



The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Monitoring the Work of the Executive Power an Analytical Study in Light of the Provisions of the Bylaws of the Syrian People's Assembly 2017

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Abstract

Parliamentary committees are the mainstay of legislative and oversight work in all parliaments of the world. It plays a key role in fulfilling many of the competencies of the world's parliaments. Parliamentary committees derive their importance from the premise that there is no work that falls within the competence of the Parliament's work but that it has a share of quiet research, deep and careful study, and serious objective discussion within these committees. Thus, the parliamentary committees are the most important parliamentary bodies with regard to the functioning of the Council and its performance of its functions. Referring to the texts of the Syrian constitution of 2012, and the provisions of the Bylaws of the People's Assembly of 2017, we find that some parliamentary committees, whether they are permanent or special temporary committees, exercise their role in monitoring the work of the executive authority, through several means, the most important of which are: Gathering information and investigating facts about a general matter of special importance, or a specific topic related to any public body, and inviting the ministry to put forward a general topic for discussion in order to clarify the ministry's policy on it and to exchange opinions about it. As well as directing interrogations to members of the Council of Ministers in matters that falls within their competence. Finally, reviewing the written petitions submitted by citizens to the Council and submitting their report to the Council.

Keywords

Parliament, Parliamentary committees, Permanent committees, Temporary committees, Parliamentary control, Parliamentary interrogation, Committees of inquiry, Parliamentary petitions

JEL Classifications: J11, F43

1. Introduction

Parliaments in countries with parliamentary systems seek to investigate the work of governments to detect, determine who is responsible for the proper implementation of legal rules, and hold them accountable.

In the performance of all these work, parliaments create a major organizational structure for their internal entity, and the most prominent elements of their work and tools are the "**parliamentary committees**", the latter of which is the most important parliamentary organs in terms of the functioning and functioning of the Council, they are the most mobile and active, the most competent, the most productive and the most collectible, and the traditional expression "**dynamo that feeds all the work of the Council**". (Sadiq, 1982)

In order for parliament to control the work of the executive branch, it is necessary to determine the means by which this task can be performed properly, and the constitutions of states, regulations and internal regulations of parliaments will provide those means at the disposal of parliament, and serve as the instruments of oversight promised by parliament.

In connection with a particular act, Parliament may use all these means, and it may be limited to the use of one of them, and it is a matter of parliament's appreciation of the circumstances and the choice of the appropriate means to know the truth of the conduct and address the situation.

The means and control procedures that members of Parliament have towards the Government are the backbone of parliamentary democracy in our contemporary world, as their role in the legislative sphere (Batikh, 2001/2002) has declined.

B Search Goal

The main objective of this study is to identify the role of parliamentary committees in monitoring the work of the executive branch in light of the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly issued in 2017.

C The Importance of Research

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it highlights what committees are formed by the Syrian People's Assembly at the beginning of each legislative role, whether they are permanent or temporary special committees, and their role in helping parliament in the necks that it exercises on the activity of various countries to reveal the lack of proper implementation of the legislation in force. effect and determine responsibility for it.

D Problematic Research

The problem of research revolves around the importance of the presence of committees in the Syrian People's Assembly and the reality of their role in exercising

control over the work of the executive authority. Are parliamentary committees working to monitor the performance and actions of the government? What means and tools do parliamentary committees have in order to exercise their oversight role? Are there any specific proposals for parliamentary committees that should be adopted in order to activate parliamentary work and develop its performance?

Hh The Research Method:

The preparation of this study was based mainly on the analytical approach by reading the texts of the articles of both the Syrian Constitution in force for 2012 and the rules of procedure of the People's Assembly for 2017 related to the subject of the study.

And Divide the Search

The research plan is based on dividing the subject of the study into two main researchers followed by a conclusion showing the results revealed by the study with some proposals, according to the following division:

The First Topic: What are the Parliamentary Committees

The Second Topic: The Means of Parliamentary Committees in Monitoring the Work of the Government

First Research

What are the Parliamentary Committees?

Parliaments in the countries with a parliamentary system are creating a major organizational structure for their internal being, and the most prominent elements of their work and tools are "**parliamentary committees**", and the basis for the presence of parliamentary committees in parliamentary systems of government in particular was the huge number of topics that are presented to the parliaments of these countries, and because of the technical nature of these topics needs to be decided on, expertise and specialization. The large number of members of parliaments, particularly in states where the legislature is made up of two houses, makes it impossible for such a number of members to study and discuss each of the topics before it.

