

BASIC GUIDE TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

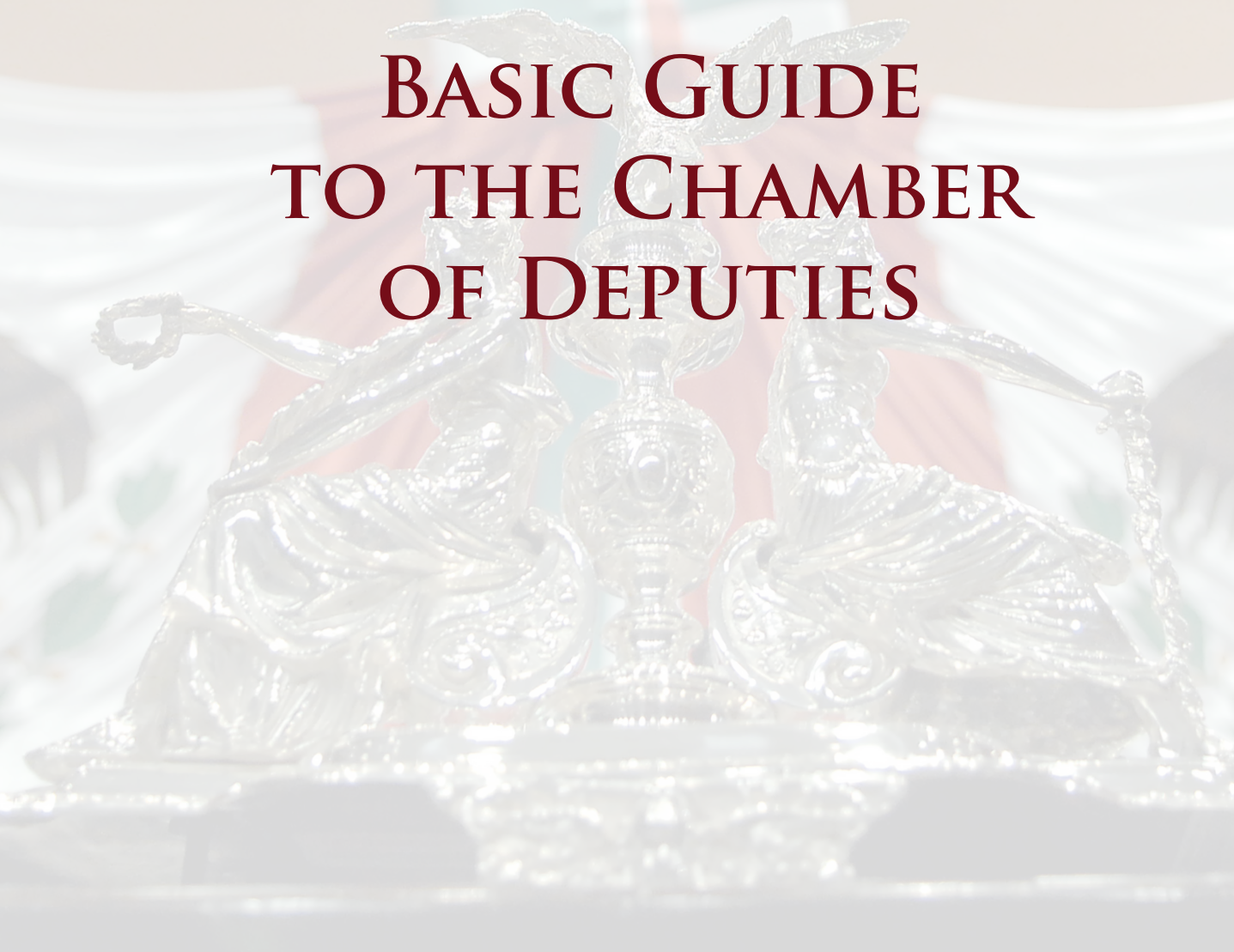
Citizen Handbook



CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS
LXIII LEGISLATURA

TO UNDERSTAND

BASIC GUIDE
TO THE CHAMBER
OF DEPUTIES



THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

BASIC GUIDE TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES



MÉXICO, 2017



Basic Guide to the Chamber of Deputies

Es una obra que forma parte de la Colección “La Cámara de Diputados cerca de ti”, como un esfuerzo colectivo que encabeza el Consejo Editorial en coordinación con la Secretaría General; Secretaría de Servicios Parlamentarios; Dirección General de Servicios de Documentación, Información y Análisis; Centro de Estudios de las Finanzas Públicas; Centro de Estudios de Derecho e Investigaciones Parlamentarias; Centro de Estudios Sociales y de Opinión Pública; Centro de Estudios para el Adelanto de las Mujeres y la Equidad de Género y Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Rural Sustentable y la Soberanía Alimentaria de la Cámara de Diputados.

Primera edición, 2017.

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Diseño Editorial y Portada: Edgar Adrián Rodríguez Cuevas

LXIII Legislatura de la H. Cámara de Diputados
Av. Congreso de la Unión, Núm. 66
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<http://diputados.gob.mx>

Fotografías:
Archivo Fotográfico CAMSA
Coordinación de Comunicación Social de la
H. Cámara de Diputados LXIII Legislatura.
Grupo Parlamentario del Partido Acción Nacional de la Cámara de Diputados.

Traducción: Mtra. Bárbara Crow de Toledo

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Impreso en México/ Printed in Mexico

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FOREWORD

The Chamber of Deputies is the home of the people of Mexico, it is the organ where all the different expressions— cultural, ideological and political - concur and flow together. This not only allows for democratic control of the institutional decisions of the federal public powers, by means of a consensus of the majorities, but it is also an organ that represents the interests, demands and worries of the people, having the faculties to approve, reject, modify and create political-judicial instruments to regulate social life.

A space for plural dialogues and varied expressions, the Chamber of Deputies is an indispensable organ for the organization of our society: thus the importance of providing a Literary work, specialized and detailed, that would allow for ever more persons to know about the function of instruments of representation and the mechanism to be able to participate in them, within or outside the country.

Dep. Marko Antonio Cortés Mendoza

President of the Political Coordination Board,
LXIII Legislature

INTRODUCTION

A true reflection of our national character, the Chamber of Deputies is a parliamentary organ that represents, by autonomy, the Mexican people and their sovereign power, in whom the fundamental task of guiding our country is entrusted, and which is undertaken in a participative and democratic manner through the 500 deputies who are elected periodically.

It is important that a greater number of persons, by means of knowledge of the legal and institutional mechanisms, join in the dialogue and analysis of the cardinal matters of our national agenda, so as to strengthen the nation.

The Basic Guide to the Chamber of Deputies, is an effort to promote and strengthen parliamentary culture outside the federal legislative organs, so that it will extend further to more sectors of society and reach the communities, municipalities, the States and any person interested in the function of the representatives of the nation; but also beyond its borders.

Dep. Emma Margarita Alemán Olvera
President of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies,
LXIII Legislature

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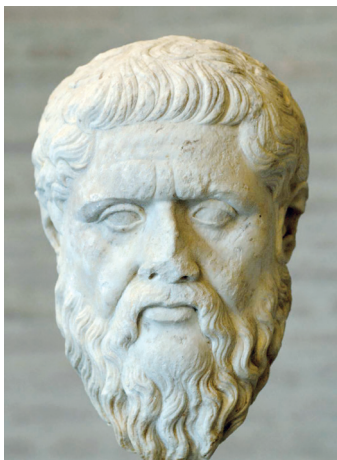
MEXICO AND ITS POLITICAL SYSTEM

State and Government are two concepts which, given their proximity, tend to be confusing for anyone approaching the interesting world of Political Theory for the first time. Their conceptual meaning is so close that for a long time both terms meant the same. Ever since Antiquity (4th Century B.C.) up to the Renaissance (16th century A.D.), the most renowned thinkers in the study of Politics¹ considered that the form of State and the form of Government were synonyms² in view of the common reference which united them: Power.³ As political studies became more sophisticated, both these terms led to a more novel and inclusive concept: the concept of a Constitution. There was a time when the form of the State and the form of the Government were practically translated as *Constitution*.⁴ But such was the range of the word Constitution that soon the concept became worthy of being studied for itself. Therefore, with the emergence of *modern constitutionalism* - based on the principle of separation and balance of public powers -, it has been necessary to redefine

David Easton, the Canadian political scientist, defines a political system as “a group of political interactions” and “distinguishes political interactions from the rest of social interactions that are directed toward the authoritative assignation of social values”.

David Easton, *Focus on Political Theory*, trans., Amorrotu Editores, Buenos Aires, 1969, p.221

- 1 Norberto Bobbio, *Theory of the forms of government in the history of political thought*, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008, 193 pp.
- 2 The most representative example of this statement appears in the section *Quot sint genera principatium et quibus modis acquireren*, in *The Prince* by Nicolas Maquiavelo, where he shows: “All States, all those who have exerted or exert dominance over men, were or are republics or principalities”. Vid. Nicolas Maquiavelo, *El Principe*, trans. and notes by José Rafael Herrera y Alejandro Bárcenas, Caracas, Editorial CEC, S.A., 1999, p.19.
- 3 We understand the term *power* as dominion, empire of the faculty of command. Leonardo Curzio Gutiérrez, *Introducción a la Ciencia Política*, México, Oxford University Press, 2009.
- 4 *Lato Sensu*, the voice *Constitution*, is a concept which includes the fundamental structures of society, it is also used as a synonym of, model, plan or legal order.



the old concepts of the form of State and the form of Government.⁵

*In Plato's "Republic", he claims that the ideal State is a sort of **large version of Man**, made up of all individuals whose actions are based on the values of justice, virtue and ethics.*

The form of State

By *form of State* one understands the way in which the State is organized and structured in terms of power of command, while *form of government* refers to the mode in which the organs of the state interact and are divided into their functions. In general terms, without over simplifying, the State is the structure and the Government is who guides the structure. The substantial features of both concepts are the form of access to and the wielding of power, as well as the degree, distribution and conservation of same.

From the point of view of Paolo Biscaretti di Ruffia, the Italian constitutionalist, *the form of State* refers to "the diverse relations that join the several traditional constitutional elements of the State itself – government, people and territory – based on specific conceptions of a politico-legal character".⁶

As regards the exercise of political power the State can be divided, according to doctrine, in two main categories: the republics and the monarchies or principalities, in the terms of Nicholas Maquiavelo. In his *General Theory of the Constitution*, Karl Loewenstein calls the first *Constitutional States*, those in which the positions of government are temporary and there are various organs to limit their power, whose exercise is necessarily controlled by a Fundamental Law; the second Authoritarian States, in which there is a self-check to power and whose post is hereditary and for life.⁷

5 Juan Bodino (1529-1596) in *Los seis ensayos de la República* (Six essays on the Republic) was the first to make a distinction between these concepts. Vid. In this work section 3.1 relative to the ancient classification of forms of government.

6 Paolo Biscaretti di Ruffia, *Introducción al derecho constitucional comparado*, (Introduction to Comparative Constitutional Law), a preliminary study by Héctor Fix-Zamudio, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998, p. 114.

7 Cfr. Karl Loewenstein, 1981-1973. *Introducción al Estudio del Derecho*, (Introduction to the study of Law), Mexico, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM/Nostra Ediciones, 2009, pp. 270 and ss.



The Constitutional Decree for the Liberty of Mexican America, better known as the *Constitución de Apatzingán*, is a key document in the history of Mexican constitutionalism. Poster “Morelos, Genio de la Independencia”, Museum of the Palace – Space of Diversity (MUPAL), Government of the State of Oaxaca.

Starting from these two traditional examples proposed as the point of departure, several types of States have developed over the ages in the political history of humanity, changing, gathering force or disappearing at different stages. At present, the terms

The State, as a legal-political entity, arises from the moment in which man abandons his status naturalis to enter into his status civilis. In his classic work The Social Contract Jean Jaques Rousseau states: "man loses his natural liberty and unlimited right to whatever he wants and in exchange he can reach civil liberty and ownership of his property".

Democratic and undemocratic or authoritarian are used, taking into consideration the exercise of public power and the new elements of the "legal institutionalization of democracy",⁸ such as respect for human rights, transparency and accountability in the use of public resources and the efficient controls of the constitution⁹ that make up the present Rule of Law.

Nevertheless, the analysis of forms of State includes not only the way political power is exercised and its constitutional control, but also its territorial distribution, that is to say, the way it is organized politically and administratively.

In this way we there are Federal States which are no more than the union, pact or association of two or more State entities – originally sovereign states – that submit their legal exercise of power to the authority of a State of major importance. In the words of André Hauriou, "it is an association of states who share relations of internal law, that is, constitutional law by means of which a super-State rules over the associated states".¹⁰

Its origins go back to the II Continental Congress of Philadelphia in 1787, whose purpose was to revise the articles of the Treaty of Union, League and Perpetual Confederation, by means of which the 13 British colonies in North America remained united since 1781. This Congress met in the Philadelphia State House from May 25 to September 17 in 1787. Regarding this Dr. Mariano Palacios Alcocer, "on May 30, Edmund Randolph and Governor Morris proposed a resolution that stressed the need that the delegates expressed to surpass the goals that the Congress had set, because it is not sufficient to have a league that unites the States by means of treaties, but rather it is necessary to create a national government with supreme Executive, Legislative and Legal powers".¹¹

8 Jaime Cárdenas García, *Introducción al Estudio del Derecho*, Mexico, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM/Nostra Ediciones, 2009, pp. 270 and ss.

9 In the second chapter of this work a section is dedicated to these mechanisms.

10 André Hauriou, *Derecho constitucional e instituciones políticas*, trans. José Antonio González Casanova, Barcelona, Ariel, 1971, p. 177.

11 Mariano Palacios Alcocer (coord.) *Federalismo y relaciones gubernamentales*, (Federalism and Government Relations) México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa/ LIX Legislatura del Senado de la República, 2003, p. 34.



Mural entitled *Creadores de la República y el Senado*, which shows face-on and in movement, with firm steps and severe expressions, the illustrious Mexicans who guided the creation of a republican system for the country. Headed, in the front row Valentín Gómez Farías, pioneer of the reform; Miguel Ramos Arizpe, father of federalism, and Guadalupe Victoria, first president of Mexico. Behind them are the figures of other outstanding personalities who contributed to the formation of the Republic.

Due to its integrated and hierarchical structure, within the Federal State there are three valid coexisting legal levels: national, state and municipal. For this reason it has characteristics which make it substantially different from the Unitarian State. The federated States have a written constitution; they have at least two powers: one national and the other regional; the Legislative power has two chambers and the local legislatures do participate in the reform of the Federal Constitution.

We can see that the forms of State are diverse and they respond particularly to historic, legal, economic, social and cultural criteria which do not only take into account public power and its exercise or territorial distribution a variable to explain *its particular form*, but also the degree of democratic and social development reached.

So that, to speak of the *form of a State* is to refer to “what this state entity is in its totality”,¹² or rather, to how it organizes and materially structures its formal power and how the political institutions interact with the population and the results of this convergence in terms of social welfare.

The modern or contemporary State is no more than a *Constitutional State or Rule of Law*,¹³ which, in the words of Dr. Peter Häberle, is one which “is characterized by human dignity as the anthropological-cultural premise, by popular sovereignty, by fundamental rights and tolerance, by plurality of political parties and the independence of the judiciary”.¹⁴ In fact, the genesis of this state entity emerges from the revolutions which gave rise to the recognition of political and social rights of the people in face of the authority.

12 Eduardo Andrade Sánchez, *Derecho Constitucional*, (Constitutional Law), Mexico, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 88.

13 Because the political rights and civil liberties of man are recognized, as well as economic liberalism and its badge o *laissez faire, laissez passer*. This State is also known as a “Liberal State”, since it

14 Peter Häberle, *El Estado constitucional*, estudio introductorio de Diego Valadés, trad. de Héctor Fix-Fierro, México, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, 2003, p. 3



The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, 1789.

These few reflections show that Mexico, as regards its form of State is a Democratic Federal Republic, as well as being representative and lay.

Form of Government

Once human beings became sedentary, the social complexity and sophistication reached by different settlements, made it necessary to create a series of measures leading to the creation and gestation of an order which would allow for the correct harmony among individuals. So, throughout history and at different periods, civilizations at all latitudes of the planet have created the best ways to organize their political, economic and social environments according to context.

Particularly, the way of structuring the institutions that regulate and order public activities of the State and arrange the functions of the authorities and popular representatives, is what in general terms we can define as form of government.

Employing Plato's parable about government, we can say that *latu sensu* speaking of the *form of government* is to refer to the manner in which the Ship of State is conducted, which leads us to the question of: Where are we and where are we heading?



The school of Athens, Philosophical Academy founded by Plato.

From that time up to the present, political and legal doctrine has defined the forms of government based on the relations that build up between the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary powers and the mechanisms counteracts the pre-eminence of one organ over another, or those instruments that allow a better communication and collaboration between each other.

In this way, the current forms of government – whether studied as systems or as political regimes -, are divided in two large archetypes: presidential and parliamentary, with their hybrid or variant mixes of both, as in the case of the semi-presidential system and the directorate.

The presidential system

In general terms, a presidential system is a regime characterized by the rigid tradition of the division of powers, in which the logic of centripetal political power hangs on the Executive Power and the relations this constructs with the Legislative Power, although both organs are independent of each other, depending on their historical, political, social and cultural context, as there are a large number of nuances and types of presidential systems.

In his article *Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy: Does it make a difference?*, Juan Linz, the political scientist, explains that the presidential system is “a system of dual legitimacy”, in view of the two characteristics that are accepted by general consensus of several experts in this field. The first is that the President, who holds the Executive Power and the figures of Head of State and of the Government, as well as the Congress or Legislative Power, are elected by universal popular and direct vote, in some cases the former are also elected by means of an electoral college. The second is that both powers are elected for a fixed term and are independent of each other, since neither depends on the trust of the other for their existence or survival.¹⁵

To complement this vision of total independence between these two powers, or rather, the lack of a mechanism that would allow the solution of conflicts between the Executive and the Legislative, Dr. Jorge Carpizo adds five additional characteristics, which are: a) the President generally freely appoints and removes the secretaries of State; b) neither the President nor the secretaries of State are politically responsible before Congress; c) neither the President nor the secretaries of State can, as a general rule, be members of Congress (parliamentary incompatibility); d) the President can be affiliated to a political party other than that of the legislative majority; e) the president cannot dissolve Congress and this body cannot give a vote of censure on his actions.¹⁶

15 Cfr. Juan Linz, “*Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy: Does it make a Difference?*” in Juan Linz and Arturo Valenzuela (coops.), *The Failure of Presidential Democracy. Comparative perspectives*, vol. I, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994, p. 6

16 Jorge Carpizo, *Concepto de democracia y sistema de gobierno en América Latina*, Mexico, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, 2007, p. 43.



The National Palace, seat of the Federal Executive Power in Mexico

The original prototype, also ideal and pure of the presidential system is that of the United States of America. In fact, all the other contemporary democratic systems derive from it, as does the Mexican system. They adopted the presidential form of government considering the thesis of the weights and counter weights between the branches of the legislative and the executive powers.

The Parliamentary system

In parliamentary systems *democratic legitimacy* is the responsibility of Parliament and the government *per se* derives its authority and functionality from this institution, which makes the whole political process more *flexible*.¹⁷ Therefore, when the distinctive feature of a presidential regime is mutual independence of the Legislative and Executive powers, in the parliamentary system it is precisely this *mutual dependence* which exists between both organs of government. In fact, the main characteristic is that the Executive and Legislative powers share their origins so that it is necessary that both government bodies be “designated, supported and, depending on the case, removed (from office) according Parliamentary vote”.

¹⁷ Cfr. Juan Linz, *op. cit.*

Regarding this, Alfred Stepan, professor at Columbia University, and his colleague Cindy Skatch M.A. at Harvard Law School, explain that in a *parliamentary regime* there are two fundamental features: 1. The Head of the Executive power must be supported by a majority in the Legislature and can fall if he/she gets a vote of no confidence or of censure; and 2) the Executive power (normally in conjunction with the Head of State) has the capacity to dissolve the Legislature and to call early elections.¹⁸



Palace of Westminster, seat of Parliament in the United Kingdom

In addition to these two features, Dr. Jorge Carpizo adds other notes particular to the parliamentary system, such as: 1. That members of the cabinet (Executive Power) are also elected members of Parliament; 2. That the cabinet is made up of the leaders of the parliamentary majority or leaders of coalition parties who form the parliamentary majority; 3. That the Executive power is two-headed, in that there is a head of State and a Head of Government; 4. That in the cabinet there is a person who holds supremacy and who is usually called “Prime Minister”; 5. That the Cabinet subsists, on condition that it has the support of the majority in parliament; and 6. That the cabinet is in charge of public administration, which is subjected to the supervision of Parliament.¹⁹

18 Cfr. Alfred Stepan y Cindy Skach, “Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism” en *World Politics*, no. 46, October, 1993, pp. 3-4. Quoted in George Tsebelis, *Jugadores con veto. Cómo funcionan las instituciones políticas*, trans. José Manuel Salazar, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006, p.93.

19 Jorge Carpizo, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

The Semi-Presidential system

If the presidential system and the parliamentary system constitute the two *pure forms* of government adopted by contemporary democracies and since these each classify by mutual exclusion, even with all their characteristics and variations; the semi-presidential system is therefore the *intermediate or mixed system* between these two types of government: presidential in essence yet parliamentary, given that they function by shared power.

In this way, the authority of the Executive Power becomes two-headed or dual: The President must share power with the prime minister and he/she in turn needs the confidence of Parliament. Regarding this, Arend Liphart, the Dutch political scientist explains that “the origin of a bi-polar government has its roots in the Constitution of Wiemar, and among countries which have adopted this model are Finland, Austria after 1929, Iceland, Ireland, the second Spanish Republic with its Constitution of 1931, France and Portugal”.²⁰



Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, world prototype of the semi-presidential system

The same as in the presidential and the parliamentary systems, there are certain particular features within the semi-presidential system that define it and give it a unique form: 1. The president (Head of State) is elected by means of universal suffrage for a determined term and 2. There is a Prime Minister (Head of Government)

²⁰ Arend Liphart (ed.) *Parliamentary versus Presidential Government*, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 142-149. Quoted in Jaime Cárdenas Gracia, *Poderes fácticos... op. cit.*, p. 107.

and Ministers (Cabinet) whose permanence in the government depends on the confidence of Parliament. About the Legislative –Executive relationship, Giovanni Sartori describes the existence of three defining criteria:

- a. The President is independent of Parliament, but he is not allowed to govern alone or directly, consequently his/her will must be channeled and processed through the government;
- b. The Prime Minister and his cabinet are independent of the President but depend on Parliament; they are subjected to a vote of confidence and/or a vote of censure, in both cases they need the support of a parliamentary majority.

The Directorial System

In addition to the semi-presidential system, there is another *hybrid or mixed system* between the presidential and the parliamentary regimes, we refer to the directorial or conventional regimes as mentioned by some specialists. Although this is the case, the power of the Assembly is above any other authority. This model has seldom been recurred to throughout history, up to now, only in Uruguay in 1917 and in Switzerland in 1848 has it been used.

In the Directorial system the division of powers is diffuse, since all political power derives from Parliament and it is Parliament that elects the members of government, as the Executive Power it is a college and responsible for its own acts. So, far from any *mutual independence* as seen in presidential systems or *mutual dependence* as in parliamentary systems between the legislative and the executive branches, in the directorial regime there is a convergence of these two functions, in which the Executive is the expression of the will of the parliamentary majority. Similarly, the assembly elects the members of the Judiciary Power.



The Swiss Federal Palace, seat of the directorial government of this country

Its essential features are as follows: 1. The Congress or Assembly includes the legislative and executive functions; 2. There is no autonomous executive organ; 3. The President of the Federal Council and his collaborators are appointed by the Assembly and are, in turn, members of this; 4. The government is politically responsible before the Assembly; 5. The Assembly cannot be dissolved by the government; and 6. The assembly is the maximum organ of public power.

The Mexican Political System

Our presidential system inherited since 1824 is the product, in the words of Dr. Jorge Carpizo, of a political experiment which makes the Mexican government similar in form to that of the U.S.A., or as suggested by Servando Teresa de Mier, a *northmania*²¹ of the constituent deputies of the period. However, if the constitution of 1824 adopted part of the political organization of the United States, as well as elements of the Spanish constitution of 1812, it was not an exact copy of the model, but rather an interpretation and a consequence of the history that ineluctably joins us with our neighbour count to the north.

Despite the criticism that arose because of the supposed *copy* of the Constitution of the United States of 1787 and of the Spanish one of 1812, the constituent Congress of 1824 set the bases and distinctive notes of the Mexican political regime, which continue, in some cases, the same as today, such as the division of powers, federalism and republican principles.²² These fundamental contributions remain in the two later Federal constitutions of 1857 and 1917.

Although the origins go back to antiquity with philosophers like Plato and Aristotiles, the idea of checks and balances was perfected in the age of Enlightenment with thinkers like Marsilio di Padua, John Locke and Montesquieu, including the fathers of North American constitution, such as Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison, among others.

In Mexico, article 49 of the Political constitution states that: “The Supreme Power of the Federation is divided, for its exercise, into the Legislative, the Executive and the Judiciary”. This precept establishes that never can two or more of these powers be united or deposited in one single person, nor can the Legislative be in the hands of one individual.

Thus the *Power of the Federation*, with its figure of *Supreme*, is unique and indivisible; but its functions fall on different organs, which in conjunction give origin to the *government of the Republic*. Put another way, the Mexican constitutional regime establishes a division

21 Understood as an exaggerated tendency to follow the thinking of the U.S.A.

22 Emilio O. Rabasa, *Historia de las Constituciones Mexicanas*, (History of the Mexican Constitutions) Mexico, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, 2004, p.19.



Fray Servando Teresa de Mier

This Constitutional principle prevents the concentration of public power and its excesses. But it also allows for the independence of the organs of State in the

23 *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos.*

framework of a system of functions and competences provided for by the very text of the constitution. Regarding this, Doctor Irma Eréndira Sandoval Ballesteros points out that with the so-called *separation of powers* they attempted to” promote a Legislative power independent of the Executive Power, and to allow the former to be the representatives of the people in drawing up laws. They also gave the second sufficient capacity to apply and execute these laws and the Judicial Power the necessary independence from both Powers, for the purpose of safedefending the application of the law and impartial enactment / ratification.²⁴



Mural "The History of the Mexican People through its Constitutional Life", by Guillermo Cenicerós. San Lázaro Legislative Palace, Lobby of E building.

The origin of a division of powers in Mexico needs to be mentioned. It is to be found in article six of the Federal Constitution of the United States of Mexico of

24 Bruce Ackerman, *La nueva división de poderes*, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007, p. 10.

October 4, 1824.²⁵ In addition, this principle – whose most remote antecedent is in the Spanish Constitution of 1812 – ²⁶ had been foreseen in the Constitution of Apatzingán in 1814, the Provisional Regulation of the Mexican Empire of 1822, the Plan of the Political Constitution of the Mexican Nation of 1823 and the Constituent Document of the Mexican Federation of January 1824.²⁷

Each constitutional norm in the framework of a specific historical, political and social context leaves the imprint of certain characteristics. While in the Constitution of Cadiz in 1812 the interacting figures were the Cortes and the King, in the Constitutions of 1824, 1857 and 1917 the three-way division of powers – Legislative, Executive and Judicial – was contemplated. However, during the centralist period of the Seven Constitutional Laws of 1836 the figure of a Supreme Conservative Power was established, an organ which took precedence over the three traditional branches of public power with meta-constitutional faculties.²⁸

In this way, at different periods and by different means the separation of public functions attempted to curb the excesses of power and limit the margin of action of one power over another.²⁹ By this means they managed to impose a *mutual control* between the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Powers, in the understanding of a correlated independence of competences, since although the Executive is in charge of administrative activities, the Legislative Power of legislative activities and the Judicial of the judicial activities, the Executive, in certain cases, exercises some formal administrative faculties but materially legislative, while the Legislative Power, together with the Judicial also exercise function which are materially administrative but formally legislative and jurisdictional, regarding their interior regime.

Now then, the regime of the division of powers in Mexico should be understood parting from federalism and the system of competences, constitutional principles in view of which the States of the Republic also divide the exercise of public state power in three branches: Legislative, Executive and Judicial, according to article 116 of the constitution in force.

25 José Luis Camacho Vargas, *El ABC de la Cámara de Diputados*, México, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios sobre el Poder Legislativo, A. C., 2008, p. 21.

26 Luis Medina Peña, *Invencción del sistema político mexicano*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004, pp. 40-43.

27 Miguel Carbonell y Pedro Salazar, “Comentario al artículo 49” en *Los derechos del pueblo mexicano, México a través de sus constituciones*, t. XVII, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2008, p. 873.

28 This power has faculties to suspend the sessions of the General Congress, to declare that the President of the Republic is physically and morally incapacitated and that a law or a decree is null and void. To go deeper into the subject, *Vid.* Enrique Pedrero González, *País de un solo hombre. El México de Santa Anna*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993, p.492 & ss.

29 *Cfr.* Miguel Carbonell y Pedro Salazar, *op. cit.* p. 864.

In Mexico, the first jurisdictional–constitutional antecedents of the federal regime are to be found in the basic first plan of the Political Constitution of the Mexican Nation of May 16, 1823, articles five and six of the Constitutive Document of the Federation of January 31, 1824 and article four of the Federal Constitution of 1824. Later, the essence of federalism was concentrated in article 40 of the Federal Constitution of 1857.³⁰

The Constituent Congress of Querétaro, which led to our present Political Constitution, decided to leave article 40 of the Carta Magna of 1857 intact, and up to now the Permanent Constituency has not modified this constitutional precept. The fundamentals of Mexican federalism are to be found in this article which states: “It is the will of the Mexican People to constitute a representative, democratic, lay and federal Republic, composed of free and sovereign States in everything concerning its internal regime, and for the city of Mexico, united in a federation established according to the principles of this fundamental law.”³¹

The Federal Republic of the United States of Mexico is made up of 31 States and the City of Mexico, with faculties assigned by the federal Carta Magna and the local Constitutions.

