



CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS

THE BRAZILIAN LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

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A DEMOCRATIC, OPEN AND TRANSPARENT HOUSE

In earlier times the relationship between the elector and the elected in Brazil ended at the polls. Every tie between citizens and their representatives vanished as soon as the ballot was put in the ballot box. Today, on the contrary, relations between people and politicians begin at polling day and continue throughout the term. Fortunately, voters now monitor their representative's performance, and they expect them to make every effort to promote the collective interest and the common good.

The Chamber of Deputies was self-centered, inward-looking and considered such an attitude sufficient to justify itself. Now, the Chamber looks towards society, and is, therefore, proud to help developing the Legislative Power into the most open and most transparent of the three Branches. As a law-making institution, the Chamber knows that writing laws is not enough. Moreover, it is necessary to make the people, particularly the anonymous citizen, aware of them. They are the ones who will turn legislation into important weapons in the struggle for economic development and social justice after all. When we talk about our responsibilities, our structure and the way we work, we open the doors of the Chamber of Deputies to all those who recognize it as the pillar of democracy and the guarantor for institutional stability.

This is our feeling as we salute the Brazilians and the foreigners who wish to know more about the House we have the privilege to belong to. We welcome you all! Join us so that we may together overcome the challenge of becoming builders of a future filled with peace, solidarity and social dignity.

Brasilia, February 15th, 2006

Deputy Aldo Rebelo
Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies



THE CONSTITUTION AND THE CHAMBER RULES AND MANUAL

The current Brazilian Constitution effective as of October 5th, 1988 states the power of law-making among other rules regulating the State organization.

The Chamber Rules and Manual is a very important tool to law-making procedures in Brazil. It is a set of principles and rules that determines the structure, organization and operation of the Chamber. As any infra-constitutional act, it must abide by the Fundamental Law.

The Brazilian Parliament is called The National Congress. Besides the prerogative of making laws, the National Congress is responsible for the oversight of every accounting, financial and budgetary operation regarding not only the Union's moneys and properties but also any of the Unions' branch departments or federal agencies' moneys and properties. Brazil has a bicameral legislative assembly, composed by the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate. As the country adopts the bicameralism, a bill laid before any of the houses must be revised by the other; therefore, apart from subjects within private competence of each house, the legislative process grants both houses participation in the lawmaking process. The sittings follow a Parliamentary Calendar, which is different from the calendar year. The Congress works in a four year basis, planned to coincide with the deputies' term. This period is called "Legislatura" in Portuguese and, therefore, is a false friend to Legislature, in English. The 52nd Congress started on February 1st 2003 and will last to January 31st, 2007.

However, the sittings do not take place at the whole period. The National Congress recesses so that its members may visit their states and feel the needs of the people they represent. For this reason, each Congress is divided in four legislative sessions. Hence, each ordinary legislative session begins on



February 2nd stops on July 17th, restarts on August 1st and ends on December 22nd.

THE FEDERAL SENATE

The Federal Senate is based on the federalism. The effective federal structure presupposes power decentralization on the national territory. Hence, there is a central body (the Union), the State-members, with their own prerogatives and autonomy, and the Federal District, which includes Brasilia, where the Federal Government seat is located.

The Senators represent the interests of the Federation Units. Therefore, in the Senate the representation is equal, that is, every state and the Federal District have three Senators, regardless of population or area. The Federation units are considered equally important to the Federal Republic and there cannot be distinction or privileges among them, unless prescribed by the Constitution framers.

Consequently, the election to the Federal Senate is not proportional, but obeys the majority principle. The most voted candidates take the seats. The list includes two substitutes for each candidate,

Box 1 – Federal Senate

- Federation Units representatives;
- Majoritary electoral system;
- Three Senators for each state and for the Federal District;
- Direct elections every four years, alternating between one and two-thirds of the seats;
- Eight-year-term, coincident to two deputies' terms (Congress);
- Now composed by 81 Senators.



THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Most bills are laid before the Chamber of Deputies. The house that represents people more closely, also stages most of the most important debates and nationwide decisions. Below, we list some of the basic features of the Chamber:

Box 2 – Chamber of Deputies

- People's representatives;
- Representatives elected according to proportional electoral system (state's population);
- Minimum of 8 Representatives per state and the Federal District (e.g. Acre);
- Maximum of 70 Representatives per state (e.g. São Paulo);
- Four-year-term, coincident to a Congress;
- Now composed by 513 Deputies.

OVERSIGHT

In addition to its intrinsic power of law making, the Legislative Branch supervises the allocation and use of public resources. As people and states' representatives, respectively, the Chamber and the Senate, as well as any of their Committees, may question Ministers of State- or any public officer in charge of branch departments or federal agencies subordinated to the President - about their acts. The public officer called by any of the houses of the Legislative Branch must release all the requested information under penalty of being dismissed or temporarily removed from civil service.