In addition, parliament cannot examine all the detailed matters in the administration, as a large number of members cannot examine complex issues with particular problems, nor can it deal in some committees as parliamentary investigative committees with witnesses and experts who provide it with information and documents on these complex issues.

Based on the above, we will discuss in this research what the parliamentary committees are through two main demands, the first of which we address the

concept of parliamentary committees, and in the second we address the types of parliamentary committees, according to the following:

The First Requirement

Concept of Parliamentary Committees

Parliamentary committees are considered to be organs of the parliamentary councils, and therefore they are not an independent body, but merely a body assisting them in the completion of their functions in the legislative and oversight field.

Accordingly, we will discuss in this requirement the concept of parliamentary committees through two branches, the first of which shows the definition of parliamentary committees, and in the second section we will show the characteristics of parliamentary committees, according to the following:

Section 1

Definition of Parliamentary Committees

It is stated in the Dictionaries of The Arabic language that the word "**committee**" [single] : collected by committees, committees and committees, and is intended to: «**a group meet in something they are satisfied with**», or «**a group entrusted with examining an order or accomplishing a work**» (Omar, 2008). The dictionary of the law issued by the Arabic Language Complex in Cairo defines "**parliamentary committees**" as: «**A term is called committees that parliament doubts among its members to exercise its competences, each committee according to the limited area of it** » (Law, 1999).

The researcher defines the parliamentary committees as: «**A term called committees that the People's Assembly doubts among its members, at the beginning of the legislative role, to help him in the exercise of what he was assigned, under the constitution and the rules of procedure governing its work, of competences in the legislative and supervisory field**

It is clear from this definition that the parliamentary committees are the basic structure of the work of the Syrian People's Assembly, from which it actually begins the practice of legislative and supervisory work, and we say this on the foundation that no work falls within the purview of the Council except and has a share of quiet research, in-depth careful study, and serious substantive discussion, within these committees.

Section 2

Characteristics of Parliamentary Committees

As one of the main organs assisting the Parliament in exercising its legislative and supervisory powers, parliamentary committees have the following characteristics and features:

First, the parliamentary feature: The parliamentary nature of the parliamentary committees seems through the work carried out by parliament through its membership, parliament when it proceeds with these actions is doing a work that is legally related to it, which is achieved and does not raise any controversy, because the rules of procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly expressly stated this, as it specified The types of standing parliamentary committees, the number of members of each committee, and the authority of the Council to form them, and the work of these committees falls within the work of parliament; it is not judicial work, not administrative work, but a purely parliamentary work.

Secondly, the oversight feature: where the "**parliamentary committees**" play a special role in monitoring the work of the executive branch, **whether these committees are permanent**, such as the "Complaints and Oversight Committee" in the Syrian People's Assembly, where the Council considers complaints of administrative and financial corruption in various ministries and institutions of the state (Rules, 2017), **or through some temporary (or private) committees**. As a "fact-finding committee", where parliament is setting up an interim special commission of inquiry on a particular situation in the organs of the executive and associated public bodies. The parliamentary inquiry is essentially one of the effective means of oversight of the legislature in the face of the executive (Laila, 1971) branch.

Thirdly, the specific objective feature: the objective scope of the work of parliamentary committees is determined by the scope of the work of the executive branch, whether in terms of the authority or in terms of the subject matter, based on the constitutions of the parliamentary states, which require parliament to exercise control over the work of the executive branch. Accordingly, parliamentary oversight through parliamentary committees is limited to the work and activities of the executive branch. Constitutional jurisprudence agrees that parliamentary committees cannot deal with or relate to an issue that falls within the jurisdiction of the judiciary, as the jurisdiction of parliamentary committees is limited to the work of the executive branch and does not extend beyond the work of the judiciary, as this authority is completely independent and it is not right to interfere in its affairs, because the work of parliamentary committees is primarily political rather than judicial (Nassar, 1996).

Fourth, diversity (permanent, temporary and joint parliamentary committees): Parliamentary committees have a diversity in terms of the fact that some of them are permanent, which are the origin, others are temporary (or special) committees, and some are joint committees.

The Second Requirement

Types of Parliamentary Committees

Despite the multiplicity of criteria that define the types of parliamentary committees, there are three types of parliamentary committees that have settled

in all parliaments of the world in parliamentary systems, although their names and terms of reference vary: permanent parliamentary committees (or quality), special (or interim) parliamentary committees, and joint parliamentary committees.

