;
- f) Chair of the Temporary Investigative and other temporary commissions — 4940 GEL;
- g) Deputy Leader of the Majority and the Minority; First Deputy Committee Chair — 4800 GEL;
- h) Deputy Committee Chair; Deputy Faction Chair — 4740 GEL;
- i) A Member of the Parliament who is not a governing official of the Parliament — 4624 GEL.

3. The remuneration of an MP includes an amount for the execution of MP duties of 1000 GEL. An MP may also be given an amount defined by the Bureau of the Parliament for transportation costs and may also have the amount provided for life and health insurance reimbursed.

4. Costs related to means of communication by an MP are reimbursed within the limits determined by the Bureau of the Parliament.

Article 15. Assistance in the Event of Disablement or Death of a Member of the Parliament

1. If an MP passes away as a result of an assault, his/her family is given one-time financial assistance amounting to 15 000 GEL.

2. If an MP passes away, his/her family is given one-time financial assistance amounting to 10 000 GEL.

3. An MP who becomes disabled during the execution of his/her duties, is given one-time financial assistance amounting to 10 000 GEL.

4. In the event of the death of an MP, his/her family members shall receive state compensation of an amount in accordance with the rules set forth in the Law of Georgia on State Compensation and State Academic Scholarships.

5. In the event of the death of an MP, the Parliament shall finance all funeral-related expenses within the scope of the approved annual budget for the Parliament.

Article 16. Guarantees of Former MPs and Officials

1. Former MPs shall be authorized to enter the building of the Parliament during the next convocation of the Parliament unimpeded.

2. A former MP is given a pension or compensation as envisaged in the legislation.

3. A resigned or dismissed Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament for the term of authority of active Parliament, as well as an MP who was the Chair (Speaker) of the previous Parliament is provided with the same salary and working conditions (working space, secretariat, service car, communication and other technical facilities), which are provided to the acting Deputy Chair of active Parliament.

4. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament receives personal security during the first year after the expiration of his/her term of authority or termination of powers, if the termination of powers is not the result of a violation of the Constitution of Georgia or the commission of a crime.

CHAPTER III

CHAIR (SPEAKER) OF THE PARLIAMENT AND DEPUTIES

Article 17. Rules for Electing the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament

1. At its first session, the Parliament elects the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament by secret vote of its members for its term of authority.

2. The Majority, the Minority, a faction, which is not united in the Majority or the Minority, and a group of no fewer than six MPs who are not affiliated in any faction (hereinafter referred to as Group of six MPs), have a right to nominate a candidate for the position of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. A written statement on the nomination of a candidate for the position of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is submitted to the Chair of the plenary sitting, who compiles a joint list of the relevant candidates according to the sequence in which they were nominated. After the candidates are nominated, the Chair of the plenary sitting publishes a list and asks for candidates' consent to receive votes for this position.

4. A candidate for the Parliamentary Chair can withdraw his/her candidacy at any time without explanation, including before each vote.

5. A candidate for the Parliamentary Chair is given the floor for 20 minutes during the plenary sitting and the required time for answering the questions, after which debates start according to the rules determined for conducting the first hearing of a draft law.

6. A candidate shall be considered as elected to the position of Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament if s/he is supported by the majority of enlisted members.

7. If 1 or 2 candidates are participating in the elections, the voting is held simultaneously via the electronic system (the candidate nominated first is voted by pressing the “for” button, while the candidate nominated as second indicated by pressing “against” button); if more than 2 candidates are participating in the elections, the voting is held by ballot.

8. If only one candidate participated in the elections for the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and s/he was not elected, new elections are held.

9. If two candidates participated in the elections of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and none of them received the necessary number of votes, the candidate with more votes is put up for vote again. If s/he then still does not receive the necessary number of votes, new elections are held.

10. If more than two candidates participated in the elections of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and none of them received the necessary number of votes, the next round of the elections is held between the two candidates who received most votes. If neither of them receive the necessary number of votes, the candidate who received the most votes is put up for vote again. If even in this case s/he does not receive the necessary number of votes, new elections are held. If the candidate, who enters the next round, withdraws his/her candidacy, the next candidate according to the number of votes received, is put up for vote instead.

11. If the votes are divided equally, the new vote is held.

Article 18. The Powers and Scope Thereof of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall carry out the functions defined by the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure in a fair and impartial manner.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament:

a) Represents the Parliament of Georgia in domestic and foreign affairs;

b) Performs all administrative functions in the Palace of the Parliament;

c) Leads the work of the Parliament, and guides the activities of the parliamentary bodies and officials;

d) Presides over the plenary sittings of the Parliament and convenes and presides over the sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament. If necessary s/he may delegate these rights and duties to one of his/her deputies;

e) Defines the responsibilities of the Deputy Chairs by order and gives them separate tasks;

f) Signs appeals on draft laws adopted by the Parliament that are to be submitted to the President of Georgia;

g) Signs and promulgates laws in the cases provided for by the Constitution and Article 122 of the Rules of Procedure;

h) Signs and promulgates the Rules of Procedure, and signs other acts adopted by the Parliament;

i) Defines the budget of the Parliament and submits it to the Parliament for approval;

j) Issues orders within his/her competency;

k) Appoints the Head of the Parliamentary Delegation;

l) On the basis of the Rules of Procedure, makes decisions regarding official visits of individual MPs and the parliamentary delegations to foreign countries;

- m) Within its competencies, guarantees the protection of dignity of the Parliament and the security of MPs;
- n) Guides the activities of the Office of the Parliament;
- o) Approves the Charter, the structure and the staff list of the Office of the Parliament, and determines the amount of remuneration, salary increments, and cash bonuses;
- p) Appoints and dismisses the Chief of the Office of the Parliament, the Deputy Chief of the Office of the Parliament, the heads of the departments of the Office of the Parliament and Mandaturi Service as provided for by the Rules of Procedure;
- q) Within its competencies, decides on issues of disciplinary liability;
- r) Approves the security regime in the Palace of the Parliament and the surrounding territory;
- s) On behalf of the Parliament, assigns representative powers, including proxy (power of attorney), to the Constitutional and Common Courts of Georgia;
- t) Invites officials to Parliament's plenary sitting who otherwise do not have a right to attend the plenary sitting, as well as representatives of the public who wish to attend the plenary sitting;
- u) Approves the rules of holding press conferences and accreditation of the representatives of mass media at the Parliament;
- v) According to the Rules of Procedure, gives the right to an MP by order to enter penitentiary establishments functioning on the territory of Georgia without special permission;
- w) Determines the rules for reimbursement of expenses for the official visits of MPs and state and public servants of the Office of the Parliament;
- x) Makes decisions on awarding a person with the Order of Freedom and the Medal of the Parliament;

y) Exercises other powers determined by the Rules of Procedure and other legal acts.

Article 19. Annual Report on the Activities Performed by the Parliament and the Next Year's Action Plan

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament coordinates and manages preparation of the Annual Report on the activities performed by the Parliament and the action plan for the following year . The report and the action plan are posted on the web site of the Parliament.

2. The Parliament, as a rule, hears the Annual Report on the activities performed by the Parliament and the next year's action plan in the first week of the plenary sittings of the spring session, which is then submitted to the Parliament by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. The Parliament jointly considers the Annual Report on the activities performed by the Parliament and the next year's action plan according to the rules determined for conducting the first hearing of a draft law.

Article 20. The Rule of Termination of Powers of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament has a right to apply in writing to the Parliament to resign or to publicly announce his/her resignation without any explanation. The Parliament accepts either of these facts as notification at the nearest plenary sitting and writes them down in the protocol of the sitting.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is regarded as having resigned from the moment of submitting a written application/ making a public statement to this effect.

3. Parliament may remove the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament from the position. No less than one-third of enlisted members, in

writing, can raise before Parliament the issue of removing the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

4. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules examines the validity of the MPs' signatures within 7 days and presents its conclusion to the Parliament at the plenary sitting.

5. Parliament makes a decision on removing the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament without discussion within 15 days of the issue being raised.

6. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is considered to have been removed if the majority of enlisted members support the proposal of his/her removal.

7. If the Parliament fails to make a decision on removing the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament within the terms envisaged in paragraph 5 of this article, the MP that signed the termination of powers of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall not be allowed to participate in the raising of this issue during the next 6 months.

8. In the event of the termination of powers of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament ahead of time, the Parliament, within 14 days, according to the established rules, elects a new Chair (Speaker).

Article 21. The Replacement of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament

1. When the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is absent, s/he assigns one of his/her deputies to carry out the duties of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

2. When the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament carries out the duties of the President of Georgia, When the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament carries out the duties of the President of Georgia, or if the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament resigns, or if s/he is dismissed, or if s/he cannot exercise his/her powers or if his/her powers as of the MP are terminated ahead of time, his/her duties are

performed by the First Deputy and if the First Deputy cannot exercise his/her powers, the Parliament assigns one of his/her deputies to carry out the duties of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament by decree at the next plenary sitting. This decision is made without discussion. In this case, the Majority, the Minority, and the faction that is not part of the Majority or the Minority has the right to nominate a replacement for the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

Article 22. Rules for Electing Deputy Chairs of the Parliament

1. The Parliament elects the Deputy Chairs including the First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament for the term of its authority, according to the rule established by the Rules of Procedure, with a secret vote of its members and by a majority of enlisted members:

a) The First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall be elected by the nomination of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament;

b) One Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is elected from the MPs elected from the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and other is elected from the majoritarian MPs elected from the Autonomous Republic of Adjara according to the nomination of the majority of these MPs;

c) Not more than 3 candidates for the position of Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall be elected upon the nomination of the Majority;

d) Not more than 3 candidates for the position of Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall be elected upon the nomination of the factions, which are not affiliated with the Majority. These factions shall have the right to nominate no more than 3 candidates for the position of Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

2. A written statement on the nomination of a Deputy Chair is submitted to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, who adds this to the agenda of next plenary session according to the rules set by the Rules of Procedure.

3. If the candidate nominated according to the rules set forth in paragraph 1 of this article does not receive the necessary number of votes, the subjects who have a right to nominate a candidate, can nominate a new candidate or the same candidate and a new vote is held.

4. If the candidates did not receive the necessary number of votes in accordance with the rules set forth in paragraph 3 of this Article, then a new vote shall be held.

Article 23. Termination of Powers of the Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament

1. The Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament can resign from his/her position according to the rules set forth in Article 20 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. The Parliament discusses the issue of the withdrawal of the First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament under the initiative of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and shall make a decision without discussion by the majority of full composition of the Parliament.

3. The subjects determined in subparagraphs “b”-“d” of paragraph 1 of Article 22 can at any time remove the Deputy Chairs of the Parliament elected by their nomination . The statement on the withdrawal of the Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is submitted to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, who informs the Bureau of the Parliament and the Parliament accordingly at the next plenary sitting. Parliament accepts this fact as a notification, after which the authority of the Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is terminated, which is written down in the protocol.

4. If the Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament resigns, is dismissed or his/her powers are otherwise terminated or his/her powers as an MP are terminated ahead of time, the Parliament, as a rule, within 15 days elects a new Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

CHAPTER IV

BUREAU OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 24. Competencies of the Bureau of the Parliament

1. In order to organize the work of the Parliament, the Bureau of the Parliament is established comprising the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the Deputy Chairs of the Parliament, the Chairs of the Parliamentary Committees and Parliamentary Factions.

2. According to the rules provided in the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau of the Parliament:

a) Prepares and submits for Parliament's approval a draft agenda of the plenary sittings of the session week and, upon necessity, prepares a two-week cycle work plan for the Parliament's session;

b) Puts the draft law, decree, resolution, appeal, declaration, or other act to be approved by the Parliament, or the issue prepared based on the conclusions of the committee, the Temporary Investigative Commission and other temporary commissions, on the draft agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament;

c) Considers and makes decisions on discussing draft laws in an accelerated manner and through simplified procedures;

d) Puts the issue on the draft agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament on giving a vote of confidence to the Government of Georgia, on electing and consenting to the appointment of the officials as provided for by the Constitution of Georgia based on the conclusions of the relevant committees;

e) Upon the proposal of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules, approves the quotas of proportional representation in committees, the Temporary Investigative Commission and other

temporary commissions, permanent parliamentary delegations and the Council of Ethics;

f) Approves the charters of committees, investigative and other temporary commissions;

g) Decides upon the issues of registration of factions, the Majority and the Minority according to the rules set forth in the Rules of Procedure;

h) Decides upon the registration of a person as a lobbyist;

i) Approves the decisions of the Council of Treasurers based on the recommendation of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament;

j) Approves the Charter of the Council of Ethics upon the proposal of the Council of Ethics;

k) Makes decisions on separate organizational issues of the Parliament's activities;

l) Approves the sample of the logo of the Parliament and the rules of its application;

m) Approves the Statute of the selection commission of the candidates for the membership of the Board of the Public Broadcaster;

n) Exercises other powers provided for by the Rules of Procedure and other legislative acts.

Article 25. The Sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament or, by his/her assignment the Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, convenes and leads the sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament.

2. The sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament are held at 15:00 every Monday during the session period, and, as needed, during the non-session period.

3. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament may convene a sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament by his/her own initiative or by a

well-reasoned written request of a committee, a faction, the Majority or the Minority.

4. A sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament is authorized if more than half of the enlisted members of the Bureau of the Parliament are present. The Bureau of the Parliament makes a decision by a majority of the Bureau members present at the sitting, but by no less than half of the quorum necessary for opening (authorizing) the sitting.

5. As a rule, the sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament are public. Public sittings are broadcasted live on TV and radio. A Bureau sitting may be closed if such a request is made by a member of the Bureau and his/her request is approved by the majority of Bureau members present at the sitting. The decision to close the Bureau sitting shall be discussed at the closed sitting. The Chair (Speaker) of the parliamentary sitting determines who may attend a closed sitting.

6. The members of the Bureau of the Parliament shall attend its sittings. If the Committee Chair cannot attend the sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament for permissible reasons, his/her deputy shall replace him/her with the same voting power, and the Faction Chair shall be replaced with his/her deputy or a member of the faction upon presentation of the replacement document, with the same voting power.

7. Other MPs, and the Chief of the Office of the Parliament can attend the sittings of the Bureau of the Parliament with an advisory vote.

8. A Member of the Government of Georgia, the Chair of the Constitutional Court of Georgia, the Chair of the Supreme Court of Georgia, the Auditor General, the Prosecutor General of Georgia, the President of the National Bank of Georgia, the Public Defender of Georgia, the Parliamentary Secretary of the President of Georgia, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Government of Georgia and the

Chair of the Central Election Commission of Georgia (hereinafter — CEC) can raise an issue before the Bureau of the Parliament and, with an advisory vote, participate in the discussion of the issue.

Article 26. Decision of the Bureau of the Parliament

1. The decisions made by the Bureau of the Parliament are reported to the Parliament at the nearest plenary sitting in the cases envisaged by the Rules of Procedure.

2. The Parliament can abolish or amend the decisions of the Bureau of the Parliament by a majority of votes of the MPs present at the plenary sitting, but with no less than one-fifth of the enlisted MPs present.

3. The decisions of the Bureau of the Parliament are drawn up in the protocols of the sittings. The extracts from the protocols of the sittings are sent as appropriate.

CHAPTER V

COMMITTEES OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 27. The Basis of Committee Activities

1. The Parliament ensures preliminary preparation of legislative issues, assistance in the implementation of the Parliament's decisions, and oversight over the activities of the bodies that are accountable to the Government and the Parliament of Georgia (Entity that submits to the Parliament its activity report in accordance with the Constitution of Georgia or other legislative act, or other type accountability of which to the Parliament is directly envisaged by the legislative act) through parliamentary committees.

2. There are parliamentary committees on:

- a) Agrarian Issues;
- b) Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration;
- c) Education, Science, and Culture;
- d) Environmental Protection and Natural Resources;
- e) Sector Economy and Economic Policy;
- f) Diaspora and Caucasus Issues;
- g) European Integration;
- h) Defense and Security;
- i) Legal Issues;
- j) Regional Policy and Self-Government;
- k) Foreign Affairs;
- l) Procedural Issues and Rules;
- m) Budget and Finance;
- n) Sports and Youth Issues;
- o) Health Care and Social Issues.

3. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament provides general coordination of the activities of committees.

4. The Constitution of Georgia, the Rules of Procedure and the Statutes of committee determine the powers and activities of committees.

Article 28. Formation and Composition of Committees

1. The composition of a committee is determined in proportion to the representation of factions and the number of MPs who are not affiliated with any faction. The number of committee members and the quotas of proportional representation are determined by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and approved by the Bureau of the Parliament, and at the first plenary sitting of the Parliament by the Temporary Mandatory Commission, and then confirmed by the Parliament by decree.

2. A committee must be composed of at least 10 MPs. A committee starts its work, when at least two-thirds of the minimum number of committee members has been appointed and the Committee Chair has been elected.

3. An MP shall be a member of at least one and not more than 2 committees. The issue of an MP's membership of a second committee is decided by his/her faction according to the additional seats determined by the quotas of proportional representation.

4. In the case set forth in paragraph 1 of this article, within three days of the Bureau of the Parliament (the Parliament) confirming the quotas of proportional representation of factions in the committees, a faction nominates the members at the committee by its decision.

5. The decision of a faction to nominate a member to the committee is reported to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules (Temporary Mandatory Commission) and the Bureau of the Parliament. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules (Temporary

Mandatory Commission) examines the validity of the nomination of the member by the faction to the committee and reacts appropriately. The member nominated by the faction is considered as appointed from the moment the Bureau of the Parliament (Temporary Mandatory Commission) accepts this fact as a notification.

6. The decision on membership of a committee of an MP, who is not a member of any faction, is made as set forth in paragraph 5 of this article, based on the personal statement of the MP.

7. It is allowed to reallocate or exchange the quotas of proportional representation between the factions affiliated with the Majority and the factions affiliated with the Minority. Decisions of factions on reallocation or exchange of quotas, returning such quotas is communicated to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and the Bureau of the Parliament. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules studies the validity of the decisions of factions and reacts appropriately. The quotas are considered as reallocated, exchanged or returned from the moment the Bureau of the Parliament accepts this fact as a notification.

8. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and his/her first deputy shall not be in the committee composition.

9. The relevant faction, according to the quotas of proportional representation, decides upon the committee membership of the Deputy of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the Leader of the Majority and the Minority or the Head of the Faction.

10. If the changes within a faction affect the proportional representation of factions in committees, within one week the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules determines new quotas of proportional representation of factions and submits them to the Bureau of the Parliament at its nearest sitting.

Article 29. Termination of the Powers of a Committee Member

1. A committee member may leave a committee any time. S/he shall inform in writing the Chair of the Faction, the Bureau of the Parliament and the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules.

2. The powers of a committee member are terminated:

a) Immediately after s/he submits a notification about leaving a committee;

b) Immediately after the powers of the corresponding MP are terminated;

c) Immediately after s/he is appointed to a position incompatible with committee membership

d) In the case set forth in paragraph 2 of Article 51 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 30. Rules for Electing a Committee Chair

1. The Parliament elects a Committee Chair from the members of the committee according to the rules set forth by the Rules of Procedure.

2. The Majority, the Minority, factions not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority, and a Group of six MPs, can nominate a candidate for the position of Committee Chair within 7 days from the moment that two-thirds of the minimum number of committee members have been appointed, the Committee Chair has resigned, been removed or his/her powers have otherwise been terminated or his/her powers as an MP have been terminated.

3. If the authorized subjects do not nominate a candidate for the position of Committee Chair by the time specified in paragraph 2 of this article, within 5 days of the expiration of this term, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament nominates a candidate for the position of Committee Chair from the members of the committee.

4. The Committee Chair is elected through an open vote. If one or two candidates are nominated, the voting process is held using

an electronic system simultaneously (a vote for the candidate who was nominated first is registered by pressing the “Agree” button and a vote for the candidate who was nominated second is registered by pressing the “Against” button), and if there are more than two candidates the vote is held by using nominative ballots.

5. After the candidates have been named, the Chair of the plenary sitting publishes the list of candidates.

6. The decision on electing the Committee Chair is made by a majority of enlisted MPs. This decision is made without discussion.

7. If only one candidate participated in the elections and s/he was not elected, the elections are held again. If two candidates participated in the elections and neither of them received the necessary number of votes, the candidate who gained the most votes is put up for vote again. If in this case s/he does not gain the necessary number of votes, the elections are held again.

8. If more than two candidates participated in the elections for the Committee Chair and none of them received the necessary number of votes, a second round of elections is held between the two candidates who gained the most votes. In the event that it is impossible to determine only two winners from the first round of the elections, the second round of elections is held between however many candidates shared the first or second place in the first round according to the number of votes. The candidate who receives most votes, not less than of one-third of enlisted MPs, will be considered elected. If the votes are equally divided, the voting is held again .

9. If a candidate, who enters the second round, withdraws his/her candidacy, the next candidate according to number of votes received in the first round, is put up for vote.

10. A candidate may withdraw his/her candidacy before each round of voting.

Article 31. Rules for Electing Deputy Committee Chairs

1. By open vote and by a majority of its acting members, a committee elects 3 Deputy Chairs (including the First Deputy) at the first organizational sitting from its members and informs the Bureau of the Parliament accordingly.

2. The Committee Chair has the right to nominate a candidate for the position of First Deputy Chair of Committee. The Majority has the right to nominate one Deputy Committee Chair and the Minority, Faction that is not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority

3. If only one candidate participated in the elections for the Deputy Committee Chair and s/he failed to receive the necessary number of votes, the voting is held again. If two candidates participated in the elections and neither of them received the necessary number of votes, the candidate who gained the most votes is put up for vote again. If in this case s/he does not gain the necessary number of votes, the election procedure is held again. If more than two candidates participated in the elections and none of them received the necessary number of votes, a second round of elections is held between the two candidates who gained the most votes.

4. If a candidate, who enters the second round, withdraws his/her candidacy, the next candidate according to the number of votes received in the first round, is put up for vote.

5. If it is impossible to determine only two winners from the first round of the elections, then the candidates who shared first or second place according to the number of votes received, are put up for vote in the second round.

6. The candidate who receives most votes will be regarded as elected in the second round of elections.

7. If the candidates participating in the second round both receive an equal number of votes, the winner will be determined by the results of the first round. If a winner cannot be determined by this rule, the elections are held again.

8. In the event that new elections are held, the relevant subjects have the right to nominate the same candidate or the other candidate. The same candidate can be nominated only twice.

Article 32. Termination of Powers of the Chair of Committee and the Deputy Chairs of Committee

1. The Parliament can dismiss a Committee Chair and a Deputy Chair can be dismissed by the committee upon the demand of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the Bureau of the Parliament, no less than one-fifth of the enlisted MPs, as well as in the case of the Committee chair — upon demand of majority of enlisted members of the corresponding committee and in case of the Deputy Chair of the Committee — no less than one-third of the enlisted members of the Committee

2. The decision on the removal of the Committee Chair is regarded as adopted, if the majority of the enlisted MPs vote for it. The decision on the removal of the Deputy Chair is regarded as adopted if the majority of enlisted committee members vote for it.

3. The Committee Chair may announce his/her resignation any time. A relevant statement tendering his/her resignation is submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Committee Chair is considered as having resigned from the moment this statement is submitted to the Bureau. The Parliament accepts the Committee Chair's statement as notification at the plenary sitting, which is written down in the protocol.

4. The Deputy Committee Chair may announce his/her resignation at any time. A relevant statement tendering his/her resignation is submitted to the Chair of the relevant committee that introduces it to the committee. The Deputy Committee Chair is considered to have resigned from the moment this statement is submitted to the Committee Chair. The parliamentary committee accepts the Depu-

ty Committee Chair's statement as a notification, which is written down in the protocol.

5. If an MP is elected to the position of Deputy Committee Chair by the quota of the Majority/Minority/faction that is not part of the Majority, and his/her status of membership in this entry is terminated, his/her authority as Deputy Committee Chair shall also be terminated.

Article 33. The Charter of the Committee

1. The committee adopts its own charter (hereinafter — the Committee Charter) at the first organizational sitting.

2. The Committee Charter shall include information on the main directions of activities and certain authorities, as well as issues related to the organization of work.

3. The protocol of the first organizational sitting and the Committee Charter are submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament.

Article 34. Sitting of the Committee

1. The committee determines the periodicity of committee sittings, but no fewer than two sittings shall be held per month (the committee is not obliged to hold a committee meeting in the period between sessions). The date of the next committee sitting is determined in advance.

2. The Committee Chair convenes sittings under his/her own initiative, upon the request of the majority of the committee's enlisted members or upon the request of the Bureau of the Parliament.

3. Committee sittings are authorized, if the majority of its enlisted members are present.

4. If a committee member, appointed by a faction, cannot take part in the work of the committee, the faction has a right to temporarily replace him/her with another member of the faction, and the

faction notifies the respective Committee Chair in writing of any such change. This right can be exercised no more than 5 times in only one session period. The committee member is not considered to have missed the sitting of the respective committee if the sitting is attended by his/her replacement.

5. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules studies information relating to exercising the right set forth in paragraph 4 of this article and responds accordingly in order to observe the requirements of the paragraph. At the end of every session, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules discusses the issue of exercising the right set forth in paragraph 4 of this article and if a violation is revealed it submits a relevant conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament.

6. If the information in writing regarding a committee member missing a committee sitting is submitted to the Committee Chair before the sitting, the sitting of the committee is not considered to have been missed for impermissible reasons by the committee member. Permissible reasons for the committee member's non-attendance of committee sittings are: illness (confirmed by medical certificate), business trip, or birth/death/illness of a family member (confirmed by medical certificate). For the purposes of this paragraph, a "family member" implies spouse, direct lineal ascendants and descendants, stepchildren, and/or siblings. If the committee sitting is convened in violation of the terms set forth in paragraph 8 of this article, the sitting of the committee is not considered to have been missed for impermissible reasons by the committee member. The fact of the absence of an MP from a committee sitting is written down in the protocol of the sitting.

7. The committees submit to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules the protocol of the committee sitting regarding the reasons for a sitting being missed by committee members and regarding written applications submitted to the Committee Chair to

exercise the right set forth in paragraph 4 of this article not later than 3 days after the completion of every month.

8. The information regarding date and agenda of a committee sitting is published on the Parliament's website not later than three calendar days before the sitting. The terms defined within this paragraph do not apply to the cases where a draft law is being considered in an accelerated manner.

9. The Committee Chair determines the agenda of the committee sitting under his/her own initiative or upon the request of the committee member/members. The decision to put a new issue on the agenda at a committee sitting is not permitted unless the issue is envisaged in the Constitution of Georgia and in cases where a draft law is being considered in an accelerated manner. An issue can be removed from the agenda by the justified decision of the majority of committee members present at the sitting. The issue can be removed from, or added to, the agenda before the committee sitting upon the justified written request of the majority of the committee members.

10. Decisions are made through an open vote by the majority of the committee members present at the sitting, but by no less than half of the votes necessary to open the sitting (determining its authority), except for cases determined by the Rules of Procedure.

11. Committee sittings are public. Public sittings are broadcasted live on TV and radio. In special cases, a committee holds a closed sitting. The decision on holding a closed sitting is made by a majority of votes of enlisted members of the committee at the closed sitting. The list of members attending the closed sitting is determined by the Committee Chair. A sitting shall not be closed for the discussion of a draft law.

12. Other MPs, members of the Government of Georgia and invited guests may attend a committee sitting, with an advisory vote.

13. Interested representatives of the public may be invited to attend a committee sitting. They can be given the floor upon the decision of the Committee Chair.

14. Accredited mass media representatives may be invited to attend a committee sitting. Broadcasting of the committee sitting is allowed.

15. It is impermissible to hold committee discussions of a draft law during the plenary sitting of the next session of the Parliament except for cases when the decision on a draft law is being made in an accelerated manner, as well for cases where a draft law on amendments to the State Budget draft law and State Budget law is being discussed.

16. The Committee is authorized to hold a field sitting.

Article 35. Joint Sitting of the Committees

A joint sitting of committees can be held upon the request of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, or upon the decision of the Bureau or the Chairs of the relevant committees. The committees decide the issues to be discussed at the joint sitting by separate votes.

Article 36. Powers of the Committee Chair, First Deputy Committee Chair and the Deputies

1. The Committee Chair exercises his/her powers fairly and impartially.

2. The Committee Chair:

a) Leads the activities of the committee, convenes and presides over committee sittings;

b) Represents the committee in the Parliament, outside of it, and in relevant inter-parliamentary relations;

c) Signs the committee conclusions and protocols of its sittings;

- d) Provides general supervision to the Committee Office;
- e) Organizes development of the annual action plan of the committee;
- f) According to the annual results, submits a written report to the Parliament on activities no later than 2 weeks before the start of the spring session;
- g) Issues a directive on the internal organizational issues of the committee;
- h) Exercises the powers provided to him/her by the Rules of Procedure and other legislative acts.

3. The First Deputy Committee Chair:

- a) Carries out the duties of the Committee Chair when the latter is absent;
- b) Performs certain tasks by the Committee Chair's assignment;

4. The Deputy Committee Chair:

- a) Carries out the duties of the Committee Chair when the First Deputy Chair is absent upon the assignment of the Committee Chair;
- b) Performs certain tasks of the Committee Chair.

5. In the event of a Committee Chair resigning, s/he is dismissed, or his/her powers are otherwise terminated, or s/he cannot exercise his/her powers, or his/her powers as an MP are terminated ahead of time, the duties of the Committee Chair are performed by the First Deputy Committee Chair. In the absence of the First Deputy Committee Chair, the committee assigns the duties of the Committee Chair to his/her deputy by a majority of votes of its enlisted members.

6. In the case set forth in paragraph 4 of this article, one-third of the enlisted members of the committee or the Deputy Committee Chair have the right to convene a committee sitting to assign the duties of the Committee Chair. In this case, one of the Deputy

Chairs presides over the committee sitting upon the decision of a majority of the enlisted committee members.

Article 37. Committee Competencies

1. Within its competencies, a committee:

a) Develops, considers and prepares draft laws, Parliamentary decrees, and other decision proposals for the plenary sittings of the Parliament;

b) Participates in the discussions and elaborations of the draft laws and/or other acts submitted to the Parliament, prepares its conclusions the paper reflecting the state of consideration of submitted comments in the draft law;

c) Considers the draft budget and elaborates a conclusion;

d) Considers reports of the State Audit Service as set forth in the Rules of Procedure;

e) Oversees adherence to the legislative acts of Georgia, the parliamentary decrees and other decisions, and where necessary submits a relevant conclusion to the Parliament;

f) Exercises oversight over the activities of other bodies accountable to the Government of Georgia and the Parliament and where necessary submits a relevant conclusion to the Parliament;

g) Decides the organizational issues of its own activity;

h) Exercises the right to launch a legislative initiative;

i) Based on its activities, prepares the Committee Action Plan and publishes it on the Parliament's web-page;

j) Exercises other powers as provided for by the Rules of Procedure and other legislative acts.

2. The relevant committee considers all of the issues discussed at the plenary sitting of the Parliament except for cases envisaged in the Rules of Procedure.

3. Within its competencies, under its own initiative or based on the relevant application, appeal, or petition, the committee shall

study the activities of the administrative organ and if needed shall request relevant materials and shall submit a conclusion for discussion to the Parliament.

4. Other competencies of the committee are defined by the Charter of the committee, based on the Rules of Procedure.

Article 38. Oversight over the Implementation of Normative Acts

1. The committee oversees the state of enforcement of normative acts adopted by the Parliament in the committee's specific field. With this purpose in mind, it studies and analyzes their efficiency, considers any obstacles to have emerged since they became effective and the necessary measures to eradicate these obstacles, as well as subjective and objective factors that prevent their proper enactment, and takes necessary measures to ensure their enforcement.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to put on the agenda of the plenary sittings the issue of the enforcement of normative acts. The issue is discussed according to the rules established by the Rules of Procedure for the first hearing of a draft law.

3. After the parliamentary hearing of the state of the enforcement of a normative act, if necessary the Parliament adopts a decree that may reflect:

a) The Parliament's evaluation regarding the implementation of the normative act;

b) Assignment to a respective committee on making appropriate corrections into the normative act;

4. The committee, within its competencies, analyzes the judiciary practice and takes appropriate measures to eradicate legislative flaws.

Article 39. Inspection of Compliance of Normative Acts with the Legislation of Georgia

1. Within its competencies a committee is authorized to examine the compliance of the normative acts of the Government of Georgia, of Minister, of the head of other state institution of the executive branch to the Georgian legislation, the state of their enforcement. It studies and analyses any imperfections revealed in these acts during their implementation and prepares recommendations and sends them to the corresponding institution.

2. In its field, the committee inspects the execution of the obligations assigned by the transitional provisions of the parliamentary decrees to the institutions of the executive branch of the Government, and the timeliness thereof. If the terms of executing the aforementioned obligations are not defined, the committee defines them for the relevant institution of the executive branch. The committee submits the information regarding the state of the enforcement of the obligations envisaged in this paragraph to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules that studies the aforementioned information and submits it to the Bureau of the Parliament once every three months. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules publishes the information on the status of the enforcement of obligations assigned by the transitional provisions of the parliamentary decrees on the Parliament's website.

3. In cases of failure in fulfilling an obligation or recommendation set forth in this article, the committee makes an appropriate decision.

Article 40. Compulsory Attendance of Officials at Committee Sitzings

1. A Member of the Government, an official accountable to the Parliament (member of the Government, head of the body accountable to the Parliament, or the official that submits to the Parliament

its activity report in accordance with the Constitution of Georgia or other legislative act or the accountability of which to the Parliament is directly envisaged by the legislative act), the head of the body accountable to the Parliament, and the Public Defender of Georgia are authorized, and in cases of request obliged, to attend committee sittings in accordance with the rule set forth by the Rules of Procedure, to answer the questions raised at the sitting, and to report on the activities performed. The committee shall hear this official immediately upon his/her request.

2. The person defined in paragraph 1 of this article shall attend committee sittings upon the request of a majority of committee members present at the sitting or in a faction, except for cases envisaged in paragraph 3 of this article. A faction shall have right to summon a person to the committee sitting if that faction has a member in the committee.

3. The Prime Minister of Georgia, the Prosecutor General of Georgia, the Head of the Special State Protection Service of Georgia are obliged to attend a committee sitting upon written request of a majority of enlisted members of the committee. The written request should contain detailed information regarding the issue/issues to be discussed with the official to be summoned at the committee sitting.

4. The Committee Chair shall send the person defined in paragraph 1 of this article the request of the committee that he/she be summoned to the committee sitting. The request shall be sent not later than 1 week before the committee sitting. The person defined within paragraph 1 of this article shall be heard by the committee at the first sitting of the committee after being summoned. This rule can be changed based on an agreement between the initiator of the summoning and the person to be summoned.

5. The request defined within paragraph 4 of this Article should include comprehensive information regarding the issue/issues to

be discussed with the person to be summoned to the committee sitting. The person summoned to the committee sitting is allowed not to discuss the issues that s/he was not informed about in advance as set forth in this article.

6. The person summoned to the sitting is given the floor for 20 minutes, and that can be prolonged by decision of the Chair of the session by up to a further 10 minutes.

7. After the person defined in paragraph 1 of this article, finishes his/her speech, the MPs may ask him/her questions regarding the speech for not less than 30 minutes. At first, the initiator of the summoning shall ask the questions. The question time shall be fairly allocated among the Minority, the Majority and members of the factions/Parliament that are not affiliated with the Minority and the Majority. After the questions have been asked, the official responds separately to the questions asked by the MPs.

8. The person defined in paragraph 1 of this article, is obliged to attend a committee sitting upon the request of a majority of enlisted members of the committee no more than 2 months after his/her compulsory attendance at a committee sitting”.

Article 41. Obligation to Provide Information

Upon the request of a committee, a member of Government, an official of a body accountable to the Parliament, and/or the head of a body accountable to the Parliament shall present relevant documents, conclusions and other necessary materials within the time given by the committee.

Article 42. Committee Acts

1. Committee acts can be one of the following: a conclusion, a recommendation, a decision.

2. After hearing, overseeing and checking the information relating to the issue under its competencies, as well as after reviewing the

draft law, a committee provides a conclusion. The conclusion of the committee shall provide an assessment and/or specific measures of reaction. Committee conclusions, as a rule, are submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament, and the plenary sitting of the Parliament.

3. The sample/samples of the committee conclusions are adopted by the order of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

4. The committee, based on the hearing, oversight and study of issues within its competencies, as well as on facts of violation of the Constitution of Georgia and laws of Georgia, will develop recommendations. A committee recommendation may be submitted to the Parliament or sent within the competence for further response. The committee shall be informed regarding the results of its discussion or subsequent measures taken not later than 1 month or within the terms defined by the committee.