In this way, the public powers constituted in each of the federal entities possess faculties to govern and administer the resources of their jurisdiction in a free and sovereign manner, provided that these faculties do not correspond exclusively to the federal government such as hydrocarbons, nuclear energy, mining and, in general, matters mentioned in articles 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the constitution.³²

30 See Miguel Carbonell “Comentario al artículo 40 constitucional” en *Los derechos del pueblo mexicano, México a través de sus constituciones*, vol. XVII, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2008, pp. 585-629.

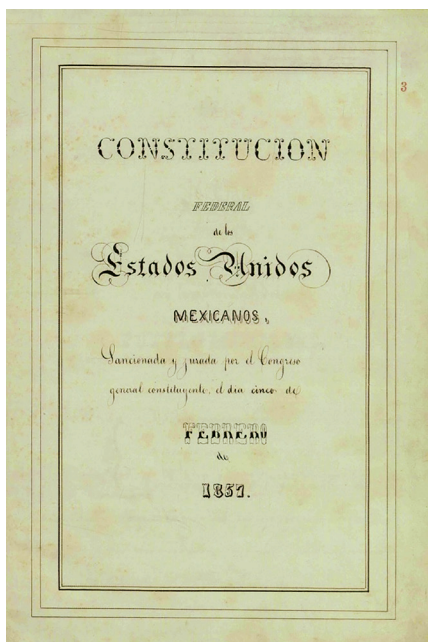
31 *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*. (The Constitution of the United States of Mexico)

32 José Barragán Barragán, *El federalismo mexicano, visión histórico constitucional*, México, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, 2007, pp. 108 and 109.

2.

THE GENERAL
CONGRESS OF
THE UNITED
STATES OF
MEXICO

The first of the entities of the Supreme Power of the Federation set forth by article 49 of our Political Constitution is the Federal Legislative Power, with names like *General Congress*, *Congress of the Union* or simply *Congress*. Since the Federal Constitution of 1824 in the order of naming the public powers they have taken into account the organ of the legislative function in first place, later the Executive and the Judicial powers, without implying subordination of one power over another.



In the session of the Constituent Congress of September 10, 1856, the first debates took place which finally eliminated the Senate: arguing that this chamber had an aristocratic bent because it did not arise from the people, instead it was elected by the state legislatures, so that it acted as a superior power above the representatives of the people. Consequently, by the action of the most radical liberals, the Senate was suppressed in the constitution of 1857.

The Federal Constitution of the United States of Mexico (1857) establishes in article 51 that the exercise of Supreme legislative power lies with the assembly or Congress of the Union.

In contrast to the Federal Executive Power – which is a single person –, the Federal Legislative Power cannot be placed in the hands of a single individual.

Since its origins, the federal Legislative Power lies with the General Congress divided into two chambers. Nevertheless, over the course of time this collegiate organ has been the object of numerous transformations in its structure, function and faculties. The most symbolic change in this process was the suppression of the Senate of the Republic in the constitution of 1857, restored on November 13, 1874.³³ So that, between 1857 and 1874 the Mexican Federal Legislative Power consisted of one chamber, which is the present case in countries such as Venezuela, China, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Cuba, among others. It is estimated that today the Legislative Powers of half the sovereign states of the world have a single chamber.

Based on the original Federal Pact of 1824, authorized later in 1847, 1857 and 1917, our Federal Legislative Power remained two-chambered from that time until today.

According to article 50 of the constitution and article 1 of the Organic Law of the General Congress of the States of Mexico (OGEUM), the Legislative Power in Mexico lies in the hands of the General Congress, the organ of popular and political representation for its correct function it is divided into two chambers: one of deputies and the other of senators. The former represents the nation as a whole, while the latter represents each of the 32 integrated parts of the Federation.

So, although we refer to the General Congress as an organ of the Supreme Power of the Federation, the Constitution itself establishes that in the local order the entities themselves also have a legislative branch and is in charge of legislating in the ambit of their competence. In this sense, “according to article 116 of the constitution the integrating parts of the Federation also have the Legislative power to legislate in the matters of their competence, which, in the Carta Magna of 1917 designates as local legislatures (articles 73, 105, 108, 110, 111, 115, 116, 117, and 135), state legislatures (art.115) or simply as legislatures (arts. 2, 28, 102, 115, 117 and 135) or legislative (art. 116, first paragraph, 105, 122)”.³⁴

33 Francisco Zarco, *Historia del Congreso Constituyente de 1856 y 1857; extracto de todas sus sesiones y documentos parlamentarios de la época*, México, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la UNAM, 2006 e Ignacio Romero Vargas Yturbide; *La Cámara de Senadores de la República Mexicana*, México, Senado de la República, 1967.

34 José Luis Camacho Vargas, *El Congreso Mexicano*, Cuarta Edición, México, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios sobre el Poder Legislativo, A.C., 2010, pp. 51 y 52.



The Legislative Building on Donceles street, seat of the Legislative Power of Mexico City

It must be noted that the 32 local legislative powers in Mexico have single chambers, that is, they are constituted by one single chamber, that of the deputies. This situation is common to most of the sub-national entities of the world: all the territories and provinces in Canada, all the Bundesländer in Germany, all the Regions in Italy, all the Autonomous Communities in Spain and all the states in Brazil have one single chamber. In the United Kingdom, the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly of Wales and the Assembly in Northern Ireland also possess only one chamber. On the contrary, what happens in fifty states of the American Union, with the exception of Nevada, which has one chamber, they all possess two chambers.

Organization, structure and function

Just as the seat of the Federal Executive Power is the National Palace, in the center of Mexico City, the seat of the Congress of the Union is at the same time the seat of the Chamber of Deputies, that is, the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, a location of historical importance in our country, where many of the events that have marked modern Mexico's history. It should be noted that for many years the National Palace was the official seat of the Executive power and of the Legislative power as well as the Congress in one of its halls. On July 22, 1872, a terrible fire broke out and consumed the location where the Congress held session (then composed of the one

chamber of Deputies). The fire was caused by the accidental fall of a candle carried by a mourner of President Benito Juárez, who had died four days earlier in his room in the National Palace. Congress had then to find new premises and it was established in the then Iturbide Theatre, on the streets of Donceles and Allende. The Congress remained there until the construction of the new premises today's San Lázaro Palace.

The Legislative Palace of San Lázaro

A colossal building inaugurated on September 1, 1981. On May 5, 1989 a fire broke out in the main building, so the deputies had to session provisionally in the main auditorium of the Congress Unit of the National Medical Center, until November 1, 1992, when it was re-inaugurated.

The palace comprises ten buildings which apart from housing the plenary halls, meeting rooms, administrative areas, study centers and auditoriums, there is also the day-care center for the children of the employees of the Chamber of Deputies.

The palace comprises ten buildings which apart from housing the plenary halls, meeting rooms, administrative areas, study centers and auditoriums, there is also the day-care center for the children of the employees of the Chamber of Deputies.

In this way when the two chambers of the Congress of the Union meet, they do so in the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, this on the occasions of the ordinary sessions of the first period of each exercise year, upon receiving the annual written State of the Union report on the federal public administration by the President of the Republic in person, for the appointment of a provisional or substitute President in case of the absolute absence of the President of the Republic, to receive the resignation of the President of the Republic due to serious circumstances and to effect the take-over by the Federal Executive Power, or for other solemn sessions.

In these cases it must be noted that the acting President of the Chamber of Deputies, also presides over the Congress of the Union when it meets.

Each chamber of the Congress has its own structure, competences and internal organization, established by the Constitution, its **Organic Law** (Internal Administrative Rules) and its Regulations.

In the legislative process both chambers can, indistinctly, function as the chamber of origin or revision (to initiate a reform, an addition or a new law), except as specified in article 72 section H and in the cases which deal with the exclusive faculties set down in articles 74 and 76 of the Constitution, where the matter is attended to by one of the chambers. For example, expedition of the Document Confirming Election to make known to the whole of the Republic the declaration of the President Elect made by the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Power of the Nation. This is an exclusive faculty of the Chamber of Deputies.



Congress in session on September 1, 2015, for the opening of the first period of ordinary sessions of the First Year of the LXIII Legislature.

In order for the Congress of the Union to be able to freely exercise its attributions, it functions as an independent and autonomous power.

The Chamber of Deputies

Regarding the two-chamber structure of the Congress, it should be noted that the Chamber of Deputies is a collegiate organ made up of 500 deputies, who are elected directly by popular vote. Of this Chamber 300 members are elected by the principle of relative majority, by means of a system of the same number of uninominal electoral districts distributed throughout the national territory, according to the latest population census; 200 more are elected on the principle of proportional representation, by means of a voting system that divides the country into five pluri-nominal circumscriptions.



Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, seat of the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union, located on Av. Congreso de la Unión #66, Col. El Parque.

The vote of the Mexican electorate, whether by the principle of relative majority or by proportional representation, is how the federal deputies are elected.

While 300 deputies are elected by the principle of relative majority by means of direct vote by the electorate, it is by proportional representation that the 200 pluri-nominal candidates, (from a list previously submitted to the electoral authorities by the various political parties) that (200) seats of the Lower Chamber are designated.

The Chamber of Senators - The Senate

Also known as the *Upper Chamber*, it is composed of 128 members, 64 elected by formula and under the principle of relative majority vote, 32 are assigned by the

principle of first minority, and an equal number elected by proportional representation, by means of lists voted in a single national pluri-nominal circumscription.



Seat of the Senate of the Republic, located on Paseo de la Reforma #135, Col. Tabacalera.

Unlike the deputies, whose commission lasts for three years, the senators remain in their posts for six years, but, the same as the deputies, since the federal election of 2018 they can be re-elected for one consecutive term to make a total of 12 years.

So as to allow for well-coordinated, functional and periodic work, the General Congress divides its constitutional duties in 'legislatures', periods during which

they work on the analyses, discussion, drawing up, presentation and approval of the ordinary laws or the reforms to already existing laws, as well as on the Political Constitution.

Legislature

Period composed of three years known as tri-annual legislature, which “defines the period of existence of one Chamber from the day of the first summons to convene to its normal or early dissolution (that is) the period of duration of a Legislature starts from the moment that the Chamber is formally constituted and the legislators have been sworn in according to the law (articles 17 and 62 of the Organic Law of the CGEUM)”.³⁵

This is the period that defines the time deputies are in their posts and their own renewal, since upon its conclusion a new Legislature begins. At present the Congress of the Union is in its LXIII Legislature.

According to the second article of the Organic Law of the CGEUM, the legislature consists of three years, which, based on article 65 of the Constitution stipulates that they start on September 1 of the year of renewal of the Legislative and conclude on August 31, of the following year, and for each successive year.

Every legislative year consists of two periods of ordinary sessions, a time during which the legislators attend Plenary sessions to hear, discuss, and vote on the judgments on laws or decrees, reports, agreement, *bandos*, regulations and general exhortations registered for the corresponding agenda of the day. The first period of ordinary sessions starts on September 1 and cannot be postponed later than December 15, except in the year when the Federal Executive Power is renewed, in which case, starting in 2024 it will begin on August 1 be postponed beyond the last day of December. The second period starts on February 1 and cannot be extended longer than April 30 of that year.

The Permanent Commission

The lapses that occur between one ordinary period and the next are known as periods of recess. Even when Congress has two periods of recess, this does not mean that the parliamentary business stops or that the citizenry lacks representation temporarily. Just before the closure of the ordinary periods of sessions a Permanent commission is elected, an organ which “functions during the recesses of the legislative organs, not to substitute them in their attributes, but rather to prepare the public business to be

³⁵ José Luis Camacho Vargas, *El Congreso Mexicano*, Fourth Edition, México, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios sobre el Poder Legislativo, A.C., 2010, pp. 51 and 52.

attended to during the period of sessions, to call them to extraordinary sessions and to attend to certain pressing matters, which, given their urgency, cannot wait until the next meeting”.³⁶ This organ is integrated by 37 legislators, elected from among members of both Chambers, nineteen deputies and 18 senators.



Assembly Hall of the Legislators, seat of the Permanent Commission of the Chamber of Deputies.

So that, the Permanent Commission is in charge of giving continuity to the parliamentary work and, in any case, to keep informed of the affairs reaching the Congress during the periods of recess. Among its attributes, framed in article 78 of the Constitution, is to receive, if necessary, even the swearing in of the President of the Republic; to receive proposals for laws or decrees sent to Congress to be delivered to their respective commissions; to grant or reject the ratification by the General Prosecutor of the Republic and to ratify the appointments made by the President of the Republic of certain public servants, among other faculties.

The Permanent Commission

A collegiate organ with established legislative attributes and in charge of protocol, administration and consent. It is composed of 37 federal legislators: 19 deputies and 18 senators. It functions during the legislative recesses: December-January and May-August of each legislative year.

In the cases that the Constitution establishes, the Permanent Commission can, with two thirds of its members present and/or with a proposal from the Federal Executive, convene Congress as a whole or only one of its Chambers to extraordinary sessions in order to discuss matters that require urgent resolution.

36 Ignacio Burgoa Orihuela, *Derecho Constitucional*, Porrúa, México, pp. 724 y ss.

Constitutional Faculties

The division of powers implies, by antonomasia, a division of public functions and the assignment of specific competences for each organ. Therefore, the Mexican Political Constitution establishes the faculties and attributes that correspond to each branch of the Supreme Power of the Federation. In the case of the General Congress, these are set down in article 73 of the Constitution. Regarding the constitutional faculties, Doctor Francisco Berlín Valenzuela says: “From a legal point of view, it is the legal norms that give a person the attributes to carry out valid actions that produce judicial effects. So that said faculty has the implicit capacity to act legally, which can be read as *can do*. With this faculty a person or institution is granted the attributes to carry out certain acts derived from specific powers established by the normative order”.³⁷

The constitutional faculties conferred on public powers allow for cohesion in their organization and. In turn, the development of acts that allow the State to fulfill its tasks and obligations.

Regarding the constitutional faculties of the General Congress and their classification, they can be divided according to the following subjects as contemplated in article 73 of the constitution:

Subjects	Fractions
Territorial Division	I. and III. To admit and form new States; and V. To transfer the residence of the Supreme Powers of the Federation.
Treasury	VII. To impose taxation needed to cover the Budget; VII. To establish the mint, set the conditions that it should have, dictate rules to determine the relative value of foreign currency and adopt a general system of weights and measures; XXVII. To issue laws on the subject of government accounting that regulate public accounting and the presentation of homogeneous financial information, about Tax and expenditure, as well as patrimonial information, for the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities and territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, for the purpose of guaranteeing its harmonious function at a national level; XXIX-W. To issue the laws of responsibility of the treasury designed to achieve a sustainable management of public finances in the Federation, the States, the Municipalities and Mexico City, based on the principles established in paragraph 2 of article 25;
Commerce	IX. To prevent the establishment of commercial restrictions between the federative entities. XXIX-E. To issue laws to programming, promotion, concentration and execution of acts of economic order, specially referring to supply, and others whose objective is to produce sufficient and opportune goods and social services for the nation's needs. XXIX-F. To issue laws to promote Mexican investment, the regulation of foreign investment, the transfer of technology and the generation, diffusion and application of scientific and technical knowledge required for national development.

37 Francisco Berlín Valenzuela, *op. cit.*, p. 309

War	<p>XII. For the declaration of war, in view of the data presented by the Executive Power.</p> <p>XIII. To issue laws according to which the prize of land or sea be declared good or bad, and to issue laws relative to maritime law for peace or war.</p> <p>XIV. To raise and maintain the armed institutions of the Union, that is: Army, Navy (War) and National Air Force, to regulate their organization and service.</p>
About the Executive	<p>XXVI. To grant leave of absence to the President of the Republic, also to constitute itself and Electoral College and designate the citizen who should substitute the head of the Federal Executive, under the terms of articles 84 and 85 of the Constitution.</p>
Expressly reserved	<p>X To legislate in the whole Republic upon hydrocarbons, mining, chemical substances, explosives, pyrotechnics, the film industry, trade, gambling and lotteries, mediation and financial services, electric and nuclear power and to issue labor laws.</p> <p>XV. To establish regulations for the purpose of organizing, arming and disciplining the National Guard, as well as appointing its Chief of Staff and officers, and granting the federal entities the faculty of instruction according to the discipline prescribes by said regulations.</p> <p>XVI. To issue laws about nationality, the legal condition of foreigners, citizenship, naturalization, emigration and immigration and the general health of the Republic.</p> <p>XVII. To issue laws about means of communication in general, information and communication technology, radio transmission, tele-communications, including broad band and Internet, post and mail, and about the use and exploitation of water under federal jurisdiction.</p> <p>XX. To issue laws to organize the Mexican Diplomatic and Consular Corps.</p> <p>XXIII. To issue laws to establish the bases for coordination between the Federation, the federal entities and the Municipalities, as well as to establish and organize the institutions of public security for the federation, according to that established in article 21 of the Constitution.</p> <p>XXIV. To issue the laws to regulate the organization and faculties of the General Auditor of the Federation, and those others that regulate the management, control and evaluation of the Powers of the Union and the federal public entities; as well as to issue the laws to establish the bases for coordinating the National Anti-corruption System referred to in article 113 of the Constitution;</p> <p>XXV. To establish the Professional Teaching Service under the terms of article 3 of the Constitution; to establish, organize and support, in the whole republic, the rural, elementary, upper, secondary and professional schools; institutions for scientific research, for the arts and technical training; schools for practical training in agriculture and mining, arts and trades; museums, libraries, observatories and other institutions concerned with the general culture of the inhabitants of the nation and to legislate in everything related to said institutions.</p> <p>XXIX-A. To issue the general law that establishes the bases for alternative mechanisms for solving controversies, with the exception of penal matters.</p> <p>XXIX-B. To legislate on the characteristics and use of the National Flag, Emblem and Anthem.</p> <p>XXIX-D. To issue laws about planning the nation's economic and social development, as well as matters of statistics and geography of national interest;</p> <p>XXIX-G. To issue laws to establish concurrence of the Federal Government, the governments of the federative entities, the Municipalities and also the territorial demarcations of Mexico City, in the ambit of their respective competences, in matters of environmental protection and the preservation and restoration of ecological balance.</p> <p>XXIX-I. To issue laws that establish the bases upon which the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences, must coordinate their actions in matters of civil protection;</p> <p>XXIX-J. To legislate on matters of physical culture and sports for the purpose of fulfilling the objectives set out article 4 of the Constitution, establishing the concurrence between the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences; as well as the participation of the social and private sectors;</p>

Expressly reserved	<p>XXIX-K. To issue laws on matters of tourism, establishing the general bases for coordination of the concurrent faculties between the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences, as well as the participation of the social and private sectors;</p> <p>XXIX-L. To issue laws to establish the concurrence of the federal government, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences, in matters of fishing and aqua-culture, as well as the participation of the social and private sectors;</p> <p>XXXIX-M. To issue laws on matters of national security, establishing the requisites and limits to the corresponding investigations.</p> <p>XXIX-N. To issue laws on matters of the constitution, organization, function and extinction of cooperative societies. These laws establish the bases for the concurrence in matters of promotion and sustainable development of the cooperative activities of the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences;</p> <p>XXIX-Ñ. To issue laws that establish the bases upon which the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences, coordinate their actions in matters of culture, excepting that set out in fraction XXV of this article. Similarly, to establish the mechanisms for participation of the social and private sectors, for the purpose of fulfilling the objectives of paragraph twelve of article 4 of the Constitution.</p> <p>XXIX-O. To legislate on matters of protection of personal data in possession of private individuals.</p> <p>XXIX-P. To issue laws that establish the concurrence of the Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, in the ambit of their respective competences, in matters of children and adolescents' rights, defending their superior interests at all times, in accordance with the international treaties on the subject of which Mexico is a signatory.</p> <p>XXIX-Q. To legislate about citizen initiatives and popular consultation.</p> <p>XXIX-R. To issue general laws to harmonize and homologize the organization and function of civil registers, the public registers of property, of individual citizens, of the Federal entities and the registry of municipal real estate;</p> <p>XXIX-S. To issue general regulatory laws for the development of principles and bases of government transparency, access to information and protection of personal data in the possession of the authorities, organs and government organisms at all levels of government.</p> <p>XXIX-T. To issue the general law to establish the organization and homogeneous administration of the archives of Federation, the federal entities, the Municipalities, and also the territorial demarcations of the City of Mexico, and to determine the bases of organization and function of Federation, of the National system of Archives.</p> <p>XXIX- U. To issue the general laws that distributes competences among the Federation and the federal entities in certain matters, such as political parties, electoral organisms and electoral process, in the terms of the Constitution.</p> <p>XXIX-V. To issue the general laws that distribute competences among the orders of government to establish the administrative responsibilities of the public servants, their obligations, applicable sanctions for acts or omissions in which they may incur, and those private individuals linked to serious administrative faults, as well as the procedures for their application.</p> <p>XI. To create and eliminate public posts in the Federation and to stipulate, increase and decrease their remuneration.</p> <p>XXI. To issue the general laws that establish the minimum types of penalty and sanction in cases of kidnapping, forced disappearance of persons, other forms of privation of liberty against the law, people trafficking, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading acts, as well as electoral, and also the general laws that regulate the distribution of competences and the forms of coordination between the Federation, the federal entities and the Municipalities;</p> <p>XXII. To concede amnesty; and</p> <p>XXIII. To issue laws to establish coordination within the Federation.</p>
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Implicit	XXX. To issue all the necessary laws in order to make the foregoing faculties effective, and all the others granted by the Constitution to the Powers of the Union
As sole Assembly	XXVI. To grant the President of the Republic license to constitute the Electoral College and designate the citizen who should substitute the President of the Republic, be it as interim or substitute, in the terms of articles 84 and 85 of the Constitution; XXVII. To accept the resignation to the post of President of the Republic.
Permanent Constituency	To reform the Constitution, in which case the approval by two thirds of the legislators present in both chambers is required, and the majority in all the state legislatures, according to that established in article 135 of the constitution.

The faculties set down in the said articles apply equally to both chambers, that is, both chambers can assist in their executions. However, as foreseen, each of the federal chambers has exclusive faculties, which endows Congress, as a whole, with the ideal complementarity for the correct treatment of legislative matters and the most efficient control of the nation.

3.

THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

The Mexican legislative institution constitutes a pillar of the democracy not only for the nature of its election, but also for the functions it carries out by representing the population of the whole country, by issuing and reforming laws, by acting as a control of the Executive Power and by supervising the exercise of public funds.



Aerial view of San Lázaro Legislative Palace, seat of the Chamber of Deputies, built on the site formerly occupied by the San Lázaro Terminal Station of the Interoceanic Railroad. In the background is the TAPO West Passenger Bus Terminal.

According to article 39 of the Constitution, “National sovereignty resides essentially and originally in the people. All public power springs from the people and is instituted

for the good of the people...”. This from an article produced by the Constituent Congress of 1856-57, which was not reformed in the Constituent process of 1916-17 and has not been modified up to today by the Permanent Constituent Congress, which demonstrates the validity of its dictum.

The **Chamber of Deputies** is an organ of the Federal Legislative Power competent in matters of legislation and control of the administrative function, as well as the revision of Public Accounts each year.

At present, no democracy can disassociate itself from the existence of an assembly constituted by means of electoral processes to choose the representatives who act not only in the name of the citizenry, but in that of the general population. This is the reason for the existence of the Chamber of Deputies as a true reflection of national sovereignty.

According to several authors, the essential features of democratic parliaments are their collegiate nature, permanent character, political pluralism and legitimate representation.

Deputies and Senators have the fundamental attribute to integrate and participate in the organs of deliberation and resolution where the fundamental attributes that determine the competence of the Congress of the Union and each of its Chambers are exercised. By means of these organs, in collegiate form, they participate in the exercise of the fundamental attributes assigned to the General Congress or to either of its Chambers.

José G. Sandoval Ulloa – *Pendium of terms, practices and procedures most used in the parliamentary work of the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union*, Porrúa, Mexico, 2014, pp. 270-271

About the first aspect, the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union is composed of 500 men and women elected by popular vote, so that each of them has the same rights and obligations, indifferent of their party affiliation or system of election, and decisions are made by majority. Article 49 of the Constitution specifically prohibits that the Legislative Power should be in the hands of a single individual, because its nature is collegiate.

Similarly, the duration of a legislature is immovable, as the division of functions established in our Constitution does not allow the Executive Power to dissolve Congress, nor that Congress should remove the Chief of State from office, since these are institutions with permanent and defined mandates.

Over the years, the Chamber of Deputies has been the object of many modifications in its structure and function, but above all in its integration, since the political plurality chosen by the citizenry is seen everywhere, but mostly in the Plenary Assembly, where every political force expresses and defends its ideas and position.



Façade of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, designed by Architect Pedro Ramirez Vázquez. It combines the 3 national colors: the red 'tezontle', the white marble and the green patina of brass. In the center is the Mural "Political Pluralism" by José Chávez Morado, showing anonymous faces representing the people of Mexico.

Integration of the Chamber of Deputies 1994-2018

Legislature	LVI (1994- 1997)	LVII (1997- 2000)	LVIII (2000- 2003)	LIX (2003- 2006)	LX (2006- 2009)	LXI (2009- 2012)	LXII (2012- 2015)	LXIII (2015- 2018)
PAN	119	121	206	148	206	142	113	109
PRD	71	125	53	97	125	61	99	61
PRI	300	239	209	202	106	242	214	205
Movimiento Ciudadano (Former Convergencia)			1	5	18	6	12	21
PVEM		6	18	17	17	22	27	40
PT	10	7	8	6	11	14	11	
PSN			3					
PAS			2					
PANAL					9	8	10	12
Alternativa					5			
MORENA							12	39
No party								9
Sin Partido				25	3	5	2	3
Independent		2						1

Source: José Luis Camacho Vargas, Present day and challenges to Parliamentary reform in Mexico. IMEPOL, Mexico, 2012.

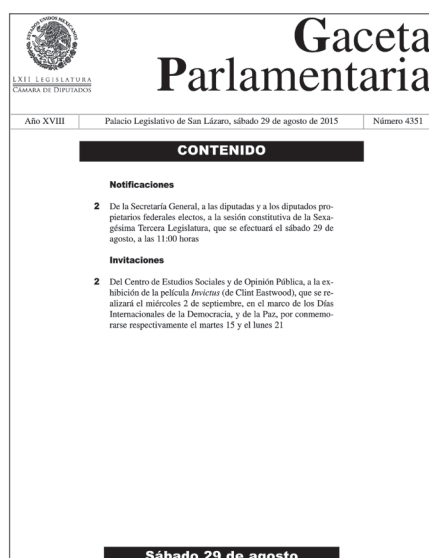
In our country the Chamber of Deputies is also called the Lower Chamber, without this meaning that our Legislative Power is imperfect, that is to say that there is pre-eminence of one of the chambers. Quite the contrary, the Congress of the Union is perfect in the sense that both chambers have the same hierarchy and attributions.

The Chamber of Deputies Parliamentary Gazette

Is the official organ for communication of the Chamber of Deputies in which are published all the initiatives, decisions, projects of agreement by the organs of government, reports, minutes of the sessions, communications and invitations made by the federal deputies as well as the commissions. It is published daily and has free access on its Internet site: gaceta.diputados.gob.mx

This is an organ of the Legislative Power integrated “by popular representatives elected for a fixed period, by means of universal suffrage, both direct and secret, who can be reelected or not. Some chambers are composed of elected deputies under the circumscriptions of uni-nominal, by system of majority. Others are integrated by a mixed system of direct representation and proportional representation. The common rule is that the chambers of deputies or popular chambers, are renewed all at once, that is, a complete renewal”³⁸.

Cover of the edition of the Chamber of Deputies **Parliamentary Gazette**, dated August 29, 2015, in which the summons to convene of the elected federal proprietary deputies, to attend the constitutive session of the LXIII Legislature, in which they chose the members of the Presidency.



Legal Framework

The legal framework of the Chamber of Deputies is integrated by the Constitution, the **Organic Law** of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico, Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies and the Regulations for the Internal Government of

38 Francisco Berlín Valenzuela, *Diccionario Universal de Términos Parlamentarios*, México, Porrúa, 1998, p. 115.

the General Congress, as regards the Permanent Commission and the sessions of the General Congress.

As to the second source, “The **Organic Laws**, according to the Constitution, are the secondary laws regulating the internal organization of the public powers. And, it is through these that the creation of dependencies, institutions and federal entities are established; to determine their objectives, structure, attributions and functions.”³⁹ Throughout its history, the federal legislative power received several ordinances to regulate its interior functions, nevertheless it was not until 1977 that article 7 of the Constitution was reformed to establish that Congress should have a law to regulate its internal structure and functions. In this way, “in 1979 the first Organic Law of the general Congress of the United States of Mexico was issued,”⁴⁰ which was modified in 1981 and 1994. The present law was published in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* on September 3, 1999.

The Organic Law of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico has 144 articles divided in six titles.

In the ambit of parliamentary law the regulations are constituted fundamentally by a collection of norms and dispositions that rule legislative procedure, debate and conduct of the members of the representative assembly.⁴¹

In this sense its creation is a sample of the parliamentary autonomy to organize and shape its internal regime, and to set down an important number of parliamentary practices which, without being written norms, had been part of the interior customs of the legislative offices.