All the provisions relating to the parliamentary committees in the Syrian parliament were contained in chapter three of Title III of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly issued on July 30, 2017, talking about the organizational structure of the Syrian People's Assembly.

After referring to the legal articles contained in chapter III (articles 35 to 87) of Title III of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly, we find that the Syrian legislator has divided the committees within the People's Assembly into two types: the first type called « **Standing Committees** », and the second type called « **Interim Committees** ».

Accordingly, we will discuss in this requirement the types of parliamentary committees in the Syrian People's Assembly, by talking about the standing committees in the first branch, and the interim committees in a second branch, and the following:

Section 1

Standing Committees of the Syrian People's Assembly

The standing committees of the Syrian parliament were mentioned in chapter 3 (articles 35 to 81) of Title III of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly for 2017, as the Syrian legislator in the aforementioned legal articles indicated all the provisions relating to the standing committees of the Syrian People's Assembly, in terms of their composition, terms of reference, modus operandi, how to manage their meetings, and supervise their work, and prepare her reports.

According to the articles of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly, the standing committees are formed by a decision issued by the People's Assembly at the suggestion of the People's Assembly Office at the beginning of the legislative role of the Council, and they are reconstituted annually, i.e. one calendar year after the date of their formation (Rules, 2017).

According to the rules of procedure of the People's Assembly, the Council may, at the suggestion of the Council's office, decide at any time, even if the duration of the year does not expire, to dissolve any of the formed standing committees if they do not perform their functions in accordance with the provisions of the Council's rules of procedure (Rules, 2017).

The number of standing committees formed in the current third legislative session of the Syrian People's Assembly (2020-2024) has reached **seventeen(17)** standing committees (Rules, 2017), and it is noted here that this number can be increased or decreased, as the People's Assembly may decide to set up other standing committees, or cancel any of the existing committees (Rules, 2017). Or cancel any of its tasks assigned to it (Rules, 2017).

The origin of the composition of the standing committees is to observe the **principle of specialization**, i.e. each group of council members studied subjects that are self-centered and an apparent readiness to examine and study them (Kamel, 1927), and therefore the 2017 People's Assembly rules provided for the formation of **seventeen permanent committees**, each with a specific set of issues (Rules, 2017).

According to the 2017 People's Assembly rules, each standing committee has at least 10 members and no more than 10yen. (Rules, 2017)

Section 2

Interim Committees in the Syrian People's Assembly

Article 78 of the Syrian Constitution of 2012 stipulates that the **People's Assembly shall form interim committees among its members to gather information and investigate facts on topics related to the exercise of its terms of reference**. The "fact-finding committees" were mentioned in the second section of chapter III of the Rules of Procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly for 2017, under the title "**Interim Committees**", in the articles (article 82 to Article 87), and the above articles showed how to form the commissions of inquiry, the powers enjoyed by these committees to carry out their mission, and what report they are preparing and submitting to the presidency of the Council in preparation for discussion and conduct. **This is what we will talk about in the first demand of the next** research.

Second Research

Means of Parliamentary Committees in Monitoring the Work of the Government

Parliamentary committees are the assistant to parliament in its oversight of the activity of various state agencies to detect and determine responsibility for the failure to properly implement the legislation in force. Referring to the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly for 2017, we find that some parliamentary committees, whether permanent or temporary special committees, exercise their role in monitoring the workers of the executive branch and holding them politically accountable. We form an interim special committee or assign a committee of its standing committees **to investigate, gather information and investigate** any public matter of particular concern, or a specific topic related to any public body, and allow each committee of the Standing Council to ask the President of the Council to invite the ministry **to put a general topic for discussion** to clarify the ministry's policy on it and exchange opinions on it. Each of the Council's standing committees was also authorized to **question** cabinet members in matters within their jurisdiction.

Based on the above, we will discuss in this research the means owned by the parliamentary committees in the Syrian People's Assembly in monitoring the work of the executive branch, through four main demands according to the following:

The First Requirement

The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Fact-Finding

Constitutional jurisprudence generally considers that the right to investigate is a prescribed right of the parliaments in all countries, whether the system of government in which it is parliamentary, presidential or mixed; This is aimed at exposing the weaknesses, imbalances and deficiencies of the existing system, both politically, economically and socially, and to prepare a detailed report of the outcome of its work to be submitted to the Legislative Council for discussion and action (H. M. A. Bahri, 2006).