Article 43. Action Plan of the Committee

1. The committees, before the opening of the spring session, develop an annual action plan of the respective committee activities that shall be adopted by decision of the relevant committee, not later than two weeks after the opening of the spring session.

2. The Committee Action Plans are adopted upon the approval of a majority of the enlisted committee members, and this is notified to the Bureau of the Parliament and published on the Parliament's website.

3. The Committee Action Plans shall include information regarding activities to be carried out and terms for fulfilling legislative, oversight and other functions, including functions set forth in Articles 38, 39 and paragraph 2 of Article 201. The action plans shall define the member/members responsible for carrying out each of the activities. The mentioned member/members automatically represent the thematic speakers as defined within Article 45 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 44. Reports of Committee Work

1. The Committee Chair presents a written report and relevant statement to the Parliament on the work performed by the committee every year not later than two weeks before the opening of the spring session.

2. The Deputy Committee Chair elected by the Minority quota or by a the quota of a faction that is not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority, is authorized to be the co-rapporteur on the report on the performed work of the committee.

3. The report is submitted to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament, which immediately sends it to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, Deputy Chairs, other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority and independent MPs. The report is as published on the Parliament's website.

4. The Bureau of the Parliament schedules discussion of the report in the agenda of the spring session's plenary sitting.

5. The duration of each presenter's speech on the report at the plenary sitting of the Parliament shall not exceed 20 minutes. When rendered necessary by the decision of the Sitting Chair, the length of a speech may be extended by 10 minutes.

6. After the speech of each presenter, his/her co-presenters take the floor. The duration of each co-presenter's speech shall not exceed 15 minutes. The duration of a speech can be prolonged by up to 5 minutes by the decision of the Chair of the sitting.

7. Discussion of the issue/issues is conducted in accordance with the rules defined by the Rules of Procedure for the first hearing of a draft law, according to paragraphs 5 and 6 of this article.

8. The Parliament accepts each report submitted by the committee as a notification.

Article 45. Thematic Speaker of the Committee

1. To improve the conducting of legislative, oversight and other activities, as well as to ensure quality of work and allocation of work among the MPs, The committee member shall be the thematic speaker within the committee competencies.

2. The working field/fields or direction/directions of the thematic speaker are defined annually in accordance with the Committee Action Plan.

3. The Committee Chair will appoint committee members as thematic speakers for the term of authority of the Committee Action Plan, under their initiative. One thematic speaker from the Majority and should they desire one thematic speaker from factions and independent members that are not affiliated with the Minority and the Majority shall be responsible for each working field defined by the Committee Action Plan. The Committee Chair can assign third and every other thematic speaker for the same working field by his/her decision.

4. If no one expresses the will to be the thematic speaker for the working field defined by the Committee Action Plan, the Committee Chair nominates the thematic speaker by his/her own decision.

5. The joint list of thematic speakers, with relevant working field, with regard to committees, is published on the website of the Parliament.

6. The thematic speaker shall analyze the issues within the competencies of the committee (including draft laws) according to the corresponding working fields and prepare a report which s/he shall submits to the committee during the discussion of the issue (draft law).

Article 46. Working Group of the Committee

Each committee creates working groups to facilitate committee activities for the preliminary preparation of legislative issues and

other ongoing issues. MPs and specialists of the relevant field shall be members of such working groups.

Article 47. Scientific-Consultative Council

1. The committee by its decision may create a scientific-consultative council under it, to provide consultation on issues related to the working field for the term of authority of the Parliament, and such a council is composed of competent consultants in the relevant field/fields. The committee defines by its own decision the composition of the scientific-consultative council and the rules of its work.

2. The relevant committee convenes its scientific-consultative council as necessary.

CHAPTER VI

FACTION, THE MAJORITY, THE MINORITY

Article 48. The Major Political Subject of the Parliament

1. A faction is a political subject of the Parliament's activity wherein MPs unite to achieve joint political goals. The rules of creation and activities and powers of a faction are determined by the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure.

2. It is impermissible to create a faction for personal, professional, local, regional or religious purposes.

Article 49. Formation of a Faction

1. At least 6 MPs can form a faction.

2. Elected MPs from same party list of the same party are not allowed to form more than one faction; an MP, except a Majoritarian MP, is allowed to affiliate with only one faction that is formed by members of a political party that nominated her/him.

3. MPs, who intend to form a faction, shall develop a political platform and charter for the faction. F

4. The charter of a faction shall regulate its internal organizational issues according to the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure.

5. The charter of a faction shall determine the rules for its formation and changes to its composition, rules for creation of a faction's governing bodies, election of officials and their competencies, authority of faction members, goals, tasks and structure of the faction, and rules for revision of the charter.

6. Faction officials comprise a chair, deputy chair and secretary. The charter of the faction shall determine the rules for their election, dismissal and reassignment.

7. A faction is considered to have been created from the moment that at least 6 MPs have united to adopt its political platform and charter.

8. Registration of newly formed factions is mandatory. Before registration, a newly formed faction shall operate within the competencies specified in Article 50 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 50. Registration of a Faction

1. The duties and responsibilities of a faction shall become effective from the moment of its registration.

2. A faction shall elect a chair from its composition, before registration.

3. In order to register a faction, at the very first meeting of a newly elected Parliament, the Faction Chair shall address the Temporary Mandatory Commission with a statement indicating the faction's official name and the names of its chair, other officials, and members. The political platform and the charter of the faction shall be attached to the statement. The Temporary Mandatory Commission shall immediately consider the issue of registration of a faction and make a decision. If the Temporary Mandatory Commission fails to make any decision at the first sitting of the Parliament, the faction is considered registered from the moment of submission of the document to the Temporary Mandatory Commission. A faction, of which registration has been rejected, has the right to raise the issue of the legitimacy of the decision of the Temporary Mandatory Commission at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

4. In order to register a faction, except for the case provided in paragraph 3 of this article, within 1 week of its creation the Faction

Chair shall address the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament with a statement that contains the faction's official name and the names of its chair, other officials, and members. The political platform and the charter of the faction shall be attached to the statement. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall immediately present the materials submitted for registration of a faction to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules, which submits its conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament at its next sitting. Unless the Bureau of the Parliament makes another justified decision in accordance with paragraph 5 of this article at its next sitting, the faction shall be regarded as having been registered from the moment of submission of the document to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. The decision of the Bureau of the Parliament shall be notified to the Parliament at the nearest plenary sitting and published on the website of the Parliament.

5. If a faction does not meet the requirements of paragraph 2 of Article 48 and paragraphs 1-3 of Article 49 of the Rules of Procedure, its registration shall be rejected. A faction, of which registration has been rejected, has the right to raise the issue of the lawfulness of the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament at the plenary sitting of the Parliament.

Article 51. Representation of Faction Members in Parliamentary Bodies

1. Representation of a faction in parliamentary bodies shall be defined proportionally according to the number of members of a faction, except for cases specified in the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure.

2. A member nominated by a faction shall stop his/her activity in a parliamentary body or as a parliamentary official when the registration of a faction is terminated in line with the Rules of Procedure, when s/he is expelled from the faction, when s/he leaves the fac-

tion or the faction recalls him/her from this body due to a waiver or exchange of quotas of proportional representation, or the return of a waiver or exchange of quotas if s/he is appointed by such quotas. A faction can nominate a new candidate.

3. In the case that a faction is created, or is abolished, or the members join or leave the faction or they are expelled, if the changes to the faction affect the proportional representation of the factions, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules determines the new quotas of proportional representation of factions.

4. If a faction's quota of proportional representation is increased, the relevant faction is entitled to decide individual issues of faction representation in the parliamentary bodies.

5. If faction's quota of proportional representation is decreased, the faction shall determine the withdrawal of its members from parliamentary bodies. If a faction fails to meet this requirement within 1 week, the issue of the withdrawal of a relevant member of the faction from parliamentary bodies shall be decided by the relevant parliamentary body/bodies.

Article 52. Change in Composition of a Faction

1. An MP shall be a member of one faction only.

2. An MP willing to join a faction applies in writing to the Faction Chair.

3. A faction considers the application of the MP in accordance with the rule set forth in the charter of the faction and makes a relevant decision.

4. An MP may leave a faction at any time without any motivation; s/he shall inform the Faction Chair in writing.

5. A faction is authorized to expel any of its members in cases set forth in the charter of the faction.

6. The Faction Chair shall inform in writing the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and the Bureau of the Parliament con-

cerning any members leaving, or being expelled from, the faction within 3 days.

7. The member is regarded as having joined a faction, having left a faction or having been expelled from a faction from the moment the Bureau of the Parliament accepts this fact as a notification.

8. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall prepare its conclusion concerning changes and react appropriately.

9. If fewer than six members remain in a faction after a member leaves the faction or s/he is expelled, or the powers of the member of the faction as an MP were terminated, the faction is regarded as abolished on the 7th day after submission of a statement on the member's departure or expulsion from the faction. During this period, the faction maintains the rights defined by the Rules of Procedure. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules informs the Parliament of the abolition of a faction at the nearest plenary sitting.

10. The election, removal, or resignation of the faction officials, as well as the amendments to the founding documents of the faction, are reported to the Bureau of the Parliament and the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules within three days.

11. Information relating to the changes set forth in paragraphs 6, 8 and 10 of this article is published on the Parliament's website.

Article 53. Right of Every Faction to Take the Floor

A faction that is not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority is entitled to take the floor twice for 30 minutes during a session. A faction may raise this issue after the discussion on the issue is over at any time except during voting procedures. The Parliament is obliged to give the floor immediately.

Article 54. Funding of Factions

1. A faction's expenses are funded from the Budget of the Parliament. The space allocated in the Palace of the Parliament and the funds allocated for the operations of a faction are, as a rule, determined in proportion to the number of MPs within the faction.

2. The salary fund for a faction's office staff is defined proportionally according to the faction's representation. Based on the proposal of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the Bureau of the Parliament confirms the decision of the Treasury Council of the Parliament on the salary fund for the faction's office staff.

Article 55. Inter-Faction Group

1. In order to overcome differences in views arising in the Parliament during discussion of draft laws and other issues, and to specify and agree on certain provisions, an inter-faction group shall be created by the order of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on consultations with factions.

2. An inter-faction group is authorized to apply to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and the Bureau of the Parliament with its opinions and proposals about a draft law or other issue.

Article 56. Formation of the Majority and the Minority

1. If the total number of MPs affiliated with an action exceeds half of the total number of MPs, the faction shall assume the status of the Majority upon its request.

2. Factions or MPs who support them and are not affiliated with any faction may form the Majority if the total number of these MPs exceeds half of the full composition of the Parliament.

3. If the Majority is formed, then it is also permitted for the Minority to be formed.

4. If the total number of MPs affiliated with a faction exceeds

half of the number of MPs who are not members of the Majority, the faction may request and receive the status of the Minority.

5. Factions, or MPs who support them and are not affiliated with any faction, may form the Minority if their total number exceeds half of the number of MPs who are not affiliated with the Majority.

6. Information about changes to the compositions of the Majority and the Minority, as well as to political platforms and charters, shall be notified to the Bureau of the Parliament within 3 days.

Article 57. Registration of the Majority and the Minority

1. The Majority and the Minority shall acquire authority after registration by the Bureau of the Parliament and upon the first sitting of the newly elected Parliament — after being registered by the Temporary Mandate Commission of the Parliament. For registration, a leader of the Majority and a leader of the Minority shall present to the Bureau of the Parliament statements that shall contain the names of the leaders and members of the Majority and the Minority, respectively. The political platforms and charters of the Majority and the Minority signed by their respective leaders and by the chairs of factions affiliated with them, shall be attached to the statements.

2. The Parliament shall be notified concerning the registration of the Majority and Minority. This information shall be published on the website of the Parliament.

Article 58. Officials of the Majority and the Minority

Officials of the Majority and the Minority include:

- a) Leaders of the Majority and the Minority;
- b) Deputy leaders of the Majority and the Minority;
- c) Secretaries of the Majority and the Minority.

2. Charters of the Majority and the Minority shall determine the rules for changes to its composition, as well as rules for election

and dismissal of officials, competencies of members, and structure.

3. If the composition of the Majority and/or the Minority coincides with the composition of a faction, the chairs of relevant factions shall serve as the leaders of the Majority and/or the Minority.

Article 59. Right of the Majority and the Minority to Take the Floor

The Majority and the Minority have the right to take the floor four times for 30 minutes during one session. The Majority and the Minority may raise an issue after the discussion of the issue has concluded, at any time except during voting procedures. The Parliament is obliged to immediately give the floor to them.

Article 60. Funding of the Majority and the Minority

Their offices perform the activities of the Majority and the Minority. The payrolls of the Majority and the Minority are defined proportionally according to the number of MPs with whom they are affiliated. The payrolls of the Majority and the Minority are approved by the Bureau of the Parliament upon submission to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on the proposal of the Treasury Council of the Parliament.

CHAPTER VII

TEMPORARY INVESTIGATIVE AND OTHER TEMPORARY COMMISSIONS

Article 61. Basis of the Activities of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. In the presence of the basis set forth in Article 42 of the Constitution of Georgia and this article, a Temporary Investigative Commission is created in the Parliament with the purpose of exploring the facts of violation of Georgian legislation by state bodies and public officials, and to react appropriately. The Temporary Investigative Commission is temporary subject of the parliament activities.

2. The bases for creation of a Temporary Investigative Commission are:

a) The emergence of information on illegal actions of state bodies or public officials, or corruption offences, which threaten the security, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political, economic or other interests of Georgia;

b) The emergence of information on the misappropriation of state and local self-governing entities' budgets.

3. The Temporary Investigative Commission is created solely for the purpose of studying a specific issue or specific issues and is abolished according to the rules defined within the Rules of Procedure after the issue/issues has/have been studied.

4. The Temporary Investigative Commission is accountable to the Parliament.

5. The Temporary Investigative Commission develops the Charter that is aproved by the Parliament.

Article 62. Creation of a Temporary Investigative Commission

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, a committee, a faction, or no less than one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament are authorized to initiate a draft resolution regarding the creation of a Temporary Investigative Commission. The draft resolution shall include relevant arguments for the formation of the Temporary Investigative Commission. The suggestion in writing is transferred to the Bureau of the Parliament to be included on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. The Parliament makes a decision based on the support of no less than one-third of enlisted members. During the decision-making process, the votes of opponents shall not be considered. The decision of the Parliament has to indicate the basis for forming the Temporary Investigative Commission, the range of the issues to be studied, and the authority of the commission.

2. Within three days from the decision envisaged by paragraph 1 of this article, the number of members and quotas of proportional representation in the Temporary Investigative Commission are determined by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and approved by the Bureau of the Parliament during the nearest sitting. It is possible to give or exchange quotas according to paragraph 7 of Article 28 of the Rules of Procedure.

3. The composition of the Temporary Investigative Commission is determined proportionally according to the number of MPs who are members of factions and the number of MPs who are not members of any faction. The Temporary Investigative Commission shall also include at least one member of each parliamentary faction and Representation of the opposition in the Temporary Investigative Commission — the MPs who are not members of the parliamentary majority — shall not be less than half of the total number of the commission members. .

4. Following the quotas set forth in paragraph 2 of this article, factions and independent members who are not members of any factions of the Parliament, appoint the members of the Temporary Investigative Commission within three days from the decision being made about the determination of quotas, and inform the Bureau of the Parliament accordingly.

5. The first organizational meeting of the Temporary Investigative Commission is held no later than three days after the Bureau of the Parliament accepts the fact of the nomination of Temporary Investigative Commission members as a notification.

6. The Temporary Investigative Commission elects the Commission Chair and the Commission Secretary and develops the Commission Charter at its first organizational meeting.

Article 63. Officials of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. Temporary Investigative Commission officials are the Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission and the Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission.

2. Temporary Investigative Commission officials execute the powers within their competencies in a fair and impartial manner.

3. The Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission:

- a) Represents the Commission in and beyond the Parliament;
- b) Calls and leads the sittings of the commission;
- c) Coordinates the work of commission members;
- d) Signs commission decisions and the protocols of its sittings;
- e) Exercises other powers set forth by the legislation of Georgia.

4. The Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission:

- a) Organizes the commission sittings;
- b) Carries out office work, signs the protocols of commission sittings;

- c) Temporarily performs the duties of the Commission Chair when the latter cannot exercise his/her powers;
- d) Performs other tasks of the Commission Chair;
- e) Exercises other powers provided by the regulations of the Commission.

Article 64. Selection and Termination of Powers of the Chair and the Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. The Commission elects the Chair and the Secretary of the Commission by a majority of members of the Commission.

2. More than one-third of the Commission's members have a right to nominate the persons defined within paragraph 1 of this article.

3. If the Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission is a member of the Majority, the Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission shall not be a member of the Majority; and if the Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission is not a member of the Majority, the Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission must be a member of the Majority.

4. If only one candidate participated in the elections of the persons defined within paragraph 1 of this Article and s/he was not elected, then new elections are held. If two candidates participated in the elections and none of them received the required number of votes, a second round of elections is held between these two candidates, where the candidate who receives the most votes is regarded as having been elected. If the votes are equally divided, a new vote is held.

5. If the election of the Chair of the Temporary Investigative Commission is not possible according to the rules established by this article, the Commission Chair is elected by the drawing of lots.

6. Upon the initiative of one-third of the Commission's members, the Commission shall have the right to dismiss the Chair or

the Secretary of the Temporary Investigative Commission by a majority of votes of enlisted members.

7. The statement about the resignation of the persons defined within paragraph 1 of this article is accepted by the Temporary Investigative Commission as a notification.

8. The Temporary Investigative Commission shall inform the Bureau of the Parliament regarding the decision and information envisaged in this article.

Article 65. Termination of Powers of a Member of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. A member of the Temporary Investigative Commission may leave the Commission by issuing his/her own personal statement.

2. The Temporary Investigative Commission can expel any of its members, if the member did not participate in the work of the Commission for two consecutive weeks for unsubstantiated reasons, did not attend its sittings, or abused his/her powers. The Commission makes such a decision by a vote of no less than two-thirds of the Commission members present at the sitting and informs the Parliament about the decision accordingly.

3. Other grounds for termination of powers of a member of the Temporary Investigative Commission are determined under paragraphs 2 and 5 of Article 51 of the Rules of Procedure.

4. In the event of the termination of powers of a member of the Temporary Investigative Commission, the faction has right to nominate a new member.

Article 66. The Term of Authority of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. The Temporary Investigative Commission can be formed for a term of authority of up to three months. The term of authority of the Commission can be prolonged for one month according to the

rules set forth in paragraph 2 of this article. The total term of office of the Commission shall not exceed a period of 6 months.

2. If by the given time the Temporary Investigative Commission does not present a draft decision on the considered issue, the Parliament hears the report on the activities of the Commission at the nearest plenary sitting and, by a vote of one-third of its enlisted members, makes one of the following decisions:

- a) Prolongation of the term of authority of the Commission;
- b) Termination of the authority of the Commission.

3. It is not permissible to create a new Temporary Investigative Commission within 3 months before the expiration of the term of authority of the relevant convocation of the Parliament. 3 months before the expiration of the term of authority of the Parliament, the authority of the Temporary Investigative Commission is terminated. The Commission is obliged to present the reports of its activities before this date. If the Temporary Investigative Commission fails to prepare a conclusion on the considered issue, the materials obtained by the Commission, together with a report, are transferred to the new convocation of the Parliament that makes a decision about further examination and discussion of the issue according to the rules set forth in paragraph 1 of Article 62 of the Rules of Procedure.

4. After the termination of the authority of the Temporary Investigative Commission, the materials related to its activities are transferred to the Office of the Parliament according to the rules established by law.

Article 67. Authority of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. It is obligatory to attend the sitting of the Temporary Investigative Commission if requested to do so by the Commission.

2. The Temporary Investigative Commission has the authority to summon and request written explanation from any person, with

the exception of cases envisaged by the law and the Rules of Procedure, in relation to any circumstances of the issue under discussion.

3. To fulfill specific tasks, the Temporary Investigative Commission has the authority to invite, with the approval of the head of the relevant state body, the representatives of the Chief Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Service, and other state bodies or institutes, who, if necessary, will be temporarily relieved of their duty within the period needed to fulfill the specific tasks of the Commission, during which time their remuneration in the relevant state agency is maintained and their official visit expenses are covered.

4. If requested by the Temporary Investigative Commission, state bodies, public officials, and legal and private persons are obliged to submit the conclusions necessary for the examination of the issue and other materials, in accordance with the time limits and rules set forth by the Commission. The Commission has the right to raise the issue before the relevant state oversight body in order to obtain information regarding the issue under question.

5. The Temporary Investigative Commission is authorized to submit a request in writing to the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia and study a criminal case on-site according to the rules set forth in the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia, and to receive copies of the materials relating to the case, as well as study the materials on the rejection to proceed with the investigation, in case, if the commission believes that the data necessary to examine the issue under question may be found in the aforementioned case or the case materials.

6. Based on the written request of the Temporary Investigative Commission and the assignment of the Prosecutor General, an investigator is obliged to ensure that the members of the Commission have the opportunity to study the case and case materials on-site and to obtain copies of the materials.

7. The process of taking an explanatory statement from an underage person shall be attended by his/her legal representative. It is explained to a person under the age of 14 that it is necessary to give a correct explanation, but s/he is not warned about the criminal liability for refusal to give an explanation or avoiding giving an explanation or intentionally giving a false explanation.

8. If a person does not speak Georgian, an interpreter shall be assigned. When taking an explanatory statement from a person with a hearing and/or speaking impairment, a person familiar with his/her language shall be assigned. If an interpreter or a person, who knows the language of the person with a hearing and/or speaking impairment, intentionally translates incorrectly, s/he will be held responsible according to Article 370 of the Criminal Code of Georgia.

9. The explanatory statement from the invited person is taken at the sitting of the Temporary Investigative Commission. In exceptional cases, the Commission can assign three of its members, at least one of whom shall not be a member of the Majority, to take the explanatory statement. Before giving the explanation, the person is warned about his/her criminal liability for the refusal to give an explanation or avoiding giving an explanation or for intentionally giving a false explanation, which is noted in the text of the explanation and is confirmed by the signature of the invited person.

10. The access of the Temporary Investigative Commission to state secrets is determined by the legislation of Georgia.

11. The Temporary Investigative Commission is authorized to address the Parliament with a request to collect signatures to raise the issue of impeachment of officials as envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia.

12. The Temporary Investigative Commission can create a working group in which the Commission's members and invited experts participate in order to work on a specific issue.

Article 68. Sitzings of the Temporary Investigative Commission

1. The location and frequency of the sittings of the Temporary Investigative Commission are determined by the Commission. However, at least two sittings should be held per month.

2. A sitting of the Temporary Investigative Commission is authorized if it is attended by the majority of the Commission's members. The Temporary Investigative Commission makes decisions based on a vote of the majority of enlisted members, if the Rules of Procedure do not specify otherwise. If votes are divided equally, the voting procedure is conducted again. If the decision is not made on the repeated vote, the issue is considered to have been rejected.

3. Commission members are notified in advance regarding the date and agenda of the sitting of the Temporary Investigative Commission. As soon as the date of the sitting is set, the mentioned information is posted on the website of the Parliament.

4. Other MPs and invited persons can attend the public sittings of the Temporary Investigative Commission, with the right to vote. Any public sitting is broadcasted live.

5. The Temporary Investigative Commission shall hear the Public Defender of Georgia immediately upon request. For this purpose, no later than three days before addressing the Temporary Investigative Commission, the Public Defender of Georgia presents to the Commission Chair the issues that s/he wants to address to the Commission. The Commission Chair immediately distributes the written application to the Commission's members.

6. Based on a proposal of a member of the Temporary Investigative Commission, the Commission may make a decision to hold a closed sitting. The decision to hold a closed sitting is made via a closed vote. The attendees of the closed sitting are determined by the Commission Chair.

7. Sitzings of the Temporary Investigative Commission are not held during the days of plenary sittings during the regular session.

Article 69. The Protocol of the Sitzings of the Temporary Investigative Commission and the Classified Nature of Parliamentary Investigation

1. The work of the Temporary Investigative Commission is fully and accurately recorded in the protocol of the Commission sitting, prepared by the Secretary of the Commission.

2. Any member of the Temporary Investigative Commission has the right to see the protocol of the Commission sitting and provide his/her comments.

3. If the Temporary Investigative Commission uses documents, which include a state secret, it shall follow the rules established by law for the preservation and use of such documents

4. The publication of the information (material) obtained by the Temporary Investigative Commission, or the protocols of its sittings in part or in full, if the mentioned information (material) includes criminal case materials, is allowed with the approval of the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia, whereas the rules for the publication of materials or protocols including state secrets are envisaged by the legislation of Georgia.

5. The members of the Temporary Investigative Commission, as well as other persons participating in the work of the Commission, are obliged to respect the classified nature of the parliamentary investigation.

Article 70. Acts of the Temporary Investigative Commission and Rules of their Discussion

1. In the case of identifying a violation of the legislation of Georgia as a result of learning of information relating to the case under question, oversight, and examination, the Temporary Investigative

Commission has the right to raise the issue before the relevant body or official responsible to prevent the violation of the legislation of Georgia, and, depending on the nature of the violation of the legislation of Georgia, can raise the issue of investigation, administrative or disciplinary proceedings, confiscation of state property or compensation for damages to the State before a relevant body or official.

2. In relation to the issue under question, the Temporary Investigative Commission elaborates the following acts: a conclusion, a recommendation, a decision. Conclusions and recommendations are adopted only at the final stage of the discussion of the issue and decisions are adopted in relation to the issues envisaged with Article 67 of this Rules of Procedure.

3. A decision on an issue under question is discussed by the Temporary Investigative Commission publicly, through an obligatory live broadcast, with the exception of cases for which publicity is limited under the legislation of Georgia.

4. A conclusion/recommendation made by the Temporary Investigative Commission is presented to the Bureau of the Parliament in order to be included in the agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament has the responsibility to include the issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. The Temporary Investigative Commission has the right to send its conclusions, recommendations and decisions to the relevant body, institution or agency for their response.

5. In the case of sending conclusions, recommendations and decisions to the relevant body, institution or agency for their response, the Commission shall be informed about the results of the discussion of the case and measures taken no later than one month or within a time period determined by the Commission.

6. The position of the Temporary Investigative Commission is presented to the plenary sitting of the Parliament by the Commis-

sion Chair or a speaker selected by the Commission from its members.

7. The plenary sitting of the Parliament, during which the decision of the Temporary Investigative Commission is discussed, can be either public or closed. Upon the decision of the Parliament, the plenary sitting to discuss the decision of the Commission may be closed. The decision to hold a closed sitting is made via a closed vote. At the beginning of the sitting, the speaker warns the MPs and the persons with the right to attend the closed sitting according to the Rules of Procedure regarding the liability envisaged by law for the publication of information regarding the Commission, investigation materials, or classified files.

8. The discussion of the decision of the Temporary Investigative Commission at the plenary sitting of the Parliament starts with the speech of the Commission Chair or a selected member of the Commission. The duration of the speech should not exceed 30 minutes (if necessary, the duration of the speech can be extended by not more than 30 minutes with the approval of the speaker of the sitting).

9. After the speech, the MPs have the right to ask questions regarding the case. The questions-and-answers and speeches of MPs proceed according to the rules set forth by the Rules of Procedure for the consideration of a draft law at the first hearing.

10. Upon request from the Commission or a faction, the Parliament issues a decree regarding the decision of the Temporary Investigative Commission.

11. Together with the decision, the Temporary Investigative Commission also submits case materials to the Parliament. If criminal case materials are attached to the case, the plenary sitting of the Parliament is held with the approval of the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia. The rules for presenting information including state secrets at a public plenary sitting are envisaged by the law.

Article 71. Funding of the Temporary Investigative Commission

The expenses of the Temporary Investigative Commission incurred in the period of its work are paid from the Parliament's budget. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament proposes and the Bureau of the Parliament confirms the decision of the Treasury Council on the amount to be allocated for the expenses of the Temporary Investigative Commission.

Article 72. Purposes of the Other Temporary Commission

1. The Other Temporary Commission (hereinafter referred to as — Temporary Commission) is a temporary body of the Parliament, created for the purposes of fulfilling an impermanent objective of state and/or societal importance that requires collegial examination and decision-making.

2. Along with the temporary commission defined within paragraph 1 of this article, a temporary commission related to the issues of restoration of territorial integrity and de-occupation shall be formed in the Parliament.

3. The work of the Temporary Commission is subject to the rules envisaged by the Rules of Procedure for the Temporary Investigative Commission, with the exceptions laid out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 61, paragraphs 3 and 7-11 of Article 67, and paragraph 11 of Article 70.

Article 73. Creation of Other Temporary Commissions

1. The issue of creating a temporary commission can be raised by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, a committee, a faction, or at least one-fifth of the enlisted MPs.

2. The Parliament makes a decision regarding the creation of a temporary commission according to the rules set forth in the Rules of Procedure, by the majority of votes that amount to no less than one-quarter of the enlisted MPs.

Article 74. Term of Authority of Other Temporary Commission

1. It is impermissible to create a temporary commission 6 months before the expiration of the term of office of the relevant convocation of the Parliament.

2. The term of authority of a temporary commission related to the issues of restoration of territorial integrity and de-occupation is determined by the relevant decree of the Parliament and it is not subject to the limitations set forth by the Rules of Procedure regarding the term of authority of a temporary commission.

3. A temporary commission created in relation to the issue mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article 72 is obliged to present a report on its activities at least once every three months, as well as upon the expiration of the term of authority of the commission and the extension of this term. If the commission fails to present a report to the Parliament, or the Parliament does not consider the report to be satisfactory, the Parliament shall issue a decree with a decision to change the chair and members of the commission.

CHAPTER VIII

CONSULTATIVE BODIES OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 75. Permanent Consultative Councils of the Parliament

1. Permanent consultative councils of the Parliament shall be created in the Parliament to promote elaboration and coordination of continuous, systematic and sustainable policies for determined areas.

2. The Permanent consultative councils of the Parliament are:
- a) The Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality;
 - b) The Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council.

Article 76. Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality

1. According to the Constitution of Georgia, international treaties and other legislative acts and by-laws of Georgia, the Parliament defines the major directions of state policy on gender, ensures creation and development of a regulatory framework for gender equality, reviews and adopts relevant strategy, and oversees gender-related activities of bodies accountable to the Parliament.

2. The Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality is created in the Parliament to ensure systematic and coordinated work on gender issues.

3. The Chair (Speaker) of Parliament approves the number of members and composition of the Council. The composition of Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality is defined by the

Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on preliminary consultations with the Parliamentary factions.

4. The Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality shall develop a statute and submit this to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall approve the statute of the Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality. The following authorities shall be defined by the statute of the Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality:

a) Perform analysis of the legislation of Georgia and develop proposals to eliminate existing gender inequality in the legislation;

b) Ensure expert examination in terms of the gender equality of draft legislative acts submitted as legislative initiatives;

c) Develop and plan certain activities to achieve gender equality and provide equal rights for men and women;

d) Develop and introduce a monitoring and assessment system for activities aimed at ensuring gender equality, and produce appropriate recommendations;

e) Request and receive any information and document related to the study of gender issues, except for documents the confidentiality of which is protected under the legislation of Georgia;

f) Examine statements, documents and other information on violations of gender equality and respond to them within the scope of its authority as well as produce appropriate recommendations;

g) Invite representatives and/or experts of international or local organizations working in a relevant field to discuss gender equality issues;

h) Exercise other powers granted by the legislation of Georgia.

5. The Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality shall submit a report on gender equality in Georgia annually, and

prepares reports on the performance of its obligations assumed under international agreements with respect to gender equality. The Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality shall be authorized to represent the Parliament on gender equality issues in international relations, based on the relevant decision of the Parliament.

6. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament or, as tasked by him/her, one of the members of the Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality, shall serve as a chair of the Permanent Parliamentary Council of Gender Equality.

Article 77. The Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council

1. The goal of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council is to ensure parliamentary transparency and accountability based on open governance principles and the coordinated work of the Parliament in this direction.

2. The charter and composition of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council is approved by an order of the Chair (Speaker) of Parliament. The Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council shall elaborate and present for approval a charter to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. The Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council statute shall define the authority of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council, the rules of its operation, issues related to the organization of its work, its cooperation with representatives of civil society, issues related to organizing annual meetings of the Parliament and public organizations, as well as rules of oversight on the implementation of an action plan developed by the Executive Government of Georgia within the framework of open governance.

4. The number of members and the composition of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council is confirmed by the

Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on preliminary consultations with the Parliamentary factions.

5. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament or, as tasked by him/her, one of the members of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council shall serve as a chair of the Open Governance Permanent Parliamentary Council.

Article 78. The Council of Treasurers

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, within his/her competencies, oversees the financial activities in the Parliament by means of the Budget and Finance Committee as well as the Council of Treasurers which is intended to govern the targeted spending of the budget

2. The Council of Treasurers is an advisory body of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament determines the number of members and the composition of the Council of Treasurers based on preliminary consultations with parliamentary factions.

3. The powers of the Council of Treasurers and the rules governing its activities are determined by the Regulations of the Council of Treasurers, which is approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

Article 79. Joint Coordination Council

1. In order to coordinate the legislative processes of the Parliament, the Supreme Councils of the Autonomous Republics of Adjara and Abkhazia, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall issue an order on the establishment of a joint coordination council composed of representatives of the Parliament and the Supreme Councils of the Autonomous Republics of Adjara and Abkhazia.

2. The Joint Coordination Council consists of 6 members, 3 of which are appointed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and

3 of which are appointed by the Chairs of the Supreme Councils of the Autonomous Republics of Adjara and Abkhazia.

3. Sittings of the Joint Coordination Council without a voting right are chaired by Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, or one of his/her deputies.

4. Sittings of the Joint Coordination Council shall be held at least once every 3 months.

Article 80. State Commission

1. To define the various directions of the State's domestic and foreign policy, the Parliament is authorized to create a consultative body known as a state commission with a composition of representatives of different branches of power and persons with relevant competencies.

2. A person may be appointed as a member of a state commission only with his/her own consent.

3. A state commission shall be established by a decree of the Parliament. The same decree shall approve the charter of the relevant state commission that shall define its competencies, duration and the rules of its activities.

4. A state commission has a right to receive documents, records and other data necessary for its operation from state institutions.

5. The Office of the Parliament shall provide organizational and technical support of a state commission. The expenses of state commissions are covered from the budget of the Parliament.

Article 81. Restrictions on Sittings of Consultative Bodies

Sittings of consultative bodies shall not be held during regular session plenary sitting week.

CHAPTER IX

PARLIAMENTARY SESSIONS AND SITTINGS

Article 82. Regular and Special Sessions of the Parliament

1. The Parliament assembles for a regular or special session.
2. The Parliament assembles for a regular session twice a year, for spring and autumn sessions, according to the Constitution of Georgia and the rules set forth by the Rules of Procedure. The autumn session convenes on the first Tuesday of September and adjourns on the third Friday of December, and the spring session convenes on the first Tuesday of February and adjourns on the last Friday of June.
3. The national anthem of Georgia is performed at the opening and closing of a regular session.
4. A regular session of the Parliament shall be declared opened and closed accordingly at a sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament or a plenary sitting.
5. The Parliament assembles for a special session only between regular sessions of the Parliament and special sittings during a regular session.
6. A regular session of the Parliament does not need to be officially convened. A special session and sitting of the Parliament shall be convened in accordance with the rules envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure.
7. The President of Georgia convenes a special session during the period between sessions and convenes a special sitting during the current session upon the request of the Chair (Speaker) of the

Parliament, with at least one-quarter of the full composition of the Parliament or the Government of Georgia.

8. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, or at least one-quarter of the full composition of the Parliament shall submit a written request to convene a special session or sitting to the President of Georgia. A written request for a special sitting shall contain a list of matters to be considered during the special sitting, while a written request for a special session shall contain a tentative list of matters to be considered during the special session.

9. An act on convening of a special session or sitting shall be issued within 48 hours from the submission of a written request. Otherwise, the Parliament shall assemble based on a decision of the Chair (Speaker) of Parliament within 48 hours.

10. The Government of Georgia shall submit a request to convene a special session or sitting to the President of Georgia.

11. The President of Georgia shall convene a special session or sitting within the time specified in the request; MPs shall be notified personally concerning this decision.

12. When a special session is convened, its agenda shall be defined in accordance with a rule specified in Article 89 of the Rules of Procedure. A special sitting shall be convened only based on a pre-defined agenda and shall be closed once all issues on the agenda have been discussed.

13. A special session of the Parliament is planned in accordance with the plan developed by the Bureau of the Parliament, and the requirements defined within paragraphs 2-4 of Article 88 of this Rules of Procedure are applicable to a special sitting.

14. A special session or sitting should be adjourned at least a day before the beginning of the next regular session. The Parliament may add an issue or issues to the agenda of the regular session, the discussion of which was not completed at the special session.