So that, the regulations are a source of Mexican parliamentary law, since they have developed, enlarged and interpreted the constitutional dispositions related to congressional activity and regulated aspects which had not been considered in the Constitution and the Organic Law.⁴²

The regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, ratified in the session of December 15, 2010, consist of 285 articles, which are organized under nine titles and order each aspect of the internal function of this organ of the Federal Legislative Power.

39 Francisco Gil Villegas (coord.); *El Congreso Mexicano*, México, Edit. H. Cámara de Diputados, Instituto de Investigaciones Legislativas, 1994, p. 212.

40 Elisur Arteaga Nava; *Manual de derecho constitucional*, Oxford, México, 2015, p. 62

41 Salvador O. Nava Gomar, *Manual de Técnica Legislativa*, México, Asociación Nacional de Oficiales Mayores de los Congreso de los Estados y Distrito Federal, A. C. (ANOMAC), 2005, p. 400.

42 Susana Thalía Pedroza de la Llave, *El Congreso de la Unión. Integración y Regulación*, México, Porrúa, 1997, p. 39



Central courtyard of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro

The regulations for the Internal Government of the General Congress, were published in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* on March 20, 1934 and was the norm for 76 years for both chambers of the Congress of the Union. Nevertheless, as a result of the ratification in each chamber of their own regulations, the former ones now function as subsidiaries as regards the function of the Permanent Commission and sessions of the general Congress.

Integration

The Electoral Systems determine the way the votes are transformed into parliamentary or congressional seats, there are two original systems: the majority and the proportional; and a third product of the symbiosis of the two former cases: the mixed form. In any of these cases, they should be interpreted within the framework of historical development of each society.

The political Constitution states in article 52 that the Chamber of Deputies is integrated by 300 deputies elected upon the principle of relative majority, by means of the system of uni-nominal electoral districts, and by 200 deputies elected by the principle of proportional representation, by means of the system of lists for pluri-nominal circumscriptions.

Unlike other political systems, in the Mexican system there is only one way to be elected as federal deputy: the vote, which has two principles: 1. relative majority and 2. proportional representation.

In this country, according to articles 52, 53, 54 and 55 of the Constitution we have a mixed electoral system, a product of the election of legislators by relative majority and by proportional representation, which guarantees that all political forces that represent society as a whole, have access to posts entailing decision making.

The word *deputy*, according to its etymology, comes from the Latin *deputare* which means “assign, designate”, and the verb (*Sp.*) “to name, to choose”.⁴³

In the federal system, we have two types of deputies: the *federal deputies*, elected by the aforementioned principles to integrate the Chamber of Deputies of the General Congress, and the *local deputies* upon whom the citizenry of each federal entity confer a seat in their respective local legislatures. Their function, like that of the federal legislators, is to represent the interests of society, accepting that their attributes are different.

The deputies fulfill the function of integrating the Chamber of Deputies and its governmental organs, attending to the attributes given them by law by:

1. Presenting projects for a law or a decrees, as well as proposals with their points of agreement;
2. Voting on projects for ratification, agreement and positioning,
3. Participating in the work of commissions, committees, government organs, parliamentary groups and friendship groups;
4. Negotiation and management; and
5. Representing the interests of social, economic, political and cultural groups.



Mural made by the sculptor Ricardo Ponzanelli, with which the Chamber of Deputies commemorated the centenary of the Constitution of 1917. The work shows 219 constituent deputies who participated in writing our Magna Carta in December 1916 and January 1917; as well as the First Head of the Constitutional exercise, Venustiano Carranza, who presented the project to reform the Constitution of 1857, and diverse episodes and personalities from the hazardous trajectory of the Mexican Constitution.

43 Cfr. Francisco Berlín Valenzuela, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

Requirements

The Constitution states in article 55 that to become a member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union, it is necessary – among other things: 1. To be a Mexican citizen by birth, in exercise of ones rights; 2. To be 21 years old by the date of the election; 3. To have originated from the entity where the election is held or to have effectively resided there for a period of no less than six months prior to the date of the election, 4. Not to be in active service in the Army or have a post of command in the Police force or the rural gendarmerie in the district where the election is held; 5. Not to be head of any autonomous organ, nor secretary or under-secretary of State (90 days prior to the election), nor Minister of the Supreme Court of Justice (2 years prior to the election); or not to be an active minister of any religious cult; without omitting the requisites set down in article 10 of the General Law of Institutions and Electoral Procedure (LEGIPE for its acronym in Spanish).

It should be noted that in the case of a person being a candidate to deputy under the principle of proportional representation, it is necessary to be native of one of the federal entities in the circumscription where the election is held, or an effective resident for six months prior to the date of the election.

Based on article 51 of the constitution, for each proprietary deputy a substitute should be elected.



Front wall of the Hall of Sessions, where President Benito Juárez' maxim is placed on high.

The National Electoral Institute (INE) was created to qualify the election of the federal deputies, their responsibilities include giving each successful candidate their certificate of appointment as elected deputy. It should be noted that the LV Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies was the last to institute itself as an electoral college and qualified its own election, handing over to a specialized autonomous institution to carry out this task.

The Principle of relative majority

The LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies has 300 deputies elected under the principle of relative majority, who, after competing within their respective parties to be their nominees, competed with the candidates from the other parties and were successful in obtaining the majority vote in the elections of June 7, 2015 in their respective electoral districts.

The electoral district is each part of the national territory for the purpose of holding elections for the legislators who integrate, under the system of relative majority, the Chamber of Deputies of the General Congress.⁴⁴ Their distribution throughout the length and breadth of the country is the product of the division of the total population into 300 uni-nominal districts according to the most recent General Census of the population, and dis-allowing that the representation of any State should be less than two majority deputies.

The principle of proportional representation

In addition, the Chamber of Deputies of the Union is also integrated by 200 deputies elected under the principle of proportional representation, which results from the sum of votes for the purpose of allowing the regional majorities in the country to have a vote and a voice.

To do this, before the start of campaigns, the political parties deliver five lists to the electoral authorities, these correspond to the same number of pluri-nominal circumscriptions. The lists contain the names of candidates put forward by the parties. This according to articles 52 of the Political Constitution and article 14 of the General Law of Electoral Institutions and Procedures.

Once the election has taken place, the electoral authority carries out the computing to determine the number of pluri-nominal candidates elected per circumscription for each political party. It is necessary that a political party should gain at least

⁴⁴ Cf. *Diccionario Jurídico Mexicano*, México, Porrúa-UNAM-Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas, 1995, t. II, p. 1168.

three percent of the validated vote. It should be noted that each of the five electoral circumscriptions has 40 deputies.



Map of the five electoral circumscriptions in which the national territory is divided and where the federal deputies are elected under the principle of proportional representation.

The first circumscription has its headquarters in Guadalajara; Jalisco and includes the States of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, Durango, Nayarit, Sinaloa and Sonora. The headquarters for the second circumscription is located in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon and includes the states of Aguascalientes, Coahuila, Guanajuato, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas and Zacatecas; similarly the third circumscription has its headquarters in Jalapa, Veracruz and this includes the states of Campeche, Chiapas, Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatán. Mexico City is the center for the fourth circumscription which includes the states of Guerrero, Morelos, Puebla and Tlaxcala. Finally, Toluca, State of Mexico, is the headquarters for the fifth electoral circumscription for pluri-nominal deputies and it includes the states of Colima, Hidalgo and Michoacán.

For the political parties to have the right to pluri-nominal deputies, apart from reaching at least a valid 3% of the votes cast, they should submit candidates to deputies by relative majority for at least 200 uni-nominal electoral districts – according to article 54 of the Constitution – and they are assigned following the order in which the candidates were registered on the corresponding lists.

Substitute Deputy

So it is clear, that the requisites for a person to be elected federal deputy under the principle of relative majority and by proportional representation are the same, and both are elected by formula, that is, for each proprietary deputy there should also be an elected substitute deputy.

This mandate is the product of article 51 of the Constitution stating that “the substitution is intimately connected to the idea that if the deputies in a legislative assembly represent a district by whom they were elected and if said deputy were to be absent it would leave the constituents without vote or voice, unless there were a deputy”.⁴⁵ However, it should be noted that all together the federal deputies represent the whole nation and not just the district or circumscription by whom they were elected. So that a deputy should always put the welfare of the Nation first.



The substitute deputies cover the temporary absences, and in case the absence should become definite they will continue for the rest of the three years for which they were elected. The foregoing is based on article 63 of the Constitution which states that if the federal legislators miss 10 consecutive days without a justifiable excuse or without previous leave granted by the president of their respective Chamber, it is reason to call their respective substitute deputies, as their function is to stand in for the proprietary legislator so that the electoral district is not left without a representative.

⁴⁵ Commentary on article 51 of the constitution, in *Los derechos del pueblo mexicano*, Porrúa, México, p. 1054.

Methods of substitution

The same as there are requisites to be elective, there are requirements when the need arises to cover a deputy's vacant seat. There are two types of substitution that respond to the principle under which the deputies were elected. In this sense, if at the beginning of a new legislature, as well as during same, vacancies arise these must be covered immediately, unless it is the case during the third year of the corresponding legislature, in which case there is the option of waiting until there is a general election of federal deputies.

Before a vacancy is declared, according to article 63, second paragraph of the Constitution, in case a proprietary deputy does not take up his/her post, he/she will be summoned to present themselves during the course of the next thirty days, with the warning that if they do not present themselves it will be understood that they do not accept their charge. Then, the substitute deputy will be summoned immediately, and if he/she does not present himself/herself in the same period of time, the seat will be declared vacant.

Once a deputy's seat has been declared vacant: 1. In the case of relative majority, the substitution should be made by calling extraordinary elections to be held within 90 days following the declaration of the vacancy, according to the disposition set down in fraction IV of article 77 of the Constitution; 2. In the case of a vacancy of a deputy elected under the principle of proportional representation this should be covered by the formula for candidates of the same party who follow the order of the respective regional list.

Exclusive faculties

The ***Banda Solemne*** is the Declaration made by Congress that the President has been elected.

Article 74 of the Constitution establishes the exclusive faculties of this organ of the Federal Legislative Power, which can be divided in the following way:

Politics

- The publication of the ***Banda Solemne*** to announce to the entire Republic the declaration made by the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Power of the Federation that the President has been elected;
- Declare if there is reason or not to proceed with a penal law against public servants who have committed a crime/offense under the terms set out in article 11 of the Constitution; and

- Be informed of the charges brought against public servants referred to in article 110 of the Constitution and act as accusatory organ in the corresponding political trials.

Treasury

- By means of coordination and evaluation of the fulfillment of functions by the investigative organ of the Federation;
- Annual approval of the Federal Expenditure Budget, after due examination, discussion and, in certain cases, making the changes to the project as presented by the Federal Executive Power, once the contributions to internal revenue, in their opinion, has been decreed to cover the budget, as well as indicating the remuneration corresponding to employment as established by law; also
- Check the Public Accounts of the previous year, so as to know the results of the financial year, make sure that it has respected the criteria indicated for the Budget and has achieved the objectives contained in the programs.

It should be noted that not all the exclusive faculties of the Chamber of Deputies are set down in article 74 of the Constitution, as is the case of those established in articles 28, 41, 77, 79, 93, 105, 109, 110 and 111, among others.



Mural "Political Pluralism", by José Chávez Morado, showing the anonymous faces of the Mexican people who make up the history and the future of Mexico.

4.

WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO BE
A DEPUTY?

No doubt when one reflects on the meaning, essence and the sense of what the word *deputy* represents and transmits, we may reach many varied conclusions, since a word which has such a long history, traditions and importance for most of the societies and peoples of the world, will produce myriad interpretations.



At the beginning of each Legislature, the elected federal deputies are summoned to the initial session, where they swear an oath under law.

A deputy is the most trustworthy proof of the decision of the people and the free expression of their preferences.

Being a deputy incurs – with the investiture –, a responsibility the size of the territory they represent and of the citizenry who have expressed their conviction that a certain individual is the proper person to represent them, placing their trust in him/her.

By their election they become the depositories of the wishes of the people to modify what society considers needs modifying, to improve what needs improvement and to continue constructing and supporting what is being done correctly.

A deputy is responsible of converting, in a framework of collegiate work, what has been promised into concrete actions, of materializing into actions their word given and cannot be withdrawn, to meet their commitments as corresponds to their qualities as human beings and in this case citizens with values and education.



Deputy César Camacho, coordinator of the PRI's parliamentary group.

A deputy is the most important figure in the field of social representation and political decision making, someone who responds to everything mentioned, is the due owed to society and a deputy should be conscious of what he/she ought to do. This is the order of ideas, this is the challenge added to the natural responsibilities of their commission: a deputy must face these challenges and carry out his/her duties successfully.

The Oath that the legislators take to abide by and enforce the law and carry out their assignments to the full.

Therefore, we understand, that to be a deputy in Mexico is to be in a position of great responsibility and commitment, where they should contribute daily to the improvement of the environment surrounding the population they represent and to strive for a better country.

To sum up, the answer to the question *What does it mean to be a deputy?*, is to be a responsible, exemplary, committed, honest, hard-working citizen, who should aspire and struggle at all times against the challenges and every day adversities that arise, demonstrating that they are the representatives of the Nation and in this sense, that they know about the problems society is always facing, in the hopes of contributing to their solution by means of legal changes and the necessary political expressions.



Before the General Assembly, Carmen Victoria Campa Almaral from the *Nueva Alianza* party and María Concepción Valdéz Ramírez, from the *PRD* party, take the oath as Federal Deputies integrating the LXIII legislature.

Code of Ethics of the Chamber of Deputies of the Honorable Congress of the Union

On April 29, 2016, the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies approved the first *Code of Ethics of the Chamber of Deputies* in its history, which according to Carolina Monroy del Mazo, is an instrument designed to norm the conduct of the legislators in their parliamentary and representative functions, and also their daily conduct.

As never before, the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies includes among its members the largest number of women in the history of this legislative organ, since of its 500 members 213 are women, this is 42.6 %.

A series of principles of conduct are incorporated in the code that the legislators will have to observe, such as legality, honesty, loyalty, impartiality and efficiency, and all those conducive to the adequate fulfillment of their duties.

To make sure these precepts are kept, an Ethics Committee was created, integrated by one member from the Committee of Senior Members, one deputy representing each parliamentary group and one representative of the federal deputies in the role of independent individuals.



The General Assembly of the Chamber of Deputies

In this way, as from the LXIII Legislature this Committee should be installed within the first month of the year of the constitutional exercise of each legislature and session at least once a month.

The General Assembly gives this Committee the right to investigate.

Attendance

Article 63 of the constitution, fourth paragraph, establishes that elected deputies who do not present themselves to take up their position within 30 days of the start of ordinary sessions, will incur responsibility and be liable to the sanctions established by law, unless they have an excuse considered justifiable by the Chamber of Deputies.

In this sense, the political parties who presented the candidates for an election of deputies incur in a responsibility, when their candidates do not present themselves to undertake their functions.

In addition, article 64 establishes that the deputies who do not attend a session, unless they have a justifiable excuse or permission from the president of the Chamber, will not have the right to their salary for the day they are absent.

Federal Deputies register their attendance at the beginning of every ordinary session by means of the Parliamentary System of Attendance, Automatic Audio Voting System (SPAVAA), located in each seat of the Assembly Hall. This requires that each deputy should register his/her index fingerprint, so that the vote cannot be transferred or substituted.



Deputy Marko Cortés Mendoza (center), Coordinator of the PAN's Parliamentary Group

Inviolability

Throughout the history of the Mexican Constitution, the figure of legislator has acquired a particular status for the exercise of his/her functions, which does not imply privileges, but rather a number of transitory instruments necessary for carrying out their functions.

In articles 110 and 111 of the Constitution the need for procedural immunity is foreseen, known in Mexico as *fuero*, for certain public servants, considered by the Constitution to count as members of the higher hierarchy, one of these cases is that of the federal deputies.

The **declaration of procedure** is a political act implying an administrative penal process, a transitory and revocable process, the competence of the Chamber of Deputies, for the purpose of referring the public servant to the judicial authorities for trial, exclusively for the crimes/felonies committed during the tenure of his/her post which the declaration specifies.

This is a constitutional prerogative that exempts a federal deputy from being submitted to a penal process until he/she has stood a primary trial to declare if the accusation proceeds or not, which is the faculty of the General congress of the Chamber of Deputies, to be informed of and resolve upon the accusation brought against, not only a federal deputy but also any of the public servants mentioned in article 111 of the Constitution, in case they commit a felony.

As well as the Federal Deputies, this constitutional immunity also applies to the ministers of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, magistrates of the High Court of the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Power of the Federation, councilors of the Federal Law Courts, Secretaries of State, Attorney General of the Republic and Councilors of the National Electoral Institute, among others.



It should be noted that this immunity only applies to serious crimes, that is, cases that require imprisonment, not for accusations of a civil, administrative or commercial order.

The constitutional *fuero* (immunity) is a figure in parliamentary law which is recognized internationally and refers to the procedural shield of the public servant of the upper hierarchy, who cannot be arrested nor can he/she be legally proceeded against until the process for the **declaration of procedure** has taken place, and it has been decided to remove the person from their post, and refer him/her to the common courts of justice.

In an exercise of comparative law, all countries consider, in their constitutional order, a similar immunity for their members of congress, which shows that it is not an excessive measure, but rather a fundamental recourse to prevent the voice of a senator or deputy from being silenced.

In this sense, our Political Constitution establishes in article 61 that the deputies and senators are inviolable for the opinions that they express in the course of their functions, never to be rebuked for them. Nevertheless, they **are** responsible for the crimes committed during their term of office, also for the faults or omissions incurred during the exercise of their functions.

Federal Deputies have the right to ask for leave of absence during their term of office only for the reasons set down in Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies. These are: illness incapacitating them for carrying out their functions; undertaking a commission or employment for the Federation, federal entities and municipalities, for which they receive a salary; applying for another position of popular election; attending to and appearing before the respective authority for legal processes; taking up a position in a political party or pregnancy.

“The immunities, as they are privileges, are temporary and only benefit those who are exercising a function. The norms that these provide, because they are exceptions to the principle of everyone being equal under the law, are strictly interpreted, they are only granted to those expressly mentioned in articles 110 and 111 of the constitution.”⁴⁶

Remuneration

As mentioned in the section on *Attendance*, federal deputies receive remuneration for carrying out their duties responsibly, this salary is known as *dieta*, which they are entitled to during the three years of a legislature or while they remain as federal deputies and therefore cannot undertake any other commission or employment for the Federation or federal entities with a salary. In such cases, they should request

⁴⁶ Elisur Arteaga Nava, *Manual de Derecho Constitucional*, Oxford, México, 2015, p. 63

leave of their post, cease their functions as representatives for the duration of the new occupation. This is established in article 62 of the Constitution.



The civic ceremony of raising the national flag with honors is carried out daily in the central courtyard of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro.

The incompatibility of functions is foreseen in our Constitution which makes our presidential political system unlike the parliamentary system, in which it is normal for a legislator to be part of the team of the Executive Power.

Therefore, a Mexican federal deputy cannot be, at the same time, a senator, governor, Secretary of State or local legislator, since that would be infringing article 62 of the Constitution. In case a federal deputy decides to run for another post by election or administrative responsibility, it is necessary that he/she should ask for leave of the post of legislator and it be approved by the General Assembly of the Chamber of Deputies or the Permanent Commission, and that the substitute legislator be sent for to be sworn in as soon as legally possible.

It should be noted that only the legislator in actual functions receives a salary (*dieta*), not so his/her replacement.



View of the central courtyard through the many ornamental Xs alluding to the toponymy of the word Mexico

There are other types of prerogative that the federal deputies have a right to which are set down in article 7 of the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, these are: to have recourse to the human, material and financial resources to allow them to carry out their functions with efficiency and dignity, and to have access to communication and telematics services and other services available to the Chamber of Deputies, to allow them to perform their office, although the satisfaction of these requests are always subject to legal limitations and the availability of financial, budgetary, administrative and human resources of the Lower Chamber.

Rights

Among the rights due to the federal deputies, the best known is that established in fraction II of article 71 of the Constitution, which is to present the initiatives for a federal law or decree. However, there are other rights set down in article 6 of the Regulations of the Chamber, such as the following:

- To attend the sessions of the General Assembly with voice and vote.
- To integrate the commissions and committees, participating in their work, as well to prescribe opinions, reports, ratifications and recommendations.

- To take the podium to speak before the Chamber with the authorization of the President of the Chamber, at the times established in the Regulations. In their interventions they may say anything they consider pertinent.
- Attend, with voice but **not** vote, meetings of commissions and committees other than their own.
- Receive a salary (*dieta*), which will be the same for everyone, to allow them to perform their functions with efficiency and dignity.
- Have advisory and support personnel to assist in the exercise of their charge.
- Participate in the debates, votes and any other parliamentary procedure for which he/she is capacitated.



- Propose, through their group, the inclusion of matters for consideration in the Political Agenda and journal of the Order of the Day.
- Take part in a group or split from it, according to their orders;
- Be registered and credited in their posts during the period of their tenure.
- Have access to all the documents and means of information available in the Chamber of Deputies.
- To receive guidance, request information and advice from the technical, administrative, parliamentary and research organs of the Chamber.
- Request leave of absence from their post.
- To be elected to participate in Friendship Groups, inter-parliamentary meetings, international parliamentary organisms, forums, meetings and ceremonies.
- To obtain institutional support to maintain the link with his/her constituents, and the other duties set down in the Regulations.

All together, the exercise of all these rights allow the federal deputies to carry out the constitutional and legal attributions that they need for their parliamentary functions.



Voting in the General Assembly Hall of the Chamber of Deputies.

Obligations

As any norm of this character, imperative-attributive, the rights also carry obligations. In this sense, in article 8 of the regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, it is clearly indicated that the legislators must:

- Swear an oath and take possession of their charge.
- Attend punctually to summons to sessions and meetings, of the General Assembly, of the administrative organs and commissions and committees to which they belong.
- Respect the agreements of the General Assembly, the administrative organs, commissions and committees.
- Address the other deputies and guests, respectfully and courteously, according to parliamentary norms.
- Participate in all activities inherent to his/her charge, inside and outside the premises, with decorum and dignity corresponding to their position.
- Report matters of which they have an interest or which might provide personal benefits and excuse themselves from participating in the promotion, generation, recommendation and discussion of same.

- Abstain from acts which are incompatible with the functions of their investiture, as well as using their position as Legislator ostentatiously in any private affairs or businesses.



Deputies Jorge Carlos Ramírez Marín, (PRI); Rocío Nahle García, (Morena) and Clemente Castañeda Hoefflich, (MC) , in the sesión where they declared September 29 of each year as “National Day against Kidnapping”.

- Be reserved about everything that was discussed and decided in secret sessions, as well as the information to which they have access and which according to the respective laws, is reserved or confidential.
- Treat the personnel serving the Chamber with professionalism and respect, according to the established working conditions.
- Cast their vote, unless there is a valid excuse not to.
- Abstain from participating as actor, legal representative, attorney or employer, in trials of any kind, in which the property of the State is at risk.
- Present a declaration of one's personal patrimony or any modification to same, truthfully and opportunely.
- Renounce any benefits, financial or in kind, that might derive from the activities inherent to their charge or their impact, for:
 - a) Themselves, their spouse or concubine;
 - b) Blood relations, or relatives by affinity/marriage until the fourth degree;
 - c) Third parties with whom they have professional, labor or business relations, or
 - d) Partners or enterprises with which the Deputy is or has been part of.

- Ensure that all their conduct meets the respective regulations and make sure that none of the economic, human, material and communication resources at their disposal for their functions as Deputies, are destined to other uses.



The General Congress of the Chamber of Deputies keeping one minute' silence in memory of Mexican citizens who died in Egypt on September 13, 2015.

- To maintain a link with his/her constituents, by means of a legal liaison office in the district or circumscription where they were elected.
- Present an annual Report on the progress of activities, to the citizens of their district or circumscription, a copy of which should be sent to the Conference, for its publication in the Parliamentary Gazette.
- Allow for free discussion and decision making in the sessions, as well as in meetings.
- Remove from the General Assembly Hall, any material expression that may have been used in their intervention, at the end of a session.
- Respect the sanctions established in the Regulations and other applicable orders.



Deputies: César Camacho, Francisco Martínez Neri y Guadalupe Acosta Naranjo

Exclusive Faculties

Many of the faculties exclusive to the deputies are established in article 74 of the Constitution, among these the important issue of the Certificate of Election and the publication of the declaration that the President has been Elected, submitted by the Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Power of the Federation; the coordination and evaluation of the performance of the General Auditor of the Federation; the annual ratification of the Budget for the Expenditure of the Federation; the declaration as to if there are grounds or not to proceed legally against a public servant according to section IV of the Constitution; and the revision of Public Expenditure of the preceding year, among others.

5.

STRUCTURE
AND
FUNCTION

As we have seen, the Chamber of Deputies is one of the constitutive organs of the Congress of the Union, which, because of the nature of its legislative, budgetary and administrative control, legal and fiscal functions,⁴⁷ has a solidly built interior administrative structure; by means of which the deputies and the administrative personnel carry out their particular obligations of parliamentary activities in Mexico.

In this sense and in order to facilitate the works carried out in the interior, the Chamber of Deputies has a very particular organic structure, which is divided in three main categories, according to the type of activities of each of the elements of the organization, these are: the government, support and technical-administrative organs.

According to the Dictionary of Parliamentary terms of the System of Legislative Information (SIL), “the government organs are instances of the Chamber of Congress of the Union, who are in charge of the functions of: control, regulation, organization, supervision and direction aimed at achieving the best work by the Legislators”⁴⁸

The support organs, founded on the Fifth Heading of the Regulations for the Chamber of Deputies, are the ordinary or special Commissions and the Committees. These are integrated by legislators working in the ambit of their attributions, for the office of the affairs entrusted to them by the organs of government.

In the case of the technical-administrative organs, they are founded on the Seventh Heading of the Regulations for the Chamber of Deputies, and are in charge of coordinating and carrying out the administrative and financial activities, to enable the functions of the Chamber of Deputies.

47 José Luis Camacho Vargas, *Apuntes de Derecho Parlamentario Mexicano*, México, Editorial Porrúa, 2016.

48 Sistema de Información Legislativa, *Diccionario de Términos Parlamentarios*, Secretaría de Gobernación, en <http://sil.gob.mx/portal/Diccionario/verDiccionario>, Consultada el 29 de marzo de 2017.

Plenary Session

The etymology of the word **Plenary** comes from the Latin *plenus* which means full;⁴⁹ as when all the members of this organ of government meet in session, there are 500 legislators for the Chamber of Deputies and 128 for the Senate of the Republic; however this term can also be used for other institutions of public life.



Wall of Honor of the Hall of Sessions, where the names and maxims of the national heroes are written in gold letters.

Parliamentary Seat (Curul)

Designates the place or location the legislators occupy in the Chamber of Deputies. Equivalent to a seat in parliament. It has become a synonym for the post of popular election.

Sistema de Información Legislativa.
Secretaría de Gobernación

Although it is not exactly a government organ, the Plenary Session of the Chamber of Deputies is the organ of highest hierarchy of the collegiate body, deciding on initiatives, judgments, minutes, points of agreement, parliamentary agreements, the integration of commissions and appointments, after their respective participations, replies, questions, declarations, positioning of groups or individuals, in which the deputies meet to discuss, analyze, vote and, depending on the case, approve or reject the matters in hand.

⁴⁹ Cfr: Luis J. Molina Piñeiro, "Pleno", en Francisco Berlín Valenzuela (Coord.), *et. al., Diccionario Universal de Términos Parlamentarios*, Segunda Edición, México, 1998, Cámara de Diputados LVII Legislatura, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, p. 521.

The Plenary Session meets in the Hall of Sessions, which is the place designated for the execution of its functions, however, it can also meet in another location within the San Lázaro complex, which will be called the Hall of Sessions. The sessions can be ordinary, extraordinary, solemn or permanent.⁵⁰

In addition, in order to open a Plenary Session of the Chamber of Deputies, it is necessary for half the number plus one of its members to be present, for the matters approved to have the legal backing of the quorum.

The Board of Seniors

Every three years, during the constitution of the new legislature, on August 29th of the year of the election, the Board of Seniors is instituted, for the fundamental purpose of directing the swearing in of their companion deputies, as well as the process of the election of the first Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies.

Dr. Jorge Madrazo states “in the Mexican Constitutional rights, the term quorum means the number of deputies and senators who need to be present in their Chamber or in the federal Congress for the sessions to be legal and valid.” The required quorum for the Chamber of Deputies is half the number plus one, that is to say absolute majority.

S/A, Diccionario jurídico mexicano, Octava Edición, México, Editorial Porrúa, IIJ/UNAM, 1995, p. 2655



Hall of Session seen from the Press Gallery before the start of an ordinary session.

50 Título Tercero del Reglamento de la Cámara de Diputados. (Third Heading of the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies)

The Board of Seniors is the only temporary government organ composed of a president, three vice-presidents and three secretaries, who are appointed in a plural manner, according to seniority in the exercise of their functions as federal deputies, their trajectory in the Chamber, or their age; criteria which will be taken into account in this respective order. Once the voting for the first Presidency of the Legislature has taken place, the president of the seniors will invite them to take their places, establishing this organ as a government organ in a consultant capacity.

It should be noted that according to article 46 paragraph four of the Organic Law of the General Congress, the integrating members of the Board of Seniors form part of a Committee as consultants and for political- legislative opinions.⁵¹



The Board of Seniors of the LXIII Legislature was presided over by Deputy María Esther de Jesús Scherman Leño (PRI) and as vice-presidents Francisco Javier Santillán Ocegüera (PRI), Cecilia Romero Castillo (PAN) and Jesús Ricardo Canavati Tafich (PVEM).