The source of the determination of this right is the general principles of the right of parliaments to legislate and control, because these rights are not fulfilled by their wisdom and come to fruition only if the parliaments have the right to inform, examine and investigate the facts before they begin their jurisdiction (Nasif, 1981).

Therefore, parliamentary inquiry is essentially one of the effective means of oversight that the legislature has in the face of the executive branch, under which parliament can identify a particular fact by examining a particular work or policy, a procedure used by parliament with the intention of enlightenment, in which its light can limit its position. This means is very practical. Parliament can detect the shortcomings of the government apparatus, whether administratively, financially or politically, and through the parliamentary investigation, the disadvantages and deviations of the government instrument can be identified, and parliament then decides on the means to eliminate those disadvantages and deviations revealed by the investigation. (Kamel, 1927)

The most important characteristic of this means of oversight of the work of the Government is that Parliament does not rely on the information and data provided to it by ministers, but investigates itself and draws information directly from its original sources, by contacting individuals and employees, accessing government documents, papers and documents, and following various means that it considers to be sufficient to achieve its purpose in obtaining facts concerning the activity and work of government agencies (Younis, 2002).

This importance of the parliamentary investigation led the Syrian legislator to provide for this oversight tool at the heart of the constitution, as article 78 of the Syrian Constitution of 2012 stipulates that the **People's Assembly should form interim committees among its members to gather information and investigate facts on topics related to the exercise of its terms of reference.**

The "fact-finding committees" were mentioned in the second section of chapter III of the Rules of Procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly for 2017,

under the title "**Interim Committees**", in the articles (article 82 to Article 87), and the above articles showed how to form the commissions of inquiry, the powers enjoyed by these committees to carry out their mission, and what report they are preparing and submitting to the presidency of the Council in preparation for discussion and conduct. This is what we will talk about in the following details:

Section 1

The Nature of the Commissions of Inquiry and How They are Formed

Article 82 of the People's Assembly Rules of Procedure 2017 states: «The Council is to question an interim special committee or assign a committee of its standing committees to investigate, gather information and investigate the facts of any public matter of particular concern, or A particular topic concerns any public body, and the Prime Minister is informed of this by the President of the Council."

The text of this article is based on several things, which we will include in the following:

1) The People's Assembly has the choice between **forming an interim committee** among its members to gather information and investigate facts on topics relating to the exercise of its terms of reference, or to **assign one of its standing committees** to carry out that task.

We believe that the direction taken by the Syrian legislator in this regard was not right, because for our part we do not like the idea that the People's Assembly entrusts one of its standing committees with fact-finding on one of the topics related to the exercise of its terms of reference, on the grounds that it is within its jurisdiction, because as long as the subject is within its purview from the beginning, It was her duty to take care of him, to give him his lack of oversight, and to wait for a report by the Council, but to investigate the facts about him is, in my view, to urge the Council to carry out its duties.

2) The commissions of inquiry are formed by decision of the People's Assembly or its office in the event of its absence, without the need to submit a request for this from one of the standing committees of the Council or from a certain number of members of the Council.

3) The right to conduct an investigation is a natural right of the People's Assembly, and it is sufficient to justify it by relying on constitutional texts relating to the exercise of its competences by the People's Assembly, whether those that make it the right to propose and pass laws, or that give it the right to exercise control over the government, so that the People's Assembly can make a valid decision in what is entrusted to it in its jurisdiction. It should give the means to do so, most notably the means of research, scrutiny and enlightenment.

Hence, we can say that while commissions of inquiry, while a means of gathering information and investigating facts on topics relating to the exercise of its competences by the People's Assembly, are at the same time a tool of oversight of the work of the executive branch.

4) The commissions of inquiry in Syria are parliamentary committees formed for special circumstances on a particular subject, and these committees are of a temporary nature, their work ends with the end of the task assigned to them.

5) With regard to the number of members of the commission formed by the fact-finding committee, the Syrian legislator failed to mention this, as it did not mention a minimum or maximum number of members of the commissions of inquiry, and this was left to the discretion of the Council to conduct it according to the importance and complexity of the subject to be investigated.