Similarly, the National Congress must verify if public funds are spent according to the law. The Congress is aided by the Federal Court of Account to perform this duty and might request information from any person managing public monies, assets and values.



TYPES OF LEGISLATION LAID BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

Proposal to Amend the Constitution (Constitutional Amendment): Propose changes to the original constitutional text. Because it may alter the Organic Law, which prescribes the State's structure and the fundamental principles, the amendment is submitted to a more cautious process not required to any other measure. The constitutional amendment must pass through two qualified rounds of voting (3/5 of favorable votes) in each House. The Proposal to Amend the Constitution (Joint Resolution) does not need Presidential approval. Besides, some constitutional principles are so important to the Brazilian structure that they cannot be modified. They are the permanent clauses listed at the article 60, § 4 of the Constitution:

- a) The Federation
- b) The direct, secret, universal and regular vote;
- c) The separation of Powers (Executive, Legislative and Judiciary),
- d) The individual rights and guarantees.

Proposal to Supplementary Law (Bill): Regulates matters explicitly and exclusively stated by the Constitutional text. To become law, this bill requires at least an absolute majority (half the members plus one) vote of each entire chamber – which means 257 Representatives' votes and 41 Senators' votes. The bill must be signed into law by the President.

Proposal to Statutory Law (Bill): These are general or ordinary laws. Though the Proposal to Statutory Law requires the presence of the absolute majority of members to be considered on each chamber floor, the quorum for approval is not qualified, and, therefore it requires simple majority vote (a sufficient second of those present) in both houses before



being enacted into law. Presidential approval is necessary before the bill becomes public law.

Temporary Orders: These are temporary rules that act as laws. They are issued by the President, but they need Congress referral to be enacted into law. If Congress does not consider the Temporary Order within 120 days, it is declared null and void.

Proposal to Legislative Decree and Resolution Proposals (Concurrent Resolutions): these are rules with a specific purpose. They regulate matters within the competence of the National Congress and/or its houses; therefore, they are not sent on to the President.

Delegated Laws: These are laws issued by the President, but with explicit permission of the Legislative branch.

Proposal to Oversight and Control: This is the instrument used by a representative or a Committee to promote the oversight and control of government branch departments or agencies. They are presented to the Committee whose jurisdiction includes the body, agency or activity subjected to oversight or to the Committee of Financial Oversight and Control – CFFC. It is also possible to request to the CFFC to pursue procedures, examinations, auditing, and inspection in any agency or government body of the three branches.

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES BODIES

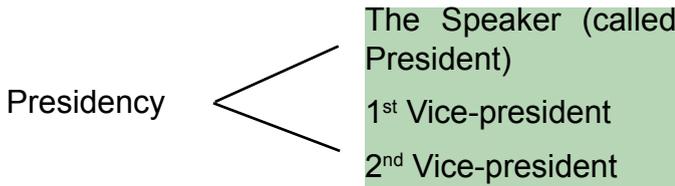
PRESIDING BOARD

The Presiding Board directs the legislative work and the administrative services of the Chamber. It is a collegiate body, composed by seven Representatives elected among their peers. The Presiding Board has exclusive duties, such as to enact, along with the Presiding Board of the Senate,

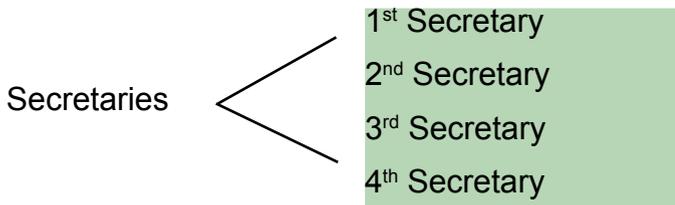


the amendments to the Constitution, as well as to propose amendments to the Chamber Rules and Manual.

The Presiding Board is voted for a two-year term.



Presiding Board



The Presiding Board is aided by an expert technical-professional body, composed by tenured position holders selected by public competitive examination.

THE SPEAKER OF THE CHAMBER

The Speaker (called President in Brazil)¹ represents the Chamber of Deputies in any collective announcement and supervises its work and order. The position is private to born Brazilians. Its main purpose is to define the list of measures to be considered by the Floor.

Among other tasks, the Speaker substitutes the President and takes part in the Republic Council and in the National Defense Council.

¹ The President is sometimes called the President of the Republic in order to differentiate from the Speaker.



If the Speaker is absent, the Floor sessions are chaired by the immediate deputies: the Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Substitutes, in this order, or, finally, by the eldest, among those with higher number of terms,

THE FLOOR

The Floor (or plenary chamber) is the upper body for most of the Chamber decisions; in other words, it is the final say for most deliberations. All 513 Chamber Representatives may ordinarily take part of the Floor meetings.

