

THE MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE OVERSIGHT (CONTROL)
FUNCTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER OF THE REPUBLIC OF
UZBEKISTAN

Ashuroxunova Iroda Tohir qizi

Tashkent State University of Law, master's degree student

Annotation: This thesis analyzes the oversight (control) function of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its practical significance. It highlights the legal foundations, subjects, and main forms of control exercised by the Legislative Chamber within the framework of parliamentary oversight. The content of various control mechanisms—such as the execution of the State budget, parliamentary and deputy inquiries, hearings of government reports, the "Government Hour" system, and parliamentary investigations—is also examined. The study further analyzes the redefinition of oversight powers in the new edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the distinction of powers between the Senate and the Legislative Chamber, and directions for improving parliamentary oversight. The author substantiates that the independence of the parliamentary institution, the immunity of deputies, and the expansion of public participation are key factors enhancing the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight.

Key words: parliamentary oversight, Legislative Chamber, oversight (control) function, parliamentary inquiry, deputy inquiry, Accounts Chamber, Constitution, Cabinet of Ministers, executive authority, public oversight, parliamentary investigation.

Parliamentary oversight is an independent institution and an important factor in the development of the country. By its function, the parliament is not only a representative and legislative body but also a supervisory institution. Parliamentary oversight primarily serves the interests of the people. From this perspective, the implementation of the oversight function by the Legislative Chamber ensures the full and proper execution of laws, their effective application in practice, and the strengthening of legislation to address existing problems. It also contributes to the effective operation of the system of "checks and balances" among branches of power.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026," one of the main objectives is to strengthen the role of the chambers of the Oliy Majlis and political parties in comprehensively studying the situation in all spheres, developing effective measures to solve existing problems, and expanding the participation of parliament in ensuring the full and unconditional implementation of adopted laws in practice. In this regard, further improving the institution of parliamentary oversight—particularly the oversight function of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan—and defining its future prospects are among the key tasks before us.

Before discussing the mechanism for implementing the oversight function of the Legislative Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is appropriate to clarify the subjects

of parliamentary oversight. According to Article 3 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Parliamentary Oversight," the subjects exercising parliamentary oversight include: the Legislative Chamber and the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, their committees and commissions, political party factions within the Legislative Chamber, deputies of the Legislative Chamber, members of the Senate, and the Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman).

According to Sh.X. Zulfiqorov, parliamentary oversight is a form of control exercised by the legislature aimed at checking the effectiveness and implementation of existing laws, as well as ensuring that the activities of state authorities and administrative bodies strictly comply with legislation and legal norms. In this process, identified violations of the law are addressed and preventive measures are taken. This oversight is carried out through analytical monitoring, parliamentary inquiries, and other forms envisaged by legislation. In our view, this definition reflects the three key aspects of parliamentary oversight, namely political, financial, and legislative control. [5;P36]

According to the Law "On the Regulations of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan," it is established that the Legislative Chamber shall have the following committees: the Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms; the Committee on Combating Corruption and Judicial-Legal Issues; the Committee on Labor and Social Affairs; the Committee on Defense and Security Issues; the Committee on International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Relations; the Committee on Innovative Development, Information Policy and Information Technologies; and the Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection. It is also stipulated that other committees may be established within the Legislative Chamber. However, the formation of committees that permanently exercise oversight functions is not envisaged.

According to information on the official website of the Legislative Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the following committees are currently operating within the Chamber:

1. Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms;
2. Committee on Labor and Social Affairs;
3. Committee on Combating Corruption and Judicial-Legal Issues;
4. Committee on Public Health Issues;
5. Committee on Defense and Security Issues;
6. Committee on International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Relations;
7. Committee on Industry, Construction, and Trade Issues;
8. Committee on Agricultural and Water Management Issues;
9. Committee on Science, Education, Culture, and Sports Issues;
10. Committee on Democratic Institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Self-Government Bodies of Citizens;
11. Committee on Innovative Development, Information Policy, and Information Technologies;
12. Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection Issues.

The Legislative Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan carries out the following oversight (control) functions:

1. Reviewing issues related to the execution of the State budget;
2. Parliamentary inquiry;
3. Deputy inquiry;
4. Considering the report of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the implementation of the State Program for the corresponding year derived from the Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Oliy Majlis;
5. Hearing the report of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan on certain urgent issues of the country's socio-economic development;
6. Hearing the information of members of the Government, heads of state bodies, and economic management bodies on issues related to their activities;
7. Hearing the responses of Government members to questions from deputies of the Legislative Chamber;
8. Hearing the report of the Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman);
9. Hearing the report of the Accounts Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
10. Conducting parliamentary inquiries (investigations);
11. Hearing the annual national report on combating corruption in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

One of the key oversight functions of the Legislative Chamber is control over the execution of the State budget. The Chamber reviews the progress of the State budget's execution on a quarterly basis. The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan submits quarterly information and necessary materials on the execution of the State budget to the Legislative Chamber. During consideration, the report of the Cabinet of Ministers, opinions and proposals of parliamentary factions, and the conclusion of the responsible committee are heard, discussions are held, and an appropriate decision is adopted.