Section 2

Powers of Commissions of Inquiry

The commissions of inquiry formed by the Syrian People's Assembly have many effective powers that enable them to complete their mission, and these authorities vary according to the place to which they respond, including what is practiced on documents and documents, including what is practiced on persons, and details as follows:

First, the powers of the Commission of Inquiry for persons: The Syrian legislator under article 83 (2) of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly authorized the Commission of Inquiry, whether it be an interim special committee or one of its standing committees, the right to take measures to ensure access to the truth, including the right to summon anyone who sees the benefit of hearing his statements, If he fails to appear after being invited in writing, investigators may issue **a subpoena** against him by the Public Prosecutor's Office, taking into account due process law. He also decided that anyone who appeared before the commission of inquiry and was found to have made a non-right shall be punished in accordance with the Penal Code, and the Commission of Inquiry may request the Presidency of the Council to assign the judiciary to initiate public proceedings against him (Rules, 2017).

Secondly, the powers of the Commission of Inquiry concerning documents and documents: the legislator decided that the Commission of Inquiry has the right to take all measures to ensure access to the truth, including the right to access management documents, obtain the necessary photographs of its documents, and disclose its necessary data to perform its work (Rules, 2017), and this is what the legislator intended when he decided that: « The executive and judicial authorities should facilitate the commission's mission and provide the documents, data and information it requests » (Rules, 2017).

Third Branch

Reports to You that the Investigation

After the People's Assembly has questioned an interim special committee or assigns one of its standing committees to investigate, gather information

and investigate a public matter of particular concern, or a particular topic related to any public body, it is normal in such a case for parliament to witness the outcome of the work of this committee. Which is reflected in the form of a report that includes the commission's efforts, its actions to accomplish its mission, and the findings of its investigations; This is what article **85** of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly stipulates: "The committee shall submit its report to the Speaker of the Council, including its opinion and the result of its work, and it is included in the agenda of the first session of the Council to discuss it."

The Syrian general also pointed out in article **86** that "if there are any violations of conduct or crimes during the investigation, the papers will be forwarded to the Prime Minister by the President of the Council to conduct the legal requirement."

The Commission continues to exercise its functions until a decision is issued by the Council on the subject for which it was formed or by the end of its mission (Rules, 2017).

As for the implications of the investigations carried out by the commissions of inquiry suspected by the People's Assembly, they are very serious, especially if one of these committees is found to have serious errors or legal irregularities in one of its ministries or public bodies, which may lead to members of the Council escalating the situation, by asking the executive to explain the reasons for its conduct in the matter investigated or its purpose, This is of course by resorting to the means of **interrogation**, whether it is the Prime Minister or one of the ministers whose irregularities or abuses occurred within his ministry, and if the questioned member is not convinced of the answers of the executive branch, he can escalate the situation further, by resorting to a no-confidence motion against the ministry as a whole or from a minister who is not satisfied with the answers of the executive branch (H. A. Bahri, 2010).

There are practical but limited applications that prove this true, and it is enough to demonstrate this by citing what happened in the fourth legislative role of the Syrian People's Assembly (from 27 February 1986 to 26 February 1990), where the Council was questioned **by two fact-finding committees** on two topics, the first of which falls within the responsibilities of the Minister of Supply and Internal Trade (Riad Haj Khalil), and the second within the responsibilities of the Minister of Industry (Engineer Ali Trabelsi). One of the consequences of their respective report was: 1) the recommendations of the entire committees. 2) Members of the Council question the competent minister (minister of supply in the first case and minister of industry in the second case). (H. A. Bahri, 2010) 3. Because the interrogator in both cases was not convinced of the relevant minister's answer, he made a written motion of **no confidence** in the competent minister, and the Council agreed to a vote of no confidence in Minister J (H. A. Bahri, 2010).

Due to the involvement of the Minister of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform (Dr. Mahmoud al-Kurdi) in the case, he was imprisoned, and the Minister of Construction (Riad Baghdadi) also resigned from his post, which then led to the

resignation of the ministry (the ministry of Abdul Rauf al-Kassam last), and the formation of a new ministry in November 1987 ... All this confirms beyond a shadow of a doubt the effective and distinctive role of the People's Assembly during the fourth legislative role in controlling and holding accountable the work of the executive branch in accordance with the law.

The Second Requirement

The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Putting a General Topic up for Discussion

Although the Syrian legislator has approved to the members of the People's Assembly the right to ask questions to the members of the Council of Ministers, with the aim of questioning about one of the matters that fall within their jurisdiction, or to verify that there has been an incident that has reached them, or to inquire them about the intention of the ministry in one matter » (Rules, 2017), except that this means of control may not suffice, Because of the bilateral and limited dialogue between the liquid member and the minister, some constitutions give the right to a number of members of parliament to demand that a general topic be raised with regard to internal policy and foreign policy for discussion in the Council for discussion. Open to be shared by whoever he wants. This right does not provoke a narrow dialogue, but it provokes a general debate, in which the Council may participate without requesting that the subject be discussed, while at the same time not accusing and injuring the Government (al-Shaer, 1985).

