

## **RASSED for Parliamentary Monitoring Program 17<sup>th</sup> Weekly Report on the Performance of the Parliament During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session March 19, 2016**

### **One Legislative Session and 13 Meetings held by Ten Parliamentary Committees.**

The House of Representatives held two legislative sessions on the seventeenth week of the third ordinary session. A loss of quorum occurred in the sessions and in the meetings of the parliamentary committees, affecting their work.

Eight legislative and oversight meetings were held by seven parliamentary committees during the past week while the Jordan-EU Friendship Committee held a meeting with the EU delegation which was on a visit to the Kingdom.

The parliamentary committee meetings are still experiencing a loss of quorum. Some of the committees, which announce its meetings in advance, are later forced to cancel their meetings because of the loss of a quorum, which is the case in the House of Representatives as well.

Noticeably, a loss of the quorum in the Council meetings recently began to exacerbate. The Council General Secretariat data shows that the number of absences in last week's council sessions reached 72. 39 MPs were absent from Sunday's session, seven of them with excused absences, while 33 MPs were absent on Tuesday's session, nine of them with excused absences.

As for the parliamentary committees, the Palestine Committee held two meetings while the Countryside and the Desert Committee, Education and Culture Committee, Labor and Social Development and Population Committee, Management Committee, Legal Committee, and the Public Services and Transport Committee held one meeting each.

The Legal Committee continued discussing the draft law of the implementation law for the year 2015; the Management Committee also discussed the Provisional Law No. 81 for the year 2003 to employ information technology resources in the Government Institutions Act.

On the regulatory side, the Education and Culture Committee has made two recommendations to end the protest of University of Jordan students to lower the increasing tuition fees for the post-graduate and parallel programs by 50 percent. The government pledged to increase support for the university up to three to four million Jordanian Dinars in a meeting held by the Committee in order to address the Jordanian university students' strike. The Committee resumed its recommendations during subsequent meetings with the President of the University of Jordan and its students.

The Palestine Committee discussed the medical exemptions to the people from the Gaza strip during two separate meetings. The Labor and Social Development and the

Population Committee promised to follow up on the demands of the Fertilizers and Chemicals Company in order to reach solutions. The Public Service and Transportation Committee held a meeting to discuss the problems of the transport sector in the container port. The Parliamentary Countryside and the Desert committee held a meeting to discuss the health situation in certain areas of the desert.

At the meeting held by the Jordanian European Friendship Committee with the European Parliament, they discussed the Palestinian issue and the issue of Syrian refugees.

During the seventeenth week, the Permanent Bureau of the Council held an emergency session chaired by Acting Speaker of the Parliament, Dr. Mustafa Amawi, to discuss the complaint filed by the Minister of Public Works and Housing Engineer Sami Halasa, which included verbal assault and uttering obscenities issued by MP Dr. Mustafa Hanikat while he was in the Hall of

meetings of the Ministry of Public Works without prior appointment and in the presence of a group of citizens and employees.

The Permanent Bureau decided to transmit MP Shanikat to the System Behavior Committee to look into the complaint and provide a recommendation on this matter in accordance with Article 58 of the Rules of Procedure.

This week, the Council will discuss the parliamentary legal committee's decision regarding the passage of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption draft law for the 2015, which is one of the important legislation reforms that would contribute the strengthening of transparency, integrity and anti-corruption. The law works to entrench the principles of justice, accountability, and good performance to the public interest and to ensure adherence to the principles of national integrity and fighting corruption in all forms. In addition, this law will work to prosecuting anyone who commits any of the acts of corruption, and activate the system of values and behavioral rules in public administration to ensure the integration and consolidation of efforts in the field of reform. This will also modernize and develop the state institutions and unify the references related to national integrity and anti-corruption.

RASSED calls upon the Council to give the bill the necessary importance for approval in line with the aspirations of the unification of references related to national integrity and anti-corruption. They also called upon the Council to promote integrity and entrench the principles of justice and accountability and good performance system for the general good, and ensure adherence to the principles of national integrity and strengthen efforts in the field of reform to modernize and develop state institutions. RASSED also calls upon the House of Representatives to access international best practices as they contain many of the qualitative experiences in the adoption of anti-corruption legislation and help develop a transparent approach.

In this context RASSED, provides a set of recommendations on the draft law:

1. Article 7 of the draft law states to the permissibility of the president or the termination of a member upon the recommendation of the Council

of Ministers. However, that contradicts the principle of financial and administrative independence which the draft law stated in Article 3 regarding any act prejudice to the principle of national integrity or within the scope corruption cannot be judged by the Council itself as it is necessary to resort to the judiciary and based on the judiciary decision the Council make their decision.

2. The bill must include clear and specific criteria for the selection of the President and members of the Integrity Council, where a draft law in the text of Article 6 - A - 1 sets a loose standard for Prime members.

3. The law should include clear and explicit material on the work of auditing institutions in all classifications and diversity and be bound by the need for coordination and cooperation between these agencies to achieve the desired objective of the establishment of the Council.

4. Do not link the appointment of the Chairman and members of the Council directly to the Prime Minister so that we can achieve complete independence of the Council for the most effective mechanism of appointment of the Chairman and the Board of the Independent Commission. This should be done through the formation of a committee headed by the Prime Minister and the Head of the Senate and the Head of the House of Representatives and the President of the Judicial Council to adopt this mechanism in the event of any vacancy in the position of the Council.

5. The law should include clear and specific text about the Commission's work in establishing the integrity and awareness through the consecration of a participatory approach with all official institutions.

6. The law must give the private sector the importance of the public sector in terms of activating the role of prevention and treatment of the private sector, where it is necessary to unify the references and gather all issues that come under the heading of corruption in either the private or public sector.