Article 83. Extraordinary Session

1. The Parliament shall assemble for an extraordinary session immediately after the President of Georgia declares a state of emergency or martial law. If the aforementioned period coincides with a regular or special session, the Parliament continues to work in extraordinary session mode. An extraordinary session shall continue until the state of emergency ends according to the plan developed by the Bureau of the Parliament.

2. The Parliament shall discuss immediately, and vote without preliminary committee hearings and other relevant procedures, decrees of the President of Georgia concerning the declaration of a state of emergency or martial law and truce agreements, as well as issues related to use of defense forces and entry, and use and dislocation of military forces of another state in the country.

3. Decisions of the President of Georgia concerning the declaration of a state of emergency and martial law shall be discussed in accordance with the rules prescribed by Article 71 of the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure at an extraordinary sitting of the Parliament, with the following exceptions:

a) The President of Georgia or his/her special proxy shall be a main rapporteur;

b) The Prime Minister of Georgia or an authorized representative of the Government, representatives of committees and factions shall be co-reporters allocated 10 minutes each;

c) Debate is not held;

d) Only the President of Georgia, or his/her special proxy, and the Prime Minister of Georgia, or an authorized representative of the Government of Georgia, shall make a final speech.

4. In the event of agreement, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament signs a resolution of the Parliament on the approval of a declaration of a state of emergency or martial law, or concluding a truce agreement, and promulgates it.

5. If the Parliament does not approve the decision of the President of Georgia concerning the declaration of a state of emergency or martial law or a truce agreement, such a decision shall cease to have legal effect upon voting.

Article 84. Plenary Sitting Hall of the Parliament

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the sitting shall sit in the center of the presidium in the plenary sitting hall of the Parliament (hereinafter — sitting hall).

2. A special place is allocated for the President of Georgia in the sitting hall.

3. Entry of the President of Georgia into the sitting hall bears special importance and is announced by a Chief Mandaturi.

4. A platform for speechmakers is placed in front of the sitting presidium.

5. An MP may only sit in the place allocated for him/her in the sitting hall. A relevant place is allocated for each faction as well.

6. Special seats are allocated in the sitting hall for the members of the Government of Georgia, heads of other bodies of the executive branch of government and their deputies, for accredited representatives of the diplomatic corps in Georgia invited to the plenary session, official and honorable guests of the Parliament, responsible officials of the Office of the Parliament, representatives of mass media, and citizens who wish to attend the session according to the prescribed rules.

7. The dress code in the sitting hall shall be business style or national dress.

8. To learn about the work of the Parliament, public representatives may be invited to the sitting hall for the specified period by the decision of a Sitting Chair.

Article 85. The First Assembly of a Newly Elected Parliament

1. A newly elected Parliament is authorized to start its activity at its first sitting if the majority of all members of a newly elected Parliament are present (registered). The Office of the Parliament shall register MPs based on temporary certificates issued by the CEC. MPs confirm their presence at a sitting by signing a registration sheet.

2. The President of Georgia opens the first sitting of a newly elected Parliament. The Chair of the CEC shall attend the sitting.

3. The President of Georgia gives the floor to the eldest MP, who leads the sitting until the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament is elected.

4. State and public representatives may be invited to the first sitting of a newly elected Parliament.

Article 86. Temporary Vote-Counting Commission and Temporary Mandate Commission of the Parliament. Oath of an MP

At the first session of a newly elected Parliament, based on the results of preliminary consultations with political parties and the suggestion of the Chair of the CEC, in accordance with the principle of proportionality, from among MPs and by the majority of those present but with no less than one-fifth of a full composition of the Parliament, are elected:

a) The Temporary Vote-Counting Commission of the Parliament consisting of 11 members will choose a chair and a secretary from among its members by a majority of votes. The Temporary Vote-Counting Commission manages the preparation and distribution of ballots and voting procedures, supervises and counts votes during open or closed voting. The Temporary Vote-Counting Commission ceases its activities after completion of the agenda approved at the first sitting of the Parliament;

b) The Temporary Mandatory Commission of the Parliament consisting of 17 members will choose a chair and a secretary from among its members by a majority of votes.

2. The authority of the Temporary Mandatory Commission is terminated immediately after the formation of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules.

3. At the first session of a newly elected Parliament, the Chair of the CEC informs the Parliament of the results of the elections and hands over the necessary documentation (election protocols, materials on the results of elections, materials on the validity of their conduct, complaints received, statements on discovered facts of violation of election legislation, and activities incompatible with the status of an MP) to the Temporary Mandatory Commission for the confirmation of the authority of the MPs.

4. The Temporary Mandatory Commission studies the documentation referred to in paragraph 3 of this article and reports the results to the Parliament, which confirms the authority of MPs by decree according to the joint list presented by the Temporary Mandatory Commission.

5. The decree of the Parliament on confirmation of the authority of MPs shall not include the name of a person, the legitimacy of whose election:

a) Is appealed to the Constitutional Court of Georgia or in a common court;

b) Is doubted by the Temporary Mandatory Commission.

6. In a case provided for by paragraph 5 of this article:

a) According to subparagraph “a” of paragraph 5 of this article, the Parliament shall discuss the issue of confirming the authority of a person elected to the Parliament at its nearest plenary sitting based on the conclusion of the Temporary Mandatory Commission and after the formation of Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules based on its conclusion, provided

that the court does not rule that any circumstances had occurred hindering the election of a person to the position of MP;

b) According to subparagraph “b” of paragraph 5 of this article, the Temporary Mandatory Commission or the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall discuss the issue of confirming the authority of a person elected to the Parliament and prepares a relevant conclusion. The Parliament considers this conclusion at its nearest plenary sitting and makes an appropriate decision.

7. The Parliament shall acquire full authority from the moment that the authority of two-thirds of its members is recognized. From this moment, the authority of the previous Parliament is ceased.

8. If the number of MPs whose authority was confirmed by the Parliament amounts to less than two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament, the Parliament’s plenary sitting shall be suspended. The Chair of the CEC convenes a new sitting of a newly elected Parliament within 10 days after it becomes possible to raise the issue of confirming the authority of a sufficient number of persons elected in Parliament, which amounts to at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament. The issue of confirming the authority of these persons is regulated according to the rules determined by this article.

9. After the authority of at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament is confirmed, the MPs shall take an oath of loyalty to the country. The Chair of the CEC reads the text of the oath: “I, as a representative of all Georgia, accountable to my country, declare before God and the nation that I shall honestly perform the rights and duties of an MP, and that I shall serve to preserve the Constitutional system, independence, unity and integrity of my country, the interests of the people, the rights and freedoms of citizens and the might of Georgia.” After reading the text, MPs say “I swear” and sign the text of the oath, after which the national anthem is performed.

10. If confirmation of the authority of an MP is delayed, or s/he is elected in the second round or as a replacement of another MP, s/he reads the text of the oath and confirms it with his/her signature immediately after confirmation of his/her powers.

11. At the first meeting of the newly elected Parliament, MPs submit a relevant statement and documentation on the formation of factions, the Majority, and the Minority to the Temporary Mandatory Commission of the Parliament.

12. The Temporary Mandatory Commission informs the parliamentary session of the formation of factions, the Majority, and the Minority, unless the Temporary Mandatory Commission decides otherwise.

13. Immediately after the formation of factions, the Temporary Mandatory Commission of the Parliament shall prepare and submit to the factions the quotas of proportional representation of factions in the committees. The Temporary Mandatory Commission shall submit to the Parliament's nearest plenary sitting for the approval the quotas of proportional representation of the factions in the committees. The Parliament shall decide on the quotas by decree.

14. If upon creation a faction acquires the status of the Majority or the Minority, the Temporary Mandatory Commission shall register it.

Article 87. Sequence of Issues for Consideration at the First Sitting

1. As a rule, the newly elected Parliament considers issues in the following order:

- a) Election of the Chair (Speaker), the First Deputy Chair, and Deputy Chairs of the Parliament;
- b) Election of Committee Chairs according to the rules set by the Rules of Procedure.

2. An electronic voting system shall be used for voting at the first sitting of a newly elected Parliament. If necessary, the voting may be held by ballots.

3. The first sitting of a newly elected Parliament shall continue as long as the discussion of issues specified in paragraph “a” of this article is not completed according to the rules established by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 88. Two-week Cycle of an Ordinary Session

1. Sessions of the Parliament are planned in two-week cycles. The first week, except the first week of sittings of a newly elected Parliament, is dedicated to plenary sittings and the second week is dedicated to meetings with the electorate and committees’ work. Faction offices shall organize meetings with the electorate.

2. Regular plenary sessions of the Parliament, except during a state of emergency and/or martial law, are, as a rule, held from 12am to 7pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays of plenary sittings weeks; during these a break is announced from 3pm to 4pm. A plenary sitting can be prolonged until 9pm by the majority vote of those attending the sitting but with no less than one-fifth of full composition of the Parliament. A plenary sitting can be prolonged during the presentation of the annual report of the President of Georgia, a speech of the Prime Minister of Georgia, political debates, interpellation, discussion of a vote of confidence in the Government of Georgia, discussion of the report of the State Audit Office, the Public Defender, the Prosecutor General, and the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia until the discussion on relevant issues is completed.

3. As a rule, during the plenary working cycle of a regular session, plenary sittings are not held on Mondays and on holidays established by law. The Bureau of the Parliament shall decide to hold a sitting on Monday and on holidays established by law during the week of plenary sittings.

4. If necessary, the Parliament may change its work schedule by the majority of votes of present MPs, but with no less than one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament.

5. As a rule, in the year of the parliamentary, presidential or local self-government elections, Parliament's plenary sittings are not held for a period of one month before elections. If necessary, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament may convene plenary sittings during this period under his/her initiative or upon the request of one-quarter of the full composition of the Parliament if this period coincides with the plenary working cycle of a regular session. In other cases, a plenary sitting is convened and conducted according to the rules determined for special sittings in Article 82 of the Rules of Procedure.

6. After the election day of a new Parliament, the regular sittings of the previous Parliament are not held and an extraordinary session, special session or special sitting is held only on the issues determined by paragraph 2 of Article 39, paragraph 3 of Article 44, Article 71 and paragraphs 2-4 of Article 72 of the Constitution of Georgia. A decision on the respective issue is made according to the rules determined by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 89. Agenda of a Plenary Sitting

1. The Bureau of the Parliament prepares the draft agenda of the plenary sittings of the session week of the Parliament based on the list of draft laws and other issues for discussion.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to put an issue on the draft agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament if the terms of committee discussions determined by the Rules of Procedure are not violated.

3. The Minority, a faction not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority, or an independent MP have the right to request a certain period of time for consideration of a law initiated by them, or de-

cree or other act of the Parliament, during the first half of Friday of the last week of each month's plenary sessions, according to the rules established by the Rules of Procedure. The Bureau of the Parliament is obliged to put the issue on the agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament as provided for by the Rules of Procedure. The issue is discussed according to the rules of discussion of the relevant issue as established by the Rules of Procedure.

4. A chair of a plenary sitting presents a draft agenda that is approved by a majority of votes of present MPs, by an open vote/hand raising. Upon the decision of a Sitting Chair, it is allowed to change the sequence of issues on the agenda, to discuss an extra issue, or to conduct a joint discussion on issues that are interrelated or alike.

5. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and an MP shall be given the floor for 3 minutes in relation to an agenda of a plenary sitting. The time allocated cannot be prolonged.

6. If the Government of Georgia, an MP, a faction, the Minority or the Majority request to include an issue or remove an issue from an agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament, the chair of the sitting explains why the issue was not included in, or removed from, the agenda, after which it is obligatory to put the issue to vote. The decision on including an issue in the agenda or removing an issue from the agenda is made without discussion by a majority of votes of the MPs present, but with no less than one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament. The issue may be included in the agenda if the aforementioned issue has passed the relevant procedures as determined by the Rules of Procedure.

7. Draft laws and submissions of the Government of Georgia shall be discussed at a plenary session without observing the set sequence if the Government so requests.

Article 90. Chair of a Plenary Session

1. Parliamentary sittings are, as a rule, led by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. If s/he does not lead a sitting, one of his/her deputies shall be assigned to chair the sitting by the oral or written order of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. A Sitting Chair shall lead a sitting fairly and impartially.

2. A Sitting Chair shall:

- a) Notify the Parliament about the opening and the end of a sitting;
- b) Lead the consideration of issues;
- c) Ensure observance of the Rules of Procedure;
- d) Give the floor to the Speaker as set forth by the Rules of Procedure;
- e) Put issues to vote and declare results of voting;
- f) Sign the protocol decisions adopted at a sitting;
- g) In cases determined by paragraphs 19 of Article 224 of the Rules of Procedure, terminate the speech of a speaker, Warn, request an MP or invited guest to leave the sitting hall.
- h) In the cases specified by the Rules of Procedure, suspend a sitting or declare a break;
- i) If necessary, put to vote a motion to end debate and to organize a consultative meeting with the participation of the parties involved while a draft law is under consideration;
- j) Conduct rating examination regarding separate issues and suggest the authors to withdraw less feasible proposals if there are numerous issues to put to vote or if necessary
- k) Exercise other powers specified by the Rules of Procedure.

3. A Sitting Chair may participate in the discussion of issues according to the rules specified by the Rules of Procedure. S/he shall resume the performance of his/her duties after s/he finishes his/her presentation.

4. A Sitting Chair does not have the right to: comment on a speech/address of an MP or interrupt his/her speech for this purpose; evaluate a speech of an MP; or to answer a question not addressed to him/her personally, unless an MP violates the requirements of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 91. Registration for Plenary Sitzings / Valid Excuse for Absence at a Sitting.

1. A plenary sitting is authorized if the majority of the full composition of the Parliament is present.

2. Registration of MPs shall be held before the opening of the morning sitting, as well as before voting.

3. If necessary, based on a decision of a Sitting Chair, after registration the results of the registration are confirmed by the Chief Mandaturi, who is personally responsible for the validity of the information s/he is providing.

4. If registration results and information provided by the Chief Mandaturi cause doubts, the Majority, the Minority, a faction not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority and a Group of six MPs can request verification of registration results by reading the names of the persons registered. The Parliament shall decide to hold a new registration only if the number of questioned votes changes the final result of the registration. In such a case, the decision is made by the majority of present MPs but with no less than one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament.

5. If at the opening of a plenary sitting of the Parliament according to registration results the necessary number of MPs is not present in the Sitting Hall, the chair of the sitting holds a new registration within 15 minutes of the first registration. If the number of MPs is still not sufficient after a second registration, within the next 45 minutes the Sitting Chair holds a new registration. If the number of MPs is still not sufficient after a third registration, an-

other registration shall be held with the same procedure during an evening sitting. In special cases, the Sitting Chair is authorized to make another decision.

6. Before each morning sitting, the leaders of the Majority and the Minority and the chairs of factions, or in their absence their deputies, shall provide in writing to the Chief Mandaturi a reason for the absence of any MPs affiliated with their corresponding entities from the plenary sitting. An MP, who is not affiliated with the Majority, the Minority or a faction, shall personally notify the Chief Mandaturi in writing of the reason(s) behind the absence from a sitting before registration.

7. If the persons specified in paragraph 6 of this article do not submit information to the Chief Mandaturi, the absence of an MP shall be considered as unjustified.

8. An MP shall register in accordance with the rules set forth by the Rules of Procedure. If an MP registers at least once during a day of plenary sitting, s/he will not be deemed to be absent from a sitting. Violation of the requirements of this article will result in liability under paragraphs 12 and 13 of Article 224 of the Rules of Procedure.

9. If the Majority, the Minority, a faction, or an independent MP, refuses to participate in a discussion and decision-making because of political considerations (boycott), the absence of an MP shall not be considered as unjustified. A relevant statement shall be presented to a Sitting Chair or an oral statement shall be issued after the completion of registration.

10. Valid grounds for the absence of an MP from a plenary session are illness (evidenced by an illness certificate), official mission, birth, death, illness of a family member (evidenced by a medical certificate). The chair of a faction (Deputy Chair) should be notified about these grounds before a sitting. For the purposes of this article, “family member” means a spouse, direct lineal ascendant and/or descendant, stepchild, or sibling.

11. If a plenary sitting has been missed by an MP due to meetings with delegations of foreign countries on official visits to Georgia, the sitting shall not be considered to have been missed or the absence of the MP shall not be considered as unjustified, based on the written statement of the MP if there is written consent from the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

12. Within 3 days after the completion of each month, the Chief Mandaturi shall notify the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of data on the registration of attendance of MPs at plenary sittings and written submissions concerning reasons for absence.

Article 92. Plenary Sitting

1. Plenary sittings of the Parliament are public unless specified as closed. Mass media representatives accredited according to the established rules have the right to attend public sittings.

2. Public sittings are broadcasted live on TV and radio.

3. The President of Georgia, the Prime Minister of Georgia, other Members of the Government of Georgia, their deputies, the Chair of the Constitutional Court of Georgia, the Chair of the Supreme Court of Georgia, the General Auditor, the Prosecutor General, the President of National Bank of Georgia, the Parliamentary Secretary of the President of Georgia, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Government of Georgia and the Public Defender are entitled to attend plenary sittings of the Parliament under their own initiative.

4. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament has the right to invite representatives of the public and foreign guests to sittings. They shall take specially allocated seats in the Sitting Hall.

5. While considering issues that require secrecy, the President of Georgia, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the Prime Minister of Georgia, other Members of the Government of Georgia, factions and committees can propose that a plenary sitting of the Parliament be declared closed in whole or partially. The decision is

regarded as adopted if the majority of present MPs, but with no less than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament, supports it.

6. A chair of a plenary sitting shall determine the list of persons who may attend a closed sitting.

7. A chair of a sitting notifies the attendees about the start of a plenary sitting of the Parliament with two strokes of a gavel, and notifies attendees of its end with three strokes. The start and end of any other procedure are marked with one stroke. The Mandaturi Service helps the Sitting Chair to keep order in the Sitting Hall.

8. Except MPs, only Mandaturis, as well as responsible staff of the Parliament who wear a special badge, have the right to be present in the Sitting Hall during a plenary sitting of the Parliament. A member of a committee office responsible for the issue under consideration, as well as an initiator of an issue under consideration, and rapporteur/co-rapporteur may enter the Sitting Hall during a plenary sitting.

Article 93. Political Debates

1. Upon the request of one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament, a day of political debates is designated at least once a month.

2. During political debates, the Majority and the Minority shall each be granted 45 minutes for a speech, with each faction given 15 minutes, while an MP willing to express a different opinion is given 5 minutes if the Rules of Procedure do not provide otherwise. Independent MPs shall take the floor first, followed by the representatives of factions, the Minority and the Majority in this sequence. A faction, the Majority and the Minority shall decide the number of speakers and the periods of time allocated to them. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to alter the sequence of the speakers upon the agreement of subjects defined within this paragraph. An MP does not have a right to transfer the time allocated for his/her

speech to another MP. It is not allowed to increase the amount of time allocated for speakers.

3. At the end of political debates, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament has the right to exercise his right to conduct a 15-minute speech.

Article 94. Political Statements

1. On Tuesday of a plenary sitting week, except extraordinary sittings, after the adoption of an agenda, each MP is given the floor for statements for 30 minutes according to the rules prescribed by this article. Each MP can make a statement for no more than 4 minutes. At the same time, an PM can use no more than 1 minute to make an additional statement. It is not permitted to prolong these periods of time.

2. Before the adoption of the agenda, the MPs sign up for statements in the secretariat and this list is submitted to the Sitting Chair (Speaker) of the sitting. MPs can personally sign up during the statement period. The order of the speaker is determined according to the time they signed up for it. Following the order of statements is mandatory. It is inadmissible to make a statement without the Sitting Chair's permission. An MP can sign up for a statement only once. If an MP does not attend the sitting during his/her turn, s/he does not have the right to make a statement later. An MP who has signed up for the statement cannot give his/her time to another MP.

3. If during the adoption of the agenda no MP addresses the secretariat to make a statement, the MP statement procedure during the plenary sitting will not be held, upon which the Sitting Chair informs the plenary sitting.

4. In some cases the Sitting Chair (Speaker) is eligible to allocate time for statements during other days of the session week. In such cases, the time allocated for the statements shall not exceed

3 minutes, and the overall time shall not exceed 30 minutes. In addition, an MP has the right to make a statement only once.

Article 95. Voting

1. The time of the beginning of the voting procedure shall be announced no later than 30 minutes in advance.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the plenary sitting is eligible to make a statement only on exceptional issues. The length of the statement shall not exceed 10 minutes.

3. Registration of MPs is held before the voting procedure. If the required number of MPs for voting is not present at a sitting, the Sitting Chair declares time of a postponed voting.

4. If a suggestion to postpone the vote is made, it must be put to vote in the first place. A decision is made by the majority of present MPs but with no less than one-fifth of enlisted members.

5. 1-minute statements are allowed during the voting procedures only on procedural issues of voting. The Minority and the Majority have the right to make 1-minute statement on procedural issues four times, a faction, which is not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority has the right to do this twice, and an independent MP has the right to do this once.

6. Upon the request of a faction(s), a break for 5 minutes may be declared only once before the commencement of a voting procedure.

7. The MPs shall not leave the Sitting Hall during the voting procedure.

8. An MP's vote is personal. It is prohibited to transfer his/her right to vote or voting card to another person.

9. If an MP did not participate in voting, s/he has no right to vote on that issue after results of the voting are announced.

Article 96. Form of Voting

1. Voting at a plenary sitting of the Parliament is open (hand raising, printing out names by an electronic voting system, nominative ballots — nominative voting in cases envisaged by the Rules of Procedure), or secret (with ballot papers or using an electronic voting system in cases envisaged by the Rules of Procedure).

2. Voting is always open except for cases envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia and other legislative acts.

3. Before a secret ballot, a Sitting Chair shall announce the form of voting.

Article 97. Counting of Votes

1. When a secret vote is held with ballots, the vote-counting commission or the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules decides on the location of voting and the form of ballot.

2. If an electronic voting system does not receive a signal from an MP's voting card, his/her vote will be counted as valid if this is confirmed before the results of voting are announced. If it is confirmed that a statement was made for the purpose of falsification of voting results, it will not affect results. If, after announcement of results, it is confirmed that an electronic voting system did not receive a signal from an MP's voting card or another MP's voting card was used and this vote is decisive, a new vote shall be held.

3. A well-reasoned statement of doubt about the results of voting submitted by a faction, a Group of six MPs, the Minority or the Majority should be immediately presented to a Sitting Chair, who transfers the statement to the Chief Mandaturi for review. The Chief Mandaturi shall review the case and immediately submit his/her conclusion to the Parliament. If the conclusion proves a forgery of votes, a new voting procedure is held only if the number of dubious votes changes the outcome of the first voting procedure. It is prohibited to hold another voting procedure before the dispute on

forged voting is settled. If doubts concerning results of the voting expressed by a faction, a Group of six MPs, the Minority or the Majority are not proved after review, then the relevant faction, Group of six MPs, the Minority or the Majority cannot request the examination of results of other voting procedures on the same day.

4. A chair of a plenary sitting presents the results of all voting procedures to the Parliament. The results are posted on the website of the Parliament.

5. An MP immediately informs the Office of the Parliament if s/he loses a voting card. In this case, a temporary voting card shall be given to the MP.

Article 98. Inadmissibility of Alteration of the Final Decision of the Parliament

It is not allowed to alter a law or decree adopted by the Parliament after the final vote. Such behavior shall result in responsibility specified by law.

CHAPTER X

LAW-MAKING PROCESS

Article 99. Submission of a Legislative Initiative

1. The law-making process starts with the drafting and submitting, inter alia through official electronic resources, a bill to the Parliament by a subject granted the right of legislative initiative.

2. According to Article 45 of the Constitution of Georgia, the right of legislative initiative is granted to the Government of Georgia, an MP, a committee, a faction, the supreme representative bodies of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjara, at least 25,000 voters.

3. Only the Government of Georgia is authorized to submit to the Parliament draft laws on the State Budget and structure and rules of operation of the Government.

4. Only an MP, a committee and a faction are authorized to submit to the Parliament a draft of the Rules of Procedure.

5. If the Government of Georgia, or the organization of an executive branch or a Legal Entity of Public Law under a state oversight body, is an author of a draft law, the latter cannot be initiated by an MP, a faction or a committee.

Article 100. Legislative Plan of the Government

1. The Government of Georgia is obliged to present its short-term plan on legislative activities to the Parliament twice a year, one per parliamentary session. The short-term law-making plan for legislative activities for a spring session shall be submitted by no later than 31 January, and a plan for an autumn session by no later than 31 August.

2. A legislative initiative of the Government of Georgia that was not included in a short-term plan for legislative amendments shall be accompanied by a justification for why the act was not included in the plan.

Article 101. General Rules of Review of a Draft Law

1. A draft law is submitted to the Parliament by legislative initiative shall pass the following procedures:

a) It is transferred to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament for registration;

b) The Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament transfers the draft law to the Legal Department and Budget Office of the Office of the Parliament to prepare a conclusion as provided for by paragraph 5 of Article 102 of the Rules of Procedure. Afterwards, the Organizational Department submits the draft law together with conclusions from the Legal Department and Budget Office to the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament, providing that the draft was submitted before the Thursday of the previous week;

c) The Bureau of the Parliament decides on the commencement of procedures for discussion of the draft law at its nearest sitting; at the same time, it transfers the draft law to a leading committee, other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament, and the Government of Georgia. A draft law regulating the activities of financial sector representatives shall also be submitted to the National Bank of Georgia;

d) After being discussed by the leading committee and other committees, together with relevant conclusions, the draft law is transferred to the Bureau of the Parliament for its inclusion in the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting for consideration and voting at the first hearing;

e) After the first hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, the draft law is transferred to a leading committee to incorporate the comments from discussion at the first hearing into the draft law and to prepare it for consideration and voting at the second hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament;

f) After the draft law is adopted at the first hearing, a leading committee shall discuss it at the second hearing of its sub-paragraphs, paragraphs (parts), articles, chapters and/or books to prepare it for discussion at the second hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament;

g) After discussion by a leading committee, the draft law, together with relevant conclusions and alternative proposals, shall be submitted to the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament to be included in the agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament for consideration and voting at the second hearing;

h) After being considered and adopted at the second hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, the draft law shall be submitted to a leading committee to prepare it for the third hearing;

i) After the draft law is adopted at the second hearing, a leading committee shall incorporate comments from the second hearing into the draft law and submit it to the Bureau of the Parliament to be included in the agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament for review and voting at the third hearing;

j) After consideration at the third hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, the final edited draft law shall be put to vote to adopt a final version;

k) After the draft law is adopted at the third hearing, it shall be submitted to the President of Georgia for signature.

2. The leading committee, defined by the Bureau of the Parliament holds the sitting to review the draft law, leads the proper procedures of parliamentary discussion of the draft law to prepare

it for consideration at first, second and third hearings at the Parliament's plenary sitting and is responsible for adherence thereof.

3. An initiator of a draft law may withdraw it provided s/he submits justifications before the draft law is adopted at the first hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

4. In cases where the draft law is initiated by two or more MPs the draft law will be considered as withdrawn from the Parliament based on the written request of all MPs who initiated the draft law.

5. In the event of the termination of an MP's authority ahead of time, the leading committee will assign the rapporteur on legislative initiative submitted by him/her that is adopted at the first hearing. A leading committee shall inform the Bureau of the Parliament about such a case. The draft laws envisaged by this paragraph that are not adopted by the first hearing shall be considered as rejected.

6. The Parliament may adopt a draft law that results in an increase of budgetary costs, or a decrease in income in a current fiscal year, or new financial commitments of the State, only after the Government of Georgia gives consent; a draft law with financial implications for the next fiscal year shall be adopted only with the consent of the Government of Georgia or within the framework of the Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD) submitted by the Government to the Parliament.

7. A committee shall discuss the draft law submitted by the Government of Georgia at its next sitting if it requires extraordinary consideration.

Article 102. Initiation of Consideration of a Draft Law and its Preparation for Committee Hearings

1. A draft law prepared and presented by a subject having the right of legislative initiative is submitted to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament in the form of a Hard copy

or machine-readable electronic format; the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament records and registers it.

2. The date of registration of a draft law at the Organizational Department of Office of the Parliament developed by a subject with the right of legislative initiative is defined as the date of its submission to the Parliament.

3. A draft law submitted by the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament to the Bureau of the Parliament in line with paragraph “b” of Article 101 of the Rules of Procedure shall be accompanied with a draft decision of the Bureau of the Parliament concerning the commencement of discussion of a draft law that should be prepared by the Legal and Organizational Departments of the Office of the Parliament; a draft decision shall indicate:

- a) The title of the draft;
- b) The initiator of the draft;
- c) The author of the draft;
- d) The date of submission of the draft to the Parliament;
- e) The leading committee;
- f) The tentative period of committee discussion of the draft law;

g) A list of other committees’ conclusions, which should be attached to the draft law;

h) The tentative date of discussion of the draft law at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

4. The Bureau of the Parliament decides on the commencement of discussion procedures concerning the draft law and issues referred to in sections “e” -“h” of paragraph 3 of this article.

5. The Legal Department of the Parliament checks the compliance of a submitted draft law with the subparagraphs “a” and “c-f” of paragraph 1 and paragraphs 2-4 of Article 17 of the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts; the Budget Office of the Parliament checks for its compliance with subparagraph “b” of paragraph 1 of Article 17 of

the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts. If a submitted draft law does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned paragraphs of the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts, based on a well-reasoned conclusion of the Legal Department and/or the Budget Office of the Parliament, the Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to return a draft law to an initiator to eliminate its imperfections.

6. The Budget Office of the Parliament may present additional information concerning issues specified in subparagraph “b” of paragraph 1 of Article 17 of the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts after discussion of a draft law has commenced and before the first hearing.

7. If the Government of Georgia requests discussion of a draft law ahead of schedule, the Bureau of the Parliament determines the terms for the parliamentary discussion of the draft law and transfers it to a leading committee.

8. After the Bureau of the Parliament decides on the commencement of the procedure of discussing a draft law, it is submitted to committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, the Legal Department of Office of the Parliament, as well as to the Government of Georgia and to independent MPs, and is posted on the Parliament’s website.

9. Any person can express his/her opinion as a comment to receive public consultations regarding the draft law, or its separate articles/paragraphs published on the Parliament’s website.

10. If it is impossible to prepare a draft law for parliamentary discussion within the determined time, the Bureau of the Parliament shall extend the term of its discussion, if necessary.

Article 103. Conclusions of the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament and the Budget Office

1. A draft law submitted to a plenary sitting shall be accompanied with information provided by the Organizational Department

of the Office of the Parliament and the conclusions of the Legal Department of Office of the Parliament and the Budget Office of the Parliament.

2. The Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament shall prepare its conclusion regarding the following issues:

a) Compliance with, or possible contradiction of, the draft law with Georgian legislation and universally recognized norms of international law;

b) Whether the new law shall be adopted;

c) Compliance with, and possible contradiction of, the draft law with the commitments of Georgia under international treaties;

d) Whether a list of normative acts that are to be abolished and a list of the normative acts that are required to be amended, is thorough (comprehensive);

e) Compliance of the draft law with the legislation of the European Union.

3. The Budget Office of the Parliament prepares its conclusion regarding the following issues:

a) The impact of the draft law on the revenue part of the budget;

b) The impact of the draft law on the expenditure part of the budget;

c) New financial commitments of the State.

Article 104. Rule of Consideration of Draft Laws Submitted to the Previous Convocation of the Parliament

1. No later than 6 months after the first sitting of the current convocation of the Parliament, committees of a newly elected Parliament shall make a list of draft laws that had been submitted for discussion to the previous convocation of the Parliament (according to leading committees), the discussion of which the committees

consider reasonable and the list is presented to the Bureau of the Parliament for consideration. The Bureau of the Parliament submits this issue for a decision to a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

2. The Parliament makes a decision by a decree concerning the reasonability of the continuation of the consideration procedure of a draft law submitted to the previous convocation of the Parliament.

3. If a decision is made to continue its consideration, the relevant leading committee shall be considered as the initiator. If necessary, the Parliament is authorized to determine a leading committee.

4. Draft laws, that the Parliament considers reasonable to discontinue consideration of, shall be considered as withdrawn from the Parliament.

Article 105. Legislative Proposal

1. A legislative proposal is a well-reasoned appeal submitted to the Parliament in hard copy or electronic format by a subject not having a right of legislative initiative, drawn up according to established rules concerning the adoption, amendment or abolition of a law.

2. A legislative proposal may be submitted by citizens of Georgia, state bodies (except organizations of the executive branch and legal entities of public law under executive branch), and bodies of local self-government, political and public unions registered in Georgia according to the established rules, and other legal entities.

3. A legislative proposal should be submitted as a draft law and/or the main principles of a proposed law or specific proposals. The legislative proposal shall include the author's justification of its need. The legislative proposal shall also include the reason and essence of the amendment, as well as the author's signature, address and contact phone number.

4. A legislative proposal shall be submitted to the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall transfer a legislative proposal to a leading committee (as well as other committees, if necessary), which shall discuss the draft law within 30 days of its submission. If the legislative proposal is not discussed within this term, the Bureau of the Parliament may prolong the term by no more than 30 days upon the request of the leading committee. If a legislative proposal is also transferred to another committee, it submits its conclusion on this legislative proposal to a leading committee within 20 days of its submission.

5. The author of a legislative proposal may be invited to a committee sitting during its discussion. A Sitting Chair shall present a legislative proposal at a committee sitting.

6. Based on a committee discussion, with a well-reasoned decision, the legislative proposal can be considered as accepted or rejected. A committee reports its decision concerning the legislative proposal to the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament.

7. The period envisaged by paragraph 5 of Article 88 of the Rules of Procedure and periods between parliamentary sessions are not considered when the term of consideration of a legislative proposal under paragraph 4 of this article is calculated.

8. If a legislative proposal is presented as the main principles of a proposed draft law or specific proposals, and a leading committee considers it acceptable, in agreement with the Bureau of the Parliament, the committee shall draft a draft law and submit it to the Bureau of the Parliament according to the rules determined by the Rules of Procedure.

9. If a legislative proposal is presented as a draft law and a leading committee considers it acceptable, the draft law shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament according to the rules and term determined by the Rules of Procedure.

10. The author of a legislative proposal may withdraw it before a committee's consideration.

11. If a legislative proposal is accepted, the leading committee shall be considered the subject having the right of legislative initiative.

Article 106. Rapporteur and Co-Rapporteur of a Draft Law

1. An MP shall present at a committee sitting a draft law initiated by him/her; a person authorized by the Government shall present at a committee sitting a draft law initiated by the Government of Georgia; a chair of a faction or committee and/or appointed representative shall present at a committee sitting a draft law initiated by a faction or a committee; a member of the Supreme Representative Bodies of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjara who is appointed by a respective body shall present at a committee sitting a draft law initiated by a relevant body; an appointed member of an initiative group shall present at a committee sitting a draft law initiated by an initiative group of citizens.

2. At a plenary sitting, a parliamentary secretary of the Government of Georgia shall be a rapporteur (co-rapporteur) of a draft law initiated by the Government of Georgia only if the Government of Georgia does not appoint a relevant minister or deputy minister/ministers as a rapporteur (co-rapporteur) by a relevant administrative-legal act. A person determined by paragraph 1 of this article shall be a rapporteur of a draft law initiated by a faction, committee, MP, the Supreme Representative Body of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjara and initiative group of citizens; a representative of a relevant committee shall be a co-rapporteur of a draft law initiated by an initiative group of citizens.

3. It is not allowed to appoint an MP as a rapporteur on a draft law initiated by the Government of Georgia.

4. A relevant representative of the Government may be a co-rapporteur on a draft law initiated by an MP, a faction or a committee.

5. If a rapporteur is not present in the Sitting Hall at the moment of commencement of consideration of a draft law (or other act), the latter shall be removed from the agenda and moved to the agenda of the next plenary sitting. The absence of a co-rapporteur does not hamper the consideration of a draft law.

6. In the case of the absence of a representative of the President of Georgia for the review of a draft law initiated by the President, the comments shall be discussed omitting the report of the representative of the President and question-answer stage

Article 107. General Procedures of Committee Consideration of a Draft Law

1. No earlier than 3 days and no later than 3 weeks after the Bureau of the Parliament decides to commence consideration of a draft law, the Government of Georgia, parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs and the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament present their comments regarding the draft law to a leading committee. If these subjects do not present their comments within the determined term, it will be considered as accepted that they approve the draft law.

2. No earlier than 3 days and no later than 5 weeks after the Bureau of the Parliament decides to commence consideration of a draft law, a leading committee convenes a committee sitting (except for cases of consideration of a draft law in an accelerated or simplified manner). A sitting of a leading committee shall be convened after the committees' conclusions of which is mandatory by the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament, and the Government of Georgia submits its remarks concerning the draft to the committee within the term prescribed by paragraph 1 of this article.

