RASED for Parliamentary Monitoring Program
21th Weekly Report on the Performance of the 17th Jordanian Parliament during its 2nd Ordinary Session
March 29, 2015

• The Finance Committee made a work plan for discussing the Audit Bureau's reports

• A great deal of legislative work is going on in the parliamentary committees

• There was a vote to postpone a general debate session without a quorum

The 21st week of the Parliament's 2nd Ordinary Session saw the holding of 13 committee meetings to discuss various topics. 5 meetings were held specifically to discuss legislation, and 7 were held for oversight functions, including one specifically to discuss parliamentary administration.

The House voted to postpone a general discussion session that had been planned for last Wednesday to discuss the current crisis going on in the print media sector. The House decided to postpone this discussion without setting a new date and without giving any kind of explanation about this decision.

The RASED team noted that the decision to postpone the discussion came after a memo was submitted to the chairman of the discussion session that was held last Tuesday, Ahmad al Safadi, asking for postponing of the discussion session without explaining the reasons behind the request. The House voted on the idea of postponement, even though the vote did not take place with a quorum in the House.

The last hour and a half of Tuesday's general session was devoted to "other business", and there was a clear lack of quorum noted by RASED's monitors.

During the week, the parliament finished its discussion about the interpellation presented by MP Mahmoud al Kharabsheh to the Prime Minister about the new nuclear project. The MPs listened to suggestions, and then the parliament voted to refer the issue to an investigative commission of MPs within the Energy portfolio formed earlier to look at the issues raised by MP al Kharabsheh.

With respect to the parliamentary committees, the Joint Legal and Administrative Committee took the first steps to look at the Draft Municipalities' and Decentralization Laws. In its first steps, the joint committee chose its chair, vice chair, and rapporteur. For its chair, the committee chose the chair of the Administrative Committee MP Khamis Atiya; MP Mustafa Yahgi was chosen as vice chair, and MP Mufleh al Khazaleh was chosen as rapporteur.

With respect to legislative work, the Public Services and transportation Committee decided on Temporary Law No.33 on Transportation and Passengers for 2010, and the Economic and Investment Committee finished its discussion about the Temporary Law on Securities No. 67 for 2002.

The Legal Committee decided on an Amended Military Penal Code for 2015 and a draft law for amendments to the Law on Military Criminal Procedure for 2015.

The committee decided on the sidelines to postpone looking at the temporary law on the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, wanting to have a special meeting between members of the committee to take a final decision to deny the law or amend it.

A joint meeting of the Legal and the Health and Environmental Committees discussed the Amended Law for the Medical Professionals Union for the Law 2015. The Administrative Committee discussed the Temporary Law No. 18 for 2003 on Employing Information Technology in Government Agencies, and the committee called on the Ministry of Communications and Technology to provide the amended text of Paragraph 5, Article 10, so that it could finally decide on it and pass it on to the Parliament.

With respect to oversight functions, the Administrative Committee met to discuss the problems being suffered by the employees of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. The meeting was held in the presence of the Chairman of the Authority Hani al Malqa, the Minsiter of Public Sector Development Ikhleef al Khawaldeh, the Chairman of the Bureau of the Accounting Service, Mustafa al Barari, and the Secretary General of the Civil Service.

The committee on Women's and Family Issues discussed a number of commissions and initiatives related to women's issues in the municipality of Ain al Basha as part of the work plan of the committee that it had prepared before.

The Committee on Tourism and Archaeology discussed a number of ideas and opinions of its members regarding finishing the committee's work plan from the previous period. This work plan had included meeting with different tourism sectors and taking field visits to tourist sites, with an aim to looking at the reality of tourist services and development in addition to listening to the challenges that the tourist sector faces. The committee's plan also aimed to find solutions to the problems in the tourist sector that are causing economic difficulties for the country. The Committee on Work and Social Development discussed the decision of the Islamic Sciences University to end services for a number of university employees including military pensioners, civilians, and civil employees.

The Committee on Integrity and Transparency held a fact finding meeting to discuss support for the governorates provided through programs of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and the committee discussed how some of the charitable organizations that were being funded by the MoPIC failed in realizing their development goals. There will be a discussion about some of the negative consequences found in the report of the Audit Bureau with a number of different ministries.

The Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ammad Fakhoury presented on the role of the Ministry in local development, building administrative local capacities, and supporting the participation of citizens in order to improve their living conditions.

The special fact-finding commission in the Energy Portfolio sat in a meeting to discuss the inquiries it had received from multiple parties.

The Finance Committee held a meeting to discuss its work plan for discussing the annual reports of the Audit Bureau, which it has backlogged from the years 2009 - 2013.