Since this right provokes a general debate, this differs from the question that is considered a personal **relationship** between the questioner and the official, as it differs from the interrogation, which, as we will see in the fourth demand, is based on accusations, and an offence to the government.

In Article 75 of the 2012 Constitution, the Syrian legislature stipulates that: (The People's Assembly shall assume the following terms of reference: 1.... 2. After the Council has completed this discussion, requests are usually made by a standing committee of the People's Assembly or a certain number of members of the Council, in order to raise a general topic regarding domestic or foreign policy for discussion in the Council, an open debate, involving the members of the Council. The 2017 Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly guaranteed the organization of this right in general, as stipulated in Chapter II of Title VII, in articles (Article 204 to Article 209).

According to the rules of procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly, the general debate is intended to : « **exchange of opinion and advice between the People's Assembly and the ministry on its policies and actions** » (Rules, 2017).

Plenary sessions are held at the first of each regular session of the Council, provided that the Ministry has submitted its ministerial statement to the Council (Rules, 2017).

A council member may leave the plenary sessions before they are over only because of necessity (Rules, 2017).

The rules of procedure allowed each of **the Council's standing committees** or at least 10 members to ask the Speaker to invite the Ministry to put forward a general topic for discussion to clarify and exchange views on the Ministry's policy.

The request is submitted to the President of the Council in writing and must include an accurate definition of the subject, the justifications and reasons for its submission to the General Debate of the Council. If the Board decides to approve the request, the President of the Council shall set the date for discussion and report it to the Ministry, and if the Board considers that the subject is not valid for discussion, it may decide to exclude it (Rules, 2017). Committee chairmen and rapporteurs whose committees have jurisdiction over the subject matter of discussion may have the right to speak whenever they so request (Rules, 2017).

In all cases, the Board may decide to refer the subject of the discussion request to a standing committee for consideration and report (Rules, 2017). If the discussion request is waived by the Committee submitted by it or by all or some of the members, so that they are fewer than 10, the President of the Council shall be notified and the discussion will take place only if at least 10 members are satisfied (Rules, 2017) with the request.

As we have pointed out, the means of public debate are considered in constitutional jurisprudence to be a quiet regulatory means aimed at conducting a dialogue between parliament and the government on a subject of certain importance, with a view to reaching a solution agreed by both parties, and this may have led some jurists to consider it as an exchange of opinion and cooperation between parliament and the government in the public interest, It is therefore very important among other means of oversight, as on the one hand it achieves parliament's objective in knowing and discussing government policy on a subject, whether it is related to domestic policy or foreign policy; on the other hand, it reveals to the Government the directions of parliament on the issue under discussion, and the extent to which it supports it in its actions to confront it, in a way that is politically accountable to him.

Demand 3

The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Questioning Members of The Ministry

Parliamentary questioning is one of the most dangerous tools of parliamentary oversight of the work of the executive branch; if the three previous rights (question, request for public debate, investigation) carry the meaning of "**request for knowledge**", "**exchange of opinion**" or "**access to the truth**", this right includes accusing the whole government or one of its members, and stripping its policy. This right is therefore usually followed by the offering of confidence in

the whole Government or some of its members, as opposed to the Council's use of previous rights, but the use of previous rights may be a prelude to the use of interrogation power (Omar, 2008).

Since the interrogation has had serious consequences, the constitutions have been hedged with many conditions and restrictions so that its use does not result in a debate on matters that the Council may consider not to be subjected to, so that the government does not surprise him. The common guarantee between the different constitutional systems is to set certain periods that may not be discussed before they are over so that the Government has the opportunity to study the subject of interrogation and prepare its own statement (al-Mahdi, 2012).

The existing Syrian constitution expressly guarantees the right of members of the People's Assembly to direct interrogations to the ministry or a minister about any public matter that falls within their jurisdiction, as stipulated in the council's rules of procedure.

Accordingly, Article 74 of the 2012 Syrian **Constitution** stipulates that: «Members of the People's Assembly have the right to propose laws **and ask questions** and interrogations to the ministry or a minister in accordance with the provisions of the Council's rules of procedure." In accordance with the constitutional text, **the 2017 Rules of Procedure of the** People's Assembly guaranteed **the organization of** this right in general, as stipulated in Chapter **III** of Title VII, in articles (Article 210 to Article 215).