3. The opinions/remarks made before the discussion of the draft law or its separate articles/paragraphs published on the Parliament's website are submitted to the leading committee chair that, if needed, introduces these to the committee members during the discussion of the draft law at the committee sitting. If the committee accepts the opinions/remarks, these shall be reflected in the committee's conclusion.

4. A remark concerning a draft law made during a committee sitting shall be considered to be accepted if a rapporteur agrees with it or if the committee considers it to be accepted based on number of votes cast . To put a remark to vote, it should be submitted as an alternative proposal or in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article.

5. After discussion at a committee sitting, a draft law may be deemed ready, not fully ready, or unacceptable for discussion at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. Even if deemed not fully ready or unacceptable by a committee, a plenary sitting may commence its consideration. If an initiator cannot submit a report on the initiative to a committee for the first hearing within the term prescribed by the Rules of Procedure, the initiative shall be considered as withdrawn.

6. It is prohibited to present a draft law to a plenary sitting of the Parliament without a leading committee's conclusion except for cases envisaged within paragraph 8 of this article. If within the term determined by the Bureau of the Parliament the leading committee fails to hold a sitting and present its position regarding the draft law, the initiator of the draft law may request that the leading committee discuss it or request that the Bureau of the Parliament put the draft law on the agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament without a conclusion of the leading committee.

7. If within the term prescribed by this article, a leading committee fails to hold a sitting and present its conclusion, based on

a well-reasoned proposal of a Committee Chair, the Bureau of the Parliament may determine a new term for a committee's discussion of the draft law. If the leading committee fails to hold a sitting and present its conclusion regarding the draft law within the new term, the initiator is authorized to request again that the leading committee holds a discussion on the draft law or request that the Bureau of the Parliament includes the draft law in the agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament without a conclusion of the leading committee. If the leading committee violates the term defined for consideration of the draft law, the Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to discuss this fact and raise the issue of liability of the relevant Committee Chair.

8. In the cases provided for by paragraphs 6 and 7 of this article, the Bureau of the Parliament shall include the draft law on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting of the Parliament. If during a relevant session period the initiator of the draft law does not raise the issue of further discussion of the draft law before the Bureau of the Parliament, the draft law is considered as withdrawn; this information shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament by the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament.

9. A decision of a leading committee on a draft law shall be reflected in the conclusion of the committee, which is signed by the Committee Chair.

10. After the leading committee sitting, the draft law shall be submitted with the signature of a relevant Committee Chair to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament to include it in the agenda of the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. In addition, the draft law should also be signed by the responsible person for the draft law from the Office of the Committee.

11. The draft law presented to the Bureau of the Parliament shall include a conclusion of a leading committee as well as the conclusions presented by other committees, factions, the Majority,

the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliamentary Office, the Budget Office of the Parliament and other authorized subjects, and a record of the status of incorporation of their comments in the draft law.

12. After discussion by the leading committee, the draft law shall be posted on the Parliament's website and a clearly visible version of the amendments thereto

Article 108. Alternative Draft Law

1. A subject with a right of legislative initiative according to the Rules of Procedure may submit an alternative legislative initiative after the Bureau of the Parliament decides on the commencement of consideration of a draft law and before its first hearing. An alternative draft law shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament that submits the draft law to the leading committee that is discussing the main draft law. The alternative draft law shall be discussed at a sitting of the leading committee together with the main draft law.

2. An alternative draft law should essentially differ from the main draft law.

3. The leading committee, with the consent of an initiator of an alternative draft law, decides on presenting a unified version at the first hearing. If an agreement has not been reached, the main and the alternative draft laws shall be presented at the first hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. The Parliament, by decree, decides to accept or reject one of them as a basis for discussion.

4. The rapporteur of the main draft law takes the floor first, followed by the rapporteur of the alternative draft law when considering the issue defined by paragraph 3 of this article. The duration of each presenter's speech shall not exceed 10 minutes, after which the proper draft decree is voted on.

Article 109. Alternative Proposal

1. An alternative proposal may be submitted on separate norms of a draft law. A committee, a faction, the Majority, the Minority and an independent MP all has the right to submit an alternative proposal.

2. An alternative proposal on separate norms of a draft law should be submitted in writing before 6pm the day before the second hearing of the relevant draft law is to be conducted at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. An alternative proposal shall be submitted to a leading committee and the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament.

3. An alternative proposal concerning a draft law shall be considered as adopted if a rapporteur approves it. If a rapporteur does not agree with the alternative proposal, a leading committee or a plenary sitting of the Parliament shall decide whether to accept or reject alternative proposals concerning each norm of a draft law. In the case of a rejection of the alternative proposal by the leading committee, the alternative proposal is submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament together with the conclusion of the leading committee.

Article 110. Rule of Consideration of a Draft Law in Three Hearings

1. The Parliament shall discuss the draft law in three hearings, except for cases envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure.

2. At the first hearing of a draft law, its basic principles and main provisions are discussed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

3. At the second hearing of a draft law at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, its sub-paragraphs, paragraphs (parts), articles, chapters and/or books are discussed and the draft law as a whole is put to a vote. A Sitting Chair shall decide the form of its consideration

(by sub-paragraphs, paragraphs (parts) articles, chapters and/or books) at the second hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament based on the proposal of a leading committee.

4. At the third hearing of a draft law, only editorial corrections are allowed.

Article 111. First Hearing Consideration of a Draft Law at a Plenary Sitting of the Parliament

1. Consideration of a draft law at a plenary sitting of the Parliament starts with its first hearing consideration, except for cases considered by the Rules of Procedure.

2. Consideration of a draft law at the first hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament starts with a speech of its initiator or his/her designated representative.

3. Speeches of a rapporteur on a draft law at a plenary sitting of the Parliament shall not exceed 20 minutes. If necessary, this time may be prolonged by up to 10 minutes by a decision of the Sitting Chair.

4. During the consideration of a draft law at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, the rapporteur, along with other issues, reminds the sitting of comments (indicating the author of the comments), made before consideration at a plenary sitting, which were incorporated in the draft law, and those which were not, accompanied by an indication of why the comments were/were not included.

5. After the rapporteur finishes his/her speech, MPs may ask him/her questions regarding the draft law. The time allocated to each author of a question shall not exceed 2 minutes. He/she can also use no more than 1 minute to specify the question. An MP may take the floor for a question and specify it only once. The Sitting Chair has the right, if necessary, to make a decision on the termination of questioning.

6. After the questions are asked, the rapporteur has the right to answer all of them together. The length of his/her answer shall not exceed 20 minutes.

7. After the rapporteur finishes his/her speech, a co-rapporteur shall take the floor. His/her speech shall not exceed 15 minutes. After the co-rapporteur finishes his/her speech, MPs may ask him/her questions regarding the draft law. An author of each question may take the floor only once for no more than 2 minutes. After the questions have been asked, the co-rapporteur has the right to answer all of them together. The length of his/her answer shall not exceed 15 minutes.

8. After a co-rapporteur finishes his/her speech, a representative of a leading committee, unless s/he is not a co-rapporteur, and representatives of other committees take the floor. Time allocated for a speech of a representative of a leading committee shall not exceed 10 minutes, and for representatives of other committees this shall not exceed 5 minutes.

9. After the representatives of leading and other committees finish their speeches, separate MPs take the floor. The speeches of each of them shall not exceed 3 minutes. In addition, the MPs personally register in the list of speakers before the rapporteur finishes his/her speech. The chair of the plenary sitting of the Parliament defines the sequence of the MPs according to the order they were registered in the list. It is obligatory to follow the sequence of the speakers. It is prohibited to take the floor without the permission of the Sitting Chair. In addition, an MP may register in the list only once. An MP, who is registered in the list and attends the sitting at a time when his/her turn comes, does not have a right to transfer the time allocated for his/her speech to another MP. If the MP does not attend the sitting when his/her turn comes, s/he cannot take the floor regarding this issue.

10. After the MPs finish their speeches, the representatives of the relevant factions take the floor, who are not affiliated with the

Majority or the Minority, the representatives of the Minority and the Majority in this order, and present to the plenary sitting of the Parliament their position regarding the general principles and main provisions of the presented draft law. The speech of a representative of a faction shall not exceed 10 minutes, and the speech of a representative of the Minority or the Majority shall not exceed 15 minutes.

11. The rapporteur, co-rapporteur, and representatives of committees, factions, the Minority, and the Majority shall deliver a speech from the tribune in front of the presidium in the Sitting Hall.

12. After the speeches of representatives of factions, the Minority and the Majority, the rapporteur shall make a concluding speech lasting no more than 10 minutes.

13. A comment regarding the draft law made during consideration at a plenary sitting of the Parliament is considered as adopted if the rapporteur agrees with it.

14. After the first hearing of a draft law has concluded, the Parliament shall make one of the following decisions via voting:

- a) Adoption of a draft law (on the basis of one of the alternative draft laws) at the first hearing;
- b) Elaboration of a new draft law based on an alternative proposal.

15. If during voting at the first hearing, the draft law does not receive the number of votes necessary for its adoption, it is considered as rejected and a decree is adopted concerning the fact of rejection.

Article 112. Second Hearing Consideration of a Draft Law

1. After the adoption of a draft law at the first hearing, it is submitted to a leading committee to incorporate comments made regarding the draft law, and is prepare for the second hearing; the leading committee shall consider the draft law within 3 weeks of

the first hearing. On a sitting of the leading committee, the draft law shall be discussed by sub-paragraphs, paragraphs (parts), articles, chapters or/and books/parts and is put on voting as a whole. If necessary, alternative proposals will be voted on. If the draft law is not prepared within the defined time, the latter may be prolonged upon a well-reasoned request from a Committee Chair and by the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament.

2. Within 4 weeks from the adoption at the first hearing, in line with rules established by paragraph 10 of Article 107 of the Rules of Procedure, the draft law, with incorporated comments considered by the Parliament at the first hearing, shall be submitted to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament, for consideration and voting at the second hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

3. The draft law submitted to a plenary sitting of the Parliament for the second hearing shall include the comments made concerning the draft law during the first hearing at the plenary sitting, the record of the status of their incorporation into the draft law, conclusions of the leading committee and the Legal Department of Office of the Parliament, as well as alternative proposals, which were submitted to the leading committee.

4. Consideration of the draft law at the second hearing at the Parliament plenary sitting starts with the speech of a rapporteur, who presents the draft law according to the decision made based on paragraph 3 of Article 110 of the Rules of Procedure. According to a decision based on paragraph 3 of Article 110 of the Rules of Procedure, an MP may take the floor to ask a question or seek clarification concerning the sub-paragraph, paragraph, article (part), chapter or book/part only once. Time allocated to an author of each question shall not exceed 2 minutes. He/she can also use no more than one minute to specify a question. An MP may take the floor to ask a question and may specify it only once. The Sitting Chair has

the right, when necessary, to make a decision on the termination of questioning.

5. After the questions have been asked, the rapporteur has the right to answer all of them together. The length of his/her answer shall not exceed 20 minutes.

6. After the rapporteur finishes his/her speech, a co-rapporteur, if available, shall take the floor. His/her speech shall not exceed 10 minutes. After s/he finishes his/her speech, MPs may ask him/her questions concerning the draft law. Time allocated to an author of each question shall not exceed 1 minute. After the questions are asked, the co-rapporteur has the right to answer all of them together. The length of his/her answer shall not exceed 10 minutes.

7. After the speech of the co-rapporteur, an MP, or a representative of a committee, a faction, the Majority, the Minority, whose alternative proposal was presented at a plenary sitting of the Parliament, takes the floor. The length of the speech of the author of the alternative proposal shall not exceed 5 minutes. MPs may ask him/her questions only once for no more than 1 minute.

8. After persons specified in paragraphs 4-7 of this article finish their speeches, a representative of the leading committee, unless/ he is a co-rapporteur, and other committees take the floor. Time allocated for a representative of the leading committee shall not exceed 10 minutes and for a representative of other committees shall not exceed 5 minutes.

9. After representatives of the leading and other committees finish their speeches, individual MPs take the floor. The speeches of each of them shall not exceed 3 minutes. For this purpose, the MPs personally register in the list of the speakers compiled at the secretariat of the sitting before the rapporteur finishes his/her speech. The list is submitted to the Sitting Chair. The Sitting Chair determines the sequence of the MPs according to the order they were registered in the list. It is obligatory to follow the sequence of

the speakers. It is prohibited to take the floor without the permission of the Sitting Chair. An MP may register in the list only once. An MP, who is registered in the list and attends the sitting at the time when his/her turn comes, does not have the right to transfer the time allocated for his/her speech to another MP. If the MP does not attend the sitting when his/her turn comes, s/he cannot take the floor regarding this issue.

10. After the MPs finish their speeches, the representatives of those factions take the floor, who are not affiliated with the Majority or the Minority, the representatives of the Minority and the Majority in this order and present to plenary sitting of the Parliament their position regarding the presented draft law. The speech of the representative of the faction shall not exceed 10 minutes, and the speech of the representative of the Minority or the Majority shall not exceed 15 minutes.

11. The rapporteur, co-rapporteur, and representatives of committees, factions, the Minority, and the Majority, shall deliver speeches from the tribune in front of the presidium in the Sitting Hall.

12. After the speeches of representatives of factions, the Minority and the Majority, the rapporteur shall make a concluding speech lasting no more than 10 minutes.

13. It is allowed to adopt the draft law at the second hearing, omitting certain articles. These articles shall be presented at the third hearing.

14. During the second hearing, the draft law as a whole shall be voted on. Alternative proposals shall be voted on first. If an author of an alternative proposal is not present in the Sitting Hall or s/he refuses to discuss an alternative proposal, the latter shall be considered as rejected and shall not be put to vote.

15. After the second hearing of the draft law has concluded, the Parliament makes a decision by voting for adoption of the draft law at the second hearing.

16. A draft law that does not receive the number of votes necessary for its adoption is considered as rejected and a decree shall be adopted concerning the rejection of the draft law at the second hearing.

17. If the draft law rejected at the second hearing is not put to vote within 1 month of a session period upon the request of an initiator for voting, it shall be considered as rejected. In addition, the draft law is considered as rejected if it does not get the necessary number of votes during the second round of voting.

Article 113. The Peculiarity of Reviewing the Legislative Package During the First and Second Hearings

1. When considering the legislative package during the first and second hearings, the procedures defined within paragraphs 2-7 of Article 111 and paragraphs 4-7 of Article 112 are conducted on each draft law included within the package separately.

2. After completing the procedures envisaged within paragraph 1 of this article on every draft law included within the legislative package, debates envisaged within paragraphs 8-10 and 12 of Article 111 and paragraphs 8-10 and 12 of Article 112 shall be held jointly.

Article 114. Consideration of a Draft Law at the Third Hearing

1. After the adoption of the draft law at the second hearing, the leading committee shall discuss it to prepare it for the third hearing at a plenary session within 105 days. After the committee sitting, the draft law is sent in writing to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament according to paragraph 10 of Article 107 of the Rules of Procedure to be included in the agenda of the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament.

2. The draft law submitted for the third hearing to a plenary sitting of the Parliament shall include comments made concerning the draft law during the second hearing at a plenary sitting, the

record of the status of their incorporation into the draft law, as well as conclusions of the leading committee and the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament.

3. At the third hearing, the draft law is presented by the rapporteur and MPs may give him/her editorial remarks regarding the draft law. Time allocated for each speech concerning editorial remarks shall not exceed 3 minutes. A person may use the allocated time only once concerning the same issue.

4. After the speeches, the rapporteur responds to the editorial remarks. His/her answer shall not exceed 10 minutes. After his/her speech, a Sitting Chair shall deem the consideration of the draft law to have been completed and will inform MPs of the date of the third hearing vote

5. The articles that were set aside for additional consideration at the second hearing shall be put to vote separately. A draft law may be adopted without these articles if they do not represent its principal provisions.

6. Before voting at the third hearing, it is mandatory to distribute a final edited version of the draft law with the comments made and approved at the third hearing at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. The title page of this version shall be signed by the rapporteur of the draft law, a leading committee Chair, a responsible member of the Committee Office, and the head of the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament.

7. After the third hearing, the final edited version as a whole is put to vote. It is impermissible to make any amendment to the draft law after the vote at the third hearing.

8. A draft law that does not receive the number of votes necessary for its adoption is considered as rejected. In this case, a decree is made concerning the rejection of the draft law at the third hearing. Rules specified in paragraph 17 of Article 112 of the Rules of Procedure are applicable to the rejected draft law.

9. The Parliament may consider the draft law as rejected at the second and third hearings if it is submitted as a new legislative initiative.

Article 115. The Protocol and Shorthand of the Plenary Sitting

1. The protocol and the shorthand of a sitting are drawn up at the discussion of a draft law at the plenary sitting of the Parliament. The protocol of the plenary sitting of the Parliament, except for confidential issues, can be posted on the Parliament's website.

2. Only the MPs, authorized representatives of the President and the Government of Georgia, or representatives of state bodies who participated in the work of the sitting, can see the protocol and the shorthand of a closed plenary sitting of the Parliament.

Article 116. Return of a Draft Law to a Previous Hearing

During the consideration of a draft law at a plenary sitting, if necessary and based on the motivated proposal of a rapporteur or a co-rapporteur, the Parliament may decide to return the draft law from the third hearing to the second hearing at a plenary sitting.

Article 117. Accelerated Adoption of a Law

1. The Parliament may consider and adopt a draft law through an accelerated procedure. A draft law may be discussed using an accelerated procedure if it only provides amendment(s) to an existing law.

2. The consideration and adoption of a draft law through an accelerated procedure means a draft law is considered and adopted by all three hearings during 1 week of plenary sittings. A draft law may be considered and adopted by more than one hearing but no more than two hearings on the first day of the plenary sitting and only by the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament. At the same

time, on the same day a draft law may be considered and adopted only at the second and third hearings.

3. The Bureau of the Parliament makes a decision on whether a draft law can be discussed in an accelerated manner based on a well-reasoned written request of an initiator of the draft law. The aforementioned decision may be made by the Bureau of the Parliament when commencing the procedures of considering the draft law as well as before the first hearing of the draft law.

4. If the Bureau of the Parliament or a plenary sitting decides to consider a draft law through an accelerated procedure, all subjects determined by the Rules of Procedure shall submit their comments concerning this draft to a leading committee within the term determined by the Bureau of the Parliament or a plenary session.

5. The Parliament shall not consider a draft law through an accelerated procedure on the day on which, or the day after, a decision concerning use of an accelerated procedure was made.

6. Conclusions that are provided by the Rules of Procedure shall be attached to the draft law that should be adopted through an accelerated procedure based on made decision. Consideration of, and voting on, the draft law through an accelerated procedure at a plenary sitting of the Parliament shall be conducted according to the rules on consideration of, and voting on, draft laws established by the Rules of Procedure.

7. When adopting a draft law through an accelerated procedure, voting may be held after the draft law is considered to have been discussed at a relevant hearing, on the same day. The Parliament shall also vote on a draft law at the third hearing only if its final edited version is presented.

Article 118. Adoption of a Law through a Simplified Procedure

1. A draft law regarding the abolition of an existing law of Georgia, or regarding amendments to an existing law, which is related

to changes of the date (the term) prescribed by law, or terminology, may be discussed and adopted at a sitting of the Parliament through a simplified procedure — with one hearing according to the rules set forth by Article 111 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament may adopt a decision concerning the consideration of a draft law through a simplified procedure based on a proposal of an initiator or a leading committee. It is impermissible to discuss a draft law at the relevant committee sitting within 1 week of the Bureau of the Parliament making a decision on adopting the draft law through a simplified procedure. One week after this term expires, the draft law shall be considered in accordance with the terms set forth in Article 107 of the Rules of Procedure.

3. When the Bureau or a plenary sitting of the Parliament decides to use a simplified procedure for the consideration of a draft law, subjects specified by the Rules of Procedure shall submit to a leading committee their comments concerning the draft law within the term defined by the Bureau of the Parliament or a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

4. The draft law, which has been granted consideration through a simplified procedure, shall include relevant conclusions envisaged by the Rules of Procedure whilst being discussed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

Article 119. Adoption of Legislative Acts and Approval of Constitutional Agreement

1. A constitutional law shall be considered as adopted if it is supported by at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament. A constitutional law shall be submitted to the President of Georgia for signature within 10 days of the Parliament of the next convocation holding one hearing for its consideration and adopting its text without changes with at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament.

2. A constitutional law shall be considered as approved if at least three-fifths of the full composition of the Parliament support it; a constitutional law shall be submitted to the President of Georgia for signature within the term established by Article 46 of the Constitution.

3. A constitutional law related to the restoration of territorial integrity shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Parliament and shall be submitted to the President of Georgia within the terms established by Article 46 of the Constitution.

4. A constitutional agreement shall be considered as approved if at least three-fifths of the full composition of the Parliament supports it.

5. An organic law shall be considered as adopted if more than half of the full composition of the Parliament supports it, unless the Constitution of Georgia provides otherwise.

6. An organic law related to agricultural land shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the full composition of the Parliament.

7. The Rules of Procedure of the Parliament shall be considered as adopted if the majority of the full composition of the Parliament support it.

8. A law shall be considered as adopted if a majority of MPs present at a plenary sitting, but at least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament support it, unless the Constitution of Georgia provides otherwise.

9. The date of adoption for a law is the day on which the Parliament adopts its final version.

Article 120. Rule of Adoption of the Organic Law of Georgia on State Symbols

The State flag, State emblem and State anthem are defined by the Organic Law of Georgia on State Symbols, which is adopted and revised in accordance with the rules set forth for revision of the Constitution of Georgia.

Article 121. Submission of an Adopted Law to the President

Within 10 days of the adoption of a draft law by the Parliament, after the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament signs the relevant appeal, a draft law signed by an initiator of the draft law or his/her authorized representative, a chair of a leading committee, a responsible representative of a Committee Office and the head of the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament, shall be submitted to the President of Georgia.

Article 122. Substantiated Remarks of the President of Georgia

1. The President of Georgia is authorized not to sign a draft law in cases and terms envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia and return the draft law to the Parliament with substantiated remarks.

2. Substantiated remarks of the President of Georgia shall be formulated in the form of a draft law.

3. A law returned to the Parliament with substantiated remarks from the President of Georgia shall be considered and adopted at a plenary sitting in one hearing according to rules established by Article 111 of the Rules of Procedure. Firstly, the law returned with substantiated remarks of the President of Georgia shall be put to a vote, afterwards — initial wording of the law.

4. If the Parliament adopts the President of Georgia's remarks, within 5 days the draft law shall be submitted to the President of Georgia, who signs its final version which is promulgated within 5 days.

5. If the Parliament does not accept the President of Georgia's remarks, the initial wording of the law is put to a vote. A law shall be considered as adopted if a majority of the full composition of the Parliament supports it. An organic law shall be considered adopted if more than half of the full composition of the Parliament support it, except for an organic law specified in paragraph 4 of Article 19 of the Constitution of Georgia which shall be considered as adopted if

at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament support it. Constitutional law shall be considered as adopted if two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament supports it. The law shall be submitted to the President of Georgia within 3 days, who signs and promulgates the law within 5 days.

6. The President of Georgia shall sign and promulgate a constitutional law that amends the Constitution and was supported by a two-thirds majority of the full composition of the Parliament within 5 days of its submission; the President of Georgia does not have the right to return such a law with remarks.

7. If the President of Georgia does not promulgate a law in the prescribed time, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall sign and promulgate it within 5 days on the web-site of the Legal Entity of Public Law “Sakartvelos Sakanonmdeblo Matsne.”

8. If in cases set forth in paragraph 3 of this article a draft law does not receive the necessary number of votes, it is considered as rejected.

9. If the President of Georgia returns a draft law to the Parliament with substantiated remarks, but the parliamentary holidays are announced or less than 15 days are left until the parliamentary holidays, a special sitting may be held to discuss the remarks.

Article 123. Draft Constitutional Law Initiated by MPs

The Bureau of the Parliament shall submit a draft constitutional law initiated by majority of the full composition of the Parliament to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules to examine the validity of signatures; the Committee shall conduct an examination within 1 week and submits the results to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall put the issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting to promulgate the draft constitutional law and create an organizational commission for general public discussion of a draft constitutional law. At the same sitting

of the Bureau of the Parliament, a draft constitutional law shall be submitted to parliamentary committees for consideration in line with the rules established by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 124. Constitutional Draft Law Initiated by Voters

1. Citizens of Georgia who have a right to vote are permitted to create an initiative group consisting of at least 10 members, to execute their right to submit a draft constitutional law.

2. An initiative group submits a request of registration to the Bureau of the Parliament. The request shall include a draft constitutional law and the following data on the members of an initiative group: first name; last name; date of birth; address; personal identification number; and contact phone number. This data is presented to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament that shall pass it to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules.

3. Within 7 days of the transfer of a registration request, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall provide the initiative group with a registration certificate or a well-reasoned refusal. Non-compliance with the requirements of paragraphs 1 and/or 2 of this article shall serve as the bases for refusal of registration.

4. The application and draft law are published on the Parliament's website after the initiative group has been provided with a registration certificate.

5. An initiative group may withdraw its request for registration before the registration certificate is received.

6. From the day of receiving its registration certificate, an initiative group is authorized to start collecting signatures of supporters of a draft constitutional law, in the following way/ways:

a) Filling in sheets of signature;

b) Collection of qualified electronic signatures on the website of the Parliament envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Electronic Documents and Electronic Trusted Services.

7. No more than 50 voters may sign each page, the form of which is defined by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules for collection of voters' signatures. The person responsible for the correctness of signatures indicates the following data of the voter: first name; last name; date of birth; personal identification number; address; phone number; and date of signature. The voter certifies these data when he/she writes his/her signature. The person who is responsible for collecting signatures is in charge of verifying the correctness of signatures confirms each page with a signature. The signature of each responsible person shall be certified at a Notary Bureau. Furthermore, in one municipality, one signature of a person responsible for collecting signatures certified by a notary's signature is sufficient. All other pages requiring signatures approved by a responsible person do not require a notary's certification in the same municipality.

8. The draft constitutional law is promulgated on the Parliament's website to collect qualified electronic signatures. Before issuing a qualified electronic signature, the voter indicates his/her phone number electronically in the relevant field and finishes the electronic signature.

9. Pursuant to the purposes defined within this article, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules uses the data on the signatory person (first name, last name, personal identification number, date of birth, address and citizenship) existing in the electronic database of the Public Service Development Agency, a legal entity of public law (LEPL) operating under the management of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia.

10. Within 4 months of receiving registration certificates, an initiative group shall apply to the Bureau of the Parliament and submit one of the following:

- a) Signature sheets filled in by no fewer than 200 000 voters;
- b) Information on the collection of qualified electronic signatures of no less than 200 000 voters;

c) Filled-in signature sheets and information on collecting qualified electronic signatures that confirms the signatures of no fewer than 200 000 voters.

11. Filled-in signature sheets and information on collected qualified electronic signatures are submitted to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament that then submits them to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules to examine the validity of the signatures.

12. Within 1 month of the sheets being presented, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules examines the validity of signatures and reports its results to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. If it is established that signatures were collected in violation of the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau of the Parliament shall refuse an initiative group's request to present a draft constitutional law for parliamentary consideration.

13. Any signature shall be considered null if it:

a) Is made on a sheet, which does not comply with the established form and/or is not confirmed and certified according to the rules set forth in paragraph 7 of this article;

b) Does not include data specified in paragraph 7 of this article;

c) Is induced by fraudulent conduct, threat, and pressure or by another person, if a voter confirms this in writing.

d) Is written by a person who does not comply with the requirements set forth in the Constitution of Georgia;

e) In the event that qualified electronic signatures are not written in accordance with the Law of Georgia on Electronic Documents and Electronic Trusted Services.

14. If, after verification, the number of signatures is less than 200 000, the execution of the right to present a draft constitutional law by citizens' initiative is considered as rejected.

15. If the right to present a draft constitutional law is rejected, the initiative group has the right to apply to a common court within 5 days.

16. Following a positive conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules on the validity of the voters' signatures, a draft constitutional law presented by 200 000 voters shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament, which, based on the conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules, puts this issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting for creation of Steering Commission on Public Consideration and Promulgation of the Constitutional Drafts on Changes to the Constitution of Georgia signature sheets shall be submitted to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament. At the same sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament, a draft constitutional law shall be submitted to parliamentary committees for consideration in line with the rules established by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 125. General Public Consideration of a Draft Constitutional Law

1. The Parliament decides to publish a draft constitutional law and create the Steering Commission on Public Consideration.

2. The Parliament determines the number of members and the composition of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration.

3. More than half (but not fewer than 3 MPs) of the members of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration shall be representatives of a faction or factions, which is or are not united in the Majority and/or independent MPs.

4. It is not mandatory to observe the rules on proportional representation of MPs in the Steering Commission on Public Consideration if it is impossible to staff the commission in line with the rules enshrined in paragraph 3 of this article.

5. The Steering Commission on Public Consideration shall consider materials related to a draft constitutional law within a month.

6. The Steering Commission on Public Consideration of a draft constitutional law shall organize public meetings in different ad-

ministrative-territorial units of Georgia with the purpose of informing the population and ensuring their involvement.

7. The meeting schedule is published on the website of the Parliament not later than 5 days before the beginning of the meetings of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration. The changes made to the schedule of the meetings shall be published on the website of the Parliament not later than 2 days before the meetings.

8. A short description of the essence of amendments to the Constitution shall be published on the website of the Parliament to inform the population and shall also be distributed during meetings.

9. Citizens' opinions shall be recorded in oral and/or written form during the meetings of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration. Orally-given opinions of citizens shall be included in the protocol of a meeting and in the conclusive protocol of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration, and written or electronic versions of the opinions submitted during the meeting of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration shall be included in the conclusive protocol.

10. Meeting protocols of the Steering Commission on Public Consideration shall be published on the website of the Parliament not later than 3 days after each meeting. The conclusive protocol shall be published on the website of the Parliament within 10 days of the completion of public discussions.

Article 126. Consideration and Adoption of a Draft Constitutional Law

1. The Parliament shall commence consideration of a draft constitutional law 1 month after its publication. The committees determined by the Bureau of the Parliament shall consider the draft constitutional law within one month after the aforementioned term of 1 month expires.

2. Consideration of a draft constitutional law at a plenary sitting shall commence with a speech of the chair of the Organizational Commission of Public Discussion or an authorized member of the commission who presents to the plenary sitting the results of the public discussion of the draft constitutional law. Thereafter, a member of an initiative group appointed by an initiator shall present a draft constitutional law to a plenary sitting.

3. The Parliament shall discuss a draft constitution law and adopt it through three hearings in line with the rules on discussion and adoption of draft laws of the Rules of Procedure, if this article does not provide otherwise.

4. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament presents the draft constitutional law envisaged by paragraph 1 of Article 119 of the Rules of Procedure to the Parliament of next convocation. Political debates are held after the report in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 93 of the Rules of Procedure.

5. It is prohibited to discuss and adopt a constitutional draft law of Georgia in an accelerated manner.

6. It is prohibited to submit an alternative draft law, or alternative proposal on separate norms of the draft law, to a draft constitution law of Georgia.

Article 127. Execution of a Right to Legislative Initiative by Voters

1. Under the initiative of 25 000 voters, to execute the right to present a draft law, Georgian citizens who have the right to vote form an initiative group comprising at least 5 members.

2. An initiative group appeals to the Bureau of the Parliament with a statement about its registration. A draft law and the following data of the initiative group shall be attached to the statement: first name; last name; date of birth; address; personal identification number; and telephone number. These materials are transferred

from the Bureau of the Parliament to the Committee of Procedural Issues and Rules within two days from the next sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament.

3. Within 5 days of the Bureau of the Parliament transferring the registration request, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall provide the initiative group with a registration certificate or a well-reasoned refusal. Non-compliance with requirements of paragraphs 1 and/or 2 of this article shall serve as the basis/bases for refusal of registration.

4. The application and draft law submitted by the initiative group shall be published on the website of the Parliament after the registration certificate is issued to the initiative group.

5. An initiative group may withdraw its request for registration before the registration certificate is received.

6. From the day of receiving a registration certificate, an initiative group is authorized to start collecting signatures of supporters of a draft law with the following form/forms:

a) Filled-in signature sheets;

b) Through the collection of qualified electronic signatures on the website of the Parliament as envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Electronic Documents and Electronic Trusted Services.

7. No more than 50 voters may sign each page, the form of which is defined by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules for collection of voters' signatures. The person responsible for the correctness of signatures indicates the following data of each voter: first name; last name; date of birth; personal identification number; address; phone number; and date of signature. The voter certifies these data by writing his/her signature. The person who is responsible for collecting signatures and is responsible for their correctness, confirms each page with his/her signature. Signatures of each responsible person shall be certified at a Notary Bureau. Moreover, in one municipality, one signature of a person responsible for collect-

ing signatures certified by a notary's signature is sufficient. All other pages requiring signatures approved by a responsible person do not require a notary's certification in the same municipality.

8. A draft constitutional law is promulgated on the Parliament's website to collect qualified electronic signatures. Before writing a qualified electronic signature, the voter indicates his/her phone number electronically in the relevant field and finishes his/her electronic signature.

9. Pursuant to the purposes defined within this article, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules uses the data on the signatory person (first name, last name, personal identification number, date of birth, address, and citizenship), existing in the electronic database of the Public Service Development Agency, a legal entity of public law (LEPL) operating under the management of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia.

10. Within 45 days of receiving a registration certificate, an initiative group shall apply to the Bureau of the Parliament and will submit one of the following:

- a) Sheets with signatures of not less than 25 000 voters;
- b) Information on the collected qualified electronic signatures of no fewer than 25 000 voters;
- c) Filled-in sheets of signatures and information on collected qualified electronic signatures, confirming the signature of no fewer than 25 000 voters.

11. Filled-in signature sheets and information on collected qualified electronic signatures are submitted to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament that will then submit them to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules to examine the validity of the signatures.

12. Within 2 weeks of receiving information on signature sheets and collected qualified electronic signatures, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules examines the validity of signatures on

a random basis and reports the results to the Bureau of the Parliament. If it is established that signatures were collected in violation of the Rules of Procedure resulting in the number of signatures falling short of 25,000, the Bureau of the Parliament shall deny an initiative group the opportunity to present a draft law for parliamentary consideration based on the conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules. In such circumstances, the right to present a draft law shall be considered as rejected.

13. Any signature shall be considered null if it:

a) Is made on a sheet, which does not comply with the established form and/or is not confirmed and certified according to the rules set forth in paragraph 7 of this article;

b) If the signatures are made on paper, and do not include data specified in paragraph 7 of this article;

c) Is induced by fraudulent conduct or by another person, if a voter confirms this in writing;

d) Is written by a person who does not comply with the requirements set forth in the Constitution of Georgia;

e) A qualified electronic signature has not been written in accordance with the Law of Georgia on Electronic Documents and Electronic Trusted Services.

14. If its right to present a draft constitutional law is rejected, the initiative group has a right to apply to a common court within 5 days.

15. A positive conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules on the validity of the voters' signatures, a presented draft law shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament and voters' signature sheets shall be submitted to the Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament.

16. The Parliament shall consider a draft law initiated by at least 25,000 voters in line with the rules concerning the consideration of draft laws prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 128. Approval of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara

1. To approve the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic presents to the Parliament the draft organic law of Georgia on Approval of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara and the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara is adopted according to the rules established by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara.

2. The Parliament shall approve the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara in line with the Organic Law of Georgia on Approval of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, through consideration and adoption at one hearing according to rules prescribed for adoption of law.

CHAPTER XI

DECREE OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 129. Contents of a Decree of the Parliament

1. All decisions of the Parliament shall be made in the form of a decree.
2. A decree of the Parliament may be an individual or normative act.
3. The Parliament shall make a decision by decree concerning any issues related to the operation of the Parliament that are not regulated for by the Rules of Procedure and other normative act.

Article 130. Rule of Adoption for a Decree of the Parliament

1. A draft decree is submitted to, and discussed by, the Parliament in accordance with the rules for submission of a draft law to the Parliament and its consideration in committees established by the Rules of Procedure.
2. A draft decree shall be considered at a plenary sitting at one hearing according to the rules of the first hearing of the draft law established by the Rules of Procedure.
3. A decree shall be considered as adopted, if a majority of MPs present at a plenary sitting, but not less than one-third of all MPs, support it unless otherwise prescribed by a legislative act.
4. The date on which the Parliament adopts the final draft of a decree shall be considered as the date of its adoption.

Article 131. Promulgation and Entry into Force of a Decree of the Parliament

1. A decree of the Parliament, unless it is a normative decree, shall enter into force upon its adoption unless it provides other

term. A normative decree of the Parliament shall be officially promulgated on the website of the legal entity of public law — Sakartvelos Sakanonmdablo Matsne — and enters into force upon promulgation unless this decree provides other term.