According to A. Latifov, parliamentary oversight is a form of state control that represents an independent and distinct mechanism of the activities of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its bodies. It is aimed at obtaining and analyzing information about processes and events occurring in society through the study of the implementation of laws and other legislative acts. [6;P 42]

The Cabinet of Ministers submits the annual report on the execution of the State budget, along with the conclusion of the Accounts Chamber, to the Legislative Chamber no later than May 15 of the year following the reporting year. The Legislative Chamber reviews this annual report based on preliminary discussions in parliamentary factions and committees.

Another important oversight function of the Legislative Chamber is the parliamentary inquiry and the deputy inquiry, which differ from one another. Firstly, in a parliamentary inquiry, the subject of oversight is the parliament itself, while in a deputy inquiry, the subject is an individual deputy. Secondly, a parliamentary inquiry is sent to officials of state and economic management bodies with a request to provide a

substantiated explanation or express their position on the implementation of laws, state programs in various fields, or other significant issues within their competence. In contrast, a deputy inquiry is usually sent to officials of state and economic management bodies with a request for an explanation or position on issues related to ensuring the rights and lawful interests of voters in the deputy's constituency.

The consideration of the report of the Cabinet of Ministers on the implementation of the State Program derived from the President's Address to the Oliy Majlis is also one of the oversight functions of the Legislative Chamber. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, together with members of the Government, submits a quarterly report to the Legislative Chamber on the progress of the implementation of the State Program for the respective year, based on the Presidential Address. Parliamentary factions and committees of the Legislative Chamber conduct preliminary consideration of the Cabinet's report and develop opinions and proposals that must be thoroughly discussed during the plenary session of the Chamber.

Another oversight function of the Legislative Chamber is hearing the report of the Prime Minister on certain pressing issues of the country's socio-economic development. Factions and committees of the Legislative Chamber conduct preliminary consideration of the Prime Minister's report, prepare opinions and proposals, and these must be comprehensively discussed during the plenary session of the Chamber.

The Legislative Chamber also exercises its oversight function by hearing reports from members of the Government, heads of state bodies, and heads of economic management bodies on issues related to their activities. The consideration of such reports is carried out by the Legislative Chamber at the initiative of parliamentary factions.

The Legislative Chamber hears information from the Minister of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan about his activities twice a year, after preliminary consideration by the Committee on Public Health Issues. A decision of the Legislative Chamber is adopted regarding the hearing of information from members of the Government, heads of state bodies, and heads of economic management bodies. The decision to hear members of the Government is sent in advance to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, while the decision to hear heads of state or economic management bodies is sent to the respective body. Based on the results of the hearing, the Legislative Chamber adopts a decision that may include recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency of their activities, as well as an evaluation of their work.

The Legislative Chamber holds a "Government Hour" once a month during its sessions, during which members of the Government respond to questions from deputies of the Legislative Chamber. The schedule for holding the "Government Hour" is determined by the Council of the Legislative Chamber in agreement with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Deputies' questions to members of the Government are sent to the Cabinet of Ministers by the Council of the Legislative Chamber no later than ten days before the "Government Hour." Based on the list of questions, the Cabinet of Ministers designates which members of the Government will respond to deputies' inquiries during the session. Following the "Government Hour," the Legislative Chamber may adopt a resolution.

Each year, no later than February 15 of the year following the reporting period, the Legislative Chamber hears the report of the Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights (Ombudsman). The report is first reviewed by parliamentary factions. Discussion of the Ombudsman's report at the session of the Legislative Chamber begins with a speech by the Ombudsman, followed by statements from representatives of the factions. Based on the results of the hearing, the Legislative Chamber adopts a resolution, which is sent to the Ombudsman and to the Senate within ten days from the date of adoption.

Each year, no later than May 15 of the year following the reporting period, the Legislative Chamber hears the report of the Accounts Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The report is first considered by parliamentary factions and by the Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms. Factions send their proposals and opinions to the Committee. Based on these, the Committee prepares a conclusion on the report, as well as a draft resolution of the Legislative Chamber concerning the Accounts Chamber's report for the respective year, and submits them for consideration by the Chamber. During the review, the Legislative Chamber hears the report of the Chairperson of the Accounts Chamber, the supplementary report of the representative of the Committee on Budget and Economic Reforms, and statements from faction representatives.

A parliamentary inquiry (investigation) may be conducted by decision of the Legislative Chamber to examine certain facts or events that may affect the most important interests of society and the state, the foundations of national security, or the country's sustainable development.

To conduct a parliamentary investigation, the Legislative Chamber forms a commission from among the deputies of the lower house.

In carrying out the parliamentary investigation, the commission has the right to: involve representatives of state bodies, economic management bodies, specialists, experts, and scholars in its work; request the necessary information from state bodies, economic management bodies, other organizations, as well as from citizens; invite officials of state bodies, economic management bodies, other organizations, and citizens to provide explanations.

The commission informs the Legislative Chamber of the work performed within the time frame established by the Chamber. According to legislation, a parliamentary investigation may also be conducted based on a joint decision of both chambers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The legislation classifies the powers of parliament related to the exercise of oversight into three categories:

1. The joint powers of the Legislative Chamber and the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
2. The exclusive powers of the Legislative Chamber;
3. The exclusive powers of the Senate.