The rules of procedure of the People's Assembly defined the interrogation as: **"To ask the Prime Minister, his deputies or one of the ministers to explain the reasons for his conduct in a matter of public affairs or its purpose"**. (Rules, 2017) The rules of procedure of the People's Assembly have allowed each of the Standing Committees of the Council or at least five of its members to question the Prime Minister, his deputies or ministers in matters within their jurisdiction. The request for interrogation must generally indicate the subject of the interrogation, with an explanatory note containing a statement of the questioned matters, the main facts and points of the interrogation and the reasons for the interrogation, the face of the offence attributed to the person to whom the interrogation was directed, and the grounds they see supporting what they have gone to.

Interrogation may not include matters contrary to the Constitution or the law or inappropriate language, may be related to matters that do not fall within the purview of the Ministry or may be in the private or personal interest of any member requesting questioning. Nor may an interrogation be submitted on a subject in which the Council has already been adjudicated at the same session unless new facts arise to justify it. The President of the Council informs the President of the Republic of the request for questioning as soon as it is received, and the date of its discussion is set after 15 days following his notification. If the minister to be questioned does not attend, the ^{no-confidence} motion may be used (Rules, 2017).

The rules of procedure of the People's Assembly have granted the applicants or their numerical majority the right to re-examine their interrogation at any time with

a written request to the Speaker of the Council, in which case it is excluded from the agenda and is considered by the Council. The absence of the numerical majority of the interrogators is the specific session to discuss their interrogation, in which case the provision of the previous paragraph applies. The interrogation is dropped by the disappearance of the majority of those who submitted it, who directed it or by the end of the legislative role during which it was submitted (Rules, 2017).

The right to speak is given to two members chosen by the applicants for questioning, including those who have the right to speak for 15 minutes, and then the right to speak to the interrogator for 30 minutes to respond and indicate his (Rules, 2017) defences. If the interrogators insisted that they were not satisfied after the previous proceedings had been completed, they had the right to resort to a motion of no confidence (Rules, 2017).

It should be noted that in the **previous legislative role of the People's Assembly (2018-2020), the Services Committee of the People's Assembly** asked **The Minister of Transport Engineer "Ali Hammoud" to** submit documents on **the** purchase of an aircraft contracted with a person, and other documents, including the basic contract for the relationship of the private company Wings of Sham with the Syrian Aviation Corporation to the People's Assembly within twenty-four hours to check for cases of corruption or not in the two files, to download Administrative and legal responsibilities and liabilities, if any, confirm in an unprecedented step **the** (Rules, 2017) committee's intention to seek the questioning and no confidence of Minister Hammoud if it is proved incorrect in the two contracts. The minister stressed that the ministry worked hard with everything it has and may have ventured too much to protect The Syrian Air from stopping, but this diligence was understood by colleagues and in the end, we returned the state funds, pointing out that it worked only for the public interest and that he pressured to secure planes for Syria and restore the rights of the Syrian state. Hammoud revealed that Russia is moving to manufacture its own aircraft in 2021 and therefore can buy aircraft from them, and the trend towards it instead of buying them from other countries.

At the end of the session devoted to the interrogation of Minister "Hammoud", which lasted about two and a half hours, the president of the council "Hamouda Sabbagh" asked the chairman of the services committee MP "Safwan Korbi", which submitted the request for questioning: Did the committee just question the minister's responses and the answer of the chairman of the committee was: « **The committee was satisfied with the interrogation** » the president of the council **announced** that « **It's over.** » (Rules, 2017)

Fourth Requirement

The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Scrutinizing Petitions

The rules of procedure of the People's Assembly of 2017 in Chapter 5 of Title VII (Articles: Article 220 to Article 225) addressed the subject of "**petitions**" as

one of the means and procedures of parliamentary oversight, as it stipulated the following:

- Every citizen shall submit to the Council a written petition containing specific actions or actions that he complains of contrary to the Constitution, laws, regulations or regulations, or any subject in the interest of the nation and the citizen.

- The petition is submitted in writing and written in the name and signature of its applicant and confirms its place of residence and work in detail and his telephone number, and its terms must be clear in the statement of the subject matter it presents, and shall be free of inappropriate language, accompanied by documents supporting it, if any, and the President of the Council must keep petitions that do not meet these requirements. Petitions submitted to the Council in the Diwan are recorded in serial numbers according to the date of their receipt, with the name of the applicant and the summary of its subject matter. The petitioner may request anonymity with the consent of the President of the Council, in which case the applicant's name is not mentioned in her registration register.