2. Decrees of the Parliament shall be posted on the website of the Parliament.

Article 132. Conception

1. A conception is a type of decision of the Parliament to determine the basic direction of state policy, approved by a decree of the Parliament.

2. A draft conception shall be presented to the Parliament according to the rules established by the Rules of Procedures concerning the submission of a draft law. A conception shall be initiated by at least one-fifth of MPs, except in cases determined by Georgian legislative acts. The Parliament shall approve a conception by a decree according to the rules prescribed by Article 130 of the Rules of Procedure, unless otherwise provided by the article.

3. A conception submitted to the Parliament shall be presented to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament that shall decide on the commencement of its consideration and determine a leading committee, as well as the committees, the conclusions of which shall be attached to the conception. After the Bureau of the Parliament makes a decision, the conception is transferred for consideration to a leading committee, other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, and the Legal Department of the Parliament.

4. The committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, and the Legal Department of the Parliament discuss and within 10 days submit a reasoned conclusion about the conception to the leading committee, which transfers the conception

and related conclusions to the Bureau of the Parliament to put the conception on the agenda of a plenary sitting.

5. The Parliament shall adopt a conception if a majority of the full composition of the Parliament vote for it.

6. If the Parliament does not approve a conception, within 48 hours it shall be discussed at a meeting of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, his/her deputies, chairs of parliamentary committees and factions, leaders of the Majority and the Minority and an initiator of a conception or his/her authorized representative. Afterwards, the conception shall be re-considered at a plenary sitting.

CHAPTER XII

THE BUDGETARY POWERS OF THE PARLIAMENT

Article 133. Basic Authority of the Budget and Finance Committee

Within the competence of the Parliament, the Budget and Finance Committee shall lead the process of adopting and amending the State Budget.

Article 134. Consideration of the Main Macroeconomic Forecasts and Basic Directions of the Ministries of Georgia

1. The Government submits information on the main macroeconomic forecasts and basic directions of the ministries of Georgia to agree on the basic dimensions and directions with the committees of the Parliament annually before June 1 in accordance with the Budget Code of Georgia.

2. The Budget and Finance Committee organizes the consideration of information concerning the main macroeconomic forecasts and basic directions of ministries of Georgia; the committee is authorized to request and receive necessary information from the Government, ministries of Georgia, other organizations, and other bodies of the executive branch.

3. As a rule, parliamentary committees discuss information concerning the main macroeconomic forecasts and basic directions of ministries of Georgia within the field of their competence, and draft relevant conclusions. These conclusions shall be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee by no later than June 18. The

Budget and Finance Committee shall submit these conclusions together with its own conclusion to the Government by no later than June 20.

Article 135. Submission of, and Access to, a Draft Law on the State Budget to the Parliament

1. Not later than October 1, the Government submits to the Parliament a draft law on the state budget together with materials determined by the legislation of Georgia (inter alia, report on the progress of the current year's state budget) Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD).

2. A draft law on the =State Budget with enclosed materials and the Country's Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD) that is in compliance with the draft law shall be published on the website of the Parliament.

3. Enclosed materials relevant to the draft law on the state budget (except the package of legislative changes required for enactment of the Law on the Annual Budget) are for information purposes and do not need to be approved by the Parliament.

Article 136. Commencement of Consideration of a Draft Law on the State Budget

1. Within 2 days of adopting a draft law on the State Budget, a report of the Government concerning the status of implementation of the current year's State Budget and the Country's Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD) that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget, after a meeting of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and the representatives of the parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority, and the Minority, the Budget and Finance Committee shall develop the schedule of consideration for a draft law on the State Budget, the report of the Government, and the Country's Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD).

2. The draft law on the State Budget, the report of the Government concerning the status of progress of the current year's State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget shall be sent to the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office upon receipt.

3. The day after the draft law on State Budget, the report of the Government concerning the status of progress of the current year's State Budget and the Country's Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD) that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget and the schedule of their consideration is sent to the parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliament and the Budget Office of the Parliament the day after the schedule is made. The schedule of the aforementioned consideration is sent alone to the Government, the National Bank of Georgia, and the State Audit Service of Georgia.

4. As a rule, within 2 weeks of the publication on the website of the Parliament, parliamentary committees (except the Budget and Finance Committee), factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliament, and the Budget Office of the Parliament consider the draft law on the State Budget, the report of the Government concerning the status of progress of the current year's State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget. Committee's conclusion shall be sent to the Budget and Finance Committee.

5. Within 2 weeks of transferring the documents envisaged within paragraph 2 of this article, the State Audit Office submits to the Parliament its conclusion on the draft law of the State Budget and the reasonability and legality of incomes and payables prescribed by this draft, as well as its report responding to the report

of the Government concerning the status of implementation of the current year's State Budget. The National Bank of Georgia shall submit to the Parliament its conclusion concerning the basic parameters of the draft law on the State Budget.

6. The Budget and Finance Committee shall organize consideration of the documents envisaged within paragraph 1 of this article according to the established rules on who is authorized to require and receive the necessary information from the Government, ministries of Georgia, other entities, as well as other establishments under the executive branch. The Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament submits the information regarding the consideration process to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament once every month.

7. The relevant minister or his/her deputy, together with the Minister of Finance or his/her deputy, shall present the draft law on the State Budget, the report of the Government concerning the status of implementation progress of the current year's State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget during the committee's consideration. Auditor General or his/her representative shall also be present for the consideration.

8. Any part of the draft law on the State Budget concerning state secrets is discussed by a Trust Group. Conclusions adopted by a Trust Group within its competencies concerning relevant facts relating to the financing of special programs and the allocation of resources for those expenses is submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee.

9. The Budget and Finance Committee shall consider and evaluate the conclusions of other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Office of the Parliament, also the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office and present its final conclusion based on these con-

clusions, own remarks and opinions to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament by no later than October 20.

10. Within 2 days, and not later than October 22, of the Budget and Finance Committee presenting its conclusions concerning the draft law on the State Budget to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, s/ he shall send it to the Government. Remarks made on the Country's Basic Data and Direction Document (BDD) that is in compliance with the State Budget, for the next three years are recommendations.

11. By no later than November 5, the Government shall submit revised versions of the draft law on the State Budget (each page of the revised draft should be signed by a responsible person) and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document to the Parliament of Georgia for consideration. Information concerning the presented proposals and remarks, as well as an indication of the status of their incorporation, shall be attached to the draft.

12. Proposals and remarks accepted by the Government shall be incorporated in the draft law on the State Budget.

13. Revised versions of the draft law on the State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document shall be published on the website of the Parliament immediately after they are received. Additionally, these are sent to the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office and within 2 days of their receipt they are sent to the parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliament and the Budget Office of the Parliament.

14. Within 5 days of the receipt of these documents, as envisaged within paragraph 11 of this article, the State Audit Office submits to the Parliament its conclusion on the revised draft law on the State Budget and the reasonability and legality of incomes and payables prescribed by this draft. The National Bank of Georgia shall submit to the Parliament its conclusion concerning the basic parameters of the revised draft law on the State Budget.

15. As a rule, within 3 days after transferring, the parliamentary committees (except the Budget and Finance Committee), factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliament and the Budget Office of the Parliament involved in the consideration, consider the revised draft law on the State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document that is in compliance with the draft law on the State Budget and prepare relevant conclusions. The Budget Office of the Parliament considers the revised draft law on the State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document within 3 days of it being transferred and prepares a relevant conclusion. The aforementioned conclusions shall be sent to the Budget and Finance Committee.

16. The Budget and Finance Committee considers the revised draft law on the State Budget and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document, considers and assesses the conclusions of the other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, independent MPs, the Legal Department of the Parliament, the Budget Office of the Parliament, the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office, and prepares its final conclusion based on these conclusions, its own remarks and opinions. The Budget and Finance Committee submits the final conclusions to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and the Bureau of the Parliament.

17. The Parliament considers the draft law on the State Budget at the plenary sitting after the Budget and Finance Committee submits the conclusion to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and the Bureau of the Parliament by no later than November 18.

Article 137. Consideration of a Revised Draft Law on the State Budget at a Plenary Sitting

1. The draft law on the State Budget is discussed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament as provided for by this chapter, in one hearing.

2. The Prime Minister of Georgia and/or another member/other members of the Government as tasked by the Prime Minister shall present the draft law on the State Budget and the report of the Government concerning the status of implementation of the current year's State Budget at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

3. Presentation/presentations of the draft law on the State Budget and the report of the Government concerning the status of implementation of the current year's State Budget by member/members of the Government shall not exceed 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the request of the rapporteur. After the speech of a member of the Government, a co-rapporteur — a representative of the Budget and Finance Committee — takes the floor for no more than 30 minutes.

4. Speeches on the draft law on the State Budget lasting not more than 30 minutes are made by:

a) The President of the National Bank of Georgia, who presents a conclusion on the basic parameters of the revised draft law on the State Budget;

b) The Auditor General, who presents a conclusion on the revised draft law on the State Budget and the reasonability and legality of incomes and payables determined by this draft, also a report on report of the Government concerning the status of implementation of the current year's State Budget.

5. After the speeches have concluded, debates are held according to the rules determined by the Rules of Procedure for the consideration of a draft law at the first hearing.

6. After the debates, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament announces a break in the consideration of the draft law on the State Budget.

7. Within 2 days of the announcement of a break in the consideration of the draft law on the State Budget, but no later than November 20, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament submits the

conclusions of the Budget and Finance Committee along with remarks made during the consideration at the plenary sitting to the Government.

Article 138. Consideration of a Final Version of the Draft Law on the State Budget

1. After conclusions and proposals are presented to the Government according to paragraph 7 of Article 137 of the Rules of Procedure but by no later than November 30, the Government shall submit to the Parliament of Georgia final versions of the draft law on the State Budget (each page signed by a responsible person) and the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document together with information on the status of incorporation of the proposals and remarks expressed at a plenary sitting. These documents shall be published on the website of the Parliament and sent to the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office.

2. Within 5 days of receiving the documents, the State Audit Office submits to the Parliament its conclusion on the final draft law on the State Budget and the reasonability and legality of incomes and payables prescribed by this draft. The National Bank of Georgia shall submit to the Parliament its conclusion concerning the basic parameters of the final draft law on the State Budget.

3. Before considering the draft law on the State Budget at the plenary sitting of the Parliament, the Budget and Finance Committee considers the final draft law on the State Budget and submits its conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament.

4. The Parliament shall consider the draft law on the State Budget at a plenary sitting no less than 5 days after submission of the final version by the Government. Consideration of the draft law shall be resumed with the speech/speeches of a member/members of the Government, the duration of which should not exceed 60 minutes.

5. The Parliament considers the draft law on the State Budget according to the rules established for the first hearing of a draft law, in line with paragraphs 4 and 6 of this article.

6. After all speeches have concluded, a member/members of the Government shall deliver a speech lasting no more than 30 minutes.

7. The Parliament adopts the Law on the State Budget by a majority of its full composition. The draft law on the State Budget shall be put to a vote by no later than the third Friday of December.

8. The draft law on the State Budget may be amended in the Parliament with the consent of the Government. In this case, the Government shall submit to the Parliament a revised version of the draft law on the State Budget. The draft law on the State Budget may also be amended during its discussion at a plenary sitting if the rapporteur agrees.

9. If the Parliament fails to adopt the draft law on the State Budget by no later than the third Friday of December, the same version or a new version of the draft law on the State Budget revised with the joint efforts of the coordinating commission of the members of Government and the Parliament, can be put to a vote again within 10 days, but not later than December 31.

10. The Law on the State Budget is published according to the established rules. The Law on the State Budget and its annexes shall be accessible to the public.

11. Within no more than 1 month of the commencement of the planning of the budgetary year, the Ministry of Finance of Georgia, based on the information received from local self-governments and autonomous republics, shall ensure the elaboration of a final draft of the Country's Basic Dimensions and Directions document and submit it to the Budget and Finance Committee.

Article 139. Consideration of Amendments to the Law on State Budget in Committee

1. The draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget is considered according to the rules prescribed by Article 136, if the current article does not provide otherwise.

2. The draft law on amendments to the Law on State Budget shall be published on the website of the Parliament immediately after being received from the Government. Within 2 days of receiving the aforementioned draft law, the Bureau of the Parliament considers the schedule of consideration of the draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget presented by the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee and submits it to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament for approval.

3. The terms of consideration of the draft law on the State Budget and submission of the conclusions by the parliamentary subjects considering the draft law on the State Budget are defined by the review schedule for the draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget, as well as estimated terms for considering the aforementioned draft law at the plenary sitting and adoption.

4. Within 10 days of the submission of the draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget to the Parliament by the Government, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall send a conclusion of the Budget and Finance Committee to the Government.

5. Within 5 days of the conclusion being presented, the Government shall submit to the Parliament a revised version of the draft law on the State Budget (each page signed by a responsible person). Information on expressed proposals and remarks as well as the status of their incorporation shall be submitted with these documents.

6. The revised draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget shall be published on the website of the Parliament upon

its submission to the Parliament and sent to the National Bank of Georgia and the State Audit Office within 1 day.

Article 140. Consideration of Amendments to the Law on the State Budget at a Plenary Sitting

1. At a plenary sitting, the Parliament shall consider the draft law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget according to the rules prescribed by Articles 137 and 138 within 7 days of a revised version of the draft law being submitted by the Government.

2. After the speeches have concluded, an authorized person shall deliver a final speech lasting no more than 30 minutes.

3. The Parliament adopts the law on the amendments to the Law on the State Budget by majority of its full composition at one hearing.

4. If the Parliament fails to adopt the law on the amendments to the Law on the State Budget, the same version or a new version of the law on the amendments to the Law on the State Budget revised with the joint efforts of the coordinating commission of the members of Government and the Parliament, can be put to a vote again.

5. The law on amendments to the Law on the State Budget shall be promulgated according to the established rules.

Article 141. Consideration of Quarterly Reports on Realization of the State Budget

1. The Parliament, through the Budget and Finance Committee, exercises general and consistent oversight over the State Budget's implementation. As a rule, other committees exercise oversight over budget implementation in the fields of their competence.

2. Within 1 month of the end of each quarter, the Ministry of Finance submits to the Parliament a quarterly overview of the implementation of the State Budget with cumulative sum.

3. The Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament and, if it so desires, other relevant committees according to the fields of their competence, as a rule, consider the quarterly implementation of the State Budget during a fiscal year. They are authorized to require and receive additional information regarding the implementation of the State Budget from the appropriate state agencies. The Budget and Finance Committee organizes the process of consideration in committees. According to the decision of the Budget and Finance Committee, the results of consideration shall be reported to the Parliament and they may become a matter of parliamentary consideration.

Article 142. Consideration of an Annual Report on the Implementation of the State Budget

1. The Government shall submit to the Parliament a report on the implementation of the State Budget for approval as soon as it has been informed that the State Audit Office has finalized preparation of its statement on the aforementioned report, but no later than 5 months after the completion of the fiscal year. The Office of the Parliament shall send the report on the implementation of the State Budget to the National Bank of Georgia in line with the rules established by the Rules of Procedure.

2. The State Audit Office shall submit to the Parliament a statement on the report of the Government on the implementation of the State Budget within 50 days of the report being presented by the Government to the State Audit Office.

3. The report on the implementation of the State Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office shall be considered by:

- a) The Budget and Finance Committee and, if it so desires, other relevant committees according to fields of their competence;

b) Factions, the Majority, the Minority and independent MPs.

4. The Parliament shall discuss the report on the implementation of the State Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office by no later than the end of the spring session.

5. The Office of the Parliament shall transfer copies of the report on the implementation of the State Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office to the Budget and Finance Committee, other committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, and independent MPs and the Budget Office of the Parliament no later than 3 days after the submission of these documents and sends to the National Bank of Georgia. The Office of the Parliament submits to the State Audit Office the annual report on the implementation of the State Budget. The Budget and Finance Committee shall define the schedule of consideration of the annual report on the implementation of the State Budget within 2 days of receiving the annual report on the implementation of the State Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office and submit these to the parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority, the Minority, the Government, the State Audit Office, and the National Bank of Georgia. The Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament, other relevant committees according to the fields of their competence, factions, the Majority, the Minority and the Budget Office of the Parliament consider the annual report on the implementation of the State Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office, and then prepare relevant conclusions.

6. Conclusions of the Budget and Finance Committee, other committees, factions, the Majority, and the Minority shall be submitted to a plenary sitting of the Parliament. Conclusions of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be submitted to a plenary sitting of the Parliament. The Parliament shall adopt a decree on the annual report on the implementation of the State Budget after having discussed the report on the implementation of the State

Budget and the statement on this report by the State Audit Office, conclusions of the parliamentary committees, factions, the Majority and the Minority and the completion of parliamentary debates according to the rules on the first hearing for draft laws prescribed by the Rules of Procedure. The Parliament shall approve an annual report on the implementation of the State Budget if it accurately and fully reflects the volume and legality of budgetary income and payables of the previous fiscal year. Otherwise, the Parliament may reject a report on the implementation of the State Budget. The Parliament shall adopt a decree on the approval or rejection of the report on the implementation of the State Budget before the end of the spring session.

Article 143. Formation of the Budget of the Parliament

1. The Parliament ensures formation and submission of the Parliament's budget to the Government before the start of a fiscal year, by no later than June 15.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament manages and coordinates the process of formation of the Parliament's budget. The Parliament's draft budget is drawn up based on the proposals of the relevant committees, factions, Council of Treasurers and the Office of the Parliament. This draft is submitted to the Parliament for approval by the Budget and Finance Committee. The reduction of indicators in the Parliament's draft budget (program classification code 0101) can only be made with the preliminary approval of the Parliament. The aforementioned draft shall be distributed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament during the consideration of the draft budget. The draft budget shall include information on financial operations and non-financial assets of the budgetary expenditures according to the main groups of budgetary classification.

3. The expenditures allocated to the Parliament in the State Budget can be reduced compared to the previous and current

years' expenditures only with the preliminary approval of the Parliament. The Parliament itself makes a decision on the division of the budget resources allocated to the Parliament in the State Budget. If the amount of resources does not exceed 15% of budget resources allocated to the Parliament, the decision on the division of budget resources allocated to the Parliament from the State Budget, is made by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, or by a decree of the Parliament

4. A decision on the management of the limits of the annual savings made in the payroll fund is made by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on a presentation of the Financial Support Department of the Office of the Parliament and the recommendation of the Council of Treasurers.

5. In the Parliament, within the scope of budget allotments, a special fund can be created, in which the sums deducted from the salaries of MPs, according to the Rules of Procedure, will be reflected. An MP has a right to deny the salary in favor of this fund. A decision regarding the disposal of sums accumulated within this fund is made by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament under her/his own initiative or based on a proposal by the Council of Treasurers. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament informs the Bureau of the Parliament about this decision.

Article 144. Formation of the Budgets of the State Heraldic Council at the Parliament and of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament of Georgia ensures the formation of the budgets of the State Heraldic Council at the Parliament and of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, and submits them to the Government.

2. The heads of the State Heraldic Council at the Parliament and the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia submit to the Parlia-

ment draft budget statements on budget estimates and maximum number of employees for the upcoming year by May 1.

3. The submitted budget statements with the corresponding conclusion from the Parliamentary Financial Support Department shall be discussed by the Budget and Finance Committee within 3 weeks and shall be presented to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall send the draft budget statements with a corresponding decision to the Government by no later than June 15.

Article 145. Formation of the Budget of the Parliament Research Center

1. The Parliament ensures submission of the budget of the Parliament Research Center for the upcoming year to the Government.

2. The Director of the Parliament Research Center submits to the Parliament the draft budget statements including budget estimates and maximum number of employees for the upcoming year by May 1.

3. The Budget and Finance Committee reviews the draft budget statement within 3 weeks and makes a conclusion. The conclusion is sent to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament submits to the Government the draft budget statements with a relevant decision by no later than June 15.

Article 146. Formation of the Budget of the State Audit Office

1. The Parliament ensures submission of the budget of the State Audit Office for the upcoming year to the Government.

2. The Auditor General submits to the Parliament the draft budget statement including budget estimates and the maximum number of employees for the upcoming year by May 1.

3. The Budget and Finance Committee reviews the draft budget statement within 3 weeks and makes a conclusion. This conclusion

is sent to the Parliament for discussion. During the discussion of the budget of the State Audit Office at the plenary sitting, it is obligatory to distribute copies of the draft budget.

4. The budget of the State Audit Office is presented to the Government by the Parliament after its consideration by no later than June 15 to be reflected in the draft law of the State Budget.

5. When approving the marginal volume of expenditures of the State Audit Office, the requirement that it should not be less than the volume of the previous budgetary year shall be considered. In addition, a reduction of the current year's expenses of the State Audit Office in comparison with the budgetary resources of the previous year can only occur with the preliminary consent of the Bureau of the Parliament.

Article 147. Formation of the Budget of the Central Election Commission

1. The Parliament ensures submission of the budget of the Central Election Commission (CEC) of the upcoming year to the Government.

2. The Chair of the CEC submits to the Parliament and Ministry of Finance draft budget statements including budget estimates and the maximum number of employees for the upcoming year by May 1.

3. The Budget and Finance Committee reviews each draft budget statement within 3 weeks and makes a conclusion. This conclusion is sent to the Parliament for discussion.

4. The draft budget of the CEC is presented to the Government by the Parliament after its consideration by no later than June 15 to be reflected in the draft law of the State Budget.

CHAPTER XIII

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

Article 148. Questions of the Members of the Parliament

1. An MP is authorized to put a question to the Government, another body accountable to the Parliament, a member of the Government, a state body of local self-government of any level, any state organization, or state agency. An MP shall receive a comprehensive response to his/her question in a timely manner.

2. A question shall be in written form. It shall be formulated precisely and clearly, and shall address an issue under the addressee's competencies.

3. A question shall be delivered to the Office of the Parliament that immediately publishes it on the website of the Parliament. The Office of the Parliament shall submit a question to the addressee within no more than 1 day.

4. Any body and official to which/whom a question is obliged to give a comprehensive written answer within 15 days. This term may be prolonged for 10 days with the consent of the author of the question. Only a person responsible for representing the subjects listed in paragraph 1 of this article or a head of a relevant organization shall sign an answer.

5. An official is authorized not to withhold information in his/her response that contains a state secret.

6. An MP is entitled to withdraw a question at any time.

7. The Office of the Parliament shall transfer an answer to the author of a question and publish it on the official website of the Parliament except for confidential information, while in cases of non-compliance with the term, this non-compliance is indicated.

Article 149. Interpellation

1. Comprising group of no fewer than 7 MPs, a faction is authorized to ask question, according to the rule of interpellation, to the Government, another body accountable to the Parliament, and any member of the Government (hereinafter — addressees).

2. A question shall be in written form with specific content and shall address an issue under the addressee's authority.

3. The written text of the question shall be delivered to the Office of the Parliament that registers it and submits it to the addressee within no more than one day.

4. Addressees shall answer questions personally, as well as submit written answers at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. The answers shall be signed by either a person with representative authority or a head of one of the subjects listed in this article.

5. An addressee of a question asked through the interpellation rule shall, as a rule, be present before the Parliament twice during each next session, in particular, on the Friday of the last week of the plenary sittings in March and May in the spring session and in September and November in the autumn session. S/he shall answer the questions that were delivered at least 10 days before the sitting.

6. An author of a question is entitled to withdraw it at any time. In this case, an addressee will not appear before the Parliament.

7. Considering the number of questions, the Bureau of the Parliament shall reduce the time proportionally envisaged by paragraphs 8-10 of this article to enable the fulfilment of procedures prescribed by this article for every question.

8. At a plenary sitting of the Parliament, an author of a question shall take the floor first for 10 minutes; the time period allocated for an addressee shall be 20 minutes, which can be extended for 10 minutes.

9. An author of a question may take the floor to specify the question only once and for no more than three minutes. The time period allocated for an addressee shall be 10 minutes.

10. After the procedure envisaged by paragraph 9 of this article has been completed, a break shall be announced for 1 hour. After the break, debates shall take place according to the rules. The Majority and the Minority shall be allocated 45 minutes each, while each faction not affiliated with either the Majority or the Minority shall be allocated 15 minutes and each independent MP shall be allocated 5 minutes. The independent MPs take the floor first, followed by factions not affiliated with either the Majority or the Minority, followed by the representatives of the Minority and the Majority. Factions, the Majority, the Minority, and independent MPs shall determine the number of speakers they use within the time allocated and according to the schedule. Taking the floor without the permission of the Chair of the sitting is inadmissible. Extension of the time allocated to speakers is inadmissible. After debates, the addressee shall take the floor for a 20-minute concluding speech.

11. After debates, the Parliament may adopt a resolution, recommendation or other decree.

Article 150. Annual Report of the Prime Minister

1. The Prime Minister is obliged to present a report to the Parliament about the progress of the Government Program once in a year in the last month of the plenary sittings of the spring session. The aforementioned report is submitted to the Parliament in written form before June 1.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament shall determine the specific time of the presentation of the Prime Minister with his/her agreement.

3. After the Prime Minister completes his/her speech, discussion of the report shall continue as prescribed by the procedures for the

first hearing of a draft law. After discussion, the Parliament may adopt a decree.

Article 151. Report of the Prime Minister

1. The Parliament is authorized to request that the Prime Minister presents a report on the progress of specific chapters of the Government Program. The Parliament shall take this decision based on the request of a committee or a faction, at a plenary sitting with the majority of the members of the Parliament present at the sitting, but with not less than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament; The decision shall be included in the protocol and immediately sent to addressees.

2. The Prime Minister shall submit the report prescribed by paragraph 1 of this article to the Parliament within 2 weeks of the relevant request being received and will present before the Parliament the relevant report within no more than 3 weeks. The Bureau of the Parliament shall determine the specific time of presentation for the Prime Minister with his/her agreement.

3. Discussion of the report envisaged by this article shall continue as prescribed by the procedures for the first hearing of a draft law. After discussion, the Parliament may adopt a decree.

Article 152. Summoning Officials

1. The Parliament is authorized to summon a member of the Government, an official of a government organization accountable to the Parliament, a head of a body accountable to the Parliament to a plenary sitting on the basis of a request of a committee or a faction, by a majority of votes of MPs present at the plenary sitting but with not less than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament. They shall be obliged to answer questions and present an activity report at the sitting. The decision of the Parliament shall be immediately sent to the addressee.

2. Any person mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article shall present before the Parliament on the last Friday of every month at a plenary sitting and report the issues that were delivered to him/her no later than 10 days before the presentation day.

3. 30 minutes shall be allocated to an official for a speech concerning issues specified by paragraph 1 of this article.

4. After an official completes his/her speech, MPs have a right to ask questions and receive answers for 30 minutes. The time allocated for each author of a question shall not exceed 2 minutes, which can be extended by 30 seconds without right of clarification. An MP may take the floor for a question only once. After all questions have been asked, an official shall answer MPs' questions separately.

5. After an official completes his/her speech and subsequent questions and answers are concluded, the debates may be held as prescribed by Article 93 of the Rules of Procedure. Afterwards, the official shall take the floor for a 15-minute concluding speech.

6. After the official presents a report and subsequent questions and answers have concluded, the Parliament may adopt a decree.

Article 153. A Minister's Hour

1. A minister's hour refers to the obligation of certain members of the Government (except the Prime Minister of Georgia), to present before the plenary sitting of the Parliament the report on the respective components of the implementation of the Government Program not less than once in a year.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament shall prepare a schedule of presentation for each member of the Government in the Parliament, with the agreement of the members of the Government and taking into consideration the committees' initiatives before the beginning of the spring session. If necessary, the schedule may be changed. The schedule should ensure that at least one minister's

hour is planned every two weeks during plenary sittings (except for the weeks in which discussion of the budget and annual report of the Prime Minister take place).

3. A minister's hour shall begin with the speech of a minister lasting no more than 45 minutes.

4. The Parliament considers the report of a member of the Government according to the rules set forth by the Rules of Procedure for the consideration of a draft law at the first hearing.

Article 154. Hearings of a Member of the Government and Other Officials

1. A Member of the Government, an official accountable to the Parliament, a head of an organization accountable to the Parliament, or the Public Defender immediately upon his/her request shall be heard by the Parliament.

2. An official specified in paragraph 1 of this article is obliged to submit in written form to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament the issues s/he wants to present to the Parliament no later than 3 days before presentation before the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament ensures immediate distribution of the written submission through the Office of the Parliament to factions, the Majority, the Minority, and independent MPs.

3. The presentation of an official specified in this article at a plenary sitting shall not exceed 20 minutes. If necessary, this can be prolonged by a Sitting Chair for 10 minutes.

4. After the presentation of an official specified in this article, a discussion shall take place according to the rules provided for the first hearing of a draft law.

Article 155. Thematic Scrutiny

1. Based on a decision of a committee or permanent parliamentary committees, a thematic scrutiny group from MPs may be ap-

pointed to study an important issue and develop a relevant draft decision. The thematic scrutiny group shall select a Chief Rapporteur from its members.

2. A member of a committee is entitled to present to the committee a list of issues for thematic scrutiny taking into consideration the analysis of an application, ongoing events, public interest and other important factors. The committee shall decide to commence thematic scrutiny with the majority of all enlisted members of the committee.

3. According to rules established by paragraph 2 of this article, a permanent parliamentary council shall make a decision, based on a list of issues presented by its chair or member, on starting the scrutiny process and appointing the thematic scrutiny group.

4. Issue of scrutiny and information on MPs who confirmed their engagement in the scrutiny shall be presented to the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. In the event that more than one committee member expresses willingness to conduct scrutiny on the same issue, with or without the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament, the MPs engaged in the scrutiny may unite.

5. A thematic scrutiny group is obliged to publish information on the commencement of scrutiny on the website of the Parliament no later than 5 days after the commencement of the scrutiny. This information shall include the title of the issue and a short description, information on the member(s) of the Parliament engaged in the process, as well as rules and terms for submission of opinions and evidence by interested persons.

6. A thematic scrutiny group shall develop a scrutiny plan and schedule, determine specialists who will participate in the scrutiny, lead the process, are responsible for studying the issue and developing a draft decision, study information/evidence submitted by interested persons, and have a right to request and receive information and explanation(s) on any issue from an administrative

body. Documents/evidence received during the scrutiny shall be published on the website of the Parliament.

7. During the scrutiny of an issue, it is mandatory to hold a hearing to which interested persons, specialists of the relevant field(s), and experts and representatives of administrative bodies related to the issue shall be invited. Details of a hearing shall be published on the website of the Parliament 1 week in advance.

8. A thematic scrutiny group shall prepare and submit a report to the Bureau or Committee of the Parliament within 2 months. This term shall be prolonged by no more than 1 month in cases of necessity. The report shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament if MPs engaged in the scrutiny represent different committees or the decision on the commencement of the scrutiny was made by a permanent parliamentary council. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to add the aforementioned issue to the agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament. Based on the conclusion, a committee or the Parliament shall develop recommendations or exercise other powers prescribed by the Rules of Procedure. Recommendations and/or tasks developed by the committee/ the Parliament shall be sent to relevant administrative bodies and published on the website of the Parliament.

Article 156. Parliamentary Oversight over Defense and Security Sector of Georgia

The Parliament of Georgia oversees the activities of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, the Special State Protection Service of Georgia and the Operative-Technical Agency of Georgia (hereinafter — the authorities of the Defense and Security Sector of Georgia) through the Committee of Defense and Security, a Trust Group and other field-specific committees.

Article 157. Composition of a Trust Group

1. A Trust Group is created in the Defense and Security Committee to exercise parliamentary oversight over the authorities of the Defense and Security Sector of Georgia as prescribed by this article.

2. A Trust Group is composed of five members: Chair of the Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament; one member of the Majority; the majoritarian MP who gained most votes in the previous election; one member of the Minority; and the MP not affiliated with either the Majority or the Minority who gained most votes in the previous election.

3. Persons envisaged by paragraph 2 of this Article shall nominate the mentioned persons of a Trust Group to the Parliament. Leaders of the Majority and the Minority, respectively, shall present the Trust Group members of the majority and the minority. MPs who give consent to the statement of their nomination shall sign decisions on the agreement of majoritarian MPs, and MPs not affiliated with either the Minority or the Majority.

4. MPs elected by the majoritarian system with the majoritarian quota and MPs not affiliated with either the Majority or the Minority with the relevant quota may sign a decision upon the nomination of only one person.

5. A person nominated as a member of a Trust Group shall undergo security background investigation procedures as prescribed by the Law of Georgia on State Secrets before submission to the Parliament to be granted access to state secrets.

6. The Parliament shall acknowledge the composition of a Trust Group that is entered in the protocol.

7. The Chair of the Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament of Georgia shall be the chair of a Trust Group, and acts on behalf of the group.

8. The authority of a member of a Trust Group shall be terminated in the event of a nomination of a new candidate by persons

entitled to nominate in a Trust Group as envisaged by paragraph 2 of this article. Such authority shall be terminated from the moment of nomination.

Article 158. Rules of Work of a Trust Group

1. At the meeting of a Trust Group, decisions shall be made by a majority of votes of its members. Sitzings of a Trust Group are closed.

2. Sitzings of a Trust Group are held as necessary. The chair of a Trust Group summons and leads its sittings. Sitzings of a Trust Group may be summoned based on the suggestion of a member of a Trust Group with the support of a majority of members of the relevant Trust Group.

3. Other MPs as well as persons invited from the Defense and Security sector may attend a sitting based on the decision of the relevant Trust Group.

Article 159. Parliamentary Oversight Powers in the Defense and Security Sector of Georgia

1. A Trust Group supervises secret activities and special programs in the Defense and Security sector, except for the activities relating to covert forms and methods of activity as prescribed by the legislation of Georgia.

2. Respective authorities are obliged to provide all information to the relevant Trust Group necessary for the uninterrupted exercise of its powers, except for the cases envisaged by the legislation of Georgia. The Operative-Technical Agency provides information to a Trust Group as prescribed by paragraph 9 of this article.

3. The relevant authorities are entitled to refuse to provide information regarding current cases and events in the national/social security and state interests. Provision of information (including normative acts) by the relevant authorities related to covert forms and

methods of activity is also limited. Within the framework of cooperation determined by international treaties, a Trust Group is provided with information as prescribed by the legislation of Georgia.

4. In the event of refusal to provide information, the relevant authorities are obliged to submit a written reasoning to the relevant Trust Group.

5. Relevant authorities shall provide the relevant Trust Group with detailed information on implemented secret state procurement, if the estimated value of goods or services exceeds 2 million GEL and, for construction work, if the estimated value of exceeds 4 million GEL. Not less than once a year, the relevant authorities shall submit a report on implemented and ongoing secret state procurement.

6. Relevant authorities shall provide the Legal Issues Committee and Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament with detailed information on planned non-secret state procurement, if the estimated value of goods or services to be purchased exceeds 2 million GEL, and, for construction work, if the estimated value exceeds 4 million GEL. Not less than once a year, the relevant authorities shall submit a report on implemented and ongoing non-secret state procurement.

7. The Prime Minister of Georgia, the Government, and relevant authorities are obliged to submit to a Trust Group the secret normative act containing the structure of the authority and main goals of its structural subunits within two weeks of registration in the secret part of the State Register of Normative Acts of Georgia except for cases envisaged by the legislation of Georgia. The normative act is immediately returned to the relevant authority upon reading.

8. The Prime Minister of Georgia, the Government, and relevant authorities are obliged to submit to the Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament documents reflecting policy, priorities and

strategy in the field of defense and security of Georgia within two weeks of submission.

9. Relevant authorities shall submit a report of the secret activity and special programs of the previous year once a year, no later than April 15 to the relevant Trust Group. The Operative-Technical Agency, a legal entity of public law, shall submit a statistical and generalized report of performance annually.

10. Heads of respective authorities or other authorized persons in agreement with the relevant Trust Group are entitled and, when requested by the relevant Trust Group, obliged, to attend the relevant Trust Group's sittings, to answer questions, to submit relevant materials and to report on the activities implemented.

11. Members of a Trust Group with the contest of the Chair of the Trust Group are authorized to implement visits to the relevant authorities regarding issues within the competencies of the Trust Group. Members of a Trust Group are authorized to interview employees of the authority and get acquainted with information regarding issues within the competencies of the relevant Trust Group during the visit. The decision of the Chair of the Trust Group on the abovementioned matter is sent to the relevant authority prior to the visit.

12. A Trust Group is authorized to make a decision on the inspection of the Operative-Technical Agency (a legal entity of public law) and to inspect it not more than twice a year. The relevant Trust Group shall select one of its members to inspect the activity of the mentioned agency as prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

13. A Trust Group is obliged to appeal to the investigative body in the event of the observance of signs composing a crime while exercising its power and to enclose existing material to the appeal.