It considers the following matters:

- Matters on which the Committees do not have concluding power;
- Matters on which the Committees have concluding power, if one-third of the total members of the Chamber have signed a motion for Floor consideration.

COMMITTEES

The Committees are collegiate bodies that aid the legislative process. They study the technical aspects of the matters under consideration of the Legislative branch and pursue oversight of the acts of the public power. Joint Committees composed by Deputies and Senators might also be established to perform this duty. The Committees may:

- Hold public hearings;
- Call Ministers of State to render information on matters inherent to their duties;
- Receive petitions, complaints and statements from any person against acts or omissions from government authorities or entities.



- Determine the search, examinations, inspections and auditing on an accounting, financial, budgetary and operating nature in the administrative units of the three branches.

The Committees have the so-called concluding power, except for the Committee on Participative Legislation – CPL. The CPL was created to receive proposed drafts of bills from the citizens. If those proposals receive a favorable indication from the CPL, they will be turned into bills.

The concluding power allows the committees to definitely approve certain bills as stated by the Constitution, .i.e., bills under the committees conclusive power are not submitted to Floor consideration. The Chamber Rules and Manual states that the Committees have concluding power on matters within their subject matter jurisdiction, with no need of further consideration by the Floor. The Rules grant this prerogative due to the fact the Committees have the power to deliberate on all subjects under their jurisdiction.

However, the concluding power of the Committees is not always mandatory. To call up a bill on the Chamber Floor, a deputy may introduce a motion with support of one-tenth of the Chamber members whenever Floor consideration is found necessary. The motion must be brought to the floor to be effective, though.

There are two types of Committees: Standing and Temporary. The Standing Committees have a permanent feature. They have risen to a level of codification in the rules of the Chamber. Moreover, they are part of the Institution. On the other hand, the Temporary Committees are created with a specific purpose. They are extinguished after acting on the bill or after a previously assigned period. The Temporary Committees last no more than four years (a Congress).



STANDING COMMITTEES

No Standing Committee might have less than three and a half (17 Representatives) nor more than twelve (61 Representatives) hundredths of the total number of Representatives - disregarding the fraction. No Representative can hold a member position on more than one Standing Committee.

The seats at the Committees belong to the parties or party groups. For this reason, the number of seats, the chairmanship and the positions at the Committees' Boards (immediate deputies to the chairman) follow the party proportionality principle. In the Chamber, there are 20 Standing Committees:

- Committee on the Amazon, National Integration and Regional Development;
- Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry, Supply and Rural Development;
- Committee on Science and Technology, Communications and Computer Sciences;
- Committee on the Constitution and Justice and Citizenship;
- Committee on Consumer Protection;
- Committee on Urban Development;
- Committee on Human Rights and Minorities;
- Committee on Economic Development, Commerce and Industry;
- Committee on Education and Culture;
- Committee on Finances and Taxation;
- Committee on Financial Oversight and Control;
- Committee on Legislative Participation;



- Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development;
- Committee on Mines and Energy;
- Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defense;
- Committee on Public Security and Fight against Organized Crime;
- Committee on Social Security and Family;
- Committee on Labor, Administration and Civil Service;
- Committee on Tourism and Sports;
- Committee on Transportation

TEMPORARY COMMITTEES

There are three kinds of Temporary Committees: Special Committees, Investigative Committees and External Committees.

Special Committees are designed to report on the following proposals:

- Amendment to the Constitution;
- Code Bills,
- Amendment to the Chamber Rules;
- Referring to charges of responsibility crime of the President, Vice-President or State Ministers

The Investigative Committees (CPI) investigate a certain fact of relevant interest to public life and to the judicial, economic and social order of the country.

External Committees permit the performance of specific parliamentary duties outside the building of the Chamber of Deputies



Besides the subject matter, the Standing Committees and Special Committees also act on judging if a proposal complies with the Constitution or not (the so-called judge of admissibility). On top of that, two committees have a special prerogative on its subject matter jurisdiction, i.e., they take the vote and decide whether the bill must be discharged from further consideration or not. The Committee on Constitution, Justice and on Citizenship (CCJC) considers the bills compliance to the Constitution and the country's legislation in general. The Committee on Finances and Taxation (CFT) analyzes the bill's financial feasibility and/or budgetary adequacy. They have the so-called final opinion. If more than three subject matters are involved, the bill may be referred to a Special Committee which will act on the total bill, considering the subject matter, judging the compliance to legislation and financial and budgetary feasibility as well.

JOINT COMMITTEES

- Joint Committee on the Budget

Among other duties, it considers the bills related to the Union's quadrennial Plan, to the budget directives law and to the Annual Budget and additional credits.

- Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Mercosur

The Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Mercosur (Common Market of the South American Countries) task is to follow all negotiations and debates on the International Agreement on Economic Integration of Latin America, signed by Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. Mercosur will grant free circulation of goods and services among the State members.

- The National Congress Representative Joint Committee

Before the houses recess, the National Congress assigns members to a representative joint committee. This committee



keeps working through the whole recess period to maintain the Congress' prerogatives and legislative competences.

MAJORITY AND MINORITY

A party or parliamentary group composed by the absolute majority (half of the members plus one) of representatives is called Majority in Brazil. Since the Chamber has 513 members, the Majority must have 257 representatives. Due to the proportional electoral system, it is very difficult to have a one-party absolute majority at the Chamber, though it can be achieved with a Parliamentary group formed by a coalition of several political parties. The Chamber Rules and Manual states that if there is no absolute majority in a party or in a party group the Majority will be the party or Party group with a simple plurality, i.e. having more representatives than any other.

The bigger party or party group opposing to the Majority's thought about the Chief of the Executive Branch's Party (The Government) is called the Minority in Brazil. Therefore if the Majority is pro Government, the Minority will be the biggest party or the biggest party group against the Executive's ideas.

LEADERSHIP OFFICES

The representatives individually or as a member of a party group elect their Party Leaders who will represent them. Among other prerogatives, the leaders indicate the party vote in the Committees. Leaders might speak to defend a certain political line anytime in the Floor sessions while issues of national relevance are being discussed. The Leaders also assign Committee Members and register candidates to run for seats in the Presiding Board.

The President may assign a Representative to be the Leader of the Government. The Government leadership is



composed by a Leader and five immediate leaders (deputy leaders).

THE LEADERS COMMISSION

Body for discussion and political negotiation.

The Leaders Commission is essential to the legislative process because it conciliates the diverse interests of the groups and categories represented at the National Congress.

Composition: Majority Leader, Minority Leader, Party Leaders, Party Group Leaders and Government Leader.

PARLIAMENTARY ATTORNEY

Responsible for the defense of the Chamber, its bodies and members before the society, in charges related to parliamentary institutional duties

Provides the judicial and extra judicial defense of the Chamber, through a lawyer, the Public Prosecution Service or the Public Defense Office. Whenever defamatory news about the Chamber or its members are made public, the Parliamentary Attorney has the right to clarify the facts, and to ask for a proper reply to repair the damages, bearing in mind the right to compensation for moral or material damages.

Composition: 11 members, indicated by the Speaker, with a 2-year term.

The Parliamentary Attorney works along with the Presiding Board.





PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER

After its election, the Presiding Board assigns four of its members to be Commissioner Officer and Substitute Commissioners, respectively. They are responsible for avoid breaches of parliamentary privileges.

The Commissioner conducts investigations when a Representative is involved.

COUNCIL ON ETHICS AND PARLIAMENTARY BEHAVIOR

The Council on Ethics and Parliamentary Behavior of the Chamber of Deputies is responsible for disciplinary measures whenever a member breaches rules related to its ethic behavior.

The Council on Ethics and Parliamentary Behavior follows special regulation which sets forth the procedures to be observed in the parliamentary disciplinary process. These rules are found in the Ethics and Parliamentary Behavior Code and on the Chamber Rules and Manual.

In the case of a disciplinary process, the Council will act under the advice of the Presiding Board.

Among other duties, the Council must care for the observance of ethical principles, for the preservation of parliamentary dignity. It must also initiate the disciplinary process and observe all the necessary procedures to its instruction; to answer all queries from the Presiding Board, Committees and Representatives on matters of its jurisdiction.



TYPES OF SESSIONS IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Ordinary Sessions: are carried out only once a day. The sittings last five hours for debate and deliberation. The sittings are held from Monday to Thursday, from 2 pm to 7 pm and, on Fridays, from 9 am to 2 pm.

Extraordinary Sessions: are carried out in different days and/or hours to the ordinary sessions. The extraordinary sessions are dedicated exclusively to the discussion and deliberation on matters in the Order of Business. They last four hours, but can be extended for up to one hour.

Solemn Sessions: they are called for great celebrations or to pay special homage to important individuals.

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SYSTEM (E-CHAMBER) – TRANSPARENCY

The System of Legislative Information of the Chamber of Deputies (e-Chamber) allows any computer user electronic access to find any measure being developed at the Chamber. Through the e-Chamber, the citizen may look up for a specific proposal, follow its development, and check the amendments to the original text and the voting results. More than that, updates on the matter development can be sent to the user's electronic address (e-mail). Thanks to data crossing and binding, it is possible to find out promptly each Representative's performance, voting, speeches, the bills he/she introduced and the Committees he/she is assigned to.

