



RASSED's Report on the Permanent Office for the First Ordinary Session of the 18th Parliament

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- **4 parliamentary blocs formed the Permanent Office and the Democratic Bloc for the first and second deputy positions[h1].**
- **No first time MPs in the Permanent Office.**
- **No Independents or women MPs in the permanent office.**
- **5% of the first time MPs ran for positions in the Permanent Office.**
- **3 women ran for the Permanent Office but failed to secure a place.**

The House of Representatives conducted the Permanent Office's election activities over the last two days. It was the first time since 1989 that the positions for deputies and assistants were postponed to the second day of the Parliament, a decision made by House Speaker Atef Tarawneh. The first Ordinary Session began on Monday 7 Nov, 2016, due to lack of time. The Permanent Office's elected members include Khamis Atiah as First Deputy of the Speaker of the House and Ahmad Hmeisat as second Deputy; Mousa Al Wahsh and Sawan Al Sharafat were elected Assistants of the Speaker of the House.

RASSED's team monitoring the course of the elections for the Permanent Office found that:

- 1- The permanent office included 4 parliamentary blocs: Watan, Democratic, Al Wefaq, and Al Eslah. The Speaker of the House is from the Watan bloc, the first and second deputies are from the Democratic bloc, and the assistants are from Al Wefaq and Al Eslah.
- 2- Al Tajded, Al Adala, and Independent MPs were unable to secure any positions in the Permanent Office.
- 3- 74 first time elected MPs were unable to secure seats in the Permanent Office, despite the fact that four had been nominated for first and second deputy (Issa Al khashashneh & Safa'a Al Momani) and as assistants (Hasan Al So'od & Haytham Zayadin).
- 4- Women MPs were unable to secure positions in the Permanent Office despite the nominations of three women Second Deputy (Safa'a AL Momani) and Assistant (Ansaf Al Kahwaldeh & Shaha Al Amareen).
- 5- The Permanent Office's election process witnessed some practices that are inconsistent with the standards of electing permanent office members, such as piling up before the election's Oversight Committee and the Speaker of the House's continuous requests for MPs to step away from the voters to preserve voter privacy. He was forced to speak loudly to keep the unconcerned parties away from polling area.



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6- It was noted that MPs used minister's seats despite the attendance of some ministers. This resulted in the Speaker of the House warning the MPs and requesting that they move away. MPs also piled up before the Speaker of the House several times.

7- The House did not discuss the duration of the Permanent Office; whether the appointments would be for a year or two. Recent constitutional amendments raised the term of Speaker of the House to two years. However, and the Speaker of the House only mentioned that appointments to the Permanent Office would be for a year, without any clarifications.

8- 18 MPs ran for the 5 seats of the Permanent Office.

9- Choosing the Speaker of the House required only one round of voting, whereas selecting the First Deputy needed two rounds.

The illustration shows the structure of the Permanent Office for the 18th Parliament in comparison to the 17th Parliament's structure.