The person responsible for analyzing the trajectory of each of the elected deputies to integrate the Board of Seniors is the Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies, who will give the qualifying report of the election of each of the 500 federal deputies carried out by the National Electoral Institute, during the initial session of the

51 *Supra*

corresponding legislature. He/she will then proceed to present the legislators with greater experience.

The Board of Directors or Presidency

Represents the unity of the Chamber of Deputies; its main objective being to conduct the Plenary Sessions, maintaining values such as impartiality, objectivity, respect and the plurality of the deputies, ensuring the respect of their parliamentary prerogatives and the complete exercise of their functions, by means of their voice and vote. This organ is rector of the parliamentary activities⁵² in charge of the governability of the chamber's work as a whole and of directing the matters presented for resolution or information.



Dep. María Guadalupe Murguía Gutiérrez, President of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies

Other activities that the Board of Directors undertakes are: to interpret the norms related to the function of the Chamber of Deputies for the adequate operation of sessions; to formulate and carry out the order of the day for the sessions; to make sure that the many documents meet the norms that regulate their formulation and presentation, and to design the courtesy commissions, among others.

52 Cfr. María Trinidad Molina Zepeda, "Órganos rectores de la actividad parlamentaria en los Congresos estatales", en Robert Balkin (Coord.), *et al., El Poder Legislativo Estatal en México*, México, Universidad Estatal de Nueva York, 2004, p. 129.

To ensure the correct development of activities it should meet, at least, once a week during the period of sessions, and during the recesses, as frequently as its members consider necessary.



The great silver-plated ink-stand, symbol of the Chamber of Deputies, particularly of the Presidency, indicating the seat of its President. Decorated with mythical figures associated with intellectuality and writing; also Themis, the goddess of Justice and Niké, the goddess of Victory. To one side is the Bell that the President rings at the start of sessions.

The Board of Directors is formed during the constituent session of the Chamber of Deputies on August 29th of the year of the election, and is integrated by the deputies who are elected by the vote of two thirds of the members present at the Plenary Session. In addition, the members serve for one year and have the option of being re-elected for the following period.

In this sense, article 17 of the Organic Law of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico, states that the Board of Directors is integrated by a president, three vice-presidents and one secretary proposed by each parliamentary group. According to the foregoing, one should note that the nominal integration of the Board of Directors does not remain inert from legislature to legislature, so, as the legal framework indicates it can vary: 1) as much by the number Parliamentary Groups that form it, 2) as by the prerogatives that these decide or not to invoke for the formation of the directive organ.

Composition of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies by the Parliamentary Group of the LXIII Legislature

Position	Parliamentary Group
One President <i>Every year it falls to the deputies of the parliamentary groups with the greater number of deputies</i>	1.-PRD (1 year) 2. PAN (1 year) 3. PRI (1year)
Three Vice-presidents <i>In Parliamentary practice, the vice-presidency of the Board of Directors falls to the parliamentary groups with the greater number of deputies.</i>	1.-PRI 2. PAN 3. PRD 4. PVEM*
Secretaries <i>One secretary for each parliamentary group included in the Chamber</i>	1.- PRI 2. PAN 3. PRD 4. PVEM 5. MORENA 6. MC 7. PANAL 8. PES

The president of the Board of Directors is the authority that organizes, summons, postpones, opens, suspends and closes the sessions of the Plenary; conducts institutional relations with other powers, but also expresses the unity of the Chamber of Deputies and it represents protocol in the assembly in parliamentary Diplomacy.



Ex-presidents of the Boards of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies during the LXIII Legislature - Jesús Zambrano Grijalva (PRD) and Javier Bolaños Aguilar (PAN), acompañados por el coordinador del grupo parlamentario del PAN, Marko Antonio Cortés Mendoza, and la secretaria de la Mesa Directiva, Alejandra Noemí Reynoso Sánchez.

* El acuerdo parlamentario número 4351-II, dated 29 August, 2015, signed by the political forces represented in the Chamber of Deputies, considering the Board of Directors' need for an equal, plural and proportional composition, they decided to include a fourth vice-president. Vid. <http://gaceta.diputados.gob.mx/PDF/62/2015/aug/20150829-II.pdf>

The vice-presidents substitute the president in his/her functions during their temporary absences, assuming the protocol representation in the Chamber, as previously appointed.

The secretaries have the task of attending the president in his/her functions, such as making sure that there is quorum, registering and computing the votes, reading the documents and legal framework, and supervising parliamentary services, among others.

The decisions of the Board of Directors are made by consensus; but if this is not reached, they should be made by majority, under the system of pondered vote, that is, taking into account the number of deputies integrating each parliamentary group. In any case, it is the vice-presidents and, if the groups do not have them, then it is the secretaries who cast the vote for their group.

It should be noted that the Organic Law expressly prohibits the coordinators of the parliamentary groups from forming part of the Board of Directors,⁵³ so that in case of aspiring to form part of this organ, they should resign their position as leader of their bench. Another note: the president of the Board of Directors cannot hold office if he/she is a deputy from the same parliamentary group that presides over the Coordination of the Political Board, for the purpose of plurality in the decisions taken in the Chamber of Deputies.⁵⁴

The Parliamentary Groups

Parliamentary groups are the deputies affiliated to the same political party so as to guarantee coordinated action in the free expression of the deputies, by organizing these different benches that represent different ideological currents so as to converge in a parliamentary body. They are not government organs, because basically their task is to congregate and organize the popular representatives.

53 Cfr. Manuel Alcántara Sáenz, Mercedes García Montero y Francisco Sánchez López (Coord.), *El Poder Legislativo en América Latina a través de sus normas*, México, Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, Aquilafuente. 2005, p. 355.

54 However, on Sept. 1, 2001 a parliamentary agreement allowed the PRD to preside over both the Political Coordination Board as well as the Board of Directors, during four months of the 3rd. year of the LXI Legislature.



Dep. César Camacho, coordinator of the PRI's parliamentary group, during the unveiling of the Sculpture to Constitution of 1917, on its centenary, located in Legislative Palace of San Lázaro.

The exercise of Party principles are also promoted through the parliamentary groups in the Chamber of Deputies, maintaining congruency between the groups and the action of the legislators.

Parliamentary Groups constituted in the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies

Party of the Parliamentary Group	Number of Deputies
Partido Revolucionario Institucional	205
Partido Acción Nacional	109
Partido de la Revolución Democrática	61
Partido Verde Ecologista de México	40
Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional	38
Movimiento Ciudadano	21
Nueva Alianza	12
Encuentro Social	9
Sin Partido	4
Independiente	1

To make up a group there need to be at least five deputies and there can only be one group for each political party. At the first ordinary session of the legislature, the deputies will deliver: 1) the document establishing the intention of its members to form a parliamentary group; 2) the norms for its internal function; as well as 3) the name of the coordinator, who will promote the understanding and cohesion of his/her bench.⁵⁵In the same way, the groups are obliged to present their legislative agenda on the first session of every ordinary period.



The parliamentary group of the MORENA party, headed by Dep. Rocío Nahle García, during the ceremony of the flag in the center courtyard of San Lázaro Legislative Palace

All the parliamentary coordinators have a voice and vote in the Political Coordination Board of the Chamber of Deputies, as well as in the Conference for the Direction and Programming of the Legislative Work. The coordinator must inform the permanent Presidency about the changes effected within his/her group.

Deputies who decide not to register or drop out of a parliamentary group without joining another, are classified as deputies without a party and have the same prerogatives and their companions. There is also the figure of independent deputies, those who were elected without being proposed by a party and, therefore have no party affiliation.

55 Cfr. Jorge González Chávez, “Órganos de la Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión”, México, Cámara de Diputados LIX Legislatura, Dirección de Servicios de Investigación y Análisis, 2006, p. 3.

The Political Coordination Board

A collegiate government organ which, not only carries out the function of representative for all the ideological currents in the Chamber of Deputies, but also strives to harmonize the chamber's work and to facilitate internal relations between organs and equals, the Board is the maximum expression of political plurality. Its principal task is to coordinate the interests of the parliamentary groups, as the key step towards reaching the fundamental agreements of parliamentary work.



Dep. Francisco Martínez Neri, parliamentary coordinator for the PRD party and president of the Political Coordination Board of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Political Coordination Board has, among its attributes the presentation of projects for points of agreement, pronouncements and declarations of the Chamber, which are placed before the Board of Directors and the Plenary Session for their consideration; at the start of the Legislature it proposes the formation of commissions, committees, friendship groups and the Editorial Board; it must approve the first project of the annual budget for the Chamber of Deputies; assigns, under the terms of the law, the human, material and financial resources, as well as the physical spaces that correspond to each parliamentary group; proposes the summons to the Plenary Session for the designation of public servants as set out in the Constitution, and it facilitates the development of the Plenary Sessions, among other important attributes.



The meeting hall of the Political Coordination Board, on the second floor of G building of the Palace of Justice at San Lázaro

Parliamentary Agreement

A resolution is taken in the interior of the government organs of Congress or one of its chambers, about a political or legislative matter which will be presented to the Plenary Session for discussion, if it is the case, ratification or to set lineaments or dispositions where the legislation is limited or nil. Agreements must be reached by the majority of the parliamentary groups represented in the government organ, strictly according to the current parliamentary practices and their importance consists in responding quickly to the dynamism and unpredictability of legislative business.

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Secretaría de Gobernación.

In order to adopt the internal decisions, an absolute majority vote is needed, taking into account the numerical proportion of the representatives of the parliamentary groups.

The Political Coordination Board must be established at the latest at the second ordinary session held by the Chamber of Deputies at the start of a Legislature and is composed of the coordinators of all the parliamentary groups. It is necessary that the deputy heading the largest bench, should summon to session this government organ, taking the Presidency of the Board of Directors during the whole legislature if his/her parliamentary group has, in itself, the absolute majority of the members of the Chamber of Deputies.⁵⁶ If this is not the case, the Presidency is exercised annually, alternately and democratically,⁵⁷ among the coordinators of the

⁵⁶ Since 1997 no Parliamentary Group has reached the absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies, there has been an unquestionable plurality in the composition of the organs of government. *Cfr.* Francisco José Paoli Bolio (Coord.), *La Cámara de Diputados en la LVII Legislatura*, México, LVII Legislatura de la Cámara de Diputados, s/a, pp. 5 y 6.

⁵⁷ *Cfr.* Enrique Armando Salazar Abaroa, *Derecho político parlamentario. Principios, valores y fines*, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Cámara de Diputados LIX Legislatura, 2005, p. 280.

largest parliamentary groups; the order is decided by the benches themselves by means of a parliamentary agreement.



Center: Dep. Luis Alfredo Valles Mendoza, coordinator of the parliamentary group of Nueva Alianza Party, during the ceremony of the flag.

Besides summoning and directing the meetings of the Political Coordination Board, the president, must oversee the implementation of the agreements, propose the program for each period of sessions and supervise the elaboration of the first version of the annual budget.

The composition of the Political Coordination Board of the Chamber of Deputies of the LXIII Legislature. Second Year.

Position	Parliamentary Group	Deputy
President	PRD	Dep. Francisco Martínez Neri
Coordinator	PRI	Dep. César Camacho
Coordinator	PAN	Dep. Marko Antonio Cortés Mendoza
Coordinator	PVEM	Dep. Jesús Sesma Suárez
Coordinator	MORENA	Dep. Norma Rocío Nahle García
Coordinator	Movimiento Ciudadano	Dep. José Clemente Castañeda Hoefflich
Coordinator	PANAL	Dep. Luis Alfredo Valles Mendoza
Coordinator	PES	Dep. Alejandro González Murillo

The Conference for the Management and Programming of Legislative Work

The Conference for the Management and Programming of Legislative Work is the third government organ mentioned in the Second Section of the Organic Law of the General Congress and it exercises an indispensable task for the correct dispatch of parliamentary activities in the Chamber of Deputies.

The Conference is its own exclusive organ in the organization of the Chamber of Deputies, given the commission of designing the calendar of ordinary and solemn sessions in each of the ordinary periods and of programming the activities to be carried out during that time. It analyses each of the agendas presented by the parliamentary groups. It also, integrates the order of the day for every session; it determines the form of the each debate, discussion or deliberation, it promotes and follows-up the work of the commissions, and proposes to the *Plenary Session* the appointments of Secretary General and Comptroller, as well as the project for the Statute of the technical and administrative organization and the civil service.



Each seat in the Hall of Sessions is equipped with a microphone, a button to contact the Presidency, a digital screen for publication in the *Parliamentary Gazette* and other documents, and a system for attendance and voting, identified by fingerprint, with the options of voting in favor, against or abstention.

The resolutions are made by consensus, and if consensus is not reached, the pondered vote is used by the coordinators of the parliamentary group.

Composition of the Conference for the Management and Programming of the Legislative Work of the Chamber of Deputies, LXIII Legislature, Second Year.

Position	Parliamentary Group	Deputy
President of the Board of Directors of the Conference for the Direction and Programming of Legislative Work	PAN	Dep. Guadalupe Murguía Gutiérrez
Coordinator	PRI	Dep. César Camacho
Coordinator	PAN	Dep. Marko Antonio Cortés Mendoza
Coordinator	PRD	Dep. Francisco Martínez Neri
Coordinator	PV	Dep. Jesús Sesma Suárez
Coordinator	Morena	Dep. Norma Rocío Nahle García
Coordinator	MC	Dep. José Clemente Castañeda Hoefflich
Coordinator	Panal	Dep. Luis Alfredo Valles Mendoza
Coordinator	ES	Dep. Alejandro González Murillo

The Conference for the Management and Programming of the Legislative Work should be integrated, at the latest, the day following the constitution of the Political Coordination Board. They should meet periodically.

The President of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies participates in the Conference. He/she has the attribute to summon to meetings, direct them and supervises the execution of agreements, as well as the Political Coordination Board, who have a voice and a pondered vote.⁵⁸ The Secretary General of Chamber of Deputies will be secretary of the Conference and will have a voice but no vote.

A Summary so far

Who does what?

Board of Seniors: Constitutes the Legislature.

Plenary of the Chambers: Makes decisions.

Board of Directors: Guides.

Parliamentary Groups: Organize.

Political Coordination Board: Harmonizes.

Conference for the Management and Programming of Legislative Works: Programs.

58 The resolutions of the Conference for Management and Programming of Legislative Work are made by a majority, by the system of pondered vote by the Coordinators of the Parliamentary Groups. The President of the Board of Directors will only vote in case of a draw. José Luis Camacho Vargas, *El ABC de la Cámara de Diputados*, México, IMEPOL, 2008, p. 71.

Ordinary Commissions

Dr. José G. Sandoval Ulloa notes that “in parliamentary practice, the commissions are considered to be the specialized political bodies that promote the important parliamentary work, since they must make the preliminary analysis and resolutions of the great majority of the matters submitted for discussion and approval by the Plenary and they are an important instrument in confirming agreement”.

José G. Sandoval Ulloa, *Prontuario de términos, prácticas y procedimientos más usados en el trabajo parlamentario de la Cámara de Diputados del Congreso de la Unión, México*, Editorial Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Cámara de Diputados LXII Legislatura, 2014, p. 51.

The Commissions

The commissions of the Chamber of Deputies are collegiate bodies composed by the legislators of different ideological currents, who are in charge of the study, analysis and technical opinion of the matters that may have legislative nature, sent to the Board of Directors. These support organs are obliged to give reports, opinions and resolutions, which are then forwarded to the Plenary Session for their analysis, approval or rejection. These organs cannot be substituted if the legal functions are to be carried out by this collegiate body.

It is important to comment that in parliamentary practice there are two main headings that divide the commissions, according to the temporality of their activities, these are: ordinary or special.⁵⁹



The meetings of the commissions are held in various spaces of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro. Principally in “G” building, 2nd. Floor. They are all recorded and transmitted live. This image shows Martín Mondragón (Journalist) about to take podium.

59 Cfr. Salvador O. Nava Gomar, *Manual de Técnica Legislativa*, México, Tomo II, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, s/a, p. 55.

The **ordinary commissions** are those that are invariably created in each legislature and are the only organs of technical support that can give a qualified opinion on the projects for a law or decree to be presented to the Plenary Session.

Article 39 of the Organic Law of Congress numbers a total of 53 ordinary commissions, added to these are the commissions with specific tasks, contemplated in article 40, they reach a total of 56.

All these have a specific tasks, which determine the subjects they have to study, give an opinion on and prepare a pronouncement, these are:

Ordinary Commissions	
1.	Agriculture and Irrigation Systems
2.	Drinking Water and Sanitation
3.	Northern Border Affairs
4.	Border Affairs South-South-west
5.	Indigenous Affairs
6.	Migration
7.	Attention to Vulnerable Groups
8.	Climate Change
9.	Science and Technology
10.	Mexico City
11.	Competence
12.	Communications
13.	Culture y Cinematography
14.	National Defense
15.	Sports
16.	Human Rights
17.	Children's Rights
18.	Metropolitan Development
19.	Municipal Development
20.	Rural Development
21.	Social Development
22.	Urban Development and Territorial Ordering
23.	Economics
24.	Public Education and Educational Services
25.	Energy
26.	Cooperative Promotion and Social Economy
27.	Federal Strengthening
28.	Stock raising
29.	State Department
30.	Finance and Public Credit

31.	Gender Equality
32.	Infrastructure
33.	Legal Affairs (art. 40 LOCGEUM)
34.	Justice Department
35.	Youth
36.	Navy
37.	Environment and Natural Resources
38.	Fisheries
39.	Population
40.	Budget and Public Accounts
41.	Civil Protection
42.	Constitutional Affairs
43.	Radio y Television
44.	Hydraulic Resources
45.	Agrarian Reform
46.	Foreign Relations
47.	Regime, Regulations and Parliamentary Practices (art. 40 LOCGEUM)
48.	Health
49.	Public Security
50.	Social Security
51.	Labor and Social Insurance
52.	Transparency and Anti-corruption
53.	Transport
54.	Tourism
55.	Supervision of the Superior Auditor of the Federation (<i>art. 40 LOCGEUM</i>)
56.	Housing

The Political Coordination Board must propose the members of the commissions to the Plenary Session by the third ordinary session of the beginning of a legislature at the latest, and they should be formally constituted during the first month of the exercise. In the same way and according to the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, the commissions should be installed within fifteen natural days following the confirmation of the agreement for nomination.



Within the premises the Federal deputies organize various activities, as do the administrative personnel. On March 16, 2017, the centenary celebrations of the *Excelsior* newspaper offered by the General Coordination of Social Communication of the Chamber of Deputies.

One should note that the ordinary commissions can have up to 30 members or as many as the legal framework of the Chamber of Deputies indicates. However, this formula can be adjusted according to the particular needs of the legislature by means of a parliamentary agreement. In this sense, we should remember that the deputies can only participate in three commissions, except for the members of the Presidency, who cannot serve on the commissions. In any case the Political Coordination Board is the organ in charge of formulating and deciding on the proportionality of the parliamentary groups to integrate the commissions, thus avoiding over-representation and facilitating decision making.

The commissions have a Political Coordination Board, which takes charge of guiding debates and preparing the necessary documents for meetings; this is composed of a president and as many secretaries as needed to carry out the activities.

According to the importance of the matters to be dealt with by the Chamber of Deputies and according to the complexity of the topic, the Board of Directors can send an initiative to more than one ordinary commission to be studied and judged. These can be constituted as *United Commissions* for the discussion and the vote.

Legal reports or opinions (*Dictámen*)

Legal reports or opinions (*Dictámen*): “Formal written document that certifies and justifies a required legislative procedure; it is issued by an organ of the Congress”.

Miguel Ángel Camposeco Cadena, *El dictamen legislativo*, México, Instituto de Investigaciones Legislativas, H. Cámara de Diputados, 1998, p. 41

Miguel Ángel Camposeco Cadena, *El dictamen legislativo*, México, Instituto de Investigaciones Legislativas, H. Cámara de Diputados, 1998, p. 41

For their part, the **special commissions** are temporary and once they finish the task they were created for they invariably disband. They do not have the attributes to issue formal reports or opinions and they must meet the deadlines for the tasks set them by the Plenary, these could be the presentation of opinions, reports or resolutions, or even, to

commemorate an event of national importance. The Political Coordination Board is the government organ that proposes their creation and integration.

Special Commissions in the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies

1.	Against People Trafficking
2.	Mining
3.	Citizen Participation
4.	Gender Alert
5.	Food /Nutrition
6.	Support for Businesses of Small and Micro Enterprises to promote Family Economies
7.	Cultivation of Citric fruit
8.	Gender related Crime
9.	Renewable Energy
10.	Ex Migrant workers
11.	Lerma Santiago Chapala Basin
12.	Burgos Basin
13.	Automobile Industry
14.	Cocoa Industry
15.	Manufacturing and <i>Maquila</i> Industries (In-bond manufacturing)
16.	Wine and Berries Industries
17.	Information and Communication Technologies
18.	Mobility
19.	Prevention and Eradication of Child Pornography and Sexual Abuse
20.	Projects for Productivity in Marginal Zones
21.	Ports and Merchant Navy
22.	Mental Health and Drugs
23.	Follow-up of the construction of the New Airport for Mexico City
24.	Follow-up on Sustainable Programs for Women

25.	Follow-up on Concurrent Programs Annex 11.1
26.	Vigilance of Public Expenditure and Debt of the States and Municipalities
27.	Coffee
28.	In charge of the study, analysis, evaluation and supervision of the Functions of the National Customs, Ports and Airports.
29.	The fight against the use of illicit resources in the Electoral Processes
30.	Follow-up of the processes and results of Government purchases.
31.	For Economic and Social Development of the Northern Border.
32.	For Sustainable Development
33.	For sponsoring Social Programs for Senior Citizens
34.	For the Promotion of ' <i>Pueblos Mágicos</i> ' (Magic Villages)
35.	For the Cultural Heritage of Mexico.
36.	For the Follow-up of the Regulatory Organs of the Energy Sector.
37.	To promote and Support intellectually gifted students.
38.	To promote Industrialization and Technical methods for Agriculture.
39.	To prevent Environmental Deterioration and if possible the conservation and restoration of same in the Federal Entities where PEMEX installations are located.
40.	To check and analyze the legislation and policies for attention to Children and Adolescents with Autism and other generalized development disorders.
41.	Follow-up on the Mexican State's actions regarding the victims, and the recommendations made by the International Human Rights Commission about the events occurred in Iguala, Guerrero, involving students of the "Raúl Isidro Burgos" teacher training school in Ayotzinapa.
42.	Follow-up of the agreements presented by the Permanent Commission, regarding the events occurred in the municipality of Asunción Nochixtlán, Oaxaca on June 19, 2016.
43.	Against Discrimination
44.	Special Economic Zones

In addition to the transitory organs there are the Investigation Commissions, which have their legal fundamentals in article 93, third paragraph, of the Political Constitution and are created upon request by a fourth part of the Chamber of Deputies. These can investigate into the functions of decentralized organisms and enterprises with majority participation by the state, presenting the final results to the Federal Executive Power, for its information. Not to be forgotten are the Courtesy Commissions - also temporary – created by the Presidency, in charge of accompanying special visitors when they enter, visit and depart from the Hall of Sessions of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro.



Federal deputies of the Encuentro Social Party, headed by their coordinator Alejandro González Murillo, at the ceremony of the flag.

Lastly, it is necessary to comment that there are *Bi-chamber Commissions*, which are composed by members of the two federal Chambers, that is, both deputies and senators, when dealing with matters of common interest for the Congress.

Bi-Chamber Commissions
1. Bi-chamber for National Security
2. Bi-chamber for the Television Channel of the Congress of the Union
3. Bi-chamber for the System of Libraries
4. Bi-chamber on the matter of Financial Discipline of the Federal Entities and the Municipalities, as regards the Deputies.
5. Dialogue and Conciliation for the State of Chiapas.

The Committees

The same as the ordinary commissions, they are collegiate organs for technical administrative support and they are to be found in the legal framework of this collegiate body, their function is auxiliary. They carry out predominantly administrative work, by defining the policies and programs for the correct function of the Chamber of Deputies; as well as proposing norms and vigilance in the concurrent areas.



A plenary session of the Chamber of Deputies

The same as with the ordinary and special commissions, the committees concentrate on different generic themes, these are:

Committees of the Chamber of Deputies	
1.	Administration
2.	Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion
3.	Center for Legal Studies and Parliamentary Research
4.	Center for Studies of Public Finances
5.	Center for Studies on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality.
6.	Center for Studies on Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty
7.	Seniors
8.	Information, Management/ negotiation and Complaints
9.	Ethics

The General Secretariat

This is the central administrative organ of the Chamber of Deputies, in charge of coordinating and executing all the tasks tending to facilitate the parliamentary work, from the preparation of documents and agreements of their competence, to carrying out the necessary functions in order to resolve the administrative and financial requirements of the parliamentary body.



Mtro. Mauricio Farah Gebera is the secretary general of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Secretary General, is the titular incumbent, nominated by a favorable vote of two thirds of the deputies present, that is, a qualified majority, and he/she is responsible for developing the fundamental tasks for the administrative organization of the Chamber, these are: prepare the constitutive session for the new legislature; direct and supervise the functions of the Parliamentary Secretarial Services and the Administrative and Financial Services; formulate annual programs for the correct function of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Secretariats of Parliamentary Services and of Administrative and Financial Services, support the Secretary General for the development of functions in the interior of the Chamber of Deputies.



Aerial view of the San Lázaro Palace of Justice Complex, comprising 10 buildings and 6 parking lots, which explains the challenge of administrating the seat of the Chamber of Deputies.

It should be noted that the Secretary General is also a member of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Secretariat of Parliamentary Services

Is a technical and administrative organ composed of career personnel, which has the main function of ensuring the correct development of Plenary Sessions of the Chamber of Deputies and the organization and management of the documents received by the Presidency, as well as other matters inherent to this organ.

The Secretariat of Parliamentary Services follows the affairs that are discussed in the commissions and keeps a register of their minutes, which record the work of the meetings; it provides services of documentation and supervises the correct preparation of the Diary of Debates and the Parliamentary Gazette; it classifies the different files from the Plenary of the Chamber of Deputies and the commissions, as well as providing library services.



The ceremony of the flag celebrating the day of *No Violence and Peace* in the Chamber of Deputies. Left to right: Lic. Aldo García Valdés, Director General of Programming, Budget and Accountancy; Ms. Abril Renée Aguayo Buentello, Director General of Human Resources; C. A. Alfredo Wong Castañeda, Internal Comptroller; Lic. Juan Carlos Delgadillo Salas, Secretary of Parliamentary Services; Mtro. Mauricio Farah Gebara, Secretary General; Ing. Carlos Alfredo Olson San Vicente, Secretary of Administrative and Financial Services; Lic. Samuel Rodríguez Mora, Director General of Inter-Institucional Relations and Protocol.

It is necessary to mention that in the organization chart of the Secretariat of Parliamentary Services the six study centers belonging to the Chamber of Deputies appear, which will be dealt with later.

The Head of the Secretariat of Parliamentary Services is also a member of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Secretariat of Administrative and Financial Services

So as to ensure the correct use of the material and human resources of the Chamber of Deputies, the participation of the Secretariat of Administrative and Financial Services is necessary. It is a technical and administrative organ whose objectives are: to provide services in the areas of treasury, information, law, security and medical attention for the deputies. In other words, it is in charge of contracting personnel, taking care of materials for the work of the Chamber, programming resources and all services to facilitate the administrative work of the parliamentary body.

Secretariat	Nominal
Secretary General	Mtro. Mauricio Farah Gebara
Secretary of Parliamentary Services	Lic. Juan Carlos Delgadillo Salas
Secretary of Administrative and Financial Services	Ing. Carlos Alfredo Olson San Vicente

Coordination of Social Communication

Is an administrative and technical organ dependent on the President of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies, in charge of publishing information about the activities carried out by the Chamber of Deputies, in the Plenary Sessions, the commissions, the committees, parliamentary friendship groups and government organs, representing the Chamber inside and outside the parliamentary premises. It also functions as liaison between the different communication media.



The Social Communication team headed by Lic. Óscar Argüelles Dorantes, at the ceremony of homage to the flag.

The Chamber of Deputies has a General Library with an important collection of documents and publications specialized in parliamentary matters, but it also includes publications on scientific, cultural and generally informative subjects, and is open to the general public interested in these subjects. It is headed by the General Services of Documentation, Information and Analysis (SEDIA) and the management of Library Services.

The Director General of SEDIA forms part of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies.



Lic. Juan Carlos Delgadillo Salas, Secretary of Parliamentary Services, and José María Hernández Vallejo, Director General of SEDIA.

Because of the quantity of bibliographic material, the Library of the Chamber of Deputies is divided in two locations. One is the recently remodeled second floor of C building of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, and the second is the General Library, at Tacuba 29, Colonia Centro of the City of Mexico. Both locations are open to the general public and they offer a wide diffusion of documents in their collections by means of information technology, so that its catalogue can be consulted at this website: <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sedia/biblio.htm>

Technical Administrative Organs	Coordinator/Director
Coordination of Social Communication	Lic. Oscar Manuel Argüelles Dorantes
Director General of Documentation, Information y Analysis Services (SEDIA)	Lic. José María Hernández Vallejo
Director of the Library of the Chamber of Deputies	Lic. Manuel Vilchis García



Unit “I” was added later to the San Lázaro Complex which explains the different structure. It houses the five study centers of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Study Center for Parliamentary Law and Research

The Study Center of the Chamber of Deputies is attached to the Secretariat of Parliamentary Services, and its common objectives are: to provide technical support and impartial information to the deputies and the organs that conform the Chamber. Each center is headed by a director.