14. If on the basis of the secret information received within the scope of its authority the Trust Group deems that a relevant authority or leader has violated the legislation of Georgia and, in addi-

tion, information has been classified illegally or unreasonably, the relevant Trust Group shall address the State Security Service of Georgia in writing to issue a reasoned instruction as envisaged by paragraph 1 of Article 12 of the Law of Georgia on State Secrets. If the State Security Service of Georgia deems that the identified classification does not contradict the principles of legality and justification, the relevant Trust Group shall address the Prime Minister of Georgia to change the status of the information classified according to the corresponding decision of the State Security Service of Georgia, which is also enclosed.

15. A Trust Group is authorized to present recommendations to the authorities of the Defense and Security Sector of Georgia.

16. Issue to be considered by the Parliament within the competencies of the relevant Trust Group as prescribed by this law shall require a conclusion to be written and issued by the relevant Trust Group.

Article 160. Declaration of Confidence in the Government

1. The Parliament shall declare its confidence in the Government presented by the candidate for the position of Prime Minister nominated by a political party with the best results at the parliamentary elections within two weeks after termination of authority of the Government, or the Prime Minister resignation or otherwise termination of authority. The program of the Government shall be submitted to the Parliament along with the composition of the Government.

2. The composition of the Government and the Government program shall be submitted by the candidate for the position of Prime Minister to the Parliament no later than 9 days after the termination of the authority of the Government, or the Prime Minister's resignation or another form of termination of his/her authority.

3. Parliamentary committees and factions shall consider a vote of confidence in the program and composition of the Government

according to their fields of competence, and present relevant conclusions to the Bureau of the Parliament. Only two hearings of the issues envisaged by the paragraph are admissible on the same day. Conclusions of the committee shall be made through secret ballot by a majority of votes of the committee members attending the sitting.

4. Based on the conclusions of the parliamentary committees and factions, the Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue of a vote of confidence in the composition and program of the Government in the agenda of a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

5. The Parliament shall consider and put to a vote the issue of confidence in the composition of the Government according to the rules prescribed by the Rules of Procedure for consideration of a draft law at a first hearing.

6. The support of the majority of the Parliament is required for the Government to pass a vote of confidence.

7. If the Parliament does not declare its confidence in the Government within the term specified in paragraph 2 of Article 56 of the Constitution of Georgia, within 2 weeks of term expiring the Parliament shall declare its confidence in the Government represented by a candidate for the position of Prime Minister nominated by more than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament by a majority of votes of the full composition as prescribed by this article. If more than 1 candidate is put forward, the Parliament shall consider the candidate who was put forward by more MPs; if the number of MPs is similar for each candidate, the Parliament shall consider the candidate who was put forward earlier.

8. If the composition of the Government is presented during parliamentary holidays or a non-session week, a special session or sitting shall be held according to the rules prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

Article 161. Declaration of No-Confidence in the Government

1. The Parliament is authorized to pass a vote of no confidence in the Government. The issue of a declaration of no-confidence can be initiated by one-third of the full composition of the Parliament.

2. In addition to calling for a vote of no-confidence, the initiators shall nominate a candidate for Prime Minister, a new composition of the Government, and a new Government program.

3. If the Parliament declares confidence in the new Government not earlier than 7 and no later than 14 days from the initiation of the issue by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament, no-confidence shall be declared.

4. Rules prescribed by paragraphs 3-5 of Article 160 of the Rules of Procedure shall apply to the procedures for the declaration of no-confidence in the Government.

5. If the Parliament does not pass a vote of no-confidence in the Government of Georgia after the initiation of the issue, it is inadmissible for the same MPs to initiate a declaration of no-confidence for the next 6 months.

Article 162. Declaration of Confidence in the Government under the Initiative of the Prime Minister

1. The Prime Minister of Georgia is authorized to initiate the issue of confidence in the Government to the Parliament.

2. The issue of a declaration of confidence shall be voted on not earlier than 7 and no later than 14 days from this initiation.

3. Rules prescribed by paragraphs 3-5 of Article 160 of the Rules of Procedure shall apply to the procedures of a declaration of confidence in the Government under the initiative of the Prime Minister of Georgia.

4. If the Parliament does not pass confidence in the Government within the term specified in paragraph 2 of Article 56 of the Consti-

tution of Georgia, within 7 days of not declaring confidence the Parliament is authorized to pass confidence to the Government presented by a candidate for the position of Prime Minister nominated by more than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament and by a majority of votes of the full composition. The Government program shall be presented to the Parliament together with the composition of the Government.

5. Rules prescribed by paragraphs 3-5 of Article 160 of the Rules of Procedure shall apply to the procedures of a declaration of confidence in the Government as envisaged by paragraph 4 of this article.

Article 163. Supervision of the Situation Regarding Human Rights and Freedoms Protection in the Country

1. Once a year, in March, the Public Defender of Georgia shall submit a report on the situation regarding human rights and freedoms protection in the country to the Parliament. In addition, once a year, at the spring session, a statement on the annual report is submitted upon consideration of which the Parliament shall adopt a decree or a resolution. The Parliament's resolution shall include an evaluation of the report of the Public Defender of Georgia regarding the situation of human rights and freedoms protection in the country as well as recommendations of the Parliament and terms of implementation monitoring.

2. A relevant committee of the Parliament presents information on the enforcement of the resolution presented in the first paragraph of this article to the Bureau of the Parliament. The information is presented to the plenary sitting according to the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament.

Article 164. Oversight of Public Funds Management by the Parliament

The Parliament exercises oversight of public funds management through the State Audit Office.

Article 165. Reports and Statements of the State Audit Office and Procedures for the Consideration Thereof

1. The Parliament oversees the activities of the State Audit Office (SAO) in accordance with the rules prescribed by normative acts of legislation and bylaws.

2. The SAO presents a statement on the report of the Government twice a year when presenting preliminary and complete reports on the implementation of the State Budget.

3. Once a year, no later than June 1 of the year immediately following the reporting year, the SAO shall submit a report on its activities to the Parliament. The report shall include results of the SAO's financial audit in an annex. The aforementioned report shall be published on the website of the Parliament.

4. The Parliament shall adopt a relevant decree upon consideration of the report envisaged by paragraph 3 of this article. The Parliament's decree, including the terms of its implementation, may reflect recommendations put forward by the audit group of the Budget and Finance Committee and be adopted upon the decision of the Committee. The Budget and Finance Committee shall be a rapporteur on this issue at a plenary sitting.

5. The Budget and Finance Committee shall oversee implementation of a decree provided for by paragraph 4 of this article through the audit group; it will submit information concerning the status of implementation to the Bureau of the Parliament if necessary. The information shall be presented to a plenary sitting of the Parliament upon the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament and shall become an issue for consideration.

6. The Budget and Finance Committee shall create a permanent audit group under itself to implement the function specified in Article 164 of the Rules of Procedure; the audit group shall be composed from members of this committee. The number of members and composition of the audit group shall be defined by a decision of the Budget and Finance Committee. The Budget and Finance Committee shall also coordinate revision of the SAO's report by the committees of the Parliament.

7. The audit group is accountable to the Budget and Finance Committee. The charter of the audit group shall be approved by decision of the Budget and Finance Committee.

8. The main function of the audit group prescribed by paragraph 6 of this article is to review reports prescribed by Article 24 of the Organic Law of Georgia on the SAO and to present relevant recommendations to the Budget and Finance Committee.

9. The SAO shall immediately submit the reports envisaged by paragraph 8 of this article to the Parliament. In addition, the SAO shall present written information on especially important reports, out of these reports, twice a year before September 10 of the current year and before February 10 of the next year.

10. The audit group is obliged to present a report on its activities to the Budget and Finance Committee at least once during a session.

11. Sitzings of the audit group are public; the audit group shall convene sittings at least once a month during a session of the Parliament.

12. The audit group shall draft a decision of the Budget and Finance Committee with corresponding recommendations and present it to the Budget and Finance Committee.

13. While developing plans for its activities, the SAO shall take into consideration the suggestions of the committees, as well as investigative and other temporary commissions of the Parliament.

14. The SAO is authorized and, when demanded, obliged, to provide audit materials to the relevant committee of the Parliament and the Temporary Investigative Commission.

15. The SAO carries out unplanned audits and inspections upon the request of the Parliament and temporary investigative commissions.

16. The SAO shall implement a financial audit in accordance with subparagraphs f.a., f.c. and f.d. of Article 2 of the Organic Law of Georgia on the State Audit Office, while international standards, and the rules established by paragraphs 9-12 of Article 166 of the Rules of Procedure are applicable to the selection of the auditing firm.

Article 166. Oversight of Activities of the National Bank of Georgia

1. In conformity with the rules envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia, other legislative acts and by-laws, the Parliament oversees the activities of the National Bank of Georgia and its high-ranking officials.

2. Every year, within 4 months of the end of the fiscal year, the National Bank of Georgia shall submit to the Parliament a report on the implementation of activities specified in Articles 60 and 61 of the Organic Law of Georgia on the National Bank of Georgia and the monetary-credit, currency and supervisory policy. The Parliament shall discuss and approve the reports by decree.

3. In the event that the report of the National Bank of Georgia is not approved, the Parliament shall make a decision on the evaluation of the performance of the National Bank of Georgia.

4. Before the start of a new fiscal year, by no later than October 1, the National Bank of Georgia shall submit a draft of the main directions of monetary policy for the next three years to the Parliament.

5. As a rule, the Budget and Finance Committee and/or committees with economics profile, review a draft of the main directions of monetary policy and prepare relevant conclusions. The committee is authorized, if necessary, to request necessary information from the National Bank of Georgia, the Government, ministries of Georgia, and other entities including other establishments of the executive branch.

6. The Parliament shall discuss the draft of the main directions of monetary policy according to the rules for a first hearing as prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

7. The Parliament approves the main directions of monetary policy by decree before the end of the current year.

8. During a fiscal year, the Parliament is authorized to request performance from the National Bank of Georgia information on the progress of implementation of the Parliament's decree on the main directions of monetary policy. The National Bank of Georgia is obliged to present the information at a plenary sitting of the Parliament in the term given by the Parliament.

9. The Budget and Finance Committee shall submit to the Parliament a list of the world's four largest auditing firms to carry out an external audit of the reports of the National Bank of Georgia, after completion of an audit, by no later than September 1, and the Parliament shall select one auditing firm (external auditor) by no later than 1 November. A contract shall be signed with the auditing firm for a period of at least 2 years but not exceeding 4 years. Costs relating to external audits of the reports of the National Bank of Georgia shall be covered by the National Bank of Georgia.

10. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall include the issue of the selection of an auditing firm by the Parliament, as submitted by the Budget and Finance Committee, on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall transfer the issue to the Budget and Finance

Committee to define the process for selection of the auditing firm (tender/competition), the composition of the tender/competition commission and the timeframes of the tender/competition. The Budget and Finance Committee shall consider these issues within 2 weeks.

11. If the Budget and Finance Committee considers it reasonable for the selection of an auditing firm to be made based on a tender, it shall submit the relevant decision together with a draft decree to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include this issue in the agenda of a plenary sitting. The Parliament shall approve the composition of a tender commission by decree. Tender conditions, requirements, and rules, as well as the statute of a tender commission, shall be approved by the Bureau of the Parliament upon the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee.

12. If the Budget and Finance Committee considers it reasonable that the selection of an auditing firm should be made based on a competition, it shall submit the relevant decision together with a draft decree to the Bureau of the Parliament. The draft decree should provide the composition of a competition commission (not more than 9 members), issues related to the elaboration and approval of a commission statute, activities to be implemented on behalf of the Parliament, and timeframes for presenting an auditing firm selected by a competition to the Parliament.

Article 167. Oversight of Activities of the Pension Agency

1. The Pension Agency shall submit to the Parliament no later than October 1, the annual report on the activities carried out during the 6 months of the current year, and shall submit the annual report of its activities by no later than June 1. The Parliament shall discuss the review/report according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 9 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

The Parliament shall adopt a relevant decree upon revision of the review/report as envisaged by this paragraph. The resolution of the Parliament may indicate recommendations and proposals regarding the elimination of individual deficiencies and/or improvements of the Pension Agency's performance.

2. The Parliament is entitled to request information from the Pension Agency on the implementation of the Parliament's decree as required during the fiscal year. The Pension Agency is obliged to submit this information at a plenary sitting of the Parliament within the timeframe defined by the Parliament.

3. The Budget and Finance Committee shall submit to the Parliament a list of the world's four largest auditing firms to carry out an external audit of the reports of the Pension Agency by no later than October 1, and the Parliament shall select one auditing firm (external auditor) by no later than December 1. A contract shall be signed with the auditing firm for a period of not more than 3 years. Costs related to external audits of the reports of the Pension Agency shall be covered by the Pension Agency.

4. Rules established by paragraphs 10-12 of Article 166 of the Rules of Procedure are applicable to the selection of an auditing firm by the Parliament.

Article 168. Performance Audit of the Georgian National Communications Commission and Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission Budget

The Parliament is authorized to make a decision on the implementation of a performance audit of the approved budget of the Georgian National Communications Commission and the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission not more than once a year. In such cases, the Parliament shall select an internationally recognized auditing firm based on a tender/competition. The composition of a tender/competition commission shall

be approved by a decree of the Parliament upon submission by the Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee.

Article 169. Annual Report of the State Inspector's Office

1. Once a year, no later than March 31, the State Inspector presents a report on the state of personal data protection in the country, the oversight of covert investigation and actions taken relating to the digital communication identification central bank as well as the state of investigation of criminal cases subordinate to the State Inspector's Office and on actions taken by the State Inspector's Office in this regard during the previous year to the Parliament. The Parliament shall consider the report by the State Inspector's Office according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. Once a year, the State Inspector's Office also presents a report on the results of its oversight of implemented investigative activities as envisaged by Articles 136-138 and covert investigative actions envisaged by subparagraphs "a" and "b" of part one of Article 143¹ of the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia. The Bureau of the Parliament shall submit the report to a relevant committee of the Parliament and the relevant Trust Group.

Article 170. Report on Activities of the Legal Aid Service

1. Once a year, by no later than March 1, a director of the legal entity of public law, the Legal Aid Service (hereinafter — LAS), presents a report on activities implemented by the LAS during the previous year.

2. It is mandatory to discuss a report on the LAS's activities at a plenary sitting. The Parliament shall consider this report according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 9 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure. After hearing a report on the LAS, the Parliament shall approve the report by decree or request the

LAS to address specific shortcomings and/or improve its performance.

Article 171. Report on Activities of the State Security Service of Georgia

1. The Head of the State Security Service or her/his deputy shall present to the Parliament a report on the activities implemented by the State Security Service during the previous year once a year, by no later than April 15. The Parliament shall consider this report according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 9 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. After considering a report on the implemented activities of the State Security Service, the Parliament shall evaluate its performance by decree. The Parliament's decree may include recommendations and proposals on addressing specific shortcomings and/or improving performance of the State Security Service.

3. The Defense and Security Committee of the Parliament shall supervise fulfillment of the decree referred to in paragraph 2 of this article.

4. The Head of State Security Service is entitled and, when requested, is obliged, to attend sittings of the Parliament, parliamentary committees and commissions, to respond to questions asked during these sittings and to present a report on implemented activities. If requested, the Head of the State Security Service is obliged to submit a report on the implemented activities within 2 weeks of the request.

Article 172. Report on Activities of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia

1. The Chief Prosecutor of Georgia shall present to the Parliament a report on the activities implemented by the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia during the previous year once a year, by no

later than May 15 regarding criminal law policy implementation outcomes, evaluation of the general crime situation in the country including statistical data of common crime indicating categories and trends, protection of human rights and liberties in the process of litigation, priorities of the Prosecutor's Office activities, and professional training development programs for prosecutors. The report does not include any investigation of a specific criminal case, judicial review and/or case-related circumstances. The Parliament shall consider this report according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 9 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. After considering a report on the implemented activities of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia, the Parliament shall evaluate the performance of the Service by decree. The Parliament's decree may include recommendations and proposals on addressing specific shortcomings and/or improving the performance of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia.

3. The Legal Issues Committee of the Parliament shall supervise the fulfillment of the decree referred to in paragraph 2 of this article.

4. The Chief Prosecutor of Georgia or his/her first deputy or deputy is entitled and, when requested, is obliged, to attend sittings of the Parliament, parliamentary committees and commissions, to respond to questions asked during these sittings and to present a report on implemented activities. Such a request shall include comprehensive information on the issue/issues to be discussed. The Chief Prosecutor of Georgia or his/her first deputy or deputy invited to the sitting, has the right to not talk about any issue/issues not known to him/her beforehand. Moreover, the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia or his/her first deputy or deputy shall not be asked questions on the investigation of a specific criminal case, judicial review and/or case-related circumstances.

5. If requested, the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia or his/her first deputy or deputy is obliged to submit a report on the implemented activities within 2 weeks of the request.

Article 173. Supervision of Implementation of the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review Recommendations

1. The Government shall submit draft recommendations concerning Georgia to the Parliament prepared by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council in the framework of the UN UPR process within 1 week of the submission of these recommendations to the Government.

2. The Government shall submit final recommendations concerning Georgia to the Parliament prepared by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council in the framework of the UN UPR process within 1 week of the official submission of these recommendations to the Government.

3. The Government shall submit to the Parliament an interim draft report on the implementation of recommendations committed to during the UN UPR process (if any exist) at least 2 months prior to the submission of this report to the UN Human Rights Council.

4. The Government shall submit to the Parliament a final draft report on the status of human rights protection in Georgia for the UN UPR process at least 2 months prior to the submission of this report to the UN Human Rights Council.

5. The Parliament shall consider documents referred to in paragraphs 1-4 of this article according to the rules prescribed in paragraphs 2-5 and 8-10 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

6. The documents referred to in this article shall be considered at a plenary sitting upon the request of a leading committee or the

Bureau of the Parliament (by a majority of votes of those present at the sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament).

7. When discussing the documents referred to in paragraphs 1-4 of this article at a plenary sitting, the Parliament shall adopt a decree.

Article 174. United Nations Supervisory Bodies' Reports on Georgia

1. Within the timeframe established by the UN's relevant committee, the Government shall submit to the Parliament a draft report on the implementation of a founding treaty of the same committee at least 2 months prior to the submission of a report to this committee.

2. The relevant committee of the Parliament shall hear information prepared by the Government on the implementation of recommendations issued by the UN's supervisory bodies, if necessary.

3. No later than April 1 every year, the Government shall submit to the Parliament a report on the status of implementation of decisions of the relevant UN commissions concerning individual petitions against Georgia.

4. The Parliament shall consider documents referred to in this article according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 8-10 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

5. The documents referred to in this article shall be considered at a plenary sitting upon the request of a leading committee or the Bureau of the Parliament (by a majority of votes of those present at the sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament).

6. When discussing the documents referred to in paragraph 3 of this article at a plenary sitting, the Parliament shall adopt a decree.

Article 175. Supervision of Enforcement of Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights

1. Once a year, no later than April 1, the Government shall submit to the Parliament:

a) A report on the enforcement of decisions/judgements of the European Court of Human Rights regarding cases on which the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a final resolution in the previous year (if available);

b) An action plan on the enforcement of decisions/judgements of the European Court of Human Rights concerning ongoing cases, as well as decisions and interim resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe concerning these cases (if available).

2. The Parliament shall consider documents referred to in this article according to the rules prescribed by paragraphs 2-5 and 8-10 of Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure.

3. For the purposes of preparation of the issues referred to in this article for \ committee hearing, a leading committee shall study the opinion and evaluation of any interested individual(s) concerning the status of enforcement of decisions/judgements of the European Court of Human Rights.

4. The documents referred to in this article shall be considered at a plenary sitting upon the request of a leading committee or the Bureau of the Parliament (by a majority of votes of those present at the sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament).

5. When discussing the documents referred to in paragraph 1 of this article at a plenary sitting, the Parliament shall adopt a decree.

Article 176. Discussion of Reports Submitted to the Parliament

1. The Parliament shall discuss reports submitted to the Parliament according to the rules prescribed by this article except for cases envisaged by the Rules of Procedure.

2. The Organizational Department of the Office of the Parliament shall present its report at the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament.

3. The Bureau of the Parliament shall decide at the nearest sitting of the Bureau on the commencement of a discussion of the report, and determine a leading committee and timeframe for the parliamentary discussion of the report. Thereafter, the report is transferred for discussion to the leading committee, other committees, factions, the Majority, and the Minority.

4. Committees, factions, the Majority and the Minority shall present their suggestions (comments) to the leading committee within the time determined by the Bureau of the Parliament.

5. A leading committee shall discuss the report at a committee sitting, prepare the conclusion and present it to the Bureau of the Parliament within the timeframe determined by the Bureau of the Parliament.

6. Discussion of a report at the plenary sitting of the Parliament is mandatory if the relevant law envisages participation of the Parliament in the staffing of the presenting body.

7. If a particular law does not prescribe the participation of the Parliament in staffing of a presenting body, the discussion of a report at the plenary sitting of the Parliament shall be held upon the request of a leading committee or the Bureau of the Parliament (by a majority of MPs present at the sitting).

8. A leading committee mentions the issue of the obligatory discussion of the report at the plenary sitting of the Parliament in its conclusion.

9. Such a report shall be discussed at the plenary sitting of the Parliament according to the rules for a first hearing of a draft law.

10. As a general rule, a report shall be presented by a rapporteur, appointed by a leading committee, to a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

11. At the end of a discussion, the Parliament shall acknowledge the report and is authorized to adopt a decree.

12. In cases specified by law or the Rules of Procedure, a report, review or information presented by a corresponding state body/public official shall be discussed according to the rules prescribed by this article.

Article 177. Rules for Consideration of Reports on Public Information

1. The Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration of the Parliament shall elaborate and submit to the Bureau of the Parliament a unified conclusion on reports presented to the Parliament by the public authorities in accordance with the rules prescribed by Article 49 of the General Administrative Code of Georgia before the end of the spring session. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. The Parliament shall consider the issue according to the rules prescribed by the Rules of Procedure for consideration of a draft law at a first hearing and adopt a decree on the assessment of reports on public information and relevant recommendations.

2. The Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration of the Parliament is authorized to transfer the reports submitted by the public authorities to committees of the Parliament according to the fields of their competence to elaborate relevant decisions. A parliamentary committee is authorized to prepare a decision on the reports.

3. Information on initiating a discussion of the reports referred to in paragraph 1 of this article shall be published on the website of the Parliament by the Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration. The Committee on Human Rights Protection and Civil Integration shall review statements submitted to the Parliament by citizens and organizations on reports and information included therein.

Article 178. Raising an Issue of Dismissal by Impeachment

1. At least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament can raise the issue of impeachment of the President of Georgia, the Chief Justice of Georgia, a member of the Government, the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia, the Auditor General and a member of the Council of the National Bank of Georgia.

2. A written request to raise the issue of dismissal through impeachment shall specify:

a) Description of the action, which, in the opinion of the initiators of the issue, forms the basis for impeachment;

b) Provisions of the Constitution of Georgia, which, in the opinion of the initiators of the issue, are violated by the official and/or the article(s) of the Criminal Code of Georgia, crime envisaged by which, in the opinion of the initiators of the issue, are committed by an official.

c) Evidence, which, in the opinion of the initiators of the issue, prove the grounds for constitutional submission.

3. After a constitutional appeal to dismiss an official through impeachment within 3 days of the submission of the relevant motion to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules, the committee verifies the validity of the signatures and elaborates a relevant conclusion.

4. The initiators of the dismissal of an official by impeachment shall submit to the Constitutional Court of Georgia a written request to dismiss an official through an impeachment proposal (constitutional appeal) within 7 days after this initiation.

5. The Parliament shall not discuss, or make a decision concerning, the charges against the President of Georgia during a state of emergency or martial law. In such cases, the Parliament shall commence/continue a discussion of the charges against the President of Georgia after a state of emergency or martial law concludes at the first sitting of the nearest session (ordinary or extraordinary).

6. If an official whose impeachment has been initiated, resigns or has been dismissed, the impeachment procedure shall be terminated.

Article 179. Discussion of Dismissal through Impeachment

1. When a conclusion of the Constitutional Court of Georgia on actions of officials listed in paragraph 1 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure is submitted to the Parliament, relevant information shall be transferred immediately, but within no more than 3 hours, to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, initiators of the impeachment process, factions, and independent MPs.

2. If the Constitutional Court of Georgia confirms the violation of the Constitution by, and the evidence of criminal conduct in the activities of, the officials listed in paragraph 1 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure, and ordinary or extraordinary sessions are ongoing when the Court's conclusion is submitted to the Parliament, the Parliament shall adopt a decree on considering the conclusion and schedule of voting no later than 5 calendar days from receiving the conclusion.

3. If the Constitutional Court of Georgia confirms a violation of the Constitution by, and the evidence of criminal conduct in the activities of, a public official and neither an ordinary nor an extraordinary session is ongoing, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall submit a request to convene an extraordinary session to the President of Georgia no later than 24 hours from receipt of the conclusion.

4. If the Constitutional Court of Georgia confirms a violation of the Constitution by, and the evidence of criminal conduct in the activities of, the public officials listed in paragraph 1 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure, within two weeks after adoption of the conclusion, the Parliament shall discuss the Court's conclusion at the plenary sitting and vote on the dismissal of a person through an

impeachment procedure. The plenary sitting may be closed to the public by a decision of the Parliament.

5. The Parliament may invite public officials listed in paragraph 1 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure whose impeachment is being considered to participate in the consideration of the conclusion. If it is impossible for a public official to attend, an authorized representative shall attend the hearing.

6. If the Constitutional Court does not confirm a violation of the Constitution by, and the evidence of criminal conduct in the activities of, any of the public officials listed in paragraph 1 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure, the impeachment procedure against the public official shall be terminated.

Article 180. Decision on Dismissal through Impeachment

1. The President of Georgia shall be dismissed from his/her office through impeachment if at least two-thirds of the full composition of the Parliament support the decision.

2. The Chief Justice of Georgia, a member of the Government, the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia, the Auditor General and a member of the Council of the National Bank of Georgia shall be dismissed from his/her office through impeachment if a majority of the full composition of the Parliament support the decision.

3. The issue of impeachment of public officials referred to in this article shall be decided through secret ballot.

4. The decision of the Parliament shall be conveyed immediately to the public official whose potential dismissal was being discussed.

5. If the Parliament does not make a decision on the impeachment of a public official within the timeframe defined in paragraph 4 of Article 179 of the Rules of Procedure, or this decision was not supported by the number of MPs specified in the Constitution, this issue shall be dismissed and it shall be inadmissible to file the same charge against the same public official.

Article 181. Dismissal of a State Inspector

1. In the case envisaged by Article 9 of the Law of Georgia on the State Inspector's Office, the authority of the State Inspector shall be terminated from the moment of the occurrence of the relevant circumstances, and the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall immediately notify the Parliament. The Parliament shall abolish the authority of the State Inspector on the basis of recognition of this information provided by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

2. The State Inspector is inviolable. It is not permitted to prosecute (criminal prosecution), detain or arrest him/her, to search his/her apartment or working space, car, or to conduct personal search of him/her without consent of the Parliament. Apprehending him/her for committing a crime is an exception. The Parliament shall be informed of the latter immediately. In the event that the Parliament does not grant consent within 48 hours, the detained or arrested State Inspector shall be released immediately. The Chief Prosecutor of Georgia shall submit a suggestion for investigation to the Parliament. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall study and consider the reasonability of this initiative within 5 days; a written conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include this issue for discussion at the nearest plenary sitting of the Parliament. After discussion, a decision is made by decree. In the event that the State Inspector has been apprehended at the location of a crime during the period between parliamentary sessions, the issue shall be considered according to the rules established by paragraph 2 of Article 44 of the Constitution of Georgia.

3. If the Parliament approves a motion on the detention or arrest of the State Inspector, his/her authority shall be suspended based on the decree of the Parliament until the decision to cease the criminal prosecution enters into force.

Article 182. Dismissal of a Director of the LAS

1. The Parliament is authorized to adopt a decree on pre-term termination of powers of the LAS Director after considering a report on the LAS activities, as well as based on the appeal of at least one-third of the LAS Board Members or information received from another source, if the Parliament concludes that the grounds for pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director provided for in subparagraphs “d” and “e” of paragraph 7 of Article 13 of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid exist.

2. If during the discussion of a report on the LAS activities it was revealed that there were grounds for pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director provided in subparagraphs “d” and “e” of paragraph 7 of Article 13 of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid, at least one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament is entitled to raise the issue of pre-term termination of the LAS Director within 3 days of the hearing of the report. The Parliament shall discuss the issue of the pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director at the nearest plenary sitting.

3. An appeal of at least one-third of the LAS Board Members on pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director or information received from another source specified in paragraph 1 of this article shall be submitted to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament in writing who will present an appeal/information to the Bureau of the Parliament at the nearest sitting. The Bureau of the Parliament shall determine which committee is to discuss the pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director and the timeframe for discussion. The relevant committee shall discuss the issue and present a justified conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament. The latter shall include this issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. If during a discussion at the plenary sitting, the Parliament considers that the grounds for pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director provided in subparagraphs “d” and “e” of par-

agraph 7 of Article 13 of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid exist, a decree on pre-term termination of the powers of the LAS Director shall be adopted.

Article 183. Dismissal of Head of the State Security Service of Georgia

1. After considering a report on the implemented activities of the State Security Service, at least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament may raise the issue of pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service, if the adoption of such a decision is deemed inevitable after discussion of a report. In this case, the authors of the initiative shall specify the grounds/reasons for raising the aforementioned issue. The Parliament shall discuss and vote on the termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service at the nearest plenary sitting, but no earlier than 2 days after the issue has been raised. The decision shall be made through a secret ballot with the support of a majority of the full composition of the Parliament.

2. In the event that the Government suspends the powers of the Head of the State Security Service and submits an ordinance of the Government to the Parliament on appealing the pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service, within 2 weeks, based on the conclusion of the Defense and Security Committee, the Parliament shall consider the issue of pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service according to the rule provided in the Rules of Procedure. A decision on the pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service shall be made through a secret ballot with a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament. If a vote is not held within the prescribed timeframe and the last day of this timeframe coincides with a day when a plenary sitting is not being held, a vote shall be held at the nearest plenary sitting. In the event

that the Parliament does not make a decision on the pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service, the ordinance of the Government on suspension of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service shall be deemed annulled.

3. In the event that there are grounds provided for by subparagraphs “b” and “e” of paragraph 1 of Article 10 of the Law of Georgia on the State Security Service of Georgia, based on the conclusion of the Defense and Security Committee, within 2 weeks of submitting this conclusion, the Parliament is authorized to discuss the issue of pre-term termination of powers of a Head of Service according to the rules provided by the Rules of Procedure and make a decision on the pre-term termination of powers of the Head of the State Security Service through a secret ballot by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament. If a vote is not held within the prescribed timeframe and the last day of this timeframe coincides with a day when a plenary sitting is not being held, a vote shall be held at the nearest plenary sitting. If a vote is not held again, the issue is considered as removed from the agenda.

4. In the event that there are grounds provided by subparagraphs “a”, “c”, “d”, “f” and “h” of paragraph 1 of Article 10 of the Law of Georgia on the State Security Service of Georgia, within 1 week of such a fact being revealed or relevant information being received, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall study its authenticity according to paragraphs 3 and 9-11 of Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure and present a conclusion at the nearest plenary sitting. The Parliament shall acknowledge the conclusion that is attested in the minutes of the plenary sitting. The powers of the Head of the State Security Service shall be terminated before the expiration of his/her term from the moment of acknowledgment of this information by the Parliament.

5. If the Parliament does not adopt a decision on the pre-term termination of the powers of the Head of the State Security Service

in cases referred to in paragraphs 1-3 of this article, it is inadmissible to raise the issue of pre-term termination of powers on the same grounds for the same person for the next 6 months.

Article 184. Vote of No-confidence in the Board of the Public Broadcaster and Pre-term Termination of the Powers of a Member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster

1. The Parliament is authorized to pass a vote of no-confidence in the Board of the Public Broadcaster if:

a) The program priorities identified on the basis of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting and its requirements are not implemented by the Board and the Board did not take effective measures to fulfill them;

b) The budget approved on the basis of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting was not fulfilled and the Board did not take effective measures to fulfill it.

2. At least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament is eligible to raise the issue of passing a vote of no-confidence in the Board of the Public Broadcaster. The decision on a vote of no-confidence shall be considered to have been accepted if at least three-fifths of the full composition of the Parliament votes for it. In the event of the non-existence of support of at least three-fifths of the full composition of the Parliament, it is unacceptable to raise the issue of passing a vote of no-confidence for the following whole year.

3. At least one-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament is eligible to raise the issue of terminating the powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster, in the event that s/he violates a conflict of interests rule according to the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting, fails to perform her/his duties, for unjustifiable reasons, for 2 consecutive months or cannot execute her/his duties as a Board member for more than 3 months in 1 calendar year.

4. The powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster are terminated prematurely according to paragraph 3 of this article, by a resolution of the Parliament adopted at a plenary sitting with a majority of attendees, but no less than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament. The powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster are terminated prematurely in cases envisaged by subparagraph “a” of paragraph one of Article 27 of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting.

5. The Parliament discusses and votes for the pre-term termination of the powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster within 30 calendar days of the submission of the request, if the term coincides with the period between sessions — the Parliament discusses and votes for the pre-term termination of the powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster in 10 days period from beginning of the next session.

6. Raising the issue of the pre-term termination of the powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster twice based on the same fact is inadmissible.

7. The Parliament shall acknowledge information on pre-term termination of the powers of a member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster on the basis of subparagraphs “e” and “f” of paragraph 1 of Article 27 of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting.

Article 185. Dismissal of a Member of the Georgian National Communications Commission

1. If a judgement of conviction sanctioning the imprisonment or restriction of liberty for a limited or unlimited period enters into force against a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission, or if s/he is declared missing by a court, or is recognized as a recipient of support services, unless otherwise stated in the court decision, or this member of the Commission resigns or dies, the Parliament shall make a decision on his/her

dismissal within a month from the moment the mentioned cases occurred.

2. In the event of the occurrence of the cases prescribed by paragraph 1 of this article, procedures prescribed by Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure shall apply. A member of the Georgian National Communications Commission shall be deemed dismissed if the relevant decision is supported by more than a half of the MPs present at a plenary sitting.

3. At least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament may initiate procedures for dismissal of a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission if:

a) Provisions regarding conflict of interests specified by the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting are violated;

b) A member of the Commission does not execute her/his duties for 15 consecutive working days or for a cumulative period of more than 2 months in a year for unjustifiable reasons.

4. MPs who initiate procedures for dismissal of a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission shall provide documentary evidence of the basis for dismissal of a member of the Commission.

5. Within 30 days of collecting signatures of MPs, the Parliament, by a majority of the full composition, shall include the issue of termination of powers of a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission on the agenda of a plenary sitting.

6. Within 30 days of the issue's inclusion in the agenda, the Parliament shall vote on the dismissal of a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission. A decision on dismissal shall be made with the consent of three-fifths of the full composition of the Parliament.

7. If the number of votes is less than required or the Parliament does not hold a vote within the timeframe specified in paragraph 6 of this article, the procedure for dismissal of a member of the

Georgian National Communications Commission shall be terminated.

8. Raising the issue of dismissal procedures for a member of the Georgian National Communications Commission twice based on the same fact is inadmissible.

Article 186. Dismissal of a Member of the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission

The Parliament, by a majority of its full composition, shall make a decision on the dismissal of a member of the Georgian National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission in the event of a violation of the Law of Georgia on Conflict of Interests and Corruption in Public Service and/or in the event that a member of the Commission does not execute her/his duties for 4 consecutive months.

Article 187. Dismissal of a Member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board

1. In the event that there are grounds for dismissal of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board as provided by subparagraphs "a-d" of paragraph 9 of Article 12 of the Law of Georgia on Accumulative Pension, within 1 week after such grounds were revealed or relevant information was received, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall study its/their authenticity according to paragraphs 3 and 9-11 of Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure and present a conclusion at the nearest plenary sitting. The Parliament shall acknowledge the conclusion that is attested in the minutes of the plenary sitting. The powers of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board shall be abolished from the moment of acknowledgement of this information by the Parliament.

2. In the event that there are grounds provided by subparagraphs "e" or "f" of paragraph 9 of Article 9 of the Law of Georgia

on Accumulative Pension, at least one-third of the full composition of the Parliament is entitled to initiate a dismissal procedure for the relevant member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board. MPs who initiate such a procedure must prove with documentary evidence the basis for dismissal of the member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board.

3. The request of at least one-third on the full composition of the Parliament for the dismissal of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board and documentary evidence envisaged by paragraph 2 of this article shall be submitted to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament; the latter shall include them in the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall determine which committee is to consider the issue of dismissal of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board. The relevant committee shall discuss the issue within two weeks and present a justified conclusion to the Bureau of the Parliament. The latter shall include this issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. A decision of the Parliament on the dismissal of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board shall be deemed adopted if supported by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament.