The E-Chamber was designed to facilitate people's access to bill development and transparency to the legislative process. The Floor debates, speeches and voting results are almost immediately available - as soon as the stenography notes are available on the Internet -, a few minutes after any activity. All information is accessible on the website: www.camara.gov.



br, which has been among the top 10 best sites in the iBest ranking for three years.

In addition, the Chamber joined the Interlegis Program – Legislative Integration and Participation Net, whose main goal is to stimulate the integration of the Legislative Power on the Federal, State and Local Levels.

PORTABLE E-CHAMBER

The portable e-Chamber system allows access to bills, as well as Committees' and Floor activities. Thanks to the portable e-Chamber, the Representatives may have prompt access to any information using a Personal Electronic Device (PDA) linked to the cordless communication net installed in the Chamber premises.

THE BRAZILIAN PARLIAMENT – ACCESSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE

DISQUE-CÂMARA (DIAL-UP CHAMBER)

A toll free telephone number is available for the citizen to send messages, complaints, suggestions, accusations or proposals to the Representatives, Parliamentary Committees and other units of the Chamber.

The issues and complaints that cannot be answered immediately by the Chamber dial-up service team will be sent to the services in charge to be finally answered by fax, email or phone call.

To use the Chamber of Deputies hot line, the citizen should call the number 0800 619 619 from 8 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday, or send an electronic message to: cidadao@camara.gov.br, at anytime.



PARLIAMENTARY OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE

The Parliamentary Ombudsman's Office receives, examines and takes all the necessary steps for the preliminary investigations on accusations of individuals and government bodies about irregularities and illegalities practiced in the Public Administration.

In addition to sending the complaints and statements to the Attorney General's Office, the Public Prosecution Service, the Federal Court of Accounts or any other court with jurisdiction on the matter, the Parliamentary ombudsman must answer any inquiry on the procedures taken by the Chamber of Deputies,

Composition: 1 General-Ombudsman and 2 Substitute ombudsmen assigned by the President of the Chamber, with a two-year term, term extension not allowed.

The internal media of the Chamber widely covers the Parliamentary Ombudsman's actions.

CITIZEN-LETTER

The Brazilian citizen can also write to the Chamber of Deputies and ask any question without spending a cent. All he/she needs is to post a letter using the pre-paid envelope available at the Post Office. It is not necessary to use stamps: the only thing to do is writing the message and sending it.

The citizen-letter aims at bring the Chamber closer to a larger number of citizens. Individuals can write their suggestions, requests or complaints and send them, without additional costs, to any Federal Representative or Committee, to the Presiding Board or to the Ombudsman's office.



COMMITTEE ON PARTICIPATIVE LEGISLATION

The Committee on Participative Legislation (CPL) is composed by 18 permanent members and an equal number of substitutes.

With the help of this Committee, the Chamber allows the citizens easier access to the law-making system. The CPL welcomes associations and class entities who wish to present their ideas, demands and the needs of the real and day-to-day Brazilian life straight to their Congress representatives.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN'S OFFICE

The Parliamentarian's Office advises and aids the Speaker and other members of the Presiding Board on legislative matters and procedures. The Constitution and the Chamber Rules and Manual set forth a few procedures for the Speaker of the Chamber and the Presiding Board, that is: to preside and guide the legislative activities, including the sittings. Therefore, it's the Parliamentarian's Office duty to follow and assist the floor sessions and other events of a technical-political nature related to the legislative activities.

For instance, following the work performed by the Parliamentarian's Office, the bills received at the Board, right after authentication, are electronically numbered and have their text displayed on the Chamber of Deputies website. The next step is to send them to the analysis of the Speaker who makes the decision on what kind of referral a bill should receive, based on the advice of the Parliamentarian. The texts of the bills and the Speakers decision are printed on the Chamber of Deputies Journal and in single copies, and the bill is released at the Legislative Information System (e-Chamber) to be accessed on Internet. Hence, the Representative and any other interested party are able to read the bill, check the amendments and follow, step by step, its development towards becoming a law.



CONSULTING SERVICES ON BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND LEGISLATIVE CONSULTING SERVICES

The Consulting Services on the Budgetary and Financial Oversight and the Legislative Consulting Services are institutional bodies of technical consulting to the Chamber of Deputies. They are composed by multidisciplinary teams of experts, who provide technical expertise to the Representatives, Chamber Committees and National Congress in all the steps of the legislative process. Their work is confidential, non-partisan, and most of it is exclusive. Besides, they obey the criteria of relevance, objectivity and technical exemption. Therefore, the consultants (senior policy specialists) have the possibility to analyze different facts, perform researches and propose alternatives of action, while providing the technical foundations to the Parliamentary action.

The Consulting Services on Budgetary and Financial Oversight was the first to make available to the public and to the Representative the data on budget and financial implementation of the Union Budget. This measure allowed the ordinary citizen to pursue an oversight of the public expenses. Among the bodies of the Federal Public Administration level, such information can only be found in an accessible level on the Chamber of Deputies website (www.camara.gov.br) under “Orçamento da União” (Union Budget).