Dr. Sadot Sánchez Carreño, Director General of the CEDEP.

As regards the Study Center of Parliamentary Law and Research (CEDIP by its Spanish acronym), it is a technical and legal support organ which systematizes and works with specialized legislative and parliamentary matters, dealing with different academic documents on the subjects of history, law and comparative law, among others. It is also in charge of organizing periodical meeting to promote parliamentary culture and the organization of the Academy of Government and Parliamentary Law, which was created by the LXIII legislature as proposed by Dr. César Camacho, coordinator of the PRI parliamentary group, for the purpose of professionalizing legislative activities.⁶⁰

Main Functions of the CEDIP

- Carry out research and study of the legal character and on any branch or discipline contributing to the exercise of legislative functions.
- Arrange academic meetings, training, publication and conventions of collaboration with other study centers, on subjects of their competence.

⁶⁰ According to article 283, third paragraph, of the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, a Study Center for Parliamentary Law and Research can be created, an academy for the formation of professional personnel called “Academy of Government and Parliamentary Law”.

- Process specialized information, catalogue and up-date it in a specialized system of archives.
- Hold academic meetings related to the study of parliamentary law and research.
- Participate in training activities which include the formation, up-dating and specialization of the functionaries of the Career Civil Service of the Chamber of Deputies, among others.

Center for Studies on Public Finance

The Center for Studies on Public Finance (CEFP by its Spanish acronym) is a body of researchers and career personnel that support the Secretariat of Parliamentary Services in carrying out research on matters such as economics, finance, transparency and responsibility in the management of public resources, but it also evaluates the impact related to the budget in diverse areas that concern the Chamber of Deputies.



Mtro. Alberto Mayorga, Director General of the CEFP

Main functions of the CEFP

- Analyze the reports of the economic situation, public finances and the debt that the Federal Executive Power presents tri-monthly to the Chamber, and return the report on the results of this analysis;
- Analyze the yearly report on the actions and results of the national plan for development related to public finances, as well their content at the start of a presidential term and report these works to the Chamber, through each of the competent commissions;

- Analyze the initiatives for the budget, the Law of Revenue, tax laws and the General Criteria for Economic Policy presented by the Executive to the Chamber, as well as the Report and the Tariffs for foreign trade and, in general, on aspects included in the second paragraph of article 131 of the Constitution, as presented by the Executive. The Center receives the above mentioned initiatives through the corresponding commissions of the Chamber;
- Prepare the analyses, projects and calculations required by the commissions concerning matters of public finance;
- Provide the commissions of the Chamber, the parliamentary groups and the deputies with the information they require for the exercise of their constitutional functions in matters of public finance; among others.

Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion

Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion or CESOP (by its Spanish acronym), analyzes the social movements and their perception of matters of great importance for the Legislative Power, but , above all for all the population, such as migration, poverty, development, housing, inequality, governability, among others, and which serve to strengthen the studies carried out by the commissions.

Functions of the Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion

- Carry out research and studies on the relations between the State and Mexican society, organized and emerging social movement, poverty, migration, gender, ethnic groups, health, housing, among others, to **enrich** parliamentary work;
- Hold academic meetings about social problems that arise in the nation, as well as the matter of public opinion;
- Participate in the training activities which include formation, up-dating and specialization of functionaries of the Service;
- Run an editorial program on social studies and public opinion and publicize it;
- Promote conventions for collaboration with similar study centers and national and international academic institutions, for the exchange of experiences and personnel, as well as experts; among others.

Center for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality

As its name implies, the Center for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (CEAMEG by its Spanish acronym) is a technical organ for parliamentary support

and its main objective it to strengthen legislative research and the legal framework regarding human rights, for the purpose of achieving greater opportunities for women and improving public policies regarding gender equality.



Adriana Gabriela Ceballos Hernández, director general of CEAMEG

Study Center for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty

The Center for Studies for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty.

This Center, also referred to as CEDRSSA, is in charge of analyzing opportunely the information received from the rural sector, making sure that it is true and objective, so that the deputies can issue laws to foster strong and sustainable programs for food and welfare for all Mexicans.

The main function of the Center for studies on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality is to study, research, analyze and inform about the subjects related to the advancement of women and, in general, matters concerning gender equality.



Professor Héctor Hugo Olivares Ventura, director general of CEDRSSA.

The Study Center for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty has, as its principal mission the study, research, analysis and reports related to the subject of sustainable rural development and national food sufficiency.

It should be noted that the Directors of the Study Centers are also members of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies.

Study Center	Director
Study Center for Law and Parliamentary Research	Dr. Sadot Sánchez Carreño
Study Center for Public Finance	Mtro. Alberto Mayorga Ríos
Study Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion	Arch. Netzahualcóyotl Vázquez Vargas
Study Center for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality	Lic. Adriana Gabriela Ceballos Hernández
Study Center for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty	Profr. Héctor Hugo Olivares V.

On December 14, 2015 the plenary session of the Chamber of Deputies issued an amendment to article 49 of the Organic Law of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico, so as to create a Study Center for Human Rights and the Vulnerable Sector of the Population and its Inclusion, which was passed on to the Senate of the Republic for its analysis and enactment.

The Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies



Plenary session of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Political Coordination Board has designated this technical- academic body, to establish impartially and objectively the criteria and policies for the publication of books, magazines, leaflets and other documents promoted by the Chamber of Deputies.

The Editorial Board is integrated by two Deputies, one nominal and one substitute, from each of the parliamentary groups of the LXIII Legislature, who have a voice and a pondered vote according to the representation of their respective bench. In addition, as mentioned previously, the Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies, the Secretary of Parliamentary Services, the Director General of SEDIA and the Directors of the Study Centers also form part of the Council, with a voice but no vote in the ordinary meetings.



Deps. René Cervera, Alma Lucía Arzaluz, Adriana Ortiz y Ángel II Alanís with Mtro. Mauricio Farah, secretary general of the Chamber of Deputies.

It is presided over annually by the deputy member representing the parliamentary group which head the Political Coordination Board. The members must session once a month in the Meeting Hall of the Political Coordination Board.

Its mission is to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge, not only on subjects of legislation and public affairs, but also Mexican culture in all forms, striving to promote analysis, reflection and proposals regarding the many national problems, in the range of pertinence, rationality, responsibility and financial viability.



Members of the Editorial Board: Deps. Patricia Aceves Pastrana, Adriana Ortiz Lanz, Ángel II Alanís Pedraza, Emma Margarita Alemán Olvera y Alma Lucía Arzaluz.

An example of this is the *La Guía Básica de la Cámara de Diputados*, whose publication was approved unanimously by the whole Editorial Board for the purpose of creating a manual for anyone interested in knowing in a clear and simple manner, the functions and attributions of the Chamber of Deputies.

All the works that the Editorial Board has approved are available for consultation on-line, on the Internet site www.diputados.gob.mx/Consejo-Editorial/ as well as with the app. For intelligent Cell phones and tablets compatible with Android and IOS.



Plenary session of the Editorial Board of the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies

Members of the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies of the LXIII Legislature. Second Year

Position	Deputy	Party
President	Dep. Ángel II Alanís Pedraza, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Victoriano Wences Real, <i>substitute</i> .	PRD
Councilor	Dep. Adriana Ortiz Lanz, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Miriam Dennis Ibarra Rangel, <i>substitute</i> .	PRI
Councilor	Dep. Emma Margarita Alemán Olvera, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Luz Argelia Paniagua Figueroa, <i>substitute</i> .	PAN
Councilor	Dep. Alma Lucia Arzaluz Alonso, <i>titular</i> . Dep. José Refugio Sandoval Rodríguez, <i>substitute</i> .	PVEM
Councilor	Dep. Patricia Elena Aceves Pastrana, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Virgilio Dante Caballero Pedraza, <i>substitute</i> .	MORENA
Councilor	Dep. René Cervera García, <i>titular</i> . Dep. María Candelaria Ochoa Avalos, <i>substitute</i> .	Movimiento Ciudadano

Councilor	Dep. Carmen Victoria Campa Almaral, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Francisco Javier Pinto Torres, <i>substitute</i> .	PANAL
Councilor	Dep. Ana Guadalupe Perea Santos, <i>titular</i> . Dep. Melissa Torres Sandoval, <i>substitute</i> .	PES
Secretary General	Mtro. Mauricio Farah Gebara	
Secretary of Parliamentary Services	Lic. Juan Carlos Delgadillo Salas	
Director General of Services for Documentation, Information and Analysis	Lic. José María Hernández Vallejo	
Director General of Study Center for Public Finances	Mtro. Alberto Mayorga Ríos	
Director General of Study Center for Parliamentary Law and Research	Dr. Sadot Sánchez Carreño	
Director General of Study Center for Social Studies and Public Opinion	Arq. Netzahualcóyotl Vázquez Vargas	
Director General of Study Center for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality	Lic. Adriana Gabriela Ceballos Hernández	
Director General of Study Center for Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty	Prof. Héctor Hugo Olivares V.	



Plenary session of the Editorial Board of the LXIII Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies.



Every year the Editorial Board of the Chamber of Deputies organizes a Book Fair where copies of the publications of the Chamber of Deputies are donated to the public.

6.

PARLIAMENTARY WORK

Representation

The word itself makes reference to modern democracies, which originated in the 13th. and 14th. Centuries, when within the religious and political organs of Great Britain certain persons were designated to participate in the meetings of Church Councils and parliament.⁶¹



The subject of gender equality is a priority for the Chamber of Deputies

And, although the word is linked to the development of our institutions, it is important to remember, in practical terms, that representation did not always carry

61 Cfr. Hanna F. Pitkin, *El concepto de representación*, Madrid, España, Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1985, p. 3.

the idea of citizen participation, nor was the activity always aimed at defending the interests of the people. For instance, when we look at the history and roots of the English Parliament, we can see that its prime objectives were not the integration of the subjects. On the contrary, it was primarily composed of the nobility, and included archbishops, bishops, priors, abbots, barons, earls, gentlemen and burghers,⁶² formed by different groups of influence and power, mainly connected to the British nobility, aimed at curbing the power of the King; advising and directing him on matters of common importance.

Dr. Bernardo Bátiz Vázquez explains that: “in modern parliaments, to be found democratic systems, the members of parliament represent others, all the people, the whole of society, or the nation, as the constitutions of today’s democratic States have repeated since 1791”.

Bernardo Bátiz Vázquez, *Teoría del Derecho Parlamentario*, México, Oxford University Press, p. 21.

As societies evolved, both politically and institutionally, representation within the parliaments gradually acquired greater force and importance for society.

These are the consequences of great armed movements in human history, such as the French Revolution, which set constitutional precedents in its fundamental text of 1791;⁶³ and later led to the implementation of many legal and political mechanisms promoted within the Nation-States to empower citizens and their governments, gradually

adding transformations regarding elections and even cultural elements, which naturally benefitted relations and representation.



Photographic exhibitions, gastronomic fairs, receptions and conferences are part of everyday reality in the Chamber of Deputies.

62 J. R. Maddicott, *The origins of the English Parliament*, Estados Unidos de América, Nueva York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 152.

63. Bernardo Bátiz Vázquez, *Teoría del Derecho Parlamentario*, México, Oxford University Press, p. 21.

So, when we speak of parliamentary representation, we are making reference to a historic, philosophical and legal principle⁶⁴ which links citizens to their popular representatives who form part of the Legislative Power; by means of which the representatives are invested with the obligation of defending the interests of their electorate in a free manner, through the prerogatives inherent to their position as legislators, that is, through their voice and vote.

Every democratic system in the world has an institutional design that contributes to the adoption of specific features regarding representation, varying from one political system to another. In this sense, the relationship between political parties unquestionably influences the electoral norms, the relationship between citizen and representative, as well as different cultural habits and customs; which determine to a greater or lesser degree that “those who have been elected to take charge of representing the citizenry are disposed to respond to their demands and give account of their acts, but also, that the plurality of interests present in society should be integrated according to the law.”⁶⁵

In the case of this country, representation is a legal principle set down in article 40 of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, and currently indicates the form of government adopted by our people: a representative, democratic, federal and lay Republic.



Federal Deputies Agustín Basave Benítez, Jesús Zambrano Grijolva and Hortensia Aragón Castillo

- 64 Hobbess, Locke and Montesquieu consider themselves founders of representative government, and set their bases in political philosophy. Murray Dry, “The separation of Powers and representative government”, in *Political Science Reviewer*, 1973, pp. 43-83
- 65 Luisa Béjar Algazi, “Representación Parlamentaria y Disciplina Partidista: el caso de México”, en Rosa María Mirón Lince y Luisa Béjar Algazi, *El Congreso Mexicano después de la Alternancia*, México, Senado de la República, Instituto de Investigaciones Legislativas del Senado de la República, Mexico, 2003, p. 213.

Even though it is true that representation is a historical principle that has been transmitted over decades, it is only explained by consulting our legal and historical sources, principally during the Mexican Insurgency, when in the Constitution of Apatzingán (1814) the exercise of sovereignty resided in the national representation established by deputies elected by the citizens, who – independently of the European and North American theoretical debate about sovereignty -⁶⁶ thought, for the first time, that the representation of the Mexican people, was the responsibility of the deputies, as it does now with article 51 of the Constitution.

Direct Election: Method of election in which the voters elect their popular representatives directly, without the participation of any person or organism. This is the case in Mexico.

Indirect vote: Electoral method by which the voter elect their popular representatives by means of delegates or other electors. This is the case in the United States of America.

In fact, today, the 500 federal deputies – *elected directly* by the citizens – are those who formally and doctrinally hold the power of representation of the Mexican nation, as in the Legislative Power and in the Plenary of the Chamber of Deputies, in the commissions, on the committees and in the friendship groups of the organs of the Chamber; and who have the right and obligation to cast their vote in favor of the interests of the citizens of their respective districts and circumscriptions.



Voting in the Commissions, the primary legislative work.

⁶⁶ According to Felipe Tena Ramírez, in theory there are two principal doctrines as regards sovereignty: the European which insists that the subject of sovereignty is the State, while the United States' version is that the subject of sovereignty is the people. Felipe Tena Ramírez, *Derecho Constitucional Mexicano*, twenty eighth edition, Editorial Porrúa, 1996, pp. 7-10

Since the fundamental origins of the Chamber of Deputies in Mexico, the representation of the nation has been attributed to this parliamentary organ; this is not so in the Senate of the Republic, which, although it is part of the Mexican Legislative Power and its members are elected directly by the citizenry, it has the original function of representing the federal entities⁶⁷ and not, in a strict sense, the nation.

To sum up, parliamentary representation in Mexico is a mechanism linking the citizens with their deputies, in which the former transmit their demands so that the legislators can promote modifications to norms or make decisions in the area of their competence so as to procure the welfare of the whole society.⁶⁸

The legal framework of the Chamber of Deputies provides different mechanisms to establish permanent links between the deputies and their electorate, such as the obligation of installing a legislative liaison office, as contemplated in article 8, fraction XV, of the regulations of the Chamber of Deputies, or the presentation of an annual report; but the citizens also have the possibility of invoking, at any time, such forms as lobbying according to the rules approved by the organs of the Chamber.

To legislate

The word *legislate* is integrated by its Latin roots *lex* and *legis*⁶⁹ as with the suffix *ate*, which identifies it as a verb; according the OED (Oxford English Dictionary) its meaning is : to make a law affecting something, to establish laws to norm institutions and individuals.⁷⁰

67 Cfr. Patricia Galeana, "Desarrollo histórico de la Cámara de Senadores", in Patricia Galeana, *Organización y funciones del Senado*, México, UNAM, Senado de la República LXI Legislatura, 2010 pp. 1-9.

68 Cfr. Laura Valencia Escamilla, *La representación parlamentaria. Un recorrido histórico por la teoría política*, México, Editorial Siglo XXI, Senado de la República, 2016, p. 153.

69 Prof. Pericles Namorado Urrutia says in the Latin etymology *lex does not exist*, according to some authors it derives from *legere* which means read, while others say it derives from *legare* meaning command. Francisco Berlín Valenzuela (Coord.), *Diccionario Universal de Términos Parlamentarios*, segunda edición, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Cámara de Diputados, LVI Legislatura, 1998, p. 360.

70 Oxford University Press, Advanced English Learners Dictionary.



The deputies, amongst them the parliamentary group of the PRI party, approved a law that reforms, adds to and abolishes various dispositions of the Federal Law of Rights, as part of the analysis of the Budget for the fiscal year 2016.

Dr. Jorge Horacio Gentile, considers that the state function of dictating regulatory norms of conduct in social life is generally characterized by abstraction and innovation. The sanction of regulatory norms tending to recognize and protect the liberty and fundamental rights of a person, and of establishing duties, obligations and public charges, are the most characteristic their competences.⁷¹

In modern practice, legislation is a state function entrusted to the Legislative power, which, as we have seen, can be integrated, in two different political regimes of government, by one or two parliamentary bodies. Their members have the right, but also the obligation of participating in parliamentary work, which allows for the preparation of proposals and the fundamentals for modifying laws or creating new legal orders, all complying with well- defined institutional processes.

According to Jesús Quintana Valtierra and Franco Carreño García, the legislative process has a number of steps leading to decision making, “and from this perspective we understand that the objective of legislative activity is to dictate a law, or even not to dictate it, depending on if the content is legally possible, viable or non-viable,

⁷¹ Cfr. Jorge Horacio Gentile “La función del parlamento en la democracia moderna”, en S/A, IV Congreso Iberoamericano de Derecho Constitucional, México, IIJ/UNAM, Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Constitucional, 1992, p. 324.

and if administratively there is the governmental structure for its application (cost of application)”.⁷²

In Mexico, legislation is a function, which, because of its nature, falls to the Legislative Power of the United States of Mexico, deposited in the Congress of the Union; and according to article 50 of the Fundamental Law, is divided into two Chambers, one of Deputies and the other of Senators.

Together, the parliamentary bodies have the obligation of discussing, indistinctly the projects for law or decree successively and independently,⁷³ this means, first in one which shall be called the originator, and then in the other, called the reviser. The foregoing is applicable when the matter under discussion is not the exclusive faculty of one of the Chambers, in which case it should be sent there to start the legislative process. For example, in the case of approval required for the initiative for the Law of Internal Revenue – proposed by the Federal Executive Power by September 8 of each year at the latest -, this cannot be discussed initially by the Chamber of Senators, as the initial faculty belongs to the Chamber of Deputies, according to article 74, fraction V of the Constitution.



The coordinator of the Morena party's parliamentary group, Ms. Rocío Nahle García, at a press conference.

⁷² Cfr. Jesús Quintana Valtierra y Franco Carreño García, *Derecho Parlamentario y Técnica Legislativa en México. Principios Generales*, México, Editorial Porrúa, 2006, p. 192.

⁷³ Cfr. Elisur Arteaga Nava, “El proceso legislativo” en *Jurídica Anuario*, México, Anuario del Departamento de Derecho de la Universidad Iberoamericana, número 28, 1998, p. 58

It should be noted that even without any direct participation in the process of resolution and decision making in the interior of the Chambers, proposals for law or decree can be presented not only by deputies and senators of the Congress of the Union, but also by public servants, local legislative powers and citizens – these last must do so according to the percentage and requirements set down in article 71 of the Political Constitution.

In addition, it should be mentioned that in decision making to reform or create new orders, the Federal Executive Power should intervene as controlling organ, to make observations on the proposals for law or decree to the ordinary orders that the Congress sends for sanction and publication in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación*.⁷⁴ In the specific case of constitutional legislative process, the President of the Republic cannot make observations on the projects for decree sent by the Permanent Constituent, so that their publication in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* is ordered directly by one of the federal chambers.

As we can observe, the legislative process is a function originating in one of parliamentary bodies – in which the Chamber of Deputies participates as the originator or the reviser – to move to the formal production of a new law and to bring it up to date.⁷⁵



In February 2017 the Chamber of Deputies was the venue for the Tenth Children's Parliament, which was held in the Hall of Sessions.

74 Cfr. José Luis Camacho Vargas, *Apuntes de Derecho Parlamentario Mexicano*, México, Instituto Mexicano de Estudios sobre el Poder Legislativo, 2015, pp. 239-242.

75 Cfr. *Idem*.

In this sense, we should point out that while legislation is a collection of static legal ordinances in face of social reality, the formal act of legislation refers to the dynamic part of transformation of the norm, a necessary process to bring it up to date.

Control

As the concept of Constitution arose from a historical process intended to control the unbounded power of King John I of England – known as John Lack-land – who was forced to sign the *Magna Charta Liberarum* in 1215;⁷⁶ the Legislative power was institutionalized as an organ to counterbalance and moderate the power of the sovereign. Its fundamentals transcend the theory of separation of powers developed during the Age of Enlightenment by John Locke and the Baron de Montesquieu.⁷⁷

“Control constitutes the origin of liberal legislative organs, in which the restrictions to the power of absolute monarchy by representatives of the bourgeoisie, constitute the principal objective, aiming at obstructing and limiting the political power of monarchs and the nobility”.⁷⁸

Lucero Ramírez de León

There is no doubt that Control is a parliamentary function originated in the theory of the separation of powers, where not only is the Legislative power is subjected to this action but so are the Executive and Judicial Powers, who also paly an indispensable in the scheme o weights and counter weights. Every day there is a greater number of autonomous government and social actors who are checking the correct behaviour of our authorities.

76 The social discontent with the government of the King was a corollary of the increase in Feudal obligations, as well as the reduction of their rights and privileges. Cfr. Rodolfo Lara Ponte, *Los derechos humanos en el constitucionalismo mexicano*, México, Cámara de Diputados LV Legislatura, UNAM, 1993, p. 26.

77 Cfr. Porfirio Marquet Guerrero, *La Estructura Constitucional del Estado Mexicano*, México, IIJ/ UNAM, 1975, pp. 151-154.

78 Lucero Ramírez de León, “Control parlamentario, mecanismo del Legislativo para co-dirigir al gobierno junto con el Ejecutivo”, en Raúl López Flores, Fermín Edgardo Rivas Prats, et. al. (Coords.), *Estrategia y práctica parlamentaria en un Congreso plural*, México, Senado de la República, Instituto Belisario Domínguez, 2011, p. 389.



The Secretary of State. Lic. Miguel Ángel Osorio Chong, appears before deputies integrating the united Commissions of the State Department and Public Security

In modern political regimes, the Legislative Power is the principal organ to exert its function of control, not only by verifying compliance with the law, but also by monitoring the actions of the government,⁷⁹ and by revising reports, votes of censure – in some government regimes -, the ratification of appointments, the exercise of jurisdictional functions, or even, the creation of special investigative commissions.

Parliamentary control “refers to a judicial-procedural and political technique by which the Parliament or Congress has the faculties to direct, evaluate and sanction the acts of the government. In parliamentary systems this is occurs by the concession or withdrawal of confidence in the head of government or the council of ministers. In presidential systems, the mechanisms of control can be political, investigative, budgetary, electoral, administrative or jurisdictional. The sole source of attributes for the exercise of parliamentary control is the Constitution and the normativity of Congress”.⁸⁰

79 Jorge Horacio Gentile, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

80 SIL , “Control Parlamentario”, in Sistema de Información Legislativa de la Secretaría de Gobernación, <http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/Glosario/definicionpop.php?ID=56> Consulted May 30, 2017

As we can see, the control of the Legislative Power watches the normative and non-normative action of the government, which means it looks into diverse administrative and jurisdictional aspects of parliamentary activity.

And although many of the faculties of the parliamentary bodies can be divided and considered to be legislative mechanisms of control, the truth is that, this organ develops investigation and balance in the exercise of public power. So, there is a need to understand control in a broader sense, as the product of all the actions carried out in the interior of the collegiate bodies, in the exercise of their formal and material acts.

To mention one example: when a matter which belongs to the competence of one of the Chamber's Plenary Sessions is discussed, the possibility arises for the parliamentary groups and their members to be vigilant of whatever government policies are adopted by the administration in turn, pointing out anything that does not function or has to be modified. In this sense, the legislators of different ideologies can use an unrestricted voice from their respective tribune to analyze, and if necessary, recommend and promote normative and non-normative changes in favor of a better function of our institutions and society.

In other words, the work of controlling a modern democracy constitutes a mechanism that tries to guarantee the process of decision making and subsequent governmental action leads to the welfare of the population and the general interest of the nation.



Deputies of various parliamentary groups take the floor in support of the International fight against Breast Cancer, on October 19th 2015.

The Chamber of Deputies, as an organ of national representation, should make sure that the actions of public powers and other government organs function in a responsible way for the welfare of society; as the deputies have the right to influence, directly or indirectly, the correct function of the government and other authorities. So that the Legislators of this Chamber can carry out many functions such as: discussion, modification and, in certain cases, approval of the budget, revision of the public expenditure, the ratification of the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit, summons to the Plenary Session so that the secretaries of State can appear before the highest organ for decisions or before commissions, the reception of the President's State of the Nation report, the parliamentary question or the creation of investigative commissions.



The Chamber of Deputies receives the Economic Packet /Budget proposed by the Federal Executive Power, from the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit.

Article 79 of the constitution states that the Chief Auditor of the Federation of the Chamber of Deputies should carry out his/her functions based on legal, definitive, impartial principles and trust, and that he/she can start a process of investigation as from the first working day of the following fiscal year.

All these faculties, together with the formal acts that the Chamber possesses – which is to legislate – make up the broad range of parliamentary control this body has.

Management



The coordinator of the PRD's Parliamentary Party in the Chamber of Deputies, Francisco Martínez Neri.

Luisa Béjar Algazi, states that management is an activity that can be assumed by parliamentarians for “facilitating the link between the agents of public administration and the citizenry, for the purpose of aiding the resolution of concrete problems arising in the course of government action or caused by different types of obstructions, in favour of persons or specific groups”.⁸¹

Although, in a strict sense, management is not a traditional function of parliamentary bodies, in recent years it has become common among the popular representatives, both of the Federal Legislative Power and the Local Legislative bodies, to carry out activities tending to foster and promote projects in favour of their constituents. Naturally, this helps them to gain the confidence of the citizenry and to carry out work close to their electors, responding to the vote they were given.

The federal deputies, through their liaison office as contemplated in the Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies,⁸² channel the demands of society to the competent organs of public administration, or take charge of them to channel them

81 Luisa Béjar Algazi, “La gestoría en la actividad parlamentaria”, *Revista Crónica Legislativa*, México, H. Cámara de Diputados, número 5, septiembre- noviembre de 1992, p. 35.

82 *Infra*

appropriately. Another mechanism of mediation between deputies and citizens is the Committee for Information, Negotiation and Complaints of the Chamber of Deputies, which was created by the Political Coordination Board on December 10th, 2009 and whose attributes are: to receive petitions from society on legislative and administrative matters.⁸³



Deputies approve reforms so that the Federal Executive can destine the remnants of the Bank of Mexico to pay off the national debt.

Management is, in this sense, an activity that has been assumed in a responsible manner by the popular representatives, who often become links with local and federal public servants, who are constantly petitioned to make positive changes in favour of their communities; without this meaning mere change in legislation.

In communities such as that of the United States of America this type of activity is known as “representation of people or persons”, in the sense that the benefit is not to the nation, but to certain specific groups.⁸⁴

83 Cfr. Laura Valencia Escamilla y Gabriel Pérez, *El vínculo de la representación: control y retroalimentación entre ciudadanos y legisladores*, México, Cámara de Diputados LXIII Legislatura, Dirección General de Servicios de Documentación Información y Análisis, Colección “La Constitución Nos Une”, 2016 p. 89.

84 Cfr. Laura Valencia Escamilla, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

One should not forget that in the Legal Framework of the Chamber of Deputies there is no express disposition for the legislators to be obliged to initiate managements in their communities; so that it is considered a private gesture, by each of the representatives. In contrast, it should be noted that there are certain local Legislatures like the States of Mexico, Jalisco and Coahuila where the Organic Laws establishes that the deputies have the right to present the demands of their constituents to the authorities.⁸⁵

In present day parliamentary practice, the management that the federal deputies undertake has a close link with the representation of the citizens, as it can continue to open channels of communication with society, so as to systematize social demands effectively.



Deputy Jesús Zambrano, accompanied by other legislators, receiving the proposed budget from the Frente Auténtico del Campo, which includes more than 40 thousand rural producers.

85 Instituto Belisario Domínguez, *Estudio sobre el proceso Legislativo en México*, Senado de la República, Marzo, 2010, p. 3

7.

LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE

In Mexico the law is the most important formal source of rights. In the federal ambit, the legislative process is envisioned in articles 71 and 72 of the Constitution and it is important to note that there are similar processes in each of the 32 federal entities.⁸⁶

The main task of the federal deputies is legislation, which implies the presentation of proposals to create, reform, repeal or abolish judicial dispositions considered necessary for social welfare and cohesion.

The legislative process is:

- Constitutional. Because it is expressly envisioned in articles 71 and 72 of the Constitution;
- Formal. Since its development and respect of the established steps is an essential element and validating the decrees that arise from these.
- Function of Government. Participation of the Federal Executive Power, local legislatures, Congress of the Union and the citizenry.
- Bi- chamber. Because it requires the participation of both federal chambers to complete and perfect the process.



The Movimiento Ciudadano parliamentary group headed by its coordinator, Dep. Clemente Castañeda Hoefflich, saluting the flag.