4. Raising the issue of the dismissal of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board twice based on the same fact is inadmissible.

CHAPTER XIV

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE PARLIAMENT. RATIFICATION, DENUNCIATION AND ANNULMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

Article 188. Official Parliamentary Delegations of Georgia and Other Countries

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament of Georgia is the supreme representative of the Parliament in foreign relations.

2. As a rule, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament or, by his/her assignment, Deputy Chair or an MP, is head of the official parliamentary delegation of Georgia.

3. MPs and heads of official delegations shall submit a report concerning the former's official visit to another country and the latter's official visit of a delegation to another country, and the work implemented therein, to the Bureau of the Parliament no later than 14 days after the visit finishes. Upon the request of a group of at least 6 MPs, committee or faction this report may be discussed at a plenary sitting.

4. The Sitting Chair or, at his/her assignment, the Mandaturi of the Parliament, makes an announcement to the Parliament about the official delegation of a foreign country entering the Sitting Hall of the Parliament and introduces its members.

5. The Parliament has the right, by a majority of votes of present MPs, to decide about the Parliament's consideration of the issues raised by an official delegation of a foreign country. Based on the same decision, the Parliament may allow an official delegation of a

foreign country or some of its members to be present at the Parliament's consideration of these issues.

6. By decision of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, heads of the parliaments of other countries, heads of countries, and heads of governments may address a plenary sitting of the Parliament according to the will of the relevant head(s) of the delegation(s).

7. Under the initiative of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, a group of at least 6 MPs, a committee, a faction, the Majority, or the Minority, the Parliament may adopt a resolution or other decision about the results of a visit of an official delegation of a foreign country at the nearest plenary sitting.

8. The Parliament is authorized to conclude agreements on co-operation with parliaments of other countries and other organizations.

9. The Parliament makes a decision by decree to join an international parliamentary assembly or to participate in the creation of a new assembly.

Article 189. Permanent Parliamentary Delegations

1. The Parliament makes a decision by decree to create a permanent parliamentary delegation to establish regular relations with international inter-parliamentary organizations.

2. The compositions of permanent parliamentary delegations are determined according to the principle of proportional representation. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules determines the quotas. The concession or exchange of quotas is possible according to paragraph 7 of Article 28 of the Rules of Procedure.

3. A permanent parliamentary delegation is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the Parliament concerning issues under its competencies.

4. The head of a permanent parliamentary delegation leads its activities and submits to the Parliament a report on implemented

work within 14 days of the opening of the spring session. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include this report for discussion at a plenary sitting after the report is presented by a head of a delegation at a sitting of the Foreign Relations Committee. The head of a delegation shall be the rapporteur at a hearing of this report at a plenary sitting; the Foreign Relations Committee shall be the co-rapporteur. The hearing of the report at the plenary sitting shall be conducted according to the rules established for a first hearing of a draft law. Following the hearing of the report at a plenary sitting, the Parliament shall make a relevant decision. This decision may change the composition of the delegation.

Article 190. Friendship Groups

1. Friendship Groups shall be created by decree of the Parliament to establish regular relations with parliaments of other countries. The compositions of Groups of Friendship are approved by a decree of the Parliament.

2. The Foreign Relations Committee coordinates activities of Friendship Groups and submits a report on the implemented activities to the Bureau of the Parliament annually.

3. Head of Friendship Groups shall submit information, report and opinions on the work implemented during a visit to another country to the Bureau of the Parliament no later than 10 days after the visit, upon the request of a group of 6 MPs, committees and factions, the report may be discussed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

Article 191. Consideration of the Recommendations of the International Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliament discusses the recommendations of international Parliamentary assembly and makes a decision on their implementation. A relevant committee considers these recommendations in advance on the basis of their submission by a head of delegation

and presents its conclusion along with the recommendations to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament is authorized to make a decision on including the issue on the agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament.

Article 192. Rules for Ratification, Denunciation and Annulment of International Treaties

1. The Government applies to the Parliament for ratification, denunciation and annulment of international treaties.

2. Applications concerning ratification, denunciation and annulment of international treaties shall include copies of the official text certified according to the established rules and the following documents:

- a) Justification of its ratification, denunciation or annulment;
- b) Determination of its compliance with Georgian legislation;
- c) Estimation of possible financial-economic and other consequences.

3. The Foreign Relations Committee together with other relevant committees shall consider a treaty presented for ratification or denunciation in advance and prepare a relevant conclusion.

4. When considering contents of an international treaty, the Bureau of the Parliament shall designate a leading committee for preparation of ratification, denunciation and annulment of an international treaty and send attached documents for the preparation of a relevant conclusion.

5. According to the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament, other committees may also participate in the preparation of an international treaty for ratification, denunciation or annulment.

6. The Foreign Relations Committee, if it is not a leading committee, together with a leading committee, organizes the preparation of the ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty.

7. A leading committee and/or the Foreign Relations Committee may request information regarding the preparation of the ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty from other state institutions. An international treaty that has financial implications shall be agreed with both the Budget and Finance Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee in advance.

8. According to the authority granted by the Constitution of Georgia, the Parliament shall ratify international treaties with other states, international financial organizations or state agencies of other countries concerning state foreign credits or issuing state guarantees for credits.

9. A leading committee and/or the Foreign Relations Committee shall submit all information concerning an international treaty (agreement) to the Parliament.

10. A committee shall invite an authorized person of the Government to participate in the consideration of issues related to international treaties. His/her absence shall not prevent the committee from considering the issue unless the committee decides that his/her participation is essential. In the latter case, consideration of the issue shall be moved to the next committee sitting.

11. International treaties cannot be ratified, denounced and/or annulled article-by-article, except for cases where a reservation has been applied.

12. The conclusion of the leading committee shall include a recommendation to accept or to reject the ratification, proposal for indispensable ratification, denunciation, annulment or reservation, as well as recommendations that are to be adopted by Parliament.

13. If the leading committee decides that ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty shall happen with reservation, it should be agreed with the Government. If the Government agrees, the ratification, denunciation or annulment of an

international treaty shall proceed with an appropriate reservation. If the Government does not agree, the leading committee discusses the issue again at its next sitting. If the Government considers a reservation necessary again, the issue shall be discussed at the plenary sitting of the Parliament with a reservation.

14. The Head of the Foreign Relations Committee, leaders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other officials shall attend the parliamentary consideration of the ratification, denunciation and annulment of international treaties.

15. An authorized person of the Government shall be a rapporteur for the ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty at a plenary sitting of the Parliament. Chairs of a leading committees as designated by the Bureau of the Parliament to consider this issue, or the Foreign Relations Committee, may be co-rapporteurs.

16. The Parliament considers an international treaty submitted for ratification, denunciation or annulment at its plenary sitting according to the rules established for a first hearing of a draft law and makes a relevant decision by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament except for decisions on international treaties concerning the territorial integrity of the State or changes to the State's borders.

17. The Parliament shall make a decision concerning the ratification, denunciation and annulment of international treaties concerning the territorial integrity of the State or changes to the State's borders by a majority of three-quarters of the full composition of the Parliament.

18. If a decision on the ratification, denunciation or annulment is not made, it is considered that the issue could not pass the relevant procedure and it shall be returned to a leading committee. The latter shall decide on the issue related to re-submission of an international treaty at a plenary sitting within 1 month.

19. The Parliament is authorized to adopt a decision to postpone the consideration of the issue of ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty. If the Parliament decides to postpone the consideration of a relevant issue concerning the ratification, denunciation or annulment of an international treaty, the decision shall be justified, well-reasoned and adopted by a decree.

20. If an appeal on the constitutionality of an international treaty is submitted to the Constitutional Court of Georgia, the issue of its ratification shall be postponed until the Constitutional Court renders its decision.

21. Based on the motion of the Government, the Parliament shall make a decision on the annulment of any international treaties that were concluded and signed on behalf of Georgia, as well as treaties that are not subject to ratification and were acceded to on behalf of the Government by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament, except for any international treaty concerning territorial integrity of the State or changes to the State's borders. Based on the motion of the Government, the Parliament shall make a decision on the annulment of an international treaty concerning territorial integrity of the State or changes to the State borders by a majority of three-quarters of the full composition of the Parliament.

Article 193. Participation of the Parliament in Conclusion of an International Treaty

1. The Foreign Relations Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are obliged to inform Parliament about the conclusion of any international treaties not requiring ratification and to submit them within one month of their conclusion. Relevant information shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament and the latter shall acknowledge receipt thereof. The Bureau of the Parliament is entitled to include the issue on the agenda of the plenary sitting of the Parliament to be discussed at a plenary sitting of the Parliament.

2. The Parliament shall present its recommendations regarding the conclusion of an international treaty to the Government.

3. Recommendations of the Parliament on the conclusion of an international treaty shall include justification with regards to the reasonability of the conclusion of this treaty.

Article 194. Consideration of the Issue of the Accession of Georgia to an International Treaty

If a motion on the accession of Georgia to an international treaty is submitted to the Parliament, the Parliament shall discuss it and a decision is made in accordance with Article 47 of the Constitution of Georgia and Article 192 of the Rules of Procedure.

CHAPTER XV

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

Article 195. Annual Report of the President of Georgia

As a rule, the Parliament, in compliance with the Constitution of Georgia, on the first day of the spring plenary session, hears the annual report of the President of Georgia on the most significant affairs of the State. Discussion of other issues at the plenary sitting on that day is inadmissible. After the speech of the President of Georgia, chairs of the factions that belong neither to the Majority nor the Minority, the leader of the Minority and the leader of the Majority make speeches, in this sequence. The duration of a speech of the chair of a faction shall not exceed 10 minutes, while the duration of a speech by the leader of the Minority or the leader of the Majority shall not exceed 15 minutes. The President of Georgia is authorized to make a concluding speech after these speeches. Upon completion of the procedures envisaged by this article, the plenary sitting shall be closed.

Article 196. Procedures for Giving Consent to the Termination of Activities or Dismissal of Representative Bodies of Territorial Units

1. The President of Georgia, by nomination of the Government, addresses the Parliament to receive consent to the termination of activities, or the dismissal, of representative bodies of territorial units.

2. The Bureau of the Parliament transfers the submission referred to in paragraph 1 of this article to the leading committee, other committees, factions, the Majority and the Minority, and they

discuss the submission within 10 days and present conclusions to the Bureau of the Parliament to include the issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting.

3. The issue referred to in paragraph 1 of this article is discussed by the Parliament at a plenary sitting according to the rules established by the Rules of Procedure for a first hearing of a draft law and adopts a decree by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament.

Article 197. Decisions on Administrative and Territorial Organization Issues of Local Self-Governments

The Parliament, by nomination of the Government, approves by resolution the establishment, abolition, and/or revision of the administrative borders of a municipality, and/or the determination and/or change of the administrative center of a municipality, in accordance with the Constitution of Georgia and the Organic Law of Georgia.

Article 198. Approval of Number of Defense Forces

1. The Government shall submit number of defence forces to the Parliament with a draft law on the State Budget.

2. The issue of the total number of defense forces personnel shall be transferred to the relevant committees, determined by the Bureau of the Parliament; the latter shall discuss the issue and prepare conclusions.

3. Justified conclusions of a leading committee shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament to be included on the agenda of a plenary sitting prior to the final discussion of the final draft law of the State Budget and voting. The Parliament approves by decree the total number of defense forces personnel after parliamentary discussion. The decree shall be deemed adopted if it is supported by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament.

4. If the Parliament does not approve the total number of defense forces personnel, a conciliatory commission may be created. This commission shall present a final version within 10 days, but no later than December 31, which shall be approved by the Parliament.

Article 199. Raising the Issue of a Referendum

1. One-fifth of the full composition of the Parliament, on the basis of relevant justification and with a written document certified by relevant signatures in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure, is authorized to raise the issue of holding a referendum on issues covered by the Constitution of Georgia and the Organic Law of Georgia.

2. The issue is considered at the plenary sitting of the Parliament within 20 days of its submission. The Parliament, by a majority of all votes, adopts an application requesting the holding of a referendum and submits it to the President of Georgia.

3. If the Parliament fails to make a decision on holding a referendum, the issue shall be deemed dropped and the question shall not be put to a vote again during the next six months.

4. The Parliament, by a majority of its full composition, may withdraw the request to hold a referendum before the President of Georgia makes a decision on holding a referendum.

5. If the President of Georgia raises the same issue for referendum based on the request of the Government or 200 000 voters, presented to the Parliament's plenary sitting for discussion, the issue shall be deemed dropped.

Article 200. Verification of Authenticity of an MP's Signature on Constitutional Appeal

1. One-fifth of the members of the Parliament is authorized to address the Constitutional Court of Georgia with a constitutional

claim or motion according to the rules prescribed by the Constitution of Georgia and the Organic Law of Georgia on the Constitutional Law of Georgia.

2. The authenticity of the signatures of the MPs on a constitutional claim or motion is verified in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 178 of the Rules of Procedure.

Article 201. Correspondence of Interested Persons and Relations with the Electorate

1. An MP submits the information received from a meeting with the electorate to the relevant committee/committees.

2. The committee analyses the information received once every 3 months and informs the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament about the response. This information is published on the Parliament's website.

3. The MPs, committees, and other units of the Parliament are obliged to consider submitted letters and statements of interested persons and to respond within their competencies within 1 month unless otherwise prescribed by the legislation of Georgia.

Article 202. The Bureau of an MP Elected through the Majoritarian System

1. In order to organize work with citizens, to ensure communication with relevant state institutions and participation in the resolution of local issues by an MP, the Bureau of an MP elected through the majoritarian system (hereinafter — majoritarian MP) is created on the spot. The functions, the rules of organization and the activity of the Bureau are regulated by the statute which, following submission by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules, is adopted by the Bureau of the Parliament.

2. Costs related to the Bureau activities of a majoritarian MP are reimbursed from the Parliament's budget and is subject to ex-

pensing upon transfer to the Bureau's bank account. Once a year from December 15 to January 15 majoritarian MPs are obliged to submit information on the expenses incurred by the Bureau of the majoritarian MPs to the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules.

Article 203. Petition

1. A petition is a written address of a group of no fewer than 300 persons on the issues, which concerns the State and/or a general problem.

2. A petition is submitted in writing and/or electronically to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and is registered in the corresponding registry. In order to submit an electronic form of a petition, a person fills out and verifies with a qualified digital signature an electronic form approved by ordinance of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament on the Parliament's website.

3. Within 3 days of the submission of the petition to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, the petition is published on the Parliament's website except if:

a) It aims to overthrow or forcibly change the constitutional order of Georgia, to infringe on the independence and territorial integrity of the country, or to propagandize war, hatred or discrimination, or to stir up national, ethnic, religious, or social strife or creates an obvious threat of the actions envisaged by this subparagraph;

b) Does not concern the State and/or a general problem;

c) It is insulting or obscene.

4. Within 1 month, the petition of 300 supporters shall be published on the Parliament's website. Support of a person is confirmed through the indication of his/her name and surname on the petition statement. If the petition statement does not receive the support of the number of persons envisaged by this paragraph within 1 month, the petition shall not be discussed. The author of the peti-

tion statement, and, in cases where there are several persons, the person indicated as the author of the petition statement, shall be informed about the decision. In the event of gathering at least 300 supporters within a 1-month term or before expiration of the mentioned term, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall present the petition at the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament upon the request of the petition statement author.

5. A petition submitted in writing with at least 300 supporters shall be registered in the relevant registry without publication on the Parliament's website. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall present the mentioned petition at the nearest sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament.

6. The Bureau of the Parliament shall pass the petition to a relevant committee to be studied and considered. A decision may be made at a sitting of the Bureau of the Parliament on the passing of a petition to a temporary commission to be studied and considered. A temporary commission shall be created in accordance with the rules envisaged by the Rules of Procedure.

7. A relevant committee or a temporary commission makes one of the following decisions:

a) Considers that the petition is suitable to be studied and considered;

b) Sending the petition to a relevant ministry, or another establishment;

c) Considers that the petition is inappropriate to be studied and considered.

8. A decision envisaged by paragraph 7 of this article shall be communicated to the author of the petition within 2 weeks, and published on the Parliament's website.

9. In the event of making a decision envisaged by subparagraph "a" of paragraph 7 of this article, a relevant committee shall consider the petition within 1 month of submission and shall submit a

conclusion enclosed with the full text of the petition to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament may prolong the timeframe based on a written address by the committee for not more than 2 months. If necessary, the Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting based on the committee's conclusion.

10. A ministry, or another establishment shall respond to the author of the petition and the relevant committee within 1 month. With the agreement of the relevant committee, the term can be prolonged by no more than 1 month. If the ministry or other establishment does not answer the author within the defined time, the Parliament shall make a relevant decision.

11. After discussing the petition at a plenary sitting, the Parliament adopts a decree, or other resolution.

12. A decision on the petition is published on the Parliament's website and is communicated to the author of the petition.

CHAPTER XVI

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS

Article 204. Rules of Election of Officials for which a Parliamentary Competition is not Announced

1. The Parliament shall elect officials as envisaged by the Constitution and other legislative acts of Georgia.

2. To the Parliament:

a) Candidates for the following positions are nominated by the President of Georgia:

a.a) Member of the Georgian National Communications Commission;

a.b) Member of the National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission of Georgia;

a.c) Member of the Council of the National Bank of Georgia;

a.d) 5 members of the CEC presenting 2 candidates for one vacancy.

b) The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall nominate a candidate for the position of Auditor General;

c) The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, factions or a group of at least 6 MPs shall nominate a candidate for the position of Member of the Constitutional Court of Georgia;

d) Factions or a group of at least 6 MPs shall nominate a candidate for the position of Public Defender of Georgia;

e) Candidates for the following positions are nominated by the High Council of Justice:

e.a) Judge of the Supreme Court;

e.b) Chief Justice;

f) The Prime Minister of Georgia:

f.a) Nominates 2 candidates for the position of State Inspector;

f.b) Nominates 8 candidates for 5 vacant positions of the Council Member of the National Statistics Office of Georgia — Geostat (hereinafter — Geostat), a legal entity of public law, and when there are fewer than 5 vacant positions, at least one more candidate than the total number of vacant positions.

g) The Government nominates a candidate for the position of the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia;

h) The Prosecution Council shall nominate a candidate for the position of Chief Prosecutor of Georgia.

3. The Parliament shall elect officials for a term of authority, which is not determined by the Constitution, for the following terms:

a) Member of the Georgian National Communications Commission — 6-year term;

b) Member/Chair of the National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission of Georgia — 6-year term. A member/Chair of the Commission can be elected again for another 6-year term. In cases of pre-term dismissal of a member/Chair of the Commission, the Parliament shall elect a new member for the remaining term in accordance with the rules prescribed for the position;

c) State Inspector — 6-year term;

d) Head of the State Security Service of Georgia — 6-year term;

e) Members of the CEC — 5-year term;

f) Members of Geostat Council — 4-year term.

4. The Parliament shall elect:

a) The Public Defender of Georgia and 3 members of the Constitutional Court of Georgia by a three-fifths majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament;

b) Judge of the Supreme Court, members of the Council of the National Bank of Georgia, the Auditor General, the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia, members of the Georgian National Communications Commission and members/Chair of the National Energy and Water Supply Regulatory Commission of Georgia by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament;

c) Members of the CEC by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament. If the number of such candidates exceeds the number of available vacancies, the relevant number of candidates with the best results shall be deemed elected. If candidates attain an equal number of votes, these candidates shall be voted on once again and the candidate with the best result shall be deemed elected.

d) The State Inspector, by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament, and with more votes than the other candidates.

e) Members of Geostat Council by a majority of votes of MPs present at the plenary sitting but not less than one-third of the full composition of the Parliament, thus giving consent to the Prime Minister of Georgia to the appointment of Members of Geostat Council.

5. Election of officials for the positions of 3 members of the Constitutional Court of Georgia and the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia, the Chief Prosecutor of Georgia and the Public Defender of Georgia shall be made by secret ballot as well as giving consent to the appointment of Members of Geostat Council to the Prime Minister of Georgia.

6. The following rules for the election of officials shall be followed:

a) The same candidate for the position of Auditor General, the Head of the State Security Service of Georgia, a Member of

the Constitutional Court of Georgia, Judge of the Supreme Court and members of the CEC can be nominated only twice,

b) In one cycle of elections, the same candidate for the position of Public Defender of Georgia can be nominated only twice;

c) If candidates nominated for the positions of Chief Justice or Chief Prosecutor of Georgia do not attain necessary number of votes envisaged by the Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure, then new candidates shall be nominated to the Parliament.

7. The Parliament, as a rule, shall elect officials determined by this article within 2 weeks from the nomination of a candidate. The exception is the term for electing a Chair of the CEC. The Chair of the CEC shall be elected within 7 days of nomination as envisaged by the Organic Law of Georgia on the Election Code of Georgia.

Article 205. Procedures of Election, Giving Contest to Officials Envisaged in Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure

1. The Bureau of the Parliament shall determine the committee(s) to consider the issue of giving approval to the election/appointment of officials envisaged by Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure.

2. A committee determined in accordance with the rules prescribed by this article shall determine the compliance or otherwise of the nominated candidates with the Constitution of Georgia and/or requirements of other laws. For this purpose, a candidate is obliged to provide comprehensive information to the committee. The committee is entitled to assess/verify necessary information about relevant candidates for official positions, including biographical data, work experience and professional skills. The relevant committee of the Parliament shall create a working group envisaged by Article 46 of the Rules of Procedure to facilitate the establishment of the compliance or otherwise of candidates for the positions of Chief

Justice of Georgia and Judge of the Supreme Court according to the requirements of the Constitution of Georgia and/or other laws.

3. Upon the determination of the compliance or otherwise with the legislation of Georgian a relevant committee of the Parliament will listen to each candidate at a sitting.

4. The relevant committee develops a conclusion after hearing candidates at a committee sitting. The conclusion is adopted by a majority of votes of the enlisted committee members. If a person is elected by the secret ballot, the committee adopts a conclusion by secret ballot. The committee's conclusion shall include a recommendation of the committee regarding the candidacies of the official(s) envisaged by Article 204. The conclusion of the committee is submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament to be put on the agenda of the Parliament's plenary sitting and is published on the Parliament's website.

5. The Parliament shall consider and hear each candidate nominated in accordance with the Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure according to the rules for a first hearing of a draft law based on the nomination of the relevant committee of the Parliament and by the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament, except the Chief Justice of Georgia, Judges of the Supreme Court and Members of the Constitutional Court of Georgia.

6. A chair of a plenary sitting shall inform the Parliament of the list of candidates and their written consent before voting. Each candidate for membership of the CEC, the Constitutional Court of Georgia, the Public Defender of Georgia and the State Inspector shall be voted on separately after the end of its consideration at the plenary sitting.

7. If all of the vacancies are not covered after voting for the CEC member candidates, the remaining candidates shall be voted on again. If there are still vacancies, one more vote shall be held. If any vacancies still remain after that, the President of Georgia

shall nominate 2 candidates for each of the remaining vacancies from the candidates participating in the contest within 3 days. If vacancies then still remain, a contest shall be announced for the remaining vacancies within no less than 3 days and the candidate nomination procedure shall start again.

8. In the event of pre-term termination of the powers of the CEC member elected by the Parliament, the President of Georgia shall nominate candidates who received at least a majority of votes of enlisted members of the Parliament during the nearest session week or a new contest shall be announced within 3 days to replace the members of the CEC. The same rule applies in cases of the absence of candidates.

9. In the event that more than one candidate is nominated for a vacant position at Geostat Council and receives enough votes, it shall be deemed that the number of candidates with the best results equivalent to vacant positions are approved.

10. In the event that the number of candidates with the best results identified according to paragraph 9 of this article exceeds the number of vacant positions due to equal number of votes, these candidates shall be voted again and the winner(s) shall be decided according to proportional majority of the vote.

11. In the event that any candidate for the vacant position of Member of Geostat Council is not approved, the Prime Minister of Georgia shall present to the Parliament new candidates taken from persons selected through a competition within 21 days and approval shall be given according to the rules prescribed by this article. In other cases, a new competition shall be announced. The candidates selected through a new competition shall be approved according to the rules prescribed by this article and Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure.

12. If 3 candidates participated in the elections of 3 members of the Constitutional Court of Georgia, and if any of them did not receive

the necessary number of votes, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, a faction, or a group of 6 MPs is authorized to nominate the same candidate 10 days after the vote. If more than 3 candidates participated in the elections and the necessary number of candidates was not elected, a new vote is held. In this case, the 3 candidates, who received most votes in the first round, are put up for vote.

13. If more than one candidate for the position of Public Defender of Georgia receives enough votes, but the winner cannot be confirmed because of another candidate receiving the same number of votes, these candidates shall be put up for vote against each other. The candidate who receives more votes, but with at least a three-fifths majority of the full composition of the Parliament, he/she shall be considered elected. If the votes are divided equally again, the procedure shall continue until a winner is revealed. If none of the candidates receive the necessary number of votes, new elections shall be held within no less than 7 days and no more than 14 days after the vote.

Article 206. Rules for Selection of the Public Defender of Consumers' Interests

1. The Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee of the Parliament shall create a selection commission which makes decisions about the selection of the Public Defender of Consumers' Interests by a majority vote of its full composition.

2. The Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee of the Parliament shall create a selection commission composed of at least 12 persons. Members of this commission are representatives of the Majority, the Minority and independent MPs, the state and non-governmental sector, representatives of the Public Defender and relevant national regulatory bodies. The selection commission makes decisions about the selection of the head of the selection commission by a majority vote of its full composition.

3. The charter of the selection commission of the Public Defender of Consumers' Interests and conditions of the competition are approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament upon submission by the Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee of the Parliament.

4. Decisions of the Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee of the Parliament and selection commission shall be communicated by the committee to the Bureau of the Parliament.

Article 207. Rules for Election of Members of the Prosecution Council

1. 5 members of the Prosecution Council, including 2 members who are also MPs, shall be elected as prescribed by the Organic Law of Georgia on the Prosecutor's Office and this article.

2. 1 member of the Prosecution Council is elected by the Majority, its second member is elected from MPs not affiliated with the Majority according to the rules determined by the majority of their composition. An MP who receives more than half of the votes of members of the Majority, or more than half of the votes of MPs not affiliated with the Majority, shall be deemed elected as a member of the Prosecution Council.

3. If there is not a majority, two members of the Prosecution Council shall be elected by the Parliament with a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament. Every faction and every group of 6 MPs are authorized to nominate one candidate for the position of a member of the Prosecution Council. Candidates for the membership of the Prosecution Council shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament no later than 15 calendar days before the expiration of the powers of the member of the Prosecution Council, and, in cases of pre-term termination of powers, no later than 15 calendar days from the day of the pre-term termination of powers. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue of

the election of a member of the Prosecution Council on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. If the vacancy remains after both rounds of voting as envisaged by paragraph 10 of this article, the election procedure shall be held again within 1 month according to the rules prescribed by this paragraph. Candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament within a 2-week term.

4. 2 members of the Prosecution Council shall be elected through a competition. Candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council are selected from: professors and academic researchers employed in the higher education institutions of Georgia; and members of the Georgian Bar Association and/or nominees of nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entities of Georgia based on the recommendation of the supervising collegial body of the corresponding organization. The activities of the mentioned nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entity shall include acting as a representative authority in court proceedings during the two years before the competition. Each abovementioned organization is authorized to nominate no more than 3 candidates for the position of a member of the Prosecution Council. An MP, judge or prosecutor may not be nominated as a candidate.

5. 1 member of the Prosecution Council shall be elected on the basis of the nomination of the Minister of Justice of Georgia by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament. The Minister of Justice of Georgia is authorized to nominate no more than 3 candidates for the position of a member of the Prosecution Council. The Parliament may elect a person as a member of the Prosecution Council with a higher legal education, with a master's or equivalent academic degree/higher education diploma, and at least 5 years of working experience in the legal profession.

6. In the case envisaged by paragraph 4 of this article, the Parliament may elect as a member of the Prosecution Council a Geor-

gian citizen who has a higher legal education with a master's or equivalent academic degree/higher education diploma, at least 5 years of working experience in the legal profession, and an excellent reputation, recognized as a specialist in the field of law. A candidate for membership of the Prosecution Council shall give prior written consent to his/her election as a member.

7. In cases envisaged by paragraphs 4 and 5 of this article, a nomination of a candidate for membership of the Prosecution Council shall be accompanied by a letter of recommendation, his/her curriculum vitae, a copy of his/her identity card or passport, copies of his/her diploma of a higher educational degree in law and copies of documents proving his/her 5-year working experience, a list of his/her published papers on legal issues (if any), the written consent of a candidate and, if the nominating entity is a nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entity, proof of the requirements prescribed in paragraph 4 of this article.

8. In cases envisaged by paragraphs 2, 4 and 5 of this article, new members of the Prosecution Council shall be elected not earlier than 30 calendar days before, and no later than 7 days after, expiration of the term of the relevant member of the Prosecution Council. In cases of pre-term termination of powers, the new member shall be elected no later than 2 months after the day of pre-term termination of powers. If this timeframe coincides fully or partially with the period between parliamentary sessions, the election process shall start or continue upon the commencement of the next session or before the next session, at the extraordinary session.

9. In cases envisaged by paragraphs 4 and 5 of this article:

a) A candidate for the membership of the Prosecution Council shall be presented to the Parliament:

a.a) Not earlier than 60 days before the term of an existing member of the Prosecution Council expires, and no later than 40 days after this term expires;

a.b) Within 10 days of the termination of powers, in cases of pre-term termination of powers;

b) Timeframes for the nomination of candidates shall be published on the website of the Parliament by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament;

c) Documents submitted to the Parliament shall be immediately transferred to the Legal Issues Committee, which shall finalize determination of their compliance with the requirements prescribed by this article after expiration of the timeframe for the nomination of a candidate for membership of the Prosecution Council:

c.a) In a 10-day term — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a.a” of this paragraph;

b) In a 4-day term — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a.b” of this paragraph;

d) Upon discussion of the documents mentioned in subparagraph “c” of this paragraph, the Legal Issues Committee shall submit a list of candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council who meet the requirements and corresponding documents to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall immediately transfer the list of the candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council and attached documents to factions;

e) Factions are entitled to discuss the nominated candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council within:

e.a) 2 weeks — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a.a” of this paragraph after submission of the list of candidates to the Bureau of the Parliament;

e.b) 1 week — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a.b” of this paragraph after submission of the list of candidates to the Bureau of the Parliament;

f) The Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue of the

election of members of the Prosecution Council on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting upon the expiration of the time-frame for discussion of the candidates by factions. Before the commencement of voting, a representative of the Legal Issues Committee of the Parliament shall present the data about the candidates to the Parliament.

10. In cases envisaged by paragraphs 3-5 of this article:

a) The Parliament shall initiate voting to elect members of the Prosecution Council at the plenary sitting without discussion. Candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council shall be voted for separately. The voting shall be conducted in alphabetical order of the surnames of the candidates;

b) In the first round of voting, candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council supported by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament shall be deemed elected. If the number of such candidates exceeds the number of available vacancies, the relevant number of candidates with the best results shall be deemed elected. If candidates attain an equal number of votes, these candidates shall be voted on once again and the candidate supported by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament with the best result shall be deemed elected;

c) In the event that all vacancies are not filled during the first round, the second round shall be held on the same day or at the nearest plenary sitting and candidates with the best results from the first round shall be voted on again; the number of candidates presented to the second vote shall not exceed double the number of vacancies that remain. If the number of candidates exceeds this number due to two or more candidates attaining the same number of votes, each of these candidates shall be voted on. The candidate who receives most votes in line with the rules prescribed by subparagraph “b” of this paragraph shall be deemed elected;

d) In the event that the number of candidates does not exceed the number of vacancies, and all vacancies are not filled in the first round, a second round shall not be held.

11. In the event that all vacancies have not been filled in cases envisaged by paragraphs 4 and 5 of this article, according to the rules prescribed by paragraph 10 of this article, new elections shall be held within 70 days according to the rules set forth in this article. In this case, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall define and publish timeframes for the nomination of candidates for membership of the Prosecution Council on the website, provided the following requirements are met: the timeframe shall not be less than 14 days and the Legal Issues Committee and factions shall consider the nominated candidates within the timeframes set in subparagraphs “c.a” and “e.a” of paragraph 9 of this article.

Article 208. Rules for Election of Members of the High Council of Justice and Members of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts

1. The Parliament elects 5 members of the High Council of Justice and 2 members of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts through a competition and a secret ballot. The Parliament shall elect new members of the High Council of Justice and Disciplinary Collegium no earlier than 30 days before the expiration of the term of the existing members of the corresponding bodies and no later than 7 days after expiration of this term. In cases of pre-term termination of powers of the existing members, new members shall be elected no later than a month after termination of these powers. If this timeframe coincides fully or partially with the period between parliamentary sessions, the timeframe prescribed for election by this paragraph shall be extended for the required time.

2. Candidates for the position of a member of the High Council of Justice and Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common

Courts are selected from: professors and academic researchers employed in the higher education institutions of Georgia; members of the Georgian Bar Association; and/or nominees of nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entities of Georgia based on the recommendation of the supervising collegial body of the corresponding organization. Each abovementioned organization is authorized to nominate no more than 3 candidates for the position of a member of the High Council of Justice and 1 candidate for the membership of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts according to the rules and timeframe prescribed by paragraph 6 of this article. An MP, judge or prosecutor may not be nominated as a candidate.

3. A nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entity mentioned in paragraph 2 of this article is authorized to nominate a candidate for the position of a member of the High Council of Justice, if the field of activities of the entity includes acting as a representative authority in court proceedings during the two years before the competition.

4. The Parliament may elect as a member of the High Council of Justice a Georgian citizen who has a higher legal education with a master's or equivalent academic degree/higher education diploma, at least 5 years of working experience in the legal profession, and an excellent reputation, recognized as a specialist in the field of law. The Parliament may elect as a member of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts a Georgian citizen who has a higher legal education, at least 10 years of working experience in the legal profession, and an excellent reputation, recognized as a specialist in the field of law.

5. The nomination of a candidate shall be accompanied by a letter of recommendation, the curriculum vitae of the candidate, a copy of his/her identity card or passport, copies of his/her diploma of a higher educational degree in law and copies of documents proving his/her 10-year working experience, a list of his/

her published papers on legal issues (if any), written consent of a candidate and, in cases where the nominating entity is a nonprofit (noncommercial) legal entity, proof of the requirements prescribed in paragraph 3 of this article.

6. Candidates mentioned in paragraph 2 of this article shall be nominated to the Parliament:

a) No earlier than 60 days before the term of an existing member expires, and no later than the 40 days after this term expires;

b) Within 10 days of the termination of powers, in cases of pre-term termination of powers.

7. Timeframes for the nomination of candidates shall be published on the website of the Parliament by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

8. Documents submitted to the Parliament shall be immediately transferred to the Legal Issues Committee of the Parliament, which shall finalize determination of their compliance with the requirements prescribed in paragraphs 2-5 of this article after expiration of the candidate's nomination timeframe:

a) A 10-day term — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a” of paragraph 6 of this article;

b) A 4-day term — in cases prescribed by subparagraph “b” of paragraph 6 of this article.

9. Upon discussion envisaged by paragraph 8 of this article, the Legal Issues Committee of the Parliament shall submit the list of the candidates nominated by persons determined by paragraph 2 of this article who meet the requirements, and corresponding documents to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall immediately transfer the list of candidates and attached documents to the factions.

10. Factions are entitled to discuss the nominated candidates within:

a) 2 weeks, in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a” of paragraph 6 of this article after submission of the list of candidates to the Bureau of the Parliament;

b) 1 week, in cases prescribed by subparagraph “a” of paragraph 6 of this article after submission of the list of candidates to the Bureau of the Parliament.

11. After the timeframe allocated for factions to consider the list and corresponding documentation has expired, the Parliament shall initiate voting to elect members of the High Council of Justice and the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts at the nearest plenary sitting without discussion. Candidates shall be voted for separately. Voting shall be carried out according to the alphabetical order of the surnames of the candidates. Before commencement of the voting, a representative of the Legal Issues Committee shall present data about the candidates to the Parliament.

12. Parliamentary elections of members of the High Council of Justice may be conducted in 3 rounds if necessary. Members of the High Council of Justice shall be elected by a three-fifths vote of the full composition of the Parliament, according to the rules set forth in paragraphs 13-15 of this article.

13. In the first round of voting, candidates supported by a three-fifths vote of the full composition of the Parliament shall be deemed elected. If the number of such candidates exceeds the number of available vacancies, the relevant number of candidates with the best results shall be deemed elected. If candidates receive the same number of votes, these candidates shall be voted on once again and the candidate supported by three-fifths of votes of the full composition of the Parliament with the best result shall be deemed elected.