The Consulting staff position is entitled exclusively to tenured civil servants of the Chamber of Deputies. These are graduated and specialized professionals, selected through a competitive examination of tests and titles.

Many of the Consultants are post-graduated, holding both master and doctorate degrees. The Consulting Services staff has not only experts on judicial matters but also engineers, managers, auditors, economists, journalists, architects, social scientists, education specialists and professionals of



wide variety of knowledge areas, most of them with relevant experience from former positions in the Executive Branch or the Court of Accounts. This facilitates a multidisciplinary approach and favors the excellent results the consulting services provide to those that request them.

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES PREMISES

The Palace of the National Congress is the seat of the Legislative branch since 1960, the year that the Federal Capital was transferred from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia. The National Congress project is signed by architect Oscar Niemeyer, who took into consideration the local topography, emphasized its size, its free spaces and visual depth, and gave the building a monumental character, despite the simplicity of its geometric forms. The architect highlighted the Plenary Chamber of both houses of Parliament, by erecting two domes above each one of them.

The two towers of the building count 28 floors. They are the highest buildings in town and home to the administrative units of the Legislative, as well as to the Ulysses Guimarães and Milton Campos Foundations. Niemeyer remarked, once, the convex and the concave structures as the most important features of the building. The convex form is the chamber of the Senate and the concave houses the Chamber floor.” The placement of the domes is merely for aesthetic purposes,” Niemeyer said. The Chamber floor is larger than the Senate’s because the number of Representatives is bigger than the number of Senators. In the Chamber, the architectural ensemble is composed by the Main Building and four Annexes, which makes a 145.000 m²built area.



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS

The ordinary Administrative office hours of the Chamber of Deputies last eight hours, Monday to Friday.

It is divided in two schedules:

I – from 9 am to 12 am;

II – from 1:30 pm to 6:30 pm or until the end of the plenary session.

In case of extraordinary session, the administrative services remain open until the end of the session.

HIGHLIGHTS

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The administrative heads of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies and its own professional body base their actions on the principle of transparency and on the responsible use of public resources with efficiency, efficaciousness and effectiveness, in order to fulfill the Chamber's mission of securing democracy and citizenship to the Brazilian society. To accomplish this objective and support the legislative work, the functional structure is composed by the Parliamentarian's Office (already mentioned), and the General-Director Office, which takes care of the planning, coordination and control of the administrative activities of the House, and it is aided by three other Director Offices: Administrative Division, Human Resources Division and Legislative Division.

Nine departments, three centers, three advising bodies, two secretariats and two consulting bodies also integrate the administrative structure.

The Chamber's General-Director Office, under the guidance of the Presiding Board, has implemented innovative initiatives,



through its subordinate offices, promoting a closer interaction between the citizenship and the Legislative branch that places the Chamber in an advanced position at the Federal Public Administration.

THE CENTER FOR DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION

The Center for Documentation and Information of the Chamber of Deputies (CEDI) provides the citizen with a varied series of national interest documents, on the history of the Brazilian Legislative branch as well as information on bill introduction and development, among other activities.

Further, the Center has amassed a huge collection of 300.000 books, among them rare books, 3.000 periodical titles, a collection of the most important Brazilian newspapers, and documents from international organizations such as UNESCO, World Bank, WHO, ILO, IMF and ECLA.

The Center provides services for the Chamber, for other Federal Institutions, academic researchers and students. The Center library is part of the Virtual Libraries Web Net, composed by the Chamber Center, the Senate Center for Documentation and more 13 libraries.

In February 2004, the Center edited a series of titles including the History of The Chamber of Deputies, with a cultural and democratic focus, dealing with the History of Brazil and the Brazilian Parliament, from 1500 to 2003.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

The Secretary of Communication's Office – SECOM - counts on a highly qualified service, composed by the communication media of the Chamber, including a TV Station (TV Câmara), a radio station (Rádio Câmara), a Press Agency (Agência Câmara) and a tabloid "Jornal da Câmara".



The Radio broadcasts the Floor sessions live, and presents news about the parliamentary activities to all the Federal District, neighborhood cities up to an area of 200 kilometers. It is possible to listen to Rádio Câmara all across the country via internet and satellite transmission.

The Agency releases electronic bulletins on the main events at the Chamber. The bulletins are sent to the Brazilian newspapers or to any person who subscribe for them. All one has to do is send an e-mail address to Agência Câmara to receive the information by the end of the day. It's free of charge.

The TV broadcasts the Floor sessions and the Committee hearings live, and promotes the pro-active participation of the Brazilian citizen in the legislative process through projects such as Câmara Especial (Chamber Special). The Chamber Special is a weekly program, that brings Ministers of State, Deputies, and Senators to answer the citizens questions on main nationwide issues. To participate the citizen needs only to phone and propose the question.

The TV Câmara respects party representation and controls the participation of the representatives through a computer-generated program, created with the sole objective to guarantee party representation on the programs, proportional to the parties' representation at the House.

SECOM also promotes the tour visiting of the House premises. It's a free service, open daily from 9:30 am to 5 am, including weekends.

To improve the Dial-up Chamber Service (0800 619 619), a larger participation of individuals is being considered on the future. In addition to receiving the answers to the questions sent to the Chamber, people will be invited to give their opinion about the diverse and relevant matters discussed in the Parliament.



In the Cultural Space of the Chamber of Deputies, national and international art and cultural works are displayed, following society interests. In addition, many events to disseminate the cultural and historical collections of the institution are promoted by the Cultural Space.

TECHNICAL BODY QUALIFICATION

The Head Office of the Chamber has strongly invested on programs of training and qualification for the Chamber civil servants.

The Center for Qualification and Training (CEFOR) is responsible for the admissions, recruiting, selection, training, updating, improving and specializing the Chamber of Representative workers.

In 2004, 487 (four hundred and eighty seven) training and qualification events were implemented, comprehending the five domains, as defined by CEFOR (Behavioral, Managerial, Institutional, Technical-Specific and Technical-General), including courses, trainings, conferences, seminars, adaptation, integration and assessment programs, and meetings, with more than 10.766 participants. Besides, 858 (eight hundred and fifty eight) workers obtained a leave for participation in conferences, seminars and post-graduate courses.

Among the activities promoted by CEFOR, some deserve to be highlighted:

- **Implementation of courses of Lato-Sensu Specialization**, in a partnership with the University of Brasilia - Managerial Development (four classes, counting more than one hundred students) and Legislative Managing (two classes). Another partnership with Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais allows 35 servants to specialize on People Management.



• **Undergraduate Internship Coordination** - At present, the Chamber has 204 (two hundred and four) interns from 7 (seven) educational institutions in a joint program to implement professional internships with college students. The purposes of the program are to broaden the connections to the academic environment and to prepare the youngsters to the labor market. Besides, the short-duration program of undergraduate internship was introduced last year, under the supervision of the 2nd Secretary and participation of the Head Office, the Communication Secretary Office and the CEFOR. The interns watch seminars and visit the Chamber units (Committees, Ombudsman's Office, Information and Documentation Center, Floor Galleries, Social Communication Secretary, Parliamentarian, Legislative Consulting Services) and other bodies (Federal Senate, Supreme Court, Court of Accounts and the Foreign Relations Department). The purpose of the program, as set forth by the Board Acts numbers 22 and 143, 2003, is to broaden the knowledge of students all over the country on the Legislative branch, its work, history, organization and structure. Hence, the idea is to contribute to the dissemination and consolidation of a more positive image of the Chamber before the society.

• **Implementation of the distance learning solution** - In 2003, a distance learning solution was acquired so the Chamber could make available to the internal and external public (parliament members, state and city legislative civil servants) courses concerning the institutional functions of the Chamber in addition to the computer science courses. CEFOR developed Courses on Legislative Process, Constitutional Law and Writing Workshops with this purpose.

• **Post-graduation Courses** - The Chamber Post-Graduation Program aims to highly qualify servants on his area or work. The program allows the exchange of knowledge with academic institutions, cultural institutions, companies and the



general society in order to promote better interaction with the community always keeping the Chamber institutional project. There are courses on Public Budget, Legislative Process and the Institutions and Political Processes in the Legislative Branch.

- **The Youth's Parliament** - The Youth's Parliament is a program that aims at providing the youngsters the opportunity to work as a member in order to feel the importance of the representative's performance to the Brazilian citizen's day-by-day life. During their stay, students from secondary private and public schools perform their representatives duties, which includes, taking the representative's oath, balloting for a Presiding Board, choosing representatives to the Leaders Commission, introducing his own bills, voting and debating them, and so forth.

- **Technical Cooperation with Other Parliaments** - In an effort to integrate Parliaments of the Portuguese language world, the Chamber has brought up some initiatives to publicize and exchange experiences on improving the servant's education. The main goal of this program is getting people to share their work experience in other Parliaments so that they improve their skill and methods to develop a better job.

- **The Congress in the Local Assemblies** - It's a program that aims to spread practical information on Federal Legislation in the Educational, Budgetary and Urban fields to the local assemblies in order to get the legislation uniformity and applicability to the cities and Town Halls. Therefore, it's also an information exchange program, this time, to provide the Congress information to evaluate if its own legislative process is attending the needs of the citizen day-by-day life.