⁸⁶ See: Ley Orgánica del Congreso del Estado Independiente Libre y Soberano de Coahuila de Zaragoza, Ley Orgánica del Poder Legislativo del Estado Libre y Soberano de México y Ley Orgánica del Poder Legislativo del Estado de Jalisco, available on: <http://www.ordenjuridico.gob.mx/>

This function does not end with the presentation of initiatives, on the contrary, this is where the most important work begins inside the Chamber of Deputies, which is precisely the study, discussion and resolution of the work of the commissions, and allows the *Plenary Organ* to pronounce in favor or against the proposals subjected to deliberation, taking into account sufficient technical elements for the decision made is the most convenient and adequate.⁸⁷

Legal Reports or opinions (Dictámen)

A legislative collegiate act by means of which, one or more facultative commissions present a technically qualified opinion in writing to accept or reject: the minutes, a proposal for law or decree, observations made by the Federal Executive Power or the senate, the national accounts, proposals and requests for constitutional permission.

The legislative process is partly a cognitive process; a search for knowledge about a certain matter for the purpose of establishing a norm; implying the possibility of knowing about the norm itself, if it is opportune and adequate for the conduct, situation or events requiring regulation. It is also part of the system that gives certainty and security; that allows the effectiveness of the systems of control, processes and counterweights, supervision and vigilance of the Legislative power in relation to the other powers and organs envisaged in the Constitution.⁸⁸



Deputies accept the integration of the commissions for decrees, who are responsible for analysing the initiatives presented and elaborating the corresponding decrees.

⁸⁷ Instituto Belisario Domínguez, *Estudio sobre el proceso Legislativo en México*, Senado de la República, Marzo, 2010, p. 3

⁸⁸ Cfr. Elisur Arteaga Nava, *El proceso legislativo*, Revistas Colaboración Jurídicas-UNAM, p. 8. Disponible [en línea] URL: <https://revistas-colaboracion.juridicas.unam.mx/index.php/juridica/article/viewFile/11341/10388>

The norms that regulate the legislative process are designed to prevent hasty improvisations and disorder in the evaluation of the initiatives presented to the legislative organ, they tend to systematize the reading, cognizance, analysis, study, discussion and acceptance or rejection of the initiatives, in order to prevent erroneous or defective acts.⁸⁹

All matters sent to a commission should be resolved within 45 days of reception. In case of initiatives for constitutional reform, the commission has 90 days to reach a legal report or opinion, with the possibility of requesting an additional 90 days.

The Legislative process in Mexico can be understood as a collection of acts and legislative procedures, concatenated chronologically, to form laws, as well as reform the Constitution and secondary laws. It has the following characteristics:⁹⁰

- 1) It is constitutional, since its procedure is expressed in articles 71 and 72 of the Magna Carta;
- 2) It is formal, since to be valid it must respect the procedures established in the constitutional norms;
- 3) It has two chambers and requires the participation of the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Senators, except in the cases where the norms refer to the exclusive faculties of one specific Chamber.

The Federal Executive Power participates in the legislative process upon presenting initiatives, sanctions, proclamations and the publication of decrees of new laws or reforms (with the exceptions expressly stated in the Constitution;⁹¹ the local legislatures participate by presenting initiatives and by endorsing constitutional reforms; the federal deputies, senators and citizens in general participate by presenting initiatives.

In this sense, in Mexico, it was not until the politico-electoral reform of 2014 that the participation of the citizenry in presenting initiatives for reform to laws before the Federal Legislative Power, was constitutionally regulated.

Preferential Initiative

Is the initiative submitted to the Congress of the Union by the President of the Republic at the start of a period of ordinary sessions, exercising his/her exclusive faculties for preferential treatment. The Federal Executive Power can present up to two preferential initiatives per period, which should be resolved in a period of not more than 30 natural days in each Chamber.

An initiative to modify the Constitution cannot be submitted in this form.

⁸⁹ Cfr. *Ibidem*, p.9.

⁹⁰ Laura Trigueros G, et. al., *Derecho Constitucional en Diccionarios Jurídicos Temáticos*, México 2000.

⁹¹ Francisco Luna Kan (coord.), *Cuadernos de Apoyo (Terminología Legislativa)*, Cámara de Diputados LXI Legislatura.



Diego Valadés, member of the Institute of Legal Research of the UNAM, participated in a forum which analysed the possible extension of the Legislative faculties to integrate investigative commissions for all matters of public interest.

The most characteristic procedures that should be followed during the process to prepare and activate the norms are the following:

- 1) Presentation of initiative,
- 2) Sent for the initiative to be studied by the corresponding ordinary commission,
- 3) The commission's decision,
- 4) Declaration for publication of the decision (formerly known as first reading) by its publication in the *Parliamentary Gazette*,
- 5) Decision under discussion (formerly called second reading),
- 6) Discussion
- 7) Approval,
- 8) Sanction,
- 9) Proclamation and publication and
- 10) Law comes into force.

Stages of the Legislative Process

The Law is made by the legislative process, which is carried out by various organs of the State. The Legislative process follows the following stages.⁹²

92 S/A, *Etapas del proceso Legislativo*, Universidad Durango Santander, Cd. Obregón, Sonora México. Disponible [en línea] URL: <https://derechouds.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/etapas-del-proceso-legislativo.pdf>

INITIATIVE: According to article 71 of the Constitution, the presentation of initiatives for the creation, modification or repeal of laws is the competence of:⁹³

- 1) President of the Republic
- 2) Deputies and Senators of the Congress of the Union
- 3) Legislatures of the States and the City of Mexico, and
- 4) Citizens (supported by the signatures of at least 0.13% of the nominal list of electors).

These are given the faculty of promoting and presenting initiatives before the Congress of the Nation for the start of the legislative process. In this act the initiative is read before the Plenary of the Chambers and, based on its content, the Board of Directors decides which commission or commissions will be responsible for its analysis, discussion and preparation for its respective ratification, which must be approved by the majority of its members and signed by them, for it to be sent to the Presidency of the Board of Directors, to be included in the order of the day of the session.

Order of the Day

The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies is the competent organ to formulate and carry out the order of the day for sessions, acting according to principles of impartiality and objectivity. The Board of Directors receives proposals from the Political Coordination Board, from commissions, minutes from the Senate and the matters it receives from other Powers of the Union, from the States and Mexico City.



Parliamentary Coordinators of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate meet to evaluate the Legislative agenda of Congress.

93 *Idem.*

DISCUSSION: This is the act where the Plenary Session of the Chamber deliberates over the passing of a law, so as to decide whether to approve it or not and on what terms. According to article 72 constitutional, if the law is endorsed by one of the two Chambers of the Congress of the Union, this becomes the “Chamber of Origin”, then it is passed on to the “Revision Chamber”, which is called minutes by the Board of Directors, informing the Plenary Session about its reception and passing it to the commission or commissions in charge of studying it, repeating the procedure carried out by the Chamber of Origin.

It should be noted that what has been approved by the Chamber of Origin can be modified by the Revision Chamber, since this is the reason that the congress of the Union has two Chambers. It is the internal system of weights and counter weights that guarantee that the reforms and laws that are passed will have the highest possible quality and the means to attend to the problems they were created to solve.

From the point of view of Mexican constitutionalist Felipe Tena Ramírez, there are certain advantages of a bi-chamber system over a single chamber one, these are: 1. they moderate the force of the Legislative Power, which generally tends to predominate over the Executive, aiding the balance of powers; 2. in case of a conflict between the Executive and one of the Chambers, the other can intervene as mediator, and in case the conflict is the Executive with both Chambers, it is presumed that Congress will prevail; 3. the second Chamber in the legislative process, is a guarantee against the haste and errors of political passions.⁹⁴

APPROVAL: Is the act in which the Revision Chamber accepts a proposed law totally or partially. This chamber proceeds to vote, after sufficient discussion, and the approval of the law. If it is approved without modifications, it is sent to the Federal Executive Power for its sanction/ratification, proclamation and execution.⁹⁵



The Commission on Population approved the modification of the general law to verify the survival of pensioner, retirees or the beneficiaries of social programs should be validated with the CURP credential.

94 Felipe Tena Ramírez. *Derecho constitucional mexicano*, México, Porrúa, 1996, p. 270.

95 *Idem*.

In case the law as proposed by the Chamber of Origin is modified by the Revision Chamber, it then returns to the former for them to analyse the changes and if they consider them acceptable, the law is approved.

If the proposed law is approved by the Revision Chamber, this send it to the Federal Executive Power for its sanction and publication in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (DOF), which is the official Government organ for diffusion, and implementation.

SANCTION: Is the acceptance of a decree (name given to every proposed law once it is approved by the Congress of the Union) in its terms, by the Federal Executive Power, who should sanction it, once it knows the content and is in agreement with it.

The President of the Republic has only one opportunity to make observations on a decree; if h/she so decides they should be notified to the Chamber of Origin. This presidential attribute is known as the right to veto.

If the President of the Republic, a period of 30 natural days, does not inform Congress of any modification to a decree, he/she has 10 natural days to proclaim and publish the decree. At the end of this period, the decree will be considered proclaimed and the President of the Chamber of Origin will order its publication in the DOF within 10 natural days, without requiring an endorsement.⁹⁶

The sanction by the President of the Republic is by signing the document containing the decree, for this to be valid it should also be signed by the Secretary of State as the branch corresponding by law, known as the “ministerial countersignature”. The foregoing is to make this public servant co-responsible for the exact implementation of the decree, which falls in the area of his/ her competence.

⁹⁶ Article 72 of the CPEUM.

Sanction: Is the stage in the legislative process when the Executive can veto and/or make observations on the project, returning it to the Chamber of Origin for revision.

Types of vote

The legal framework of the Chamber of Deputies contemplates three types of vote by means of which the Plenary can approve the various projects for reform and new laws:

1. Absolute majority: Is the result of the sum of votes of half plus one of the Deputies present in the Hall of the Plenary. This vote is required to approve or reject legislative procedures such as projects for legal reform, integration of commissions and appointment of interim President or substitute in case of absolute absence of the President of the Republic, among others.
2. Qualified majority: Is the result of the sum of the vote of two thirds of the deputies present. Is the type of vote required to approve projects for reform and addition to the Constitution, appointments of heads of Government Organs of the Chamber of Deputies, appointments of electoral councillors of INE (National Electoral Institute) of the Head of CONEVAL (National Council for Evaluation), as well as the creation of a new federal entity, among others.

PUBLICATION: Is the act in which the decree approved and sanctioned is published and made known to those who must implement it; so that it has the complete effects for which it was created, it must be published in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (DOF).



The commission for Science and Technology, presided by José Bernardo Quezada Salas, presents an award to Carlos Antonio Santamaría Díaz, 9 year-old student, graduated from the Diploma Course of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the Faculty of Chemistry of the UNAM.

THE LAW COMING INTO FORCE: The systems for a law to come into force are successive and simultaneous. The Successive system is when the law is applicable “three days after” after its publication; adding one day for every added 40 kms. of the distance from Mexico City. (art. 3 of the Federal Civil Code). The synchronic or simultaneous system is that which sets a certain time for the application of the law (ar.4 of the Federal Civil Code), which can be either:

- a) Tacit, when no date is given for a law coming into effect, and therefore it comes into effect the day following its publication, as a general rule, and
- b) Expressed: when the exact date is stated on which the law should come into effect.

It is necessary to mention that the lapse of time between the moment of publication and that when the norm comes into effect is called *vacatio legis*. The *vacatio legis* has a great advantage, of course, it allows society to study the law in order to implement the measures it considers necessary to its fulfilment.

The opposite of the start of the **in force** period is the end, there are two forms of conclusion:

- A) Caducity/ Expiry. Occurs when the disposition contains an indication of the limit to its validity without it being necessary to pronounce its termination later. This being the case, there is caducity /expiry when:
 1. For reasons of time. This occurs when the disposition ceases due to the simple course of time; the example is in the terms of the Law of Revenue each year, starting on January 1 and concluding on December 31 that year, or the dispositions that have one year's validity. This type of law will always have some indication of the limit of its validity either explicit or implicit and is generalized.
 2. For reasons of finality. This is when the disposition meets its objective and does not need any expressly stated date for conclusion, an example of this is to be found in the transitory articles that regulate the aspects arising before and after a norm is adopted and comes into force, and once its effects cease, the article in question expires. This conclusion is inferred because it is no longer applicable and is particular.
- B) Derogation. Is the next term for conclusion of validity and consists in the norm being inapplicable because of a legal disposition or inferred. Its legal fundament is to be found in article 9 of the Federal Civil Code which states; "The law is only abrogated or derogated by another later law which expressly declares or contains total or partial dispositions incompatible with the former law."



Youths delivering an initiative of law for the regulation of marihuana to the Presidency of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies

VETO: In the case that the Federal Executive Power vetoes a decree that the Congress of the Union send for its proclamation and publication, it must be returned with observations within the next 30 natural days of its reception.

In this way, if the proposed law is rejected in total or part by the Federal Executive Power, it will be returned, with observations, to the Chamber of Origin, who must discuss it again and if it is approved by two thirds of the total number of votes, it will be sent to the Revision Chamber and if it is sanctioned by the same majority, the project of law will be returned to the Executive for its proclamation.

Congress can over-rule the presidential veto by submitting the decree to the vote, and if it is approved by two thirds of the members present in both chambers, it will become Law despite the objection of the Executive Power.

The President of the Republic does not have faculties of observation or veto in the following matters:

- 1) Constitutional reforms.
- 2) The exclusive faculties of each of the Chambers.
- 3) The faculties of the Permanent Commission.
- 4) The faculties of Congress or of one of the chambers acting as electoral body, jury or prosecutor.
- 5) The faculties of Congress in unique assembly.



April 21, 2016 the Chamber of Deputies in ordinary session kept a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the accident at the Pajaritos petro-chemical plant, in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz.

Legal Framework

The Mexican Government Organs must follow the steps or stages established in the Constitution – Fundamental Law in order to produce a law. The legislative process starts with the legal framework, and follows seven stages. It is ruled by:

- I. The Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico.
- II. Organic Law of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico.
- III. Regulations of the Chamber of Deputies.
- IV. Regulation of the Senate of the Republic.
- V. Regulations for the Internal Government of the General Congress of the United States of Mexico.
- VI. Agreements of the Government Organs.
- VII. Parliamentary Practice.



In San Lázaro, the Commission for Social Development, the Political Coordination Board, civil organizations, representatives of the government and experts in civic technology and digital inclusion, signed an agreement for Open Parliamentary Collaboration, in an attempt to make legislative work in the social field more transparent.

8.

ECONOMIC
FACULTIES OF
THE CHAMBER
OF DEPUTIES

The modern theory of the separation of functions, derived from the doctrinal bases of classic theory regarding the separation of powers,⁹⁷ currently continues to be a fundamental reference to explain the way the State exercises and distributes its original activities so as to organize its essential elements, which are none other than territory, population and government.

According to Carré de Malberg, “the functions of power are the several forms by which the dominating activity of the State manifests itself; dictating the law, for example, is one of the many exercises of the state’s authority, or the function of power”⁹⁸

In this way the functions of the State – understood as those substantive tasks derived from state and sovereign power – are distributed in public powers and organs that facilitate the activities of the government, principally the legislative, administrative and judiciary powers.

Nevertheless, the classical or primary functions attributed to each of the public powers, should not be understood in a restrictive manner, since today the President of the Republic, the Congress of the Union and organs of the Judiciary Power, can undertake – without transgressing the ambit of their faculties – the materially legislative, administrative and judiciary functions granted by the Constitution and the judicial orders proceeding from it.

97 Cfr. Jorge Fernández Ruiz, *Derecho Administrativo y administración pública*, Tercera Edición, México, Editorial Porrúa, 2009, p. 50

98 Raymond Carré de Malberg, *Teoría general del Estado*, México, FCE, 1948, p. 249.



Members of the Commission of the Treasury and Public Credit approve the decree establishing that the federal government needs the approval of the Senate to take any action related to the Constitutive Convention of the International Investment Corporation.

For the Legislative Power and its Chambers, the theory of separation of functions is fundamental to understand the nature of its faculties, which are not only designed to modify or create norms, but also other great aspects related the correct function and organization of the Mexican State.

Dr. Francisco Berlin Valenzuela says that faculty “is the capability to act legally, which translates as ‘can do’. By the faculty granted to a person or institution certain attributes are given for carrying out certain acts derived from specific powers established by the normative order”.⁹⁹

As we have seen, the *functions* derive from the original and sovereign power of the State; while the faculties assist in the realization of specific acts, as understood as “the power or ability to carry out a task”, that is, they determine which organs are legally invested to be able to realize an act,¹⁰⁰ and which are granted to the Legislative power and its Chambers.

99 Francisco Berlín Valenzuela (Coord.), *Diccionario Universal de Términos Parlamentarios*, segunda edición, México, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Cámara de Diputados, LVI Legislatura, 1998, p. 309.

100 Cfr. Rolando Tamayo y Salmorán, *Elementos para una Teoría General del Derecho. Introducción al Estudio de la Ciencia Jurídica*, México, Editorial Themis, UNAM, 1992, pp. 60-61.

In this sense, there are some academics who have carried out an exercise to classify the faculties belonging to the Chamber of Deputies and which are organized in diverse ambits, like the legislative, budgetary, jurisdictional, administrative, ratification, about the Executive and Taxes, among others.¹⁰¹ The foregoing, without forgetting those authors who from scientific analysis systematize its faculties as exclusive, as part of the Permanent Commission, electoral, jurisdictional,¹⁰² as well as political, treasury, etc.¹⁰³



The under-secretary of the Treasury, Fernando Aportela Rodríguez, appearing in San Lázaro to state that the cut of 132 billion pesos would not affect programs of national security or social development.

From the foregoing, we can start to explain that, apart from those already mentioned, there are some voices that classify the faculties of the Chamber of Deputies in economics, where the parliamentary activities concur, specifically on matters of the budget, finance, auditing and control;¹⁰⁴ which, in other words, allow the influence in many ways on planning and direction of a correct public policy for

101 Vid. Salvador O. Nava Gomar (Coord.), *Manuel de Técnica Legislativa*, México, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Tomo II, pp. 12-22 y 42-45; y José Luis Camacho Vargas,

102 Cfr. Jorge Moreno González y José Luis Sánchez Barragán, *Manual de Atribuciones Constitucionales del Supremo Poder de la Federación y sus Temas Afines*, México, s/e, 2001, pp. 31-35.

103 Vid. José Luis Camacho Vargas, *El ABC de la Cámara de Diputados*, México, IMEPOL, 2008, pp. 34 y 35.

104 Cfr. Carlos Norberto Valero Flores, *El capítulo económico de la Constitución y el desarrollo de México*, México, Cámara de Diputados LX Legislatura, CEDIP, Serie Verde Temas Económicos, diciembre de 2008, pp. 25-56.

the administration of the wealth of the State, which can be classified as a group of faculties for political control.

The appointment of the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Debt and the higher employees of the Treasury

The system of weights and counterweights of our political system allows the federal public powers the possibility of exerting the controls necessary for making strategic decisions – those that do not only focus on the legislative area, but also on matters of the budget and economy–, facilitating a truly democratic correlation between the public powers.¹⁰⁵

The ratification of the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit is one of the most recent faculties to be constitutionally conceded to the Chamber of Deputies; with this the legislators can evaluate the pertinence of the appointment made by the President of the Republic. This is a central administrative decision that will broaden the responsibility of the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit before the Chamber, who must respond with greater commitment and periodicity about the public policy that the nation adopts in this matter.



On September 8, 2016, upon receiving the Economic Package for 2017, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Javier Bolaños Aguilar, affirms that the Chamber will center its analysis on the revision of the areas that could be affected by the cuts, in order to stop those that would affect the most vulnerable classes.

105 The principle of division of powers is founded on article 49 of the constitution, with antecedents pre-dating the Independence of Mexico. Other historical sources are: the Constitución Política de la Monarquía Española de 1812; the Constitución de Apatzingán de 1814; the Plan de la Constitución Política de la Nación Mexicana of 1823 y el Acta Constitutiva de la Federación Mexicana de 1824. Cfr. Miguel Carbonell, *Antecedentes y Desarrollo del Principio de División de Poderes en las Constituciones de México*, México, Editorial Porrúa, 2011, p. 19.

In this way, an unquestionable political aperture for dialogue would be established, at a time when the legislative majorities are no longer a reality; they could refer to all the parliamentary groups constituted during the Legislature so that they can discuss the viability of the professional profiles, supported by the Executive and who aspire to the post. In addition, during the ratification the political agendas of economy of each ideological force in the Chamber can be contrasted, and their focus can be evaluated, policies that an aspiring candidate intends to adopt inside the public service.

Another positive aspect is that, at the beginning of the Presidential term of office, there should be an inclusive dialogue about the formation of policy for the Treasury and the economy of the country, or rather, that the positions of only one ideological front should not predominate, making it necessary to pact with the majorities.

The ratification of the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit is founded on the constitutional disposition referring to the exclusive faculties of the Chamber of Deputies, specifically in article 74, fraction III; and it is complemented with article 89, fraction II, which refers to the faculties and obligations of the President of the Republic.¹⁰⁶



José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, secretary of the Treasury, informs the legislators that the Economic Packet for 2017 envisions a cut in expenditure of 239 billion pesos; 2 to 3% growth of the GDP, inflation of 3 %, rate of exchange 18.2 pesos to the dollar, price of the barrel of oil 43 dollars.

106 *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, en Cámara de Diputados, LXIII Legislatura del Congreso de la Unión. http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/1_240217.pdf

As this is a recent reform, its transitory regime says that this faculty will be applicable as from December 1, 2018, the date when the President, who is elected in the elections of July 1 of this year will take office.¹⁰⁷ As from that date, it will be necessary for the Executive to send the Chamber of Deputies the nominee for secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit for him/her to be ratified by this parliamentary body, unless the option of a government of coalition is taken.

If the Plenary of the Chamber of Deputies rejects the appointment of the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit on two occasions, the President of the Republic could designate a person he/she considers most apt to take the position, without the need of ratification by the representatives of the nation. With this mechanism it is possible to overcome the lack of a head of the respective Secretariat; however, it would generate a natural confrontation between the Executive and the parliamentary groups of the opposition.

What is a Government of Coalition?

According to professors Daniel Barceló and Diego Valadés, “today, governments of coalition are a constant as much in parliamentary democracies as in presidential democracies of all the world that operate – the same as in Mexico – in the context of a system of multiple political parties. The two existential notes of a government of coalition are: the formal conformation before national representation of a common government program between the coalesced political parties, and the appointment of a plural cabinet of high functionaries that integrate the coalesced parties to take charge of its conception and implementation under the direction of an Executive Power democratically elected by the people”.¹⁰⁸

When an option for a Government coalition is taken, The Senate of the Republic has the exclusive faculty of ratifying the appointments of the Secretaries of State, with the exception of the heads of National Defence and the Navy.¹⁰⁹

107 S/A, “Calendario Electoral 2018 (Versión Preliminar)”, in Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación (TEPJF), en Poder Judicial de la Federación, México, <http://www.trife.gob.mx/informacion-electoral/calendario-electoral?tid=All&eid=All>

108 Daniel Barceló y Diego Valadés (Coords.), *Estudio sobre el sistema presidencial mexicano que contiene anteproyecto de ley del gobierno de coalición*, México, Cámara de Diputados LXIII Legislatura, CEDIP, UNAM, 2016, p. 19.

109 *Vid.* Article 76, fraction II, of the Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos

It should be pointed out that the Chamber of Deputies, as the collegiate body that has the exclusive faculty of approving the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation - and, therefore, exerting control in matters of economics – is granted the possibility of analysing politically and professionally, the pertinence of the profiles of persons to be approved for ratification and appointment to certain government posts.

In case the President of the Republic decides to form a plural government of coalition, in any moment of the administration, it would be understood that the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit should be put to discussion, consensus and negotiated by the parliamentary groups that form the Senate of the Republic, in accordance with article 76, fraction II of the Constitution.

During the debates held in the interior of the Legislative power, it was argued that the ratification of the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit was aimed at strengthening our democracy, as well as modernizing the institutions of the Mexican State; since this would allow for greater participation of the political structures; fostering the co-responsibility among public powers and government organs in the execution of public responsibilities.¹¹⁰



Deputies of the Morena Party, among them the vice-coordinator Virgilio Caballero Pedraza, offering their support to ex- migrant workers claiming back pay they were owed after working for years in the U.S.A.

110 Cfr. *Legal opinion of the United Commissions on Constitutional points; State Department; Reform of the State; Legislative Studies First, and Legislative Studies second, in relation to the initiatives of a Project for decree whereby diverse articles of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico are reformed and several articles are added on politico-electoral matters.*, México, Senado de la República LXII Legislatura, 2 de diciembre de 2013, pp. 47-60.

The above confirms the intention of establishing greater weights and counterweights, to regulate the power and control among the organs of government, since this way democratic decisions can be made. The Executive will be prevented from appointing a high level public servant, without the previous evaluation of the parliamentary organ, which must fulfil its specialized task in this matter.

In this way, a permanent vigilance can be exerted by the popular representatives over the economic decisions adopted by the President of the Republic, keeping in mind their obligation to make them coincide with the general interests of the Mexican people.

In the same fraction III of article 74 of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, it also mentions that it is an exclusive faculty of the Chamber of Deputies to approve the appointment of the higher employees of the Treasury.

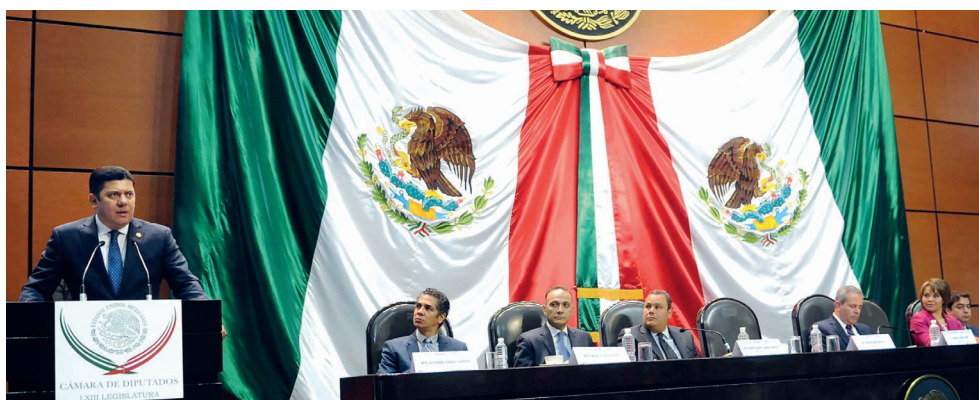
The approval of the Law of Revenue

The Law of Revenue is the legal order that the President proposes annually to the Chamber of Deputies as Chamber of origin and which contains the bases of the government's fiscal and economic policy, to capture the resources with which the organs of the Mexican government function. This law comes into force from January 1st to December 31st. of every year.¹¹¹

As its nature is legal this ordainment is the result of the steps followed in an ordinary legislative process for its approval. In this sense, according to the exclusive faculty of the Chamber of Deputies, this parliamentary body will read it in the first instance, as they receive it annually from the President of the Republic at the latest by September 8th. of each year; or by December 15th, when it is the year for renewal of the Federal Executive Power.¹¹² Once the deputies have approved the project for the Law of Revenue, it is sent to the Senate of the Republic for analysis and if it is the case, approval.

111 Francisco Berlín Valenzuela (Coord.), op cit., p. 416.

112 As from 2024, the deadline for the President to take office and start his mandate by sending the economic packet is November 15th.



In the hall of the “Legislators of the Republic”, of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, the International Forum is held “The Legislative Power in its role facing the Budgetary Process”.

In this way, the deputies analyze its adequacy to cover the budgetary needs of the following year. The internal process of analysis of the commissions and the approval of the decree by the Plenary Session of the Chamber of Deputies should not extend beyond October 20th; and the same situation occurs in the Senate of the Republic which has up to October 31st to approve it.

Later, it is sent to the President of the Republic for sanction and publication in the DOF, coming into force on the first minute of January 1st of the following year.

The approval of the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation

This is one of the most transcendental parliamentary faculties of the Chamber of Deputies, as it allows them to analyse, discuss and, in its case, to modify and approve, the project for the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation presented by the Federal Executive Power, which provides for the necessary expenditure for the correct operation of the different federal government dependencies, as well as the federal entities, municipalities and autonomous organs.

In this way, the popular representatives in the interior of the Chamber of Deputies are obliged to carry out a collegiate analysis to determine the pertinence of the sums destined for the federal entities and public organs that exercise a state function, and make the necessary adjustments to meet the principle needs of the nation.¹¹³

113 Doctor Jorge Sayeg Helú recognized that the Chamber of Deputies was invested with the exclusive faculty to analyze and approve the Budget, since its original functions are related to the financial control of the public administration. *Cfr.* Jorge Sayeg Helú, *El Poder Legislativo Mexicano*, México, Editorial Trillas, 1991, p. 176.

According to professor Enrique Sánchez Bringas, the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation represents “administrative acts determined by article 74 of the Constitution, to be carried out by the Chamber of Deputies without the intervention of the Senate [...]”, and he adds “the approval of the Budget for Expenditure is of the exclusive competence of the Chamber of Deputies because it does not constitute a law [...]”.¹¹⁴

But, *what is the Budget for the Expenditure of the Federation?* It is an essentially administrative act of the Chamber of Deputies, whose objective is to authorize the legal bases to effect the distribution of public funds to the institutions, thus removing the responsibility from the Executive.¹¹⁵

In this sense, Dra. María de la Luz Mijangos Borja mentions that, in accordance with the legal nature of the budget, the parliamentary body has the function of control and political vigilance, not precisely of a legislative character, but rather an administrative act, which does not contains judicial norms.¹¹⁶



requested an interview with the Secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit for him to explain the Economic Packet for 2017.