14. In the event that all vacancies are not filled during the first round, a second round shall be held on the same day or at the

nearest plenary sitting and candidates with the majority of votes shall be voted on again. The number of candidates presented for the second round shall not exceed double the number of vacancies remaining. If the number of candidates exceeds this number due to two or more candidates attaining an equal number of votes, each of these candidates shall be voted on. The candidate who receives the most votes in line with the rules prescribed by paragraph 13 of this article shall be deemed elected.

15. In the event that all vacancies are not filled after the second round, a third round of voting shall be held within two days. Candidates with the best results after the second round shall be put to a vote. Candidates shall be elected according to the rules prescribed in paragraph 14 of this article.

16. In the event that all vacancies are still not filled after three rounds, new elections shall be held within 70 days according to the rules set forth in this article. In this case, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall define and publish the timeframes for the nomination of candidates on the website, providing that the following requirements are met: the timeframe shall not be less than 14 days and the Legal Issue Committee of the Parliament and factions shall consider the nominated candidates within the timeframes set in paragraphs 8.a and 10.a of this article.

17. Parliamentary elections of members of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts may be conducted in 2 rounds if necessary. Members of the Disciplinary Collegium shall be elected by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament, according to the rules set forth in this paragraph and in paragraphs 18-19 of this article.

18. If in the first round, the number of candidates supported by the majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament exceeds the number of available vacancies, the corresponding number of candidates with the best results shall be deemed elected.

If more than two candidates receive the equal number of votes, these candidates shall be put up for vote once again. The candidate then receiving the majority of votes shall be deemed elected.

19. In the event that all vacancies are not filled after the first round, the second round shall be held on the same day or at the nearest plenary sitting and candidates with the majority of votes shall be voted on again. The number of candidates put to the second round of voting shall not exceed double the number of available vacancies. If the number of candidates exceeds the number mentioned above due to two candidates or more attaining the same number of votes, all of these candidates shall be put up for vote. Candidates shall be identified according to the rules set forth in paragraphs 17 and 18 of this article.

20. In the event that all vacancies are not filled after 2 rounds, new elections shall be held within 70 days according to the rules set forth in this article. In this case, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall define and publish the timeframes for the nomination of candidates on the website provided the following requirements are met: the timeframe shall not be less than 14 days and the Legal Issues Committee and factions shall consider the nominated candidates within the timeframes set in paragraphs 8.a and 10.a of this article.

Article 209. Rules for the Election of a Member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster — Trustee

1. A candidate for the position of a Member of the Board of the Public Broadcaster — Trustee is selected through an open competition.

2. 30 days before the pre-term termination of powers of a Trustee, or within 10 days of the termination of his/her power, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall issue an order on the opening of a competition, defining the term for submission of applications

from the candidates for the position of Trustee. The term shall not exceed 15 calendar days.

3. No later than 10 days after the opening of a competition, a selection commission composing 9 members shall be established by a decree of the Parliament. After consultations with the Majority, MPs who are not affiliated with the majority, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, and the Public Defender of Georgia, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall present candidates for the selection commission to the Parliament for approval. Representatives of civil society and academia may also be members of a selection commission. A selection commission shall be headed by a chair elected by the commission. A selection commission shall develop a statute that defines the criteria for the evaluation of candidates for the position of Trustee and concept papers on the development of the Public Broadcaster by candidate(s), and shall be approved by the Bureau of the Parliament.

4. The Parliament shall approve a selection committee by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament.

5. Everyone has a right to propose a candidate for the position of Trustee. The day after the expiration of the time period for the submission of an application by the candidate(s) for the position of Trustee, a list of candidates shall be published on the Parliament's official website.

6. Within 10 days of the expiration of the time period for the submission of applications of candidates for the position of Trustee, the selection commission shall select candidates in two stages. In the first stage, candidates shall be selected according to the qualification requirements indicated in the Georgian Law on Broadcasting. Additional criteria for selection shall be defined by the statute of the selection commission. In the second stage, candidates shall be selected based on the discussion of concept papers for the development of the Public Broadcaster presented by them, and their

interviews. Upon finalization of the selection process, the selection commission shall present at least three times the number of candidates needed to be selected to the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, to the parliamentary factions), MPs who are not members of the parliamentary majority, the Public Defender of Georgia and the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara for approval.

7. The selection commission is responsible for organizing public discussion of the candidates' concept papers for the development of the Public Broadcaster. A candidate shall submit his/her concept paper for the development of the Public Broadcaster to the selection commission that shall be published. Moreover, a candidate shall participate in public debates which shall be held prior to the election of a Trustee by the Parliament, aired by the Public Broadcaster.

8. Among the candidates selected by the selection commission, the Public Defender of Georgia shall present two candidates, the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, by the factions) shall present three candidates, at least one-quarter of MPs who are not members of the Majority shall present three candidates, and the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara shall present one candidate to the Parliament for approval. The mentioned entities shall select and present their candidates in the following order: the Public Defender of Georgia; the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara; MPs who are not members of the Majority; and the the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, by the parliamentary factions). The decision to nominate candidates selected by the Public Defender of Georgia shall be signed by the Public Defender of Georgia. The decision to nominate candidates selected by the Majority shall be signed by the chairmen of the factions that compose the Majority. The decision to nominate candidates selected by MPs who are not members of the Majori-

ty shall be signed by the MPs who supported the candidates. An MP has the right to sign only one decision on the nomination of a candidate. The decision to present a candidate selected by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara shall be signed by the Head of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara.

9. If there is no parliamentary majority in the Parliament, the right to nominate 6 candidates for the position of Trustee in the Public Broadcaster shall be distributed among parliamentary factions in proportion with the number of MPs united therein. The first faction to nominate a candidate is the one with the fewest MPs, while other factions nominate candidates according to the number of MPs they have, starting with the least and ending with the most.

10. If the powers of a Trustee nominated by the Majority (or in the event that there is no majority, by the parliamentary factions) is terminated and when at the time of vacancy announcement there is no parliamentary majority in the Parliament, the entity to present a new candidate shall be determined according to the number of votes given to the former candidate who resigned. In this case, rules set forth in paragraph 8 of this article shall be applied.

11. Within 3 days of the selection of candidates for the position of a Trustee, the entities provided for by paragraph 8 of this article shall nominate candidates to the Parliament.

12. Within 10 working days of the selection of candidates by a selection commission, by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament, the Parliament separately votes for candidates nominated by the Public Defender of Georgia, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, parliamentary factions) and of at least one-quarter of MPs who are not members of the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, parliamentary factions). If there is more than one vacancy that shall be selected from the quotas of the Pub-

lic Defender of Georgia, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, the Majority and MPs who are not members of the Majority, candidates shall be selected in the following order: a candidate nominated by the Public Defender of Georgia; a candidate nominated by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara; a candidate nominated by MPs who are not members of the Majority and lastly a candidate nominated by the Majority.

13. In the event that a candidate for the position of Trustee does not receive enough votes for selection, the Public Defender of Georgia, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, parliamentary factions), and at least one-quarter of the MPs who are not members of the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, parliamentary factions) shall nominate new candidates within 10 calendar days to the Parliament.

14. The entities entitled to nominate candidates for the position of a Trustee can nominate three candidates to the Parliament out of those selected by the selection commission. The same candidate may be nominated only twice.

15. If none of the candidates get enough votes to be elected, the candidate who gets the majority of votes but no less than one-third of votes of the full composition of the Parliament, shall be considered elected. The candidate who gets the majority of votes will be elected from the quotas of the Public Defender of Georgia, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, the Majority (if there is no parliamentary majority, parliamentary factions), and at least one-quarter of the MPs who are not members of the Majority.

16. If none of the candidates get one-third of the votes of the full composition of the Parliament and the Board of the Public Broadcaster is not staffed with 9 members, a new competition for the vacancies shall be announced.

Article 210. Rules for Election of Members of Selection Commission for the Pension Agency's Investment Board

1. 3 members of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Accumulative Pension shall be selected from the MPs according to the rules prescribed by this article.

2. 2 members of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board are elected by the Majority, 1 member is elected from MPs not belonging to the Majority by MPs beyond the Majority. An MP who receives more than half of the votes of members of the Majority or respectively MPs not affiliated with the Majority shall be deemed elected as a member of Selection Commission.

3. If the Majority is not established, 3 members of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board shall be elected by the Parliament with a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament. Every faction and group of 6 MPs are authorized to nominate one candidate for the position of a member of the selection commission. Candidates for the membership of the selection commission shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament no later than 15 calendar days from the recognition of the authority of the new convocation and, in cases of pre-term termination of powers of a respective MP, no later than 15 calendar days from the day of the pre-term termination of his/her powers. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include the issue of the election of a member of the selection commission on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. If there remains a vacancy after voting as envisaged by paragraph 5 of this article, the election procedure shall be held again within 15 calendar days according to the rules prescribed by this paragraph. Candidates for membership of the selection com-

mission shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament within a 10 calendar day-term.

4. New members of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board shall be elected no later than 30 days after the recognition of the authority of the new convocation and, in cases of pre-term termination of powers of a respective MP, no later than 30 calendar days from the day of the pre-term termination of his/her powers. If this timeframe coincides fully or partially with the period between parliamentary sessions, the timeframe prescribed for election by this paragraph shall be extended for the required time.

5. In cases envisaged by paragraph 3 of this article:

a) The Parliament shall initiate voting to elect members of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board at the plenary sitting without discussion. Candidates for membership of the selection commission shall be voted on separately. Voting shall follow the alphabetical order of the surnames of the candidates;

b) Candidates for membership of the selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board supported by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament shall be deemed elected. If the number of such candidates exceeds the number of available vacancies, the relevant number of candidates with the best results shall be deemed elected. If two candidates or more attain the equal number of votes, these candidates shall be voted on once again and the candidate with the best result shall be deemed elected.

Article 211. Rules for Election of the Pension Agency's Investment Board Members

1. The Parliament elects 5 members of the Pension Agency's Investment Board as envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Accumulative Pensions for a term of five years.

2. The selection commission to select candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board as envisaged by the Law of Georgia on Accumulative Pensions shall present candidates for the position selected through a competition, to the Parliament. 1 candidate shall be presented for each vacant position on the Pension Agency's Investment Board.

3. Candidates for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment Board shall be presented to the Parliament:

a) Not earlier than 60 calendar days before the term of an existing member of the Investment Board expires, and no later than the 40 calendar days after this term expires;

b) In the event of dismissal of a member of the Investment Board — no later than 60 calendar days after dismissal;

c) In the event of the opening of a new competition — no later than 60 calendar days from the day of opening the competition.

4. The Parliament elects members of the Pension Agency's Investment Board through a secret ballot by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament within 21 days of the nomination of candidate(s) for the position of a member of the Pension Agency's Investment. The Pension Agency's Investment Board member election procedure shall be implemented in accordance with paragraphs 1-6 of Article 205 of the Rules of Procedure. If this timeframe coincides fully or partially with the period between parliamentary sessions, the timeframe shall be extended for the required time.

5. In the event that all vacancies are not filled after voting, the selection commission of the Pension Agency's Investment Board

shall present to the Parliament new candidates out of persons selected through a competition within 15 days. The candidates shall be elected according to the rules prescribed by this article. In other cases, a new competition shall be announced. Candidates selected through a new competition shall be elected according to the rules prescribed by this article.

Article 212. Rules for the Dismissal of Officials or Other Termination of Powers

1. In the event that the Auditor General resigns, the Parliament is given a notice which is included in the minutes of the plenary sitting of the Parliament. The Auditor General is deemed to have resigned after the date of submission of the relevant application to the Parliament.

2. Upon the occurrence of the conditions prescribed by subparagraphs “b” and “e” of paragraph 1 of Article 10 of the Organic Law of Georgia on the Public Defender of Georgia, the powers of the Public Defender of Georgia shall be deemed terminated upon the decision of the Parliament to be adopted by at list three-fifths of its full composition.

3. A member of the Council of the National Bank of Georgia may resign if s/he submits a written application to the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament at least 2 months in advance. The member shall be deemed to have resigned after the date indicated in the written application.

4. The Parliament shall dismiss a member of the High Council of Justice of Georgia elected by the Parliament as prescribed by the Organic Law of Georgia on Common Courts. The Parliament is given a notice in the event of the existence of any condition envisaged by subparagraphs “a”-“g” of paragraph 1 of Article 48 of the Law without making a decision; the Parliament shall make a decision by voting on the termination of powers of a member of the High

Council of Justice of Georgia in the event of the existence of any conditions envisaged by subparagraphs “h”-“k” of paragraph 1 of the same article. The Parliament shall make a decision through a secret ballot by a full majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament.

5. The Parliament shall make a decision on the termination of powers of a member of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts by a majority of votes of the full composition of the Parliament.

6. The relevant committee determined by the Bureau of the Parliament shall verify the grounds for termination of the powers of a member of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts. The relevant committee is entitled to invite the respective member of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts to a sitting and hear the opinion. The conclusion of the relevant committee shall be submitted to the Bureau of the Parliament to be included on the agenda of the nearest plenary sitting. The Parliament is given a notice in the event of the existence of any conditions envisaged by subparagraph “a”-“f” of paragraph 6 of Article 75¹⁹ of the Organic Law of Georgia on Common Courts without making a decision; the Parliament shall make a decision by voting on the termination of powers of a member of the Disciplinary Collegium of Judges of the Common Courts in the event of the existence of any conditions envisaged by subparagraphs “g”-“j” of paragraph 6 of the same article.

CHAPTER XVII

OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT AND SECURITY

Article 213. Authority of the Office of the Parliament

1. The Office of the Parliament provides legal, organizational, analytical, documentary, informational, financial and material-technical assistance to the activities of the Parliament.

2. Management of the budget of the Parliament and representation of the Parliament in economic, labor, legal and other relations, exercise of the rights and implementation of the duties within its competencies, are under the authority of the Office of the Parliament.

3. The structure, scope of authority and rules of activity of the Office of the Parliament are determined by the Rules of Procedure and the charter of the Office of the Parliament.

4. The charter of the Office of the Parliament is approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on the proposal of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

Article 214. Management of the Office of the Parliament

1. The Office of the Parliament is managed by the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

2. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament is appointed to the position and dismissed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament cannot be an MP.

4. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament is not an official.

5. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament has no more than three deputies. The number of deputies of the Chief of the Office of

the Parliament is determined by a decision of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on the proposal of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

6. The Deputy Chief of the Office of the Parliament is appointed to the position and dismissed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on the nomination of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

Article 215. Structure of the Office of the Parliament

1. The departments, Mandaturi service, secretariat of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament, offices of the committees of the Parliament, staff of temporary investigative and temporary commissions, staff of the Majority and the Minority, staff of parliamentary factions, secretariats of the First Deputy Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and other deputies, secretariats of councils and state commissions, and the Budget Office of the Parliament are all structural units of the Office of the Parliament.

2. The Office of the Committee of the Parliament is a permanent structural unit of the Office of the Parliament subordinate to it, created to ensure the activities of the Committee.

Article 216. Charter and Rules

1. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament approves the charters of the Office of the Parliament, departments, the Mandaturi service and the secretariat of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament based on the proposal of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament approves the charter of the staff of the committee of the Parliament upon agreement with a chair of a respective committee based on the proposal of the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

3. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament approves the structure and list of staff of the Office of the Parliament upon submission by the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

4. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament appoints and dismisses heads of departments, the Mandaturi service, the Office of the Parliament as prescribed by the rules of the Law of Georgia on Public Service.

5. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament appoints and dismisses the public servants of the Office of the Parliament (except for public servants envisaged by paragraph 4 of this article and the Chief of the Office of the Parliament) as prescribed by the rules of the Law of Georgia on Public Service. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament appoints and dismisses other employees of the Office of the Parliament as prescribed by the rules of the Organic Law of Georgia on the Labor Code of Georgia.

6. The qualification requirements of the employees of the Office of the Parliament are determined by the legislation of Georgia and the legal act(s) of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

7. The duties and responsibilities of the public servants of the Office of the Parliament are determined by the legislation of Georgia, the charter of the Office of the Parliament, the charter of relevant structural units and the relevant job descriptions.

8. The duties and responsibilities of persons employed by administrative agreement and persons employed under a labor agreement are determined by a respective agreement.

9. Job descriptions are approved by the Chief of the Office of the Parliament upon agreement with the head of the relevant structural unit, and for staff of a committee these are approved with the agreement of the chair of the relevant committee.

10. Work Experience and internships are permitted in the Office of the Parliament. The duration of an internship in the Office of the Parliament is 6 months. Internships at the Office of the Parliament are announced twice a year. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament approves the rules of practice and internship in the Office of the Parliament upon submission by the Chief of the Office of the Parliament.

11. The Chief of the Office of the Parliament approves the rules on excursions at the Palace of the Parliament.

Article 217. Budget Office of the Parliament

1. For the purpose of providing financial, budgetary and economic analytical information to the Parliament, parliamentary committees, factions, independent MPs and the Office of the Parliament, the Budget Office of the Parliament shall be created within the structure of the Office of the Parliament.

2. The head of the Budget Office of the Parliament shall be appointed for a 5-year term and dismissed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament after a nomination from the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. A person may be appointed to the position of the head of the Budget Office of the Parliament for a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

3. Employees of the Budget Office of the Parliament shall be appointed and dismissed by the Head of the Office of the Parliament according to the Law of Georgia on Public Service, except for cases mentioned in paragraph 2 of this article.

4. The structure and work order of the Budget Office of the Parliament shall be determined by the charter of the Budget Office of the Parliament approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament based on the motion of a chair of the Budget and Finance Committee and/or the Supervisory Council.

5. The Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament shall coordinate the work of the Budget Office of the Parliament. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament and the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be members of the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament; the Chair of the Parliament appoints other members (one of whom is a member of the Majority, one from the Minority and one from among independent MPs with the majority of support, and one from among the fac-

tion members that belong to neither the Majority nor the Minority; if there is neither a majority nor a minority, one is taken from faction members) based on preliminary consultations. In addition, representation of the Minority and factions that do not belong to the Majority or the Minority shall not exceed one half of the members of the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament. If representation of the Minority and factions that do not belong to the Majority or the Minority exceeds one half of the members of the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament, the Majority is eligible to nominate an additional member considering the ratio prescribed by this paragraph. The Chair of the Parliament leads the work of the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament. The authority and rules of operation of the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament shall be determined by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

6. The Budget Office of the Parliament is accountable for and presents an annual report on its activities to the Supervisory Council of the Budget Office of the Parliament. The Budget Office of the Parliament submits written information on the activities to the Budget and Finance Committee twice a year, within a 10-day term from the spring and autumn sessions.

Article 218. Life and Health Insurance of Employees of the Office of the Parliament

1. It is mandatory to insure the life and health of employees of the Office of the Parliament.

2. A decision on the insurance of the life and health of employees of the Office of the Parliament is made by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament, based on the recommendation of the Council of Treasurers.

Article 219. Protection of the Parliament

1. The Special State Protection Service of Georgia provides protection for the Parliament and MPs as prescribed by the legislation of Georgia.

2. The Office of the Parliament elaborates the security protection regime with the Special State Protection Service in the Palace of the Parliament and on the adjacent territory. The regime is approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. A relevant committee shall investigate and review the activity of the Special State Protection Service in terms of protection of the Parliament based on the assignment of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

4. It is inadmissible for anyone including MPs to carry firearms and cold weapons in the Palace of the Parliament. Any exemption from this rule is determined by the legislation of Georgia and the security protection regime in the Palace of the Parliament and on its adjacent territory.

5. A member of the Government, an official appointed or elected by the Parliament and the official approval of the appointment of whom given by the Parliament, shall be provided an identity card signed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament in accordance with the approved sample to enter the territory of the Palace of the Parliament.

6. The Parliament is authorized to verify the name, surname, ID number, registered address, nationality, photo, and data of identification document of each MP in the electronic database of the legal entity of public law, the Public Service Development Agency, to assist the security protection regime in the Palace of the Parliament and on the adjacent territory.

CHAPTER XVIII

INSTITUTIONS EXISTING AT THE PARLIAMENT

Article 220. National Library of Georgia

1. The National Library of Georgia — the main library within the system of libraries in Georgia — is a library of the Parliament. Its activity is regulated by the Law of Georgia on the National Library of Georgia, other laws and a relevant statute.

2. The Director General of the National Library of Georgia is appointed and dismissed by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

3. The structure and list of staff of the National Library of Georgia are approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament upon submission by the Director General of the National Library of Georgia.

Article 221. Heraldic State Council

1. With the purpose of regulating issues related with state symbols, the Heraldic State Council is created at the Parliament.

2. The structure, authority and main functions of the Heraldic State Council are determined by the Organic Law of Georgia on the Rules of Application of the State Emblem of Georgia and by the relevant statute approved by a decree of the Parliament.

3. The list of staff of the Heraldic State Council is approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament upon submission by the Head of the Heraldic State Council.

Article 222. Research Center of the Parliament

1. The Research Center of the Parliament is created under the state oversight of the Parliament in a legal-organizational form of a legal entity of public law to support efficient, analytical and research activity of the Parliament.

2. The structure, authority and main functions of the Research Center of the Parliament are determined by the statute of the Research Center of the Parliament.

3. The statute and list of staff of the Research Center of the Parliament is approved by the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament.

CHAPTER XIX

RESPONSIBILITY FOR VIOLATION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE / PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS

Article 223. Penalties for Violation of the Rules of Procedure

The following penalties can be imposed on MPs for a violation of the Rules of Procedure:

- a) Revocation of the right to speak at a plenary sitting;
- b) A warning;
- c) Expulsion from the Committee Sitting Hall or from the Sitting Hall;
- e) Retention of salary.

Article 224. Imposing Penalties on Members and Officials of the Parliament

1. The chair of the sitting of a committee or of a plenary sitting of the Parliament can deprive an MP of the right to speak if s/he:

- a) Makes a speech without the permission of the Sitting Chair;
- b) Makes a speech and does not discuss the subject under consideration;
- c) Was given permission to speak on procedural matters but refers to other matters;
- d) Exceeds the time determined by the Rules of Procedure or the time s/he was additionally granted.

2. A warning is issued to an MP who:

a) Continues speaking after s/he has lost the right to speak in the cases envisaged by sections “a”, “b”, and/or “c” of paragraph 1 of this article;

b) Delivers a speech without using a microphone;

c) Acts in a manner that prevents the sitting from being held in accordance with the rules envisaged by the Rules of Procedure.

3. A request to leave the Committee or Plenary Sitting Hall is issued to an MP if s/he:

a) Still continues the same activity after a warning specified in paragraph 2 of this article;

b) Shows up in the Sitting Hall with firearms or a cold weapon;

c) Uses force and/or encourages other MPs to do likewise.

4. An MP ordered to leave the Committee or Plenary Sitting Hall must do so. Otherwise, the Sitting Chair suspends the sitting, after which the Mandaturi ensures enforcement of the order.

5. In the event of the use of any form of impact on an MP, the following speakers do not have the right to discuss the issue of the maintenance of the order.

6. An MP requested to leave the Committee or Plenary Sitting Hall shall have 5% deducted from his/her salary of that respective month. The request to leave and relevant salary deduction is written down in the minutes of the sitting and sent to the Financial Department of the Office of the Parliament.

7. In the event of a violation of the dress code envisaged by paragraph 7 of Article 84 of the Rules of Procedure, the Mandaturi is eligible not to allow a person into the Sitting Hall upon which the Sitting Chair is immediately informed. The Sitting Chair is eligible to change the decision of the Mandaturi.

8. If the examination of the voting and registration results for 1 day reveals that an MP was not in the Sitting Hall and somebody took part in the voting or registration on his/her behalf, a penalty

in the amount of 20% of the absent MP's salary will be imposed on the MP and the MP who participated in voting or registration on his/her behalf. In the event of a repeat of this act during the same sitting, 25% of the MP's salary will be retained. This is recorded in the minutes of the sitting and sent to the Financial Department of the Office of the Parliament for the reduction of the salary for the corresponding month.

9. If an MP, who has a duty to present a draft law at a plenary session (rapporteur or co-rapporteur), at the time of the presentation of the draft law is absent from the plenary session for unjustifiable reasons, s/he shall be issued with a penalty of a 5% salary reduction for the corresponding month. In the event of a draft law not being presented by the MP, the fact is written down in the minutes of the sitting on the basis of the statement of the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament which is transferred by the Chief Mandatari within 24 hours to the Financial Department of the Office of the Parliament to make the relevant salary deduction for the corresponding month in accordance with this paragraph.

10. If an MP, except for officials envisaged by paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article 28 of the Rules of Procedure, does not belong to a committee s/he is considered not to be fulfilling the remit of an MP and shall not be given the salary envisaged by law. This information is recorded by the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules and sent to the Financial Department of the Office of the Parliament in order to enforce the relevant salary deduction.

11. If an MP who is a member of two committees misses a committee sitting two times during a calendar month for unjustifiable reasons, and an MP who is a member of 1 committee misses a committee sitting one time during a calendar month for unjustifiable reasons, a penalty in the amount of 10% of his/her salary will be imposed on him/her for each subsequent missed sitting for unjustifiable reasons.

12. In the event of missing more than two plenary sittings during an ordinary session, for each missed plenary sitting for unjustifiable reasons, and during an extraordinary session for each missed sitting for unjustifiable reasons, an MP will have 10% of his/her salary deducted.

13. If an MP misses one of the registrations during the day of a plenary sitting 5% of his/her salary will be subtracted for each case (but not more than 10% for one day), except in cases envisaged by paragraph 9 of Article 91 of the Rules of Procedure and in cases of missing plenary sittings. The penalty envisaged by this paragraph shall be imposed on an MP in cases of missing registrations more than four times during a calendar month.

14. If the committee chair does not hold a committee sitting twice during a calendar month subsequently, a penalty amounting to 50% of his/her salary will be imposed on him/her. The Bureau of the Parliament discusses the reason(s) behind the non-holding of a committee sitting and when this happens more than once during the same session it is authorized to raise the issue of dismissing the committee chair from his/her position at the plenary sitting according to the established rules.

15. According to the rules envisaged by paragraphs 6, 8, and 11-13 of this article, the total amount of a single deduction from the salaries of the MPs must be no more than 50% of the MP's salary.

16. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of the Parliament makes a list of MPs who have missed plenary sittings for unjustifiable reasons with penalties envisaged by paragraph 11-13 of this article applied, and sends this to the Financial Department of the Office of the Parliament to impose the relevant salary deductions by no later than the 15th day of the corresponding month.

17. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of the Parliament compiles a list of the MPs who miss committee sittings on

a monthly basis, with an indication of the number and dates of the sittings missed by each of them and ensures publication of the list on the Parliament's website.

18. After each session, the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of the Parliament compiles a list of MPs who have missed the plenary sessions of the Parliament, with an indication of the factions and the number and dates of the sittings missed by each of them for unjustifiable reasons, and ensures publication of this list on the Parliament's website.

Article 225. Protesting Against Penalties

An MP, who has been subject to the sanctions outlined in paragraphs 6-14 of Article 224 of the Rules of Procedure, is entitled to submit a well-reasoned protest in writing. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament makes a decision on the protest issue.

Article 226. Violation of Rules of Procedure and Penalties for Other Officials

1. Liability for the violation of the Rules of Procedure according to the rules prescribed by the Rules of Procedure is imposed on officials accountable to the Parliament, as well as on officials who participate in parliamentary activities.

2. Liability is imposed on an official in the event of the following violation, when an official:

- a) Does not attend the discussion of an issue despite receiving an invitation;
- b) Violates procedures set for answering a question put to him/her by an MP;
- c) Provides the Parliament with false or wrong information;
- d) Does not implement the Parliament's decrees and recommendations;

e) Prevents an MP from carrying out his/her rights and duties as granted by this Rules of Procedure and other legislation of Georgia, bylaws and normative acts.

3. A person invited to a committee or plenary sitting is obliged to follow the sitting agenda. S/he is forbidden from action that will prevent the Parliament or an MP from carrying out the relevant functions. S/he shall refrain from expressing his/her personal attitude regarding results during voting. Guests violating the order may be expelled by the Sitting Chair from the Committee Sitting Hall or from the Sitting Hall.

4. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of the Parliament shall review all cases envisaged by paragraph 2 of this article and submit these to the Bureau of the Parliament for a relevant response.

5. The Parliament shall apply the following response measures to officials (except Government members) in cases envisaged by paragraph 2 of this article:

- a) Adopt a decree or resolution to take response measures against an official for violation;
- b) Address the head of a state authority with a motion on the liability of a subordinate official.

Article 227. Council of Ethics and Code of Ethics of a Member of the Parliament

1. The ethical standards of behavior of MPs are defined by the Code of Ethics of a Member of the Parliament, which is approved by the Parliament by decree.

2. An MP is obliged to follow the norms of parliamentary ethics.

3. The Parliament, for the term of authority, shall establish by decree a Council of Ethics within 2 months of the recognition of its authority. The decree shall indicate the number of members of the Council of Ethics. The composition of the Council of Ethics is deter-

mined proportionally to the number of MPs affiliated with factions and MPs who are not affiliated with any faction. In addition, representatives of the Majority shall not exceed one half of the members of the Council.

4. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules of the Parliament shall determine the quotas of proportional representation of the composition of the Council of Ethics within 1 week of the adoption of the decree. The Bureau of the Parliament approves the quotas. Quotas of proportional representation in the composition of the Council of Ethics can be conceded or exchanged in accordance with paragraph 7 of Article 28 of the Rules of Procedure. A person nominated as a member of the Council of Ethics by the faction is subject to rotation once a year. As soon as the term expires, the relevant faction is obliged to present a new member in compliance with the quotas of proportional representation envisaged by this paragraph.

5. The respective factions shall present the candidates nominated as members of the Council of Ethics to the Bureau of the Parliament in accordance with quotas of proportional representation within 1 week of the approval of the quotas.

6. The Parliament takes note of the composition of the Council of Ethics, and is written down in the minutes.

7. The work order of the Council of Ethics and organizational issues are regulated by the Code of Ethics of a Member of the Parliament and the statute of the Council of Ethics.

8. The Secretariat of the Council of Ethics shall be created to ensure organizational and technical support of the Council of Ethics. The structure, functions and rules of work of the Secretariat shall be determined by the statute of the Council of Ethics.

CHAPTER XX

TRANSITIONAL AND CONCLUDING PROVISIONS

Article 228. Transitional Provisions

1. Before the expiration of the authority of the Parliament elected in the next parliamentary elections, bureaus of majoritarian MPs are included as structural units within the Office of the Parliament.

2. The Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament of the VIII convocation of the Parliament shall be served by the official car and is secured by state security protection service for the term of authority of the Parliament of the IX convocation. The expenses prescribed by this paragraph shall be reimbursed from the Parliament's budget.

3. The Draft Law of Georgia on the State Budget of Georgia (2019) shall be considered and adopted on June 22, 2012 as prescribed by the Rules of Procedure.

4. Before January 1, 2019:

a) The Parliament shall elect a Personal Data Protection Inspector for a 3-year term within 14 days of the nomination of candidates for the position of Personal Data Protection Inspector by the Prime Minister of Georgia. If this timeframe coincides fully or partially with the period between parliamentary sessions, the timeframe prescribed for the election of a Personal Data Protection Inspector by this paragraph shall be extended for the required time. Each candidate is put up for vote separately. The candidate who receives the majority of votes but no less than one-third of votes of the full composition of the Parliament shall be considered elected;

b) The Personal Data Protection Inspector presents a report on the state of personal data protection in the country and activities implemented by the Personal Data Protection Inspector once a year, no later than March 1. The Parliament shall consider the report by the Personal Data Protection Inspector according to the rules prescribed by Article 176 of the Rules of Procedure;

c) If the Personal Data Protection Inspector fails to execute his/her duties during 4 consecutive months or occupies a position that is incompatible with the status of Personal Data Protection Inspector or conducts incompatible activities, based on an initiative of the Parliament or a recommendation of the Prime Minister of Georgia, his/her powers shall be terminated by a decision of the Parliament adopted by a majority of the full composition of the Parliament;

d) The Personal Data Protection Inspector is inviolable. It is not permitted to prosecute, detain or arrest him/her, to search his/her apartment, car, working space, or to conduct a personal search without consent of the Parliament. Apprehending him/her when committing a crime is an exception. Information regarding the latter case shall immediately be relayed to the Parliament. In the event that the Parliament does not grant consent, the detained or arrested Personal Data Protection Inspector shall be released immediately. The Chief Prosecutor of Georgia shall submit a suggestion for investigation to the Parliament. The Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall study and consider the reasonability of this initiative within 5 days; a written conclusion of the Committee on Procedural Issues and Rules shall be presented to the Bureau of the Parliament. The Bureau of the Parliament shall include this issue for discussion at the nearest plenary sitting of the Parliament. After discussion at the plenary sitting, a decision is made by decree. In the event that the

Personal Data Protection Inspector was apprehended at the location where a crime was committed during the period between parliamentary sessions, the issue shall be considered according to rules established by paragraph 2 of Article 44 of the Constitution of Georgia;

e) In cases that the Parliament approves a motion for the detention or arrest of the Personal Data Protection Inspector, his/her powers shall be suspended based on the consent of the Parliament until the decision on ceasing the criminal prosecution or the decision of court enters into force.

5. The Parliament shall elect 2 members of the first composition of the Pension Agency's Investment Board for a 3-year term. Members of the Pension Agency's Investment Council selection commission shall be elected by the Majority and MPs beyond the Majority no later than 15 days after the Rules of Procedure has been enacted.

6. The Budget and Finance Committee shall submit to the Parliament a list of the world's four largest auditing firms to carry out a financial audit of the State Audit Office for 2018 and the Parliament shall select one auditing firm (external auditor) within 3 months of the Rules of Procedure being enacted. Rules prescribed by paragraphs 9-12 of Article 166 of the Rules of Procedure shall be applied for the election of an auditing firm by the Parliament to carry out a financial audit of the State Audit Office for 2018 notwithstanding the terms of submission for the list of auditing firms and selection of the auditing firm from the list envisaged by paragraph 9 of this article.

7. In cases prescribed by Articles 124 and 127 of the Rules of Procedure of June 1, 2019, the signatures of supporters of the draft law are collected only by filling out signature sheets in support of the draft law and a petition referred to in Article 203 of the Rules of Procedure shall be submitted only in written form.

8. The members of the Prosecution Council elected during the enactment of the Rules of Procedure shall retain their authority for the remainder of the term.

9. Plenary sittings or sessions of the Parliament may be held at the Palace of the Parliament in the city of Kutaisi upon the decision of the Bureau of the Parliament before the spring session of 2019.

Article 229. Acts to Adopt

Within 3 months of the enforcement of the Rules of Procedure, the Chair (Speaker) of the Parliament shall ensure approval of committee conclusion sample.

Article 230. Concluding Provisions

1. Upon enforcement of the Rules of Procedure:

a) The Rules of Procedure adopted on June 22, 2012 shall become invalid (Sakartvelos Sakanonmdeblo Matsne (www.matsne.ge), 03.07.2012, registration code: 010190030.06.001.016009);

b) The Law of Georgia on the Status of a Member of the Parliament of March 05, 1998 shall become invalid (Gazette of the Parliament, №13-14, 8.04.1998, page 201);

c) The Law of Georgia on Compulsory Insurance of Life and Health of a Member of the Parliament of June 24, 1999 shall become invalid (Sakartvelos Sakanonmdeblo Matsne №30(37), 1999, Article 160);

d) The Law of Georgia on Parliamentary Faction of September 16, 1997 shall become invalid (Gazette of the Parliament №41, 8.10.1997, page 36);

e) The Law of Georgia on Trust Group of March 04, 1998 shall become invalid (Gazette of the Parliament, №13-14, 8.04.1998, page 25).

2. The legal acts issued based on the legislative acts envisaged

by the first paragraph of this article shall remain effective until they comply with the Rules of Procedure.

3. The Rules of Procedure, except Articles 145, 167, 169, 181 and 187, subparagraph “f.a” of paragraph 2, subparagraph “c” of paragraph 3 and subparagraph “d” of paragraph 4 of Article 204 and Article 201, 211 and 222 shall come into effect from the moment that the President of Georgia, elected as a result of the next elections, takes the President’s oath.

4. Articles 167, 187, 210 and 211 of the Rules of Procedure shall come into effect from January 1, 2019.

5. Articles 145 and 222 of the Rules of Procedure shall be enacted from April 1, 2019.

6. Articles 169 and 181 and sub-paragraph “f.a” of paragraph 2, sub-paragraph “c” of paragraph 3 and sub-paragraph “d” of paragraph 4 of Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure shall come into effect from July 1, 2019.

**Chair (Speaker) of
the Parliament of Georgia**

Irakli Kobakhidze

Kutaisi
December 6, 2018
№3875-რს