- The Chairman of the Council shall refer petitions to the Complaints and Oversight Committee and may use other board committees.

- The President of the Council shall directly refer petitions on important and urgent topics to the Prime Minister or to a competent minister.

- Each member has the right to access any petition referred to the Complaints and Oversight Committee.

- The Complaints and Oversight Committee scrutinizes the petitions referred to it, and in order to hear its applicant, and to ask the Minister of the complainant to provide it with all the facilities that will enable it to reveal the truth, and the minister concerned is charged with answering all the committee's questions and providing them with all documents and documents relating to the subject matter of the petition within a further 30 days.

- The Committee shall submit its report to the President of the Council within a period of 15 days at most from the date of the minister's response, and may ask the President of the Council to extend this period if necessary.

- The President of the Council shall decide to preserve it or submit it to the Council for action as it deems appropriate or to ask the Prime Minister to take a specific action relating to it.

- If the petition contains a complaint, the committee should inform the petitioner of the outcome of his complaint within a period of three months at most.

As a practical example, the Complaints and Oversight Committee of the People's Assembly held a meeting on Tuesday morning, 21 September 2021, at 11:00 p.m., chaired by Mr. Abboud Al-Shawakh and attended by the majority of members.

1. The screening of engineers was delayed, as it was stressed that the need for urgency by the Council of Ministers should be urgent, to appoint them both according to their specialization.

2. Unfair electrical rationing in all regions.
3. Citizens are dissatisfied with the phenomenon of generators and their spread on sidewalks and around residential areas, and the inconveniences they cause.
4. It was stressed that the distribution of oil allocations (gasoline) should be accelerated as we approach winter.
5. Discuss the reasons for the delay in the responses of some conservatives to complaints made by citizens through the committee.

Conclusion

After the completion of the presentation of the subject of the study « the role of **parliamentary committees in monitoring the work of the executive branch analytical study in light of the provisions of the rules of procedure of the Syrian People's Assembly for 2017** » through a modest effort made in this research, we present the following to the most important results reached, with some proposals:

First, search results:

- Parliamentary committees are the mainstay of legislative and supervisory work in the Syrian parliament, as they play a key role in fulfilling many of the terms of reference of the People's Assembly of the world. They are the most important parliamentary organs with regard to the functioning of the Council and its performance of its functions, as it is the most mobile and active of these organs, and the most competent, the most productive and collectible, which is on the common expression «Dynamo which feeds all the work of the Council ».

- Parliamentary committees of all kinds, whether permanent or temporary, consist of small groups of members of the People's Assembly who are selected in different ways, either on a permanent or temporary basis, to examine and study a number of topics or issues referred to them from parliament under its constitutional competence, better than if they were studied at the level of the whole parliament.

- The oversight function of the parliamentary committees in the Syrian People's Assembly aims to ascertain or join the legitimacy of the executive branch's actions and the integrity of its actions, and the extent to which they target the public interest.

- Referring to the provisions of the Constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic in force on February 27, 2012, and the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the People's Assembly for 2017, we find that some parliamentary committees, whether permanent or temporary special committees, exercise their role in monitoring the work of the executive branch, through several means, the most important of which are: **investigation, information gathering and fact-finding** of a general matter of particular importance, or a particular topic related to any public body, And **call on the ministry to put a general topic for discussion** to clarify the ministry's policy on it and exchange opinions on it. In addition, members of the Council of Ministers have been **questioned** in matters within their

jurisdiction. Finally, **check the written petitions** submitted by citizens to the Council and submit their report to the Council.

- The seriousness and value of parliamentary oversight is based first and foremost on the quality of the members of Parliament themselves and whether they really have the courage to express their opinion freely, and then make their decision according to their conviction and personal faith.

Second, Research Proposals

- Members of the People's Assembly are provided with the help of researchers and specialists. Specialists can provide the deputy with the necessary studies and information to carry out his oversight work, while administrative assistants in the Za A district provide him with more time and effort to spend them on the information, studies and research at his disposal to continue his oversight work.

- The development of the work of parliamentary committees, he considered the importance of their role in the field of monitoring, by ensuring the continuity of their deputies so that their expertise grows in their field of competence, and reducing their number from the most important to provide better possibilities for serious discussion in the topics they are discussing.

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