It is important to point out that the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation is

114 Doctor Enrique Sánchez Bringas shows that, in parliamentary studies, the conceptual analysis of the Budget has been analyzed simply, Enrique Sánchez Bringas, *Derecho Constitucional*, octava edición, México, Editorial Porrúa, 2003, pp. 454 -457.

115 Cfr. Gabino Fraga, *Derecho Administrativo*, México, Editorial Porrúa, 1980, p. 333.

116 Vid. Reyes Tépac Marcial, “Análisis de las Facultades que tiene la Cámara de Diputados en materia de modificación y aprobación del presupuesto de egresos de la federación”, México, Cámara de Diputados LIX Legislatura, Centro de Documentación, Información y Análisis, p.8.

financed by the public resources collected periodically by the Secretariat of the Treasury and Public Credit (Inland Revenue in the U.S.A.), according to the exercise of the policy that the State determines for the tax payers. In this sense, it is important to comment that the Congress has the faculty to approve the Law of Revenue, according to its opinion, to obtain the necessary public resources; this in accordance with article 73, fraction VII, of the Constitution.

In addition, the Secretariat of the Treasury and Public Credit belongs to the Centralized Federal Public Administration, in charge of preparing the program for federal public spending and the projected Budget for Expenditure of the Federation and presenting it to the President of the Republic annually.

The legal foundation for the approval of the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation is contemplated in articles 74, fraction IV, and 75 of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, which states that the deputies shall examine, discuss and, if necessary, modify and approve the sums assigned for the exercise of the functions of public branches and entities, the same as their distribution and destination.

In this respect and to give an example, the Budget for Expenditure of the Federation for the Tax Exercise 2017 (PEF 2017 for its acronym in Spanish) contemplates under its headings, different matters that help us to understand its nature, such as assignments; the operation of programs and other dispositions regarding the tax exercise.¹¹⁷ It is important to say that the analysis of the annual programmable sums that the Secretariat of the Treasury and Public Credit, the Budget for Expenditure can be divided in sections, the administrative branches, the general branches, the entities for direct control, the entities for indirect control, the productive enterprises of the State, the programs and projects for investment, as well as a volume referring to the analysis of posts and remunerations.¹¹⁸

117 *Vid. Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2017*, México, Cámara de Diputados, Published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación, November 30, 2016.

118 *Cfr. Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2017*, Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público.



The Sub-commission for Trade and Development of Markets, whose members wish to transform and modernize the agriculture sector of the country, by optimizing on the mechanisms to place its products on the market.

The foregoing helps us to understand the federal competence in budgetary matters, as well as the classification of the areas of public administration that receive resources for their correct function; nevertheless, one should not forget that the Budget programs public expenses specifically and tentatively.¹¹⁹

The programming of public expenditure can extend over many years, principally those projects of investment and infrastructure, which should be contemplated when planning subsequent Budgets for Expenditure.

The Law of Revenue, in the words of Dra. Yolanda Hernández Bucio, is the legal instrument that “combines the economic considerations and the Tax Policy that inspires them, with the intention of Economic Policy, the Policy of the Treasury, Tax policy, policy of Tax breaks, Monetary policy and Credit policy, as well as the Policy of the Public Debt and Customs Policy”; she makes clear that it contemplates “the estimated revenue that the Federation will receive, from the collection of taxes, contributions for improvements, from the concept of rights, products, exploitation, contributions to security”, among others.¹²⁰

Now, as to the specific process of approval, it is necessary to mention that the

119 Cfr. Javier Juárez Jonapa, *Derecho constitucional II*, México, Red Tercer Milenio, 2012, p. 71-73.

120 Ma. Yolanda Hernández Bucio y Jesús Castillo Rodríguez, *Apuntes de Derecho Fiscal I*, México, Universidad Michoacana, s/a, pp. 20-23.

project should be proposed by the Secretariat of the Treasury and Public Credit to the President of the Republic, who if he/she considers it to be pertinent, will send it to the Chamber of Deputies, together with the initiative of the Law of Revenue and possible changes in matters of taxation, components which receive the name of *Economic Packet*, which must be delivered to the Congress of the Union at the latest by September 8th each year.¹²¹ When the Federal Executive starts his/her term of office, this packet must arrive at the latest by December 15th, and as from 2024 at the latest by November 15th.¹²²

Once the project of the Budget of Expenditure of the Federation for the exercise of the following year and once the Law of Revenue has been received by both federal chambers, the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies must send it to the Commission for the Treasury and Public Credit to prepare it for its respective opinion. For the participation and democratic analysis of the project, the commission must emit the lineaments to regulate the participation and analysis by the support organs, as well as the presentation of petitions founded on it. In addition, in order to achieve a democratic analysis, it can summon public servants of the Federal Public Administration as well as Autonomous Organisms, the Judiciary Power and federal entities, municipalities and other interested parties, to declare publicly.



The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies at the ceremony of the flag to commemorate the start of the War of Independence, September 1810, and its end in September 1821.

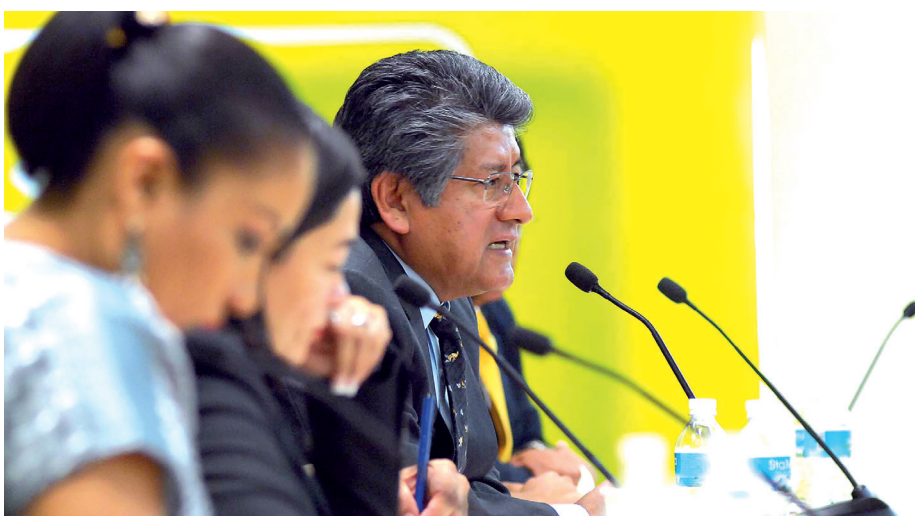
Once the project for decree is approved by the majority of its members, the

¹²¹ Cfr Reyes Tépac Marcial, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹²² The Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico envisions that there might be a postponement in the presentation of the Law of Revenue and in the Project for the Budget of Expenditure, when mediation in a request by the Executive is sufficiently justified by the Chamber of the Permanent Commission, and the Secretary of the Treasury personally informs the Chamber of Deputies of the reasons.

Commission for the Budget and Public Accounts must send it to the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Deputies for it to be included in the *Order of the Day* and it is put to the consideration of the Plenary Session, for general discussion first and then in detail. If there are correction, it is the respective commission which is responsible for making the necessary adjustments.

The Chamber of Deputies will have a limited time for the approval of the Budget of Expenditure of the Federation, November 15th; which will give it sufficient time to solve any disagreement which might arise between the political forces represented in the collegiate body. This allows time to get the approval of the Budget for the Expenditure of the Federation, a month and a half before it comes into force.



The president of the Political Coordination Board, Francisco Martínez Fierro, claimed that the Economic Packet 2017 proposed cuts of 27 billion pesos to the rural sector, he demanded that the Legislative should modify the Executive's proposal.

The process described above gained great significance for the whole nation, since this is a way to make decision making more democratic so as to program and distribute public sources correctly, where the Chamber acts as a control to analyse the concurrence of proposals and the soundness of their bases, and national reality.

The revision of Public Accounts

The economic faculties of the Chamber of Deputies, as we have seen, constitute a parliamentary control mechanism that promotes democratic decision making

in financial matters¹²³ among public powers, allowing the direct incidence in the political appointment of the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit, the approval of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Federation, as well as the investigation and revision of Public Accounts which contains the exercise of the Budget by the organs of public administration.

The revision and investigation of Public Accounts is one of the most important tasks carried out by the Legislative Power, which entails permanent vigilance and control of accounts, of the registers of institutions and persons obliged by law, as well as the revision of the resources that integrate the public treasury.



The Chief Auditor of the Federation, Juan Manuel Portal Martínez, meeting with the Commission of Vigilance of the (ASF for its acronym in Spanish), presided by Dep. Luis Maldonado Venegas, to analyse the Report of the Results of the Superior Investigation of the Public Accounts for 2014.

Dr. César Camacho reminds us that, in the beginning, the Revision of Public Accounts was a faculty shared between the Senate of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies,¹²⁴ as set down in article 73, fraction XXX, of the original text of the Constitution of 1917,¹²⁵ however, we should not forget that article 65, fraction I,

123 Doctor César Camacho, comments “the financial function, in its broadest sense, does not only approve the public revenue and expenditure, but it also supervises the exercise of these funds; the manner in which the budget is exercised, and whether it meets the parameters authorized or not” César Camacho, “Comentario al artículo 74” en *S/A, Derechos del pueblo mexicano. México a través de sus constituciones*, novena edición, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2016, Sección Tercera, Tomo IX, pp. 253 y 254

124 *Cfr. Ibidem*, p. 258.

125 The original text of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, states in article 73, fraction XXX, that it was the faculty of the Congress to examine annually the accounts presented by the President of the Republic, an examination that included not only conformity of the amounts spent in the Budget, but also the exactitude and justification of such expenditure; however, this disposition was derogated by decree published in the DOF on October 24, 1942. *S/A, Primer Centenario de la Constitución del Pueblo Mexicano 1917-2017*, sexta edición, México, Cámara de Diputados LXIII Legislatura, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2017, p. 313.

also alludes to the presentation of this instrument, which is received specifically by the Chamber of Deputies, within 10 days of the opening of sessions.

Some years later, various legal reforms were made to finally leave this faculty in the hands of the representatives of the nation, that is, the deputies; who carry out the revision of the Public Accounts by means of the Chief Accountancy of the Treasury, an investigative organ depending from the Chamber of Deputies who did not have the attributes to impose sanctions.¹²⁶ No doubt, this was the direct antecedent of the entity for the superior investigation of the federation, which was created by constitutional decree and published in the *DOF* on July 30, 1999 and which was invested with technical and managerial autonomy for the exercise of its attributes.¹²⁷

The foregoing was the product of the evolution of our institutions that has allowed us to progress toward a relationship based on transparency, accountability and impartiality in the exercise of these faculties, giving preference to the technical capacity of the organ responsible for carrying out a correct revision of the information coming from the expenditure of the institutions that make up the State.



The Commission for Infrastructure, presided by Jorge Estefan Chidiac, gave his opinion about the contents of the Report of the Results of the Superior Revision and Investigation of Public Accounts for 2014 on the subject of Public Works. He suggested reinforcing planning in the sector.

126 Cfr. Manuel Solares Mendiola, *Auditoría Superior de la Federación: antecedentes y perspectiva jurídica*, México, IJJ/UNAM, 2004, p. 199.

127 Cfr. Gregorio Guerrero Pozas, “Contaduría Mayor de Hacienda de la Cámara de Diputados”, en *Gaceta Mexicana de Administración Pública Estatal y Municipal*, México, Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública, Número 64, 2002, p. 178.

When we talk about Public Accounts, we are referring to the instrument presented by the Federal Executive, in its character as head of Federal Public Administration, formally every year, which contains “the compilation of information for the year (from January 1 to December 31 each year) regarding accounts, budgets and programming, which allows the public institutions responsible for the operations, as well as the investigators, academics and citizens in general, access to the information of the evolution of public resources, strengthening accountability and transparency in the management of public finances”.¹²⁸ However, this does not prevent the Chief Auditor of the Federation from revising the public expenditure at any time of the States, municipalities, Mexico City, the Mayors, as well as the resources of the federation that are destined and are exercised by any entity, person, public or private, those transferred to trust funds, funds, mandates, public or private.¹²⁹

The Public Accounts should be presented by the President of the Republic to the Chamber of Deputies, at the latest by April 30th of the following year. It should not be forgotten that the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico contemplates the possibility that the Federal Executive would ask the Chamber of Deputies for an extension and submit reasons, but this should not exceed 30 natural days for the presentation of the Public Accounts. In this case, the Chamber of Deputies can request the presence of the secretary of the Treasury and Public Credit to explain the considerations verbally.

The origins of the Public Accounts are to be found latently in the Constitution of the United States of America of 1787, in the first article, section nine, numeral 7, which remains in force to this day and which indicates that a statement and ordered accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the Public Treasury should be published periodically,¹³⁰ which functions as a constitutional precedent.

Subsequently, the Chief Auditor of the Federation is obliged to present the General Executive Report of the result of the Superior Investigation of the Public Accounts before the Chamber of Deputies, for the evaluation of everything related to the

128 Sistema de Información Legislativa, “Cuenta Pública”, on Internet website Sistema de Información Legislativa de la Secretaría de Gobernación <http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/Glosario/definicionpop.php?ID= 59>, Consultada el 3 de junio de 2017 a las 9:19 horas.

129 Prof. José Luis Camacho Vargas mentions that as from the anti-corruption reform, published in the DOF on May 27, 2015, new mechanisms were introduced to focus on the reduction of times to start the process of investigation, which today can begin on the first working day of the next tax year. José Luis Camacho Vargas, *Apuntes de Derecho Parlamentario Mexicano*, op cit., p. 285

130 Cfr. Jacinto Faya Viesca, “Evolución Constitucional y Significado Político de la Cuenta Pública en México” in *Revista de Administración Pública*, México, Octubre-Diciembre, Número 44, 1980, p. 72.

exercise of federal resources by the executive organs; a process which should end before October 31 of the year following its presentation.



“The Political Constitution should be the means for social transformation” declared the coordinator of the deputies of the PRI party, Dr. César Camacho, during the presentation of a facsimile of the Carta Magna.

To sum up, in article 74, fraction VI, of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, the constitutional foundation that confirms the faculty of the Chamber of Deputies, which is fundamental for parliamentary practice, as it allows the control and evaluation of the results the financial management of the obliged entities, as well confirming if the criteria indicated in the Budget have been met; as well as being able to verify the fulfilment of the objectives contained in the institutional programs.¹³¹

The investigation of the Public Accounts by the Chamber of Deputies, by means of the Chief Auditor of the Federation, will verify that there be no discrepancy between revenue and expenditure, determining the responsibilities of public servants and other persons involved, and making recommendation to strengthen the transparency of its management. In this sense, the work of the Chief Auditor of the Federation is also a key part of the parliamentary activity, since it aids the popular representatives in obtaining opportune, reliable and objective information about the use of federal resources by the employees of the state, which is the essential work of the investigator.

131 Cf. Article 74, fraction VI, of the Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos.



At dawn on October 20, 2016 the Commission for The treasury and Public Credit passed the Law of Revenue and the Taxes for 2017, forecasting the rate of exchange from 18.20 to 18.62 pesos to the dollar.

Today, thanks to the reforms on matters of anti-corruption, the Chief Auditor of the Federation can investigate in real time or over the two preceding years a tax exercise, eliminating the restrictions of checking yearly and past years, to achieve greater transparency and accountability.



In San Lázaro, the Special Commission for Vigilance of Public Expenditure and Public Debt of the States and Municipalities, takes office headed by Pablo Basáñez García; also present is the coordinator of the PRI's parliamentary group César Camacho.

9.

PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

We live in a globalized society where there are practically no human activities that do not affect others directly or indirectly on some point of the planet. Apart from technological progress that allows us instantaneous communication irrespective of where we are, the flexibility of borders, the massive flux of persons, goods and capital have also contributed to this phenomenon. This obliges the different legal systems in charge of regulating social coexistence to equip themselves in order to fulfil their functions in a global society.

In this context, the concept of “parliamentary diplomacy” gathers force. In general terms it refers to the need of the legislative powers of the different States have to conform an international concert, to extend links of support and mutual understanding so as to legislate in parallel to the tendencies set by this vertiginous 21st century.

There are many challenges and problems that we share on a planetary level, from the respect and defense of human rights to the indefatigable struggle against organized crime. This is why it is necessary that every country should adopt a legal framework which is coordinated internationally, to allow us to interact efficiently and harmoniously in face of shared threats.

Dr. Francisco Vallejos de la Barra, says that parliamentary diplomacy is the regular and coherent international activity that the parliamentarians develop to reach certain objectives.

Federico Vallejos de la Barra, “La diplomacia parlamentaria: un nuevo instrumento en la ejecución de la política exterior de los Estados”, in *Diplomacia*, Chile, Academia Diplomática de Chile, enero-marzo, 2006, num. 97, pp.80 y 81.



Ambassadors of the European Union meet in San Lázaro with deputies of the Commission for Foreign Relations, headed by Victor Manuel Giorgana Jiménez, commenting on recent terrorist attacks in different countries.

Parliamentary Diplomacy is an intervention or participation of the Legislative Power and its organs in the definition, control and execution of the State's foreign policy, as well as designing the principles of the institutional and informal relations that link it to the Legislative Powers of other countries and their members."

Lic. Fernando Solana

The Chamber of Deputies, as part of the Congress of the Union, has a multiplicity of functions in its interior which do not only, study, analyze and if it is the case approve together with its co-legislators, the proposals to modify norms; but also, and very particularly, this collegiate body exercises other activities of an administrative or jurisdictional nature, which allow for a better function of the State.

[Box – rosa viejo] Parliamentary Diplomacy is an intervention or participation of the Legislative Power and its organs in the definition, control and execution of the State's foreign policy, as well as designing the principles of the institutional and informal relations that link it to the Legislative Powers of other countries and their members."

Lic. Fernando Solana

There is no single way of carrying out parliamentary diplomacy. There are many paths open to approach other legislatures in pursuit of a beneficial exchange. In Mexico, for example the Chamber of Deputies has explored different ways to approach its counter-parts on a global level.



The Mexico-Vietnam Friendship Group headed by Dep. Claudia Corichi García, with the lady Ambassador of Vietnam, Le Linh Lan, confirming the links of friendship and cooperation between these two countries.

In recent legislatures, the number of points of agreement in matters of foreign relations has increased exponentially. According to the System of Legislative Information, in the LVII Legislature there were 65 points of agreement related to Mexican foreign policy. In LVIII there were 176 and in the LIX the number reached 389.¹³² This growth indicates, on the one hand, the interest of the legislators in participating in the process of decision making in foreign policy and, on the other hand, the interest in supervising and controlling the Executive in these tasks.

This is how the bases for parliamentary diplomacy are set so that the Chamber of Deputies can develop it for the good of the nation. In these activities we can mention the participation of the legislators in international organizations such as the Inter-parliamentary Union, inter-parliamentary meetings, friendship groups with other countries and the activities that Mexican members of Congress carry out outside the legislative organ. International efforts are increasing for coordinating and systematizing the state legislatures so as to make the fundamental laws of humankind valid beyond frontiers.

This way, parliamentary diplomacy constitutes a complement to government diplomacy, supporting its initiatives and contributing to cooperation in the broadest

132 <http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/portal>

political sense. This can be effected by the Presidents of the legislative chambers, who make official visits of a bi-lateral nature, to their counterparts to stimulate parliamentary relations at the highest level. Their agenda includes attendance at important forums organized by their peers, such as the World Conference of Parliamentary Presidents or the Conference of Parliamentary Presidents of the World, which take place every 4 years.



An encounter in San Lázaro between legislators of Mexico and the U.S.A. stressing the importance of dealing with matters of migration, trade relations, economic growth and renewable energy, as well as the development of both nations.

Another expression of parliamentary diplomacy is the inter-parliamentary meetings, these are the encounters of permanent delegations or occasional parliamentary representatives in forums and parliamentary assemblies of world instances, like the International Parliamentary World Union, which today has 162 members world-wide and constitutes the parliamentary equivalent of the United Nations Organization. The Mexican Federal Legislative Power joined in 1925, and has maintained an active participation in its work since then.

It also participates in groups like the Euro-Latin-American Parliamentary Assembly or the Latin-American Parliament, which comprises the Congresses of all the countries in Latin-America and the Caribbean and acts as a consultant organ.

The Congress of the Union fulfils an active role in these organisms whose work is to deliberate and propose, and whose resolutions constitute valuable contributions for the work of the organization of the United Nations, for regional inter-governmental organisms. Also, Mexican Federal Legislators participate in the Asia-Pacific

Parliamentary Forum – a counterpart of the Asia-Pacific Forum for Economic Cooperation – and in the Ibero-American Parliamentary Summit Conference that takes place at the same time as the Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Governments.

In the same way, Mexico participates in the Parliamentary Global Network of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), created in 2009 for the purpose of incorporating the parliamentarians of the member states into dealing with matters of priority such as competence, sustainable development, sponsoring free trade, comparative advantages and productivity. Reference should be made to the Inter-parliamentary Commission of the Pacific Alliance.

Evidently, parliamentary groups can dialogue more directly and informally, which widens the scope of traditional diplomacy. At the same time the Chamber of Deputies participates in networks of parliamentary cooperation such as Parliamentary World Action and the Network of Parliamentary Women of the Americas.

The Friendship Groups

The friendship groups are temporary collegiate organs who hope to understand and follow-up the bi-lateral links between Mexico and other countries. Their creation and integration was proposed by the Political Coordination Board and confirmed by the Plenary.



Trade between Mexico and the Irish Republic is worth a billion dollars annually, as reported by Mónica Rodríguez Della Vecchia, president of the Friendship Group of these two countries.

Just as happens with other support organs, the friendship groups have their Administrative Board consisting of a president and vice-presidents to coordinate tasks.

Friendship Groups	
1. Germany	37. Estonia
2. Angola	38. Ethiopia
3. Saudi Arabia	39. The Philippines
4. Algeria	40. Finland
5. Argentina	41. France
6. Armenia	42. Georgia
7. Australia	43. Ghana
8. Austria	44. Greece
9. Azerbaijan	45. Guatemala
10. Bangladesh	46. Haiti
11. Belize	47. Holland
12. Byelorussia	48. Honduras
13. Bolivia	49. Hungary
14. Brazil	50. India
15. Bulgaria	51. Indonesia
16. Belgium	52. Iraq
17. Canada	53. Ireland
18. Chile	54. Iran
19. China	55. Israel
20. Cyprus	56. Italy
21. Colombia	57. Jamaica
22. North Korea	58. Japan
23. South Korea	59. Jordan
24. Costa Rica	60. Kazakhstan
25. Ivory Coast	61. Kenia
26. Croatia	62. Kuwait
27. Cuba	63. Estonia
28. Denmark	64. Libya
29. Ecuador	65. Lithuania
30. Egypt	66. Luxemburg
31. El Salvador	67. The Lebanon
32. Arab Emirates	68. Malaysia
33. Slovakia	69. Morocco
34. Slovenia	70. Mongolia
35. Spain	71. Nicaragua
36. United States of America	72. Nigeria
73. Norway	87. Rumania

74. New Zealand	88. Russia
75. Pakistan	89. Serbia
76. Palestine	90. Singapore
77. Panama	91. South Africa
78. Paraguay	92. Sweden
79. Peru	93. Switzerland
80. Poland	94. Thailand
81. Portugal	95. Trinidad and Tobago
82. Qatar	96. Turkey
83. United Kingdom	97. Ukraine
84. Czech Republic	98. Uruguay
85. Dominican Republic	99. Venezuela
86. Arabian Republic of Saharawi	100. Vietnam

Today, the presence of the legislators in the international ambit goes further than the faculties of control that the Senate of the Republic exercises over the federal Executive in matters of foreign policy. The concept of parliamentary diplomacy as a legislative link with the outside world is officially recognized in the Organic Law of the General Congress, is recognized as a pillar of Mexican foreign policy in the National Plan of Development.



On November 3rd, 2016, Deputy Javier Bolaños Aguilar in conversation with the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Duncan John Rushworth Taylor, who visited San Lázaro for the installation of the Friendship Group of the two countries.

In the world today, everything that happens has repercussion in one way or another on Mexico. In face of this, the commissions of the Chamber of Deputies maintain an open dialogue and structured to the outside. In perspective, the work of the federal deputies allows us to speak to all regions of the world about subjects such as economic development, migration, climate change, human rights, culture and Mexicans in foreign countries, among others.

The field of action of Mexican Parliamentary Diplomacy is divided into three large sectors. The first of these includes the constitutional faculties of control over development of foreign policy by the Federal Executive Power, followed by coordinated activities by the legislators and finally the initiatives presented by the legislators, aiming to influence the process of decision making for the foreign policy of our country and trusting that this will contribute to the welfare of the nation.



In the gardens of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, the president of the Friendship Group Mexico-India, María del Rocío Rebollo Mendoza, accompanied by Dep. Carmen Campa Almaral, planted a tree donated by India.

Parliamentary diplomacy in coordination with the collaborators of the Executive Power attempt to defend national interests, reaffirm world peace, consolidate

international law and international institutions, strengthen cultural and commercial exchanges, establish lines of collaboration with other countries and concerted blocks, to face any type of threat.¹³³



Communication between the parliaments of Mexico and Canada is fundamental for the renegotiation of NAFTA, said María Guadalupe Murguía Gutierrez meeting with leader of the Chamber of Commons of that country, Geoff Regan.

133 María Paz Richard Muñoz; Jorge González Chávez. (2011). *Diplomacia Parlamentaria: abordajes conceptuales y expresiones en el reglamento de la Cámara de Diputados*, de Cámara de Diputados, website: <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sedia/sia/spe/SPE-ISS-04-11.pdf>

10.

ART IN THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE OF SAN LÁZARO

The collection was transferred from the Parish of Santa María de la Asunción, that housed the Congress of Anahuac on 13 of September, 1813, to the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, which was inaugurated on September 1st, 1981, and after suffering a fire that consumed the Hall of Plenary Sessions, it was re-inaugurated by stages as from October 22, 1992, the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union has had several homes, all of them were fine examples of Mexican architecture and places to gather a great part of Mexico's rich culture.



The main entrance of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro

After all, legislation is a cultural expression. And, concretely, architecture, sculpture and diverse artistic forms to be found in the interior are part of the symbolic corpus that today is the seat of the Chamber of Deputies and, therefore, the General Congress of the United States of Mexico.

The Legislative Palace of San Lázaro is invested with a symbolic support that expresses the magnanimity of legislative activity,¹³⁴ a support that over the years has become broader and richer, and today houses an artistic legacy which gives cohesion and generates a symbolic heritage that consolidates the act of legislation as a source of national identity.

The Parliamentary Premises

The architectural style is the work of the urban architects Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, Jorge Campuzano and David Suárez. The Legislative Palace of San Lázaro is parallel in size to the National Palace, seat of the Federal Executive Power, and was originally designed to house both Chambers of the Union. However, due to financial limitations the construction of the building for the Chamber of Senators was suspended and never constructed. In its place the auditorium was built and named after the first lady federal deputy, Aurora Jiménez de Palacios.



In the original plans by architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, this would have been the façade of the Chamber of Senators, and a similar design for the Deputies. However, due to financial limitations its construction was suspended and later cancelled. Building “E” of the Chamber of Deputies, with the “Aurora Jiménez de Palacios” Auditorium, as well as the administrative offices such as the General Secretariat, Parliamentary Services and Administrative and Financial Services, as well as Internal Comptroller.

¹³⁴ *Palacio Legislativo de San Lázaro. Historia y vida de la Cámara de Diputados*, México, LVIII Legislatura de la Cámara de Diputados, febrero 2003.

On a site of 15 hectares and a constructed area of approximately 150 square meters,¹³⁵ nine four-storey blocks classified by letters, as well as a Center for Child development (CENDI for its acronym in Spanish), were constructed.



Plan of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro.

At the main entrance of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, the architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez evokes the splendour of the great pre-Hispanic constructions

¹³⁵ *Legislative Palace of San Lázaro. 35th. anniversary 1981-2016*, Consejo Editorial de la Cámara de Diputados-Miguel Ángel Porrúa, México, 2016, p. 46

by employing a “tripartite, symmetric form with the façade framed by two lateral bodies, a long staircase which, added to the enormous dimensions of the building, give it a sense of hierarchy and transcendence, in accordance with the work of the legislative body.”¹³⁶ The materials used are the colors of the national flag: the red of the ‘tezontle’ stone, white marble and the green patina of bronze.

The mural of “*Political Pluralism*”



In the center is the mural “Political Pluralism” by José Chávez Morado, made of bronze plates on which the artist represents the Mexican people through anonymous faces, and reconstructs history with its indigenous roots ruled by the Political Constitution.

Wall of Honor

Within the Legislative Palace is the Hall of Sessions with a capacity for the 500 Federal Deputies in Plenary Session, which is the maximum organ for decisions of the Chamber of Deputies, where not only are the various currents of Mexican political thinking represented, but also national sovereignty.

¹³⁶
Palacio Legislativo de San Lázaro. Historia y vida de la Cámara de Diputados, op. Cit.



The Hall of Sessions is organized in the form of an auditorium, where one can see the presidium from anywhere. This has two levels for the secretariat, vice-presidency and president of the government organ responsible for conducting the plenary sessions and maintaining parliamentary order and discipline.

Here the maximum tribune of the nation is to be found, where each of the 500 federal deputies can express his/her ideas and proposals regarding the diverse matters of interest to the nation.

It is precisely in the Hall of Sessions that the Wall of Honor of the Chamber of Deputies is to be found, made of six blocks of stone with, are the names of 77 national heroes and their maxims are written in gold letters. The public institutions that each of the legislatures of this Chamber, since July 19, 1823, have recognized as national heroes. These are signs of the nation's gratitude and commitment.