The CEFOR also deals with admissions to the Chamber, concerning public competitive examinations for hiring tenured civil. This includes planning, writing of the public call notice,



hiring of expert institution to the implementation of tests, following and oversight of the implementation of contracts. In 2003, a public examination was carried out for the position of Legislative Analyst – attributions Engineering, Architecture and Social Communication.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Chamber's administration has considered programs to improve the quality of life for its workers as a top priority. The programs had a beneficial impact on the quality of the civil servants' work. The qualification of the professional body of the institution is a basic condition to broaden the Parliament's opportunities to discuss issues of national and international relevance with the different groups of the Brazilian society. It is necessary to keep in mind that, besides the specific discussions that are inherent to the legislative process, many conferences, seminars and other events take place in the Chamber premises

In September 2001, the Committee on the Management of Human Resources was created. That Committee developed into the introduction of the Human Resources Head Office of the Chamber of Deputies. The Human Resources Head Office intends to start a new management policy and promote the modernization of the Chamber Human Resources. The "Minds at Work" program, for instance, which stimulates ideas and projects generated by the workers of the Chamber to the benefit of the society and the institution, has increased the participation of the Chamber civil servants in the management, sharing knowledge, creating and modernizing the institution. The need to deal with the complex problems which show up in the Parliament routine and require informed and dynamic decisions from the institution members makes this approach essential.



If the access to information in the society today is essential to the development of all countries, the Chamber of Deputies has invested human and financial resources on the development of computer programs and computer systems to disseminate legislative information, with the help of the Center for Computer Science (CENIN). Such programs are very successful and some of them were made available, free of charge, to other branches of government. For instance, the Stenography System (SITAG), used to register and make short-hand notes public was made available to the Superior Court of Justice (STJ), which adopted it under the name of SISTAG.

The Chamber is on a top position in the Federal Public Administration. It is an example of good public management and a model to other federal public institutions in Brazil and in other countries. The efforts to make better services to the Brazilian society are continuous. The initiatives that include partnerships with other countries are also remarkable, and they show that the Brazilian Legislative Process and the Administrative Units that support all its purposes and actions are a role model to other Parliaments around the world.

CULTURAL POLICY

Culture and knowledge are also a priority to the Chamber. Therefore the institution houses many events covering a wide range of artistic, intellectual and historical manifestations, particularly related to the Brazilian culture. The Chamber's architecture and inherent work also promotes the Brazilian cultural heritage.

In the Main Building we find the great Black Hall, a common area for both houses used for official receptions, formal events and exhibitions. Adjacent to the Black Hall main entrance there is a wall with a saying carved on it. It's a piece of President Juscelino Kubitschek's speech delivered at the



signing of the bill transferring the capital from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília, in the late 50s. Next to the Black Hall there is the Noble Room. On weekdays, the Noble Hall is restricted to visits by Head of State or government officials and courtesy calls on the Speaker of the Chamber. In the room, there's a stained glass panel by Marianne Peretti, a wooden blue panel by Athos Bulcão and it's furnished by Ana Maria Niemeyer's and the Barcelona chairs designed by the architect Mies Van Der Rohe.

Adjacent to the Ulysses Guimarães Plenary Chamber (the floor), the Green Hall is the location of several pieces of art by well-known Brazilian artists such as the blue and white tile panel Ventania ("Gale") that can be seen all across the room; Muro Escultório (a green partition piece) by Athos Bulcão; Fragmento de Anjo ("Angel Fragment") by Alfredo Ceschiatti; the stained glass panel called Araguaia (the name of an important river of the region); and the panel painted by Di Cavalcanti specially to the Chamber.

The Chamber also has another space for reflexion and social values development: the Cultural Space – symbol of the artistic and intellectual freedom of expression. The Cultural spaces promotes book launching, ballet presentations, plays, reading and poetry reading, lectures, political debates, cultural events among other cultural manifestations.

The Cultural Center is a multiple and democratic space that answer to different requests on events. There's a calendar of events and to participate the citizen submits his quest filling a form sheet available on the Internet a year in advance, preferably till October. The requests are analyzed according to objective criteria.



PRODUCTION OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES 2004th Legislative Session	
1. Number of Sessions	328
- Ordinary deliberative sessions	62
- Ordinary non-deliberative sessions	120
- Extraordinary deliberatives sessions	83
- Solemn Sessions	53
- General Committees	10
2. Number of bills considered by the Floor	702
- Proposals to Amendments to the Constitution	5
- Temporary Measures	89
- Proposals to Supplementary Law	4
- Proposals to Statutory Law	31
- Proposals to Legislative Decree	10
- Proposals of Resolution	11
- Messages (from the Executive)	6
- Others	546
3. Bills referred to the committees under concluding power (Proposals to Statutory Law and Legislative Decree)	546

Source: The Parliamentarian's Office and E-Chamber



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