Based on these categories, the powers of parliament in implementing its oversight function are defined in the new edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan as follows:

According to Article 93 of the Constitution, the joint powers of the Legislative Chamber and the Senate of the Oliy Majlis in exercising their oversight function include: hearing the annual national report on combating corruption in the Republic of Uzbekistan; conducting parliamentary investigations it is important to note that, under the previous version of the Constitution, the joint powers of the Legislative Chamber and the Senate in exercising their oversight function also included: hearing and discussing the reports of the Prime Minister on pressing issues of the country's socio-economic development; exercising parliamentary oversight and other powers provided for by the Constitution.

However, under the new version of the Constitution, the hearing of reports from the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the country's socio-economic development and from members of the Cabinet of Ministers on matters related to their activities is now defined as an exclusive power of the Legislative Chamber.

In addition to this, according to Article 94 of the new Constitution, the Legislative Chamber, in connection with its oversight function, is granted the following exclusive powers: exercising control over the execution of the State budget of the Republic of Uzbekistan; reviewing the report of the Accounts Chamber of the Republic of Uzbekistan; hearing the annual report of the Cabinet of Ministers on the most important issues of the country's socio-economic life; sending parliamentary inquiries to officials of state bodies; implementing other forms of parliamentary oversight.

The Senate of the Oliy Majlis also possesses a number of oversight functions, which should be distinguished from those of the Legislative Chamber. In particular, according to Article 95 of the new edition of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the exclusive powers of the Senate in exercising its oversight function include: hearing the reports of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Chairman of the Board of the Central Bank of the Republic of Uzbekistan; hearing the reports of the heads of diplomatic and other representative offices of the Republic of Uzbekistan in foreign countries and international organizations regarding their activities; sending parliamentary inquiries to officials of state bodies; exercising other forms of parliamentary oversight.

Committees of the Legislative Chamber, as well as individual deputies, have the right to request documents, expert opinions, statistical data, and other information from state bodies, other organizations, and officials. The relevant state body, organization, or official must provide the requested information within ten days from the date of receiving the request.

Committees of the Legislative Chamber, in accordance with their work plans and the decisions of the Chamber and its Council, may hold meetings to hear information from heads of state and economic management bodies regarding their compliance with laws, the implementation of decisions of the Legislative Chamber, its Council, and its committees. Based on the results of these hearings, committees adopt decisions that are then sent to the relevant state or economic management body.

Committees of the Legislative Chamber, in accordance with their work plans, periodically conduct field studies to examine how laws and decisions of the Chamber are being implemented by state and economic management bodies, as well as to analyze the

practice of law enforcement. Following these studies, committees may hold meetings to hear reports from the heads of relevant bodies and may also decide to submit the results of their studies for consideration by the Legislative Chamber.

Committees of the Legislative Chamber also monitor the timely adoption of subordinate regulatory acts necessary to ensure the implementation of newly adopted laws. The results of this monitoring may be reviewed at committee meetings.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026," one of the main goals is to reassess the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for lawmaking and parliamentary oversight and to increase public engagement in these processes, thereby enhancing civic initiative in public administration.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to study international experience, adopt effective foreign practices, and further improve the existing oversight mechanisms.

We believe that creating a mechanism for public reporting by the Legislative Chamber—to inform the wider public about the organization, implementation, and outcomes of parliamentary oversight—will contribute significantly to enhancing the effectiveness and transparency of parliamentary control.

The oversight exercised by the Legislative Chamber is aimed at ensuring the transparency and openness of executive activity, holding the executive branch accountable, and promoting financial responsibility and the rule of law. However, it is often observed that no effective measures are taken following the results of such oversight. We believe the main reason for this lies in the insufficient strength and authority of the parliament itself.

In our opinion, to achieve effective parliamentary oversight, it is first necessary to ensure the independence of the parliamentary institution and the immunity of deputies. This, in turn, would allow deputies to oppose the executive branch without fear of personal reprisals or pressure.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight is directly related to the political and legal awareness of citizens. A society and a state can only develop when public control is exercised over the activities of state bodies and institutions. Analysis of foreign practice shows that in the United Kingdom, parliamentary oversight plays a major role in reviewing and discussing government activities, and public participation in this process is well established. In particular, on the official website of the UK Parliament, information is regularly published about the dates, times, and locations of ministerial question sessions, giving the public the opportunity to participate directly and stay informed.

It should be noted that it would be advisable to establish a special committee within both the Legislative Chamber and the Senate that deals specifically with parliamentary oversight. The creation of such a specialized institution focused exclusively on this area would have a positive impact on the effectiveness of parliamentary control.

In conclusion, the implementation of the oversight function by the Legislative Chamber serves to guarantee citizens' rights and lawful interests, ensures the effective application of adopted laws, and enables the assessment of how accurately and honestly

the government, state bodies, and officials of economic management organizations fulfill their duties.

From this perspective, improving the institution of oversight within the Legislative Chamber, identifying existing problems, and developing proposals and recommendations to address them are among the most urgent tasks facing us today.

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