Framing the Wall of Honor is the maxim “Among individuals as among nations, respect for another’s rights means peace”, proclaimed on March 15th 1867 by the illustrious Benito Juárez, after defeating the foreign enemy and restoring the Republic as an undeniable proof of Mexico’s right to self-determination as a free and sovereign state.

Following this is a pronouncement by Vicente Guerrero to his father, who was the messenger of Vice-Roy Juan Ruiz de Apodaca to offer a pardon and reparations in exchange for dropping their arms and abandoning the cause of independence. Whereupon the Insurgent Chief replied “One’s country comes first”.



In ancient cultures, naming is “to evoke the essence of what is named”. And from a symbolic perspective, the names of these heroes, and not their images, are on the Wall of Honor for being named and in this sense, they are recalled to the presence of the legislative body in plenary session.

In the center, also called the frontispiece of the Hall of Sessions there is a representation in stone of the National Emblem, flanked by two enormous tri-color national flags tied with a bow.



In the upper part of the Hall of Sessions there is an enormous chandelier to illuminate each of the 500 seats or '*curules*'. Its majestic appearance makes one think it is made of cut glass, but to avoid excessive weight it was manufactured of acrylic, with 300 lights and tablets that magnify its luminosity.

The mural of “The Mexican Constitutions”

Art is a fundamental part of the nature of the Chamber of Deputies, since in the corridors, plazas and vestibules there are representations of the times and the feelings of different generations of Mexicans who, united under the clamor for justice and social welfare, contributed by means of words and actions in the construction of diverse public institutions.

“The Constitutions of Mexico” is the title of this mural, which was carved by hand in mahogany by the sculptor from Michoacán, Adolfo Mexiac and the Muralist Patricia Salas, depicting a run through the history of Mexico. Measuring 350 meters long, it is located in the main vestibule of the Legislative Palace immediately before the Hall of Sessions.

The original version was carved in white cedar-wood, but it fell victim to a fire in 1989 which consumed the Hall of Sessions, so it was repeated by Maestro Mexiac, with new tools and some additions in mahogany.

This work contains practically 200 years of constitutional life in Mexico, since apart from emphasizing the constituent processes of 1824, 1857 and 1917, the artists portray episodes in the life of Mexico of the Independence, Empire, Reform and Revolution.



In this way, from an aesthetic perspective, the mural shows, from left to right, the movement for Independence begun in 1810 and completed in 1821 with the triumph of the Trigarante Army and Agustín de Iturbide's ascent to power. In this section the figures of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, Andrés Quintana Roo and his wife, Leona Vicario. One can see the title of a document *The sentiments of the Nation*, which José María Morelos y Pavón presented to the Congress of Chilpancingo, also called Anahuac, in the year 1813 in which the 'caudillo' (chief/commander) sets down his political ideas.¹³⁷

The artist carves a map showing the territories lost to the United States of America, such as California, New Mexico and Texas, at the same time highlighting the figures of Gómez Farías, Miguel Ramos Arizpe, Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, Ignacio López Rayon, José María Izazaga, Vicente Guerrero and Guadalupe Victoria, who was the first President of Mexico.

137 *Idem.*

In the next section one can see a chained man, a symbol of the exploitation of the masses by the conservatives, against which the battle of the sword, pen and law was carried out by figures such as José Santos Degollado, Juan N. Álvarez, Ignacio Comonfort, José María Luis Mora, the brothers Lerdo de Tejada, Valentín Gómez Farías and Benito Juárez, who fought for public lay education and the separation of State and Church.



The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1857 is depicted by a bird of prey destroying the territory of Mexico in a clear allusion to the War of American intervention.

The representation of the Constitution of 1857 shows the triumph of liberal ideals, with the constituents seated around a table – Ponciano Arriaga, Guillermo Prieto, Ignacio Ramírez, Francisco Zarco and Melchor Ocampo.

The Empire headed by Maximilian of Hapsburg, is represented by an eagle plummeting to earth having lost its crown, defeated by an armed people, painted red and fighting during the Mexican Revolution, led by Francisco I. Madero.

Emiliano Zapata and Francisco Villa testify to the destruction left by the armed conflagration. Portraits of Aquiles Serdán and José María Pino Suárez, as well as Serapio Rendón, Belisario Domínguez, Filomeno Mata and the brothers Flores Magón, precursors of the Revolution.

A train going at high speed is the train of the Revolution, carrying hundreds of men and women to participate anonymously in the armed fight, leading to the construction of a new pact, illustrated by the birth of a baby observed by Venustiano

Carranza, sponsor of the Constituent of 1916, together with some of the constituent deputies who would sign the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico.



Maestro Mexiac shows the Agrarian Reform, the Oil Expropriation and the participation of women, men, workers, peasants and construction workers of a new Mexico, without leaving aside the social movements of 1968 and 1971, the earthquake of 1985 and even the fire in the Chamber of Deputies.



This mural concludes with a legacy in the words of José María Morelos y Pavón to the legislators of Mexico: “As a good law is superior to any man, those dictated by our Congress should be such that they oblige constancy and patriotism, and moderate opulence and indigence.”

The Mural of “Eco-tropic Syntony”

The mural that reflects the idea of the plastic arts and very colorful contemporary art is “Eco-tropic Syntony” by Julio Carrasco Bretón, a Mexican muralist using surrealist touches, who finds inspiration in the General Law of Ecological Balance and Protection of the Environment for this work. Using bright, solid colors, he portrays nature as reflecting cosmic harmony mixing the animal, mineral and vegetable worlds, as well as ecosystems and the stations.

The mural is highly symbolic, as it links man with a superior and an inferior world, reflecting on the dangers of excessive exploitation of mother-nature and the ill-use of technology.



“Eco-tropic Syntony” 4 meters high and 20 meters wide, rests on the base of block “B” of the Chamber of Deputies and was created under the auspices of the parliamentary groups who, in the LVI Legislature approved the legal order, which shows, since its conception, a gesture of plurality and consensus.

In reality, this magnificent work satisfies one of the historic needs of the Legislative Power: the inclusion in the agenda of discussion of public matters related to ecology and the environment. According to the presentation made by the then President of the Grand Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, Juan José Osorio Palacios, the mural starts on the upper left side with a version of the human brain as a sound-box of the universe. There follows a stylized profile of man, which contains other faces, alluding to human evolution as a dialectic product of society. From the mouth of the figure flows a breath that moves a bird fetus about to be born, this image

represents nature in one of its most complex forms and, at the same time, the easiest to reproduce; the little egg morphologically turns into the head of a termite which is capable of destroying the foundations of a building.

Oil paintings



The liberator Simon Bolívar, the painting hangs in the offices of the Parliamentary Group of the PRI, on the ground floor of block "H"

Hand painted oil paintings are another of the diverse styles of art to be found in the corridors and meeting rooms of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro, seven of which are in large format signed “alegre 88”. These hang in the corridors of block “H”, which houses the offices of the Parliamentary Group of the PRI Party.



Oil painting to be found in the Meeting Rooms of the Coordination of the Parliamentary Group of the PRI.

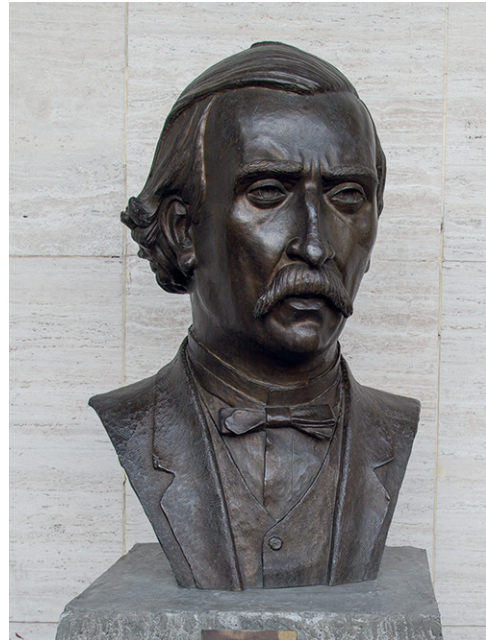
The portraits are of the great liberators of Latin-America such as: Simón Bolívar, José Martí, José de San Martín, Bernardo O’Higgins, Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos y Pavón, which symbolizes the union of all the peoples of Latin America.

Busts

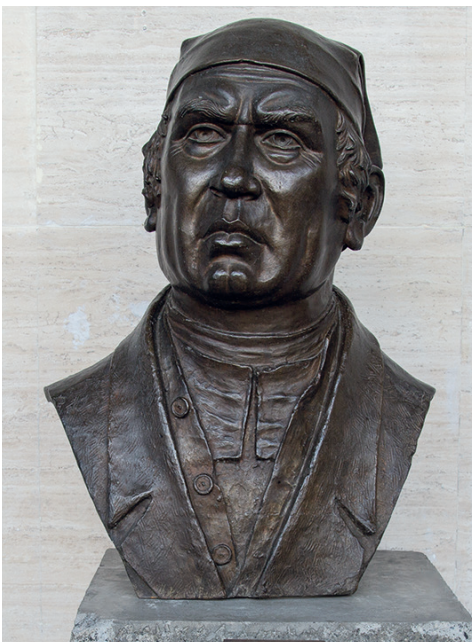
To keep in mind the history of the country and those who have forged it, the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro houses sixteen busts of illustrious Mexicans distributed throughout the interior and exterior of the premises. In the central courtyard there are the first six: the busts of Miguel Ramos Arizpe, José María Morelos, Francisco Zarco, Benito Juárez, Venustiano Carranza and Alfonso Cravioto. In the center of this courtyard there is a memorial plaque with “The Constituents of Querétaro 1916-1917”, with a list of all the constituent deputies.



Benito Juárez García



Francisco Zarco



José María Morelos y Pavón



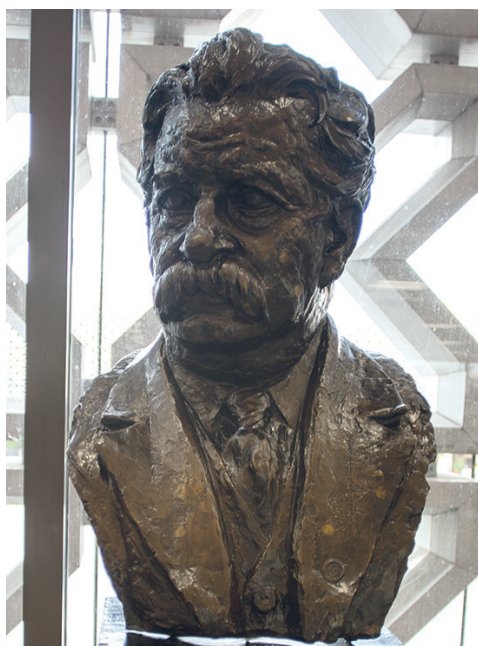
Fray Servando Teresa de Mier



Amado Nervo



Ignacio Manuel Altamirano



Salvador Díaz Mirón



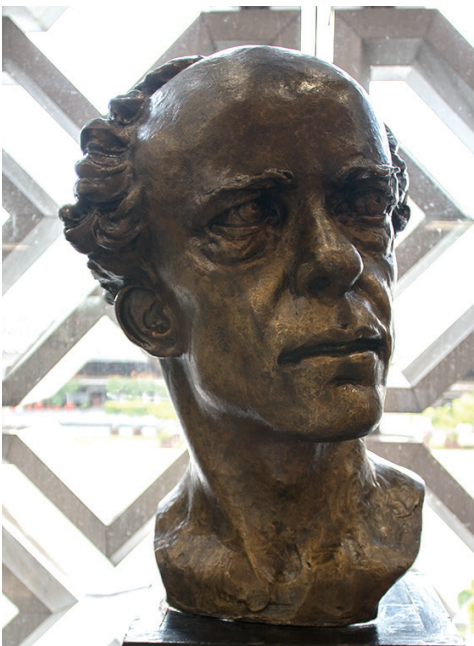
Filomeno Mata



Manuel José Othón



Venustiano Carranza



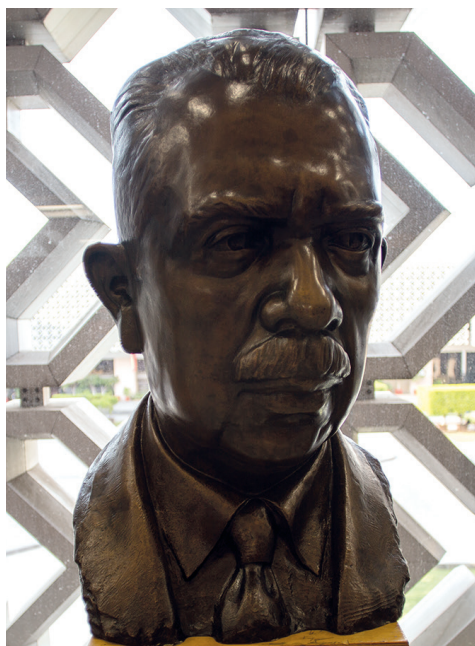
Jesús Urueta



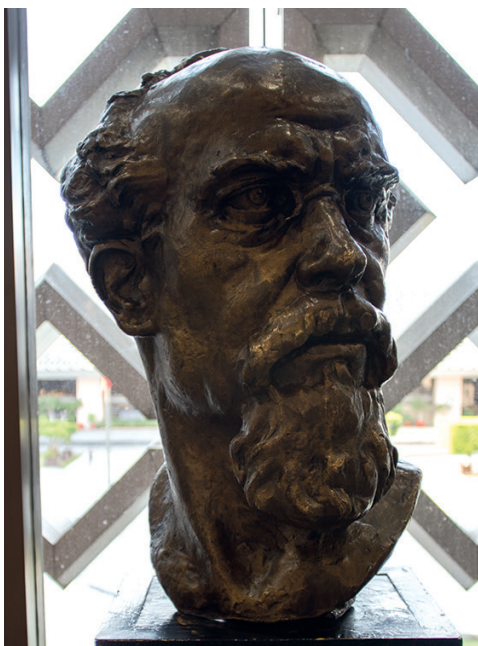
José Fernández de Lizardi



Emilio Rabasa



Lázaro Cárdenas del Río



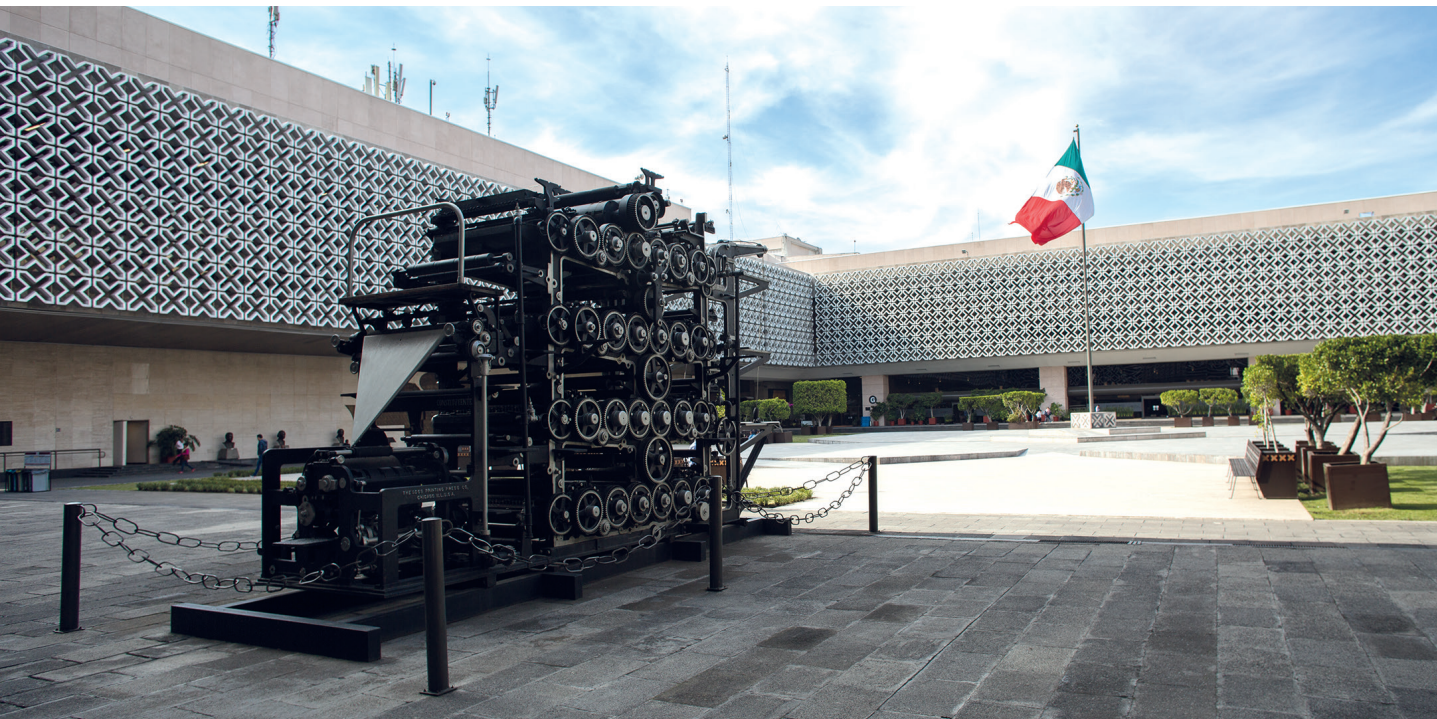
Mariano Rivapalacio



Gabino Barreda

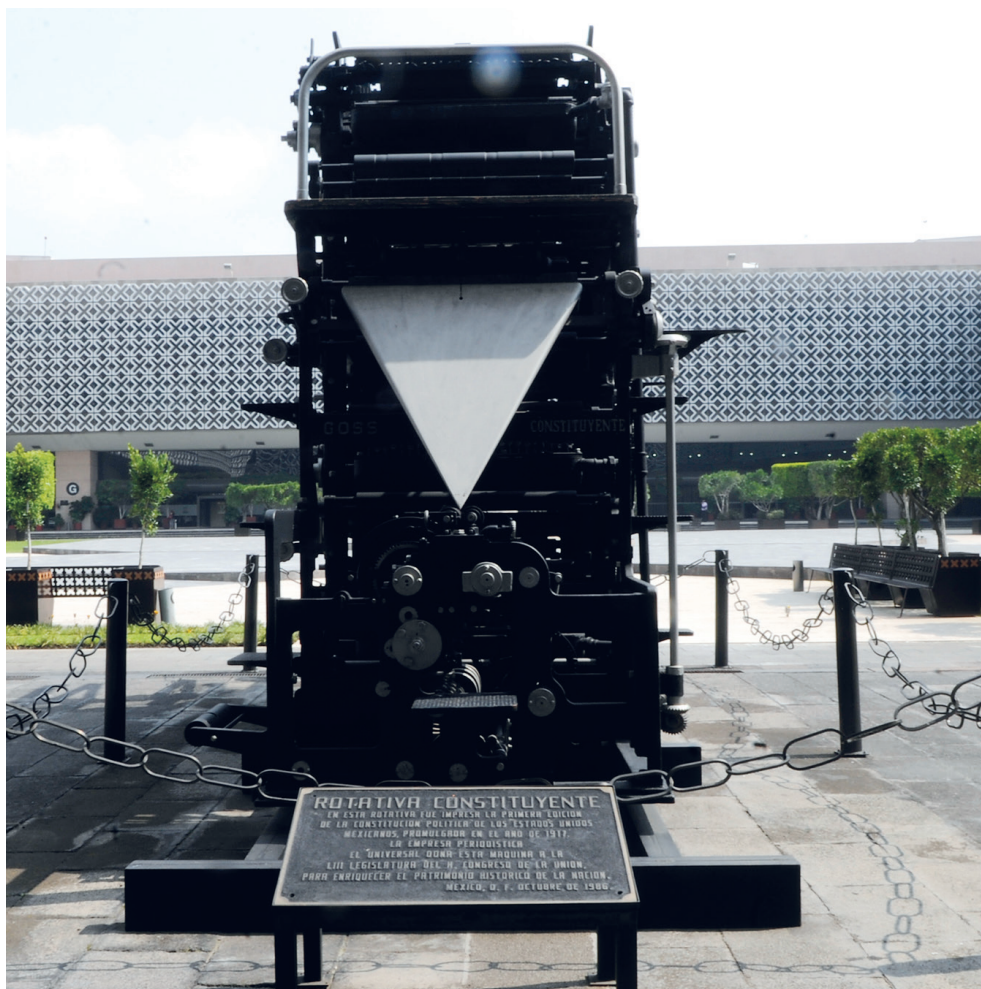
On the second floor of Block “B”, at the entrance to the Library, there are the busts of Emilio Rabasa, Mariano Riva Palacio, Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, Salvador Díaz Mirón, Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, Manuel José Othón and Jesús Urueta. This group of personalities focuses on the historical relationship of the public agenda with the press and the Legislative Power. A piece in high relief of Salvador Díaz Mirón (1853-1928), deputy on 8 occasions and director of the newspapers: *El Veracruzano*, *El Diario*, *El Orden* y *El Imparcial*; and Ignacio Manuel Altamirano (1834-1893), journalist and lawyer, founder of various newspapers and author of literary works such as *El Zarco*, *Clemencia* y *Navidad en las montañas*, among others. In the south corridor of the Library there are the busts of such eminent Mexicans as José Joaquín Lizardi, Amado Nervo, Gabino Barreda, Filomeno Mata and Lázaro Cárdenas del Río, the last was responsible for the expropriation of the oil companies in 1938.

The Constitutive Rotary Press



In 1986, the newspaper company *El Universal* donated to the Chamber of Deputies the rotary press with which the first edition of the Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico, was printed, published in the year 1917. The machine is of *The Gross Printing Press Co.*, Chicago, Ill, U.S.A., No. 350 XXI. The fact that it was the newspapers of the country that published the information about the

Constitution of 1917 as soon as it was proclaimed, was not casual nor gratuitous. This way the legal order to make known to the public was fulfilled since it dealt with the fundamental document of the Mexican state.



Mural The History of the Mexican Peoples through their constitutional life

The LXI Legislature of the Chamber of Deputies, busy with the ceremonies of the Bicentenary of the beginning of National Independence and the Centenary of the start of the Mexican Revolution, held a series of civic acts, such as the unveiling of the mural called *The History of the Mexican Peoples through their constitutional life*, by the famous artist Guillermo Cisneros, who created a work in acrylic on canvas, on a frame made of aluminum and wood and measuring 438 square meters.



One of the objectives of the work was to integrate numerous symbols of Mexican Culture, which are a sample of our origins and part of the mosaic of the thought of the pre-Hispanic peoples of Mexico.

In the upper part noted for its grandeur and poetry, the goddess Coatlicue, the mother of the Mexica gods, is the symbol of the earth, fertility and destruction. Two serpents' heads that make her face represent perpetual renovation, suggesting the metaphor of eternal creation. Another thing is as both sides of the serpents are the same (mirror images) it appears like a palindrome. In this mural only the upper part of the sculpture of the goddess Coatlicue is represented, the complete sculpture is in the National Museum of Anthropology of the city of Mexico.

Immediately below the symbol of "the ray of sun" of the god Huitzilopochtli, fundamental figure and leader of the Mexicas in their migration since their mythical exodus from Aztlán until their arrival in Tenochtitlan. Huitzilopochtli fought his enemies with this serpent of fire or Xuihcóatl representing the sun.

Also present are several Mexica representations of animals venerated by their forefathers, such as the serpent, the jaguar and the eagle. The Mexican muralist portrays the three Constituent Congresses of Mexican constituent history, like those of 1824, 1857 and 1917.

Each has the face of the men who, from the very constituent congress or armed fight and of ideas, contributed with their work in writing the wishes of the Mexican people.

In the lower part of the mural the national emblems appear from 1823, 1881 and 1968, as well as the symbol that represent all the kings –Tlatoanis, from Acamapichtli to Cuauhtémoc, who represent the honour, valor and wisdom of the Mexica people.



In the upper left side of the grand work, completely finished in 2012, the Mexican muralist portrays the biological and cultural *mestizaje* (mixed blood) of the two worlds in the persona of the Aztec Tlatoani Moctezuma Xocoyotzin, the conqueror Hernán Cortés and the indigenous woman Malintzin, the slave who, because she knew the Nahuatl and Maya languages, was given to the conqueror as interpreter, with whom he fathered the mestizo Martín Cortés.

This event is shown in the fight between the Mexica warriors, in the person of the *tlatoani* Cuauhtémoc, and the Spanish soldiers, who after three months of siege defeated one of the most brilliant civilizations of antiquity.



Immediately below, using many gods and masks of the Middle American civilizations, the cultural mosaic that constitute the roots of Mexico is represented.

Giving way to the Colony, on a blue background the portraits of 62 viceroys who governed New Spain, beginning with Antonio de Mendoza and concluding with Juan O'Donojú, who, seeing that the cause of the crown signed the Treaties of Córdoba with Agustín de Iturbide, which recognized the independence of Mexico.

At the same time as these governors took up their charge, the new Hispanic cities are built on the vestiges of the original civilizations, beginning economic activities like mining and agriculture, as well as the sciences, the arts and letters with illustrious personalities like Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, Alejandro de Humbolt, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Vasco de Quiroga, Fray Toribio de Benavente and Fray Bartolomé de las Casas.

On the right side of the mural Independent Mexico is portrayed in the persons of Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, Miguel Hidalgo, José María Morelos y Pavón and Leona Vicario.

In a circle immediately below, maestro Cisneros portrays 24 insurgents and liberals, most of whose names are written in gold on the Wall of Honor of the Hall of Sessions of the Chamber of Deputies.

The next section is dedicated to the revolutionary movement and its protagonists. In the first circle the figures are: Emiliano Zapata, Francisco Villa, Ricardo Flores Magón, Francisco I. Madero Carmen Serdán, Juan Sarabia, Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, Belisario Domínguez, Justo Sierra Méndez, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Lázaro Cárdenas del Río, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Isidro Fabela, Genaro Estrada, Gilberto Bosques, Alfonso Reyes and Eduardo Neri Reynoso.

The last circle, at the bottom extreme right, is divided in four sections that converge, portraying faces, mostly women's, who have participated with great daring and valor in the great struggles for the construction and consolidation of the free and sovereign Mexico of our days. These are: Juana Belén de Mendoza, Elisa Acuña Rosseti, Sara Estela Ramírez, Andrea Villarreal González, Avelina Villarreal, María Arias, María del Carmen y Catalina Frías, Amelia Robles y Eulalia Guzmán.

This monumental work is in the vestibule of Block "C" of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro.

Statue of the legislator Eduardo Neri Reynoso



On October 9, 2014, the statue of legislator Eduardo Neri Reynoso was unveiled. It stands on the staircase in front of the Protocol Room, in Block "C", of the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro. Cast in bronze and weighing a ton, it measures 3.20 meters high.

Neri Reynoso was a member of the Group for Renewal of the XXVI Legislature. In 1813, when he was only 26 years old, he made a very strong speech because of the assassination of Belisario Domínguez, which made Venustiano Huerta dissolve the Congress and arrest the deputies, among them Neri.



On October 21 of 1969, the Chamber of Deputies awarded a memorial medal with the words: “to civic valor and the defender of the dignity of the Legislative Power”. Since then the Medal for Civic Merit “Eduardo Neri y Legisladores de 1913”, is the maximum award of the Chamber of Deputies gives to the citizen who has distinguished him/herself, serving the Mexican Republic and its people, through civic or political acts.

A sculpture in relief to commemorate the Constitution of 1917

This work was commissioned by the Political Coordination Board of the Chamber of Deputies in its LXIII Legislature, under the Presidency of Dr. César Camacho, for the celebrations of the first centenary of the Constitution of 1917. The sculptor, Ricardo Ponzanelli created a work which measures 15 meters wide by 6 meters high, cast in an alloy of bronze, copper and brass, worked in high and low relief.



During the inauguration on August 29, 2016 an *editorial obelisk* was presented under the seal of “The Constitution unites us” comprising 34 titles and 37 volumes, this *bas relief* is the only work that portrays the 291 constituents who participated in the process of analysis and reform to the Constitution of 1857, which led to the fundamental ordering and proclamation of 1917.

The monumental work is located in the *Plaza de los Constituyentes de 1917* of

the Legislative Palace of San Lázaro. It is composed of 219 oval portraits of the constituents who went to Querétaro and prepared the constitutional document which governs us at present. In the center is the figure of the First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army, Mr. Venustiano Carranza, who summoned the Constitutive Congress, as well as being responsible for the project of the constitutional document, and of proclaiming it on February 5th, 1917.



Underneath the sculpture a print is inserted which alludes to emblematic scenes and personalities of our Revolution.

The central pieces of this artistic composition are two parchments with articles 3, 27, 123 and 130 of the Constitution, referring to free, lay, public education, land ownership, labor rights and the separation of Church and State.



In the upper part of this sculptured relief there are four medallions with scenes that cover the most significant events that took place between December 1916 and January 1917 in the city of Querétaro. The first is the façade of the then Iturbide Theatre and now *República*, where the work of the legislators took place; the second is the swearing in of the constituent deputies; the third illustrates the parliamentary

debate and the fourth is the scene where the First Chief of the Constitutional Army, Venustiano Carranza, takes the oath to enact and enforce the mandates of the Magna Carta.



Basic Guide to the Chamber of Deputies

Esta obra se terminó de componer, imprimir y
encuadernar en el mes de diciembre del año 2017.
En los talleres de Géminis Editores e Impresores, S.A.de C.V.
Emma No. 75, Col. Nativitas, Deleg. Benito Juárez,
C.P. 03500, Ciudad de México
edlag08@gmail.com

La edición en tiro consta de 1,000 